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\(^1\) Hector's body has been 12 days at the tent of Achilles: xxiv. 412.
Book One

Proem

Sing, O goddess, the anger of Achilles son of Peleus, that brought countless ills upon the Achaeans.\(^1\) Many a brave soul did it send hurrying down to Hades, and many a hero did it yield a prey to dogs and vultures, for so were the counsels of Zeus fulfilled from the day on which Atreides\(^2\), leader of men, and godlike Achilles,\(^3\) first fell out with one another.\(^4\)

A Plague for the Greeks: 8 - 52

[8] And which of the gods was it that set them on to quarrel? It was the son of Zeus and Leto;\(^5\) for he was angry with the king and sent a pestilence upon the host to plague the people, because the son of Atreus had dishonoured Chryses his priest.\(^6\) Now Chryses had come to the ships of the Achaeans to free his daughter, and had brought with him a great ransom:\(^7\) moreover he bore in his hand the sceptre of Apollo wreathed with a suppliant’s wreath and he besought the Achaeans, but most of all the two sons of Atreus, who were their chiefs.\(^8\)

[17] “Atreidai,” he cried, “and all other Achaeans, may the gods who dwell in Olympus grant you to sack the city of Priam,\(^9\) and to reach your homes in safety; but free my daughter, and accept a ransom for her, in reverence to Apollo, son of Zeus.”

[22] On this the rest of the Achaeans with one voice were for respecting the priest and taking the ransom that he offered; but not so Agamemnon, who spoke fiercely to him and sent him roughly away. “Old man,” said he, “let me not find you tarrying about our ships, nor yet coming hereafter. Your sceptre of the god and your wreath shall profit you nothing. I will not free her.

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\(^1\) An invocation of divine inspiration is a standard opening in epic poetry.
\(^2\) The -ides suffix in Greek means 'son of' or 'descendant of.' So Atreides is Agamemnon, the son of Atreus.
\(^3\) Heroes and gods are often given these epithets. 'Godlike' precedes Achilles and Odysseus but too much should not be made of it as a descriptor. The choice was mostly poetic since *dios Achilleus* and *dios Odysseus* have similar meters (Seymour 1891).
\(^4\) The events of the *Iliad* begin in the ninth year of the war (ii.295; Apollodorus Epit. 3.34). The Greek forces have conquered the outlying islands and most of the mainland allies of Troy and are now camped on the beach before the walls of the city.
\(^5\) Apollo.
\(^6\) In the action prior to the *Iliad*, the Greek forces had taken Thebe, in Cilicia. Chryses was a priest in the temple of Apollo there and his daughter, Chryseis, was taken as a prize of war.
\(^7\) It was typical for captives to be kept or sold as slaves. But aristocratic and wealthy captives were worth more in ransom so it was a standard practice for a ransom to be offered and good manners to accept it.
\(^8\) Agamemnon, king of Mycenae and Menelaus, king of Sparta, were both the sons of Atreus.
\(^9\) Priam was the king of Troy.
She shall grow old in my house at Argos far from her own home, busying herself with her loom and visiting my couch; so go, and do not provoke me or it shall be the worse for you.”

[33] The old man feared him and obeyed. Not a word he spoke, but went by the shore of the sounding sea and prayed apart to Apollo whom lovely Leto had borne. “Hear me,” he cried, “O god of the silver bow, who protects Chryse and holy Cilla\(^1\) and rules Tenedos with your might, hear me, you of Smintheus.\(^2\) If I have ever decked your temple with garlands, or burned your thigh-bones in fat of bulls or goats, grant my prayer, and let your arrows avenge these my tears upon the Danaans.”\(^3\)

[43] Thus did he pray, and Apollo heard his prayer. He came down furious from the summits of Olympus, with his bow and his quiver upon his shoulder, and the arrows rattled on his back with the rage that trembled within him. He sat himself down away from the ships with a face as dark as night, and his silver bow rang death as he shot his arrow in the midst of them. First he smote their mules and their hounds, but presently he aimed his shafts at the people themselves, and all day long the pyres of the dead were burning.

**Assembly on the Tenth Day: 53 - 303**

[53] For nine whole days he shot his arrows among the people, but upon the tenth day Achilles called them in assembly\(^4\) - moved thereto by Hera, who saw the Achaeans in their death-throes and had compassion upon them. Then, when they were got together, he rose and spoke among them.\(^5\)

[59] “Son of Atreus,” said he,\(^6\) “I think that we should now go home if we would escape destruction, for we are being cut down by war and pestilence at once. Let us ask some priest or

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\(^1\) Both cities of Mysia, the area on the mainland next to Lesbos. It is often mistakenly claimed that Chryses was from Chryse.

\(^2\) Smintheus is an epithet for Apollo with Eastern origins. There was a city near Troy called Sminthe where Apollo was worshiped.

\(^3\) Homer never uses the term ‘Hellenes’ as a general term, but refers to the Greeks as Danaans, Achaeans or Argives. The term Danaans refers to the descendants of Danaus, an Egyptian who migrated to Argos and became king there.

\(^4\) The Greek here is *agoren* and is the origin of the word *agora*, or central market in the classical Greek polis. In Homer's time it simply referred to a meeting area in the centre of the camp.

\(^5\) The custom was that any person could rise to speak in the assembly of the soldiers. The speaker held a staff (scepter, literally) indicating his right to speak.

\(^6\) Achilles addresses Agamemnon as chair of the assembly just as speakers in modern assemblies address the Speaker of the House.
prophet, or some reader of dreams (for dreams, too, are of Zeus) who can tell us why Phoebus\textsuperscript{1} Apollo is so angry, and say whether it is for some vow that we have broken, or \textit{hecatomb}\textsuperscript{2} that we have not offered, and whether he will accept the savour of lambs and goats without blemish, so as to take away the plague from us.”

[68] With these words he sat down, and Calchas son of Thestor, wisest of augurs, who knew things past present and to come, rose to speak. He it was who had guided the Achaeans with their fleet to Ilium, through the prophesyings with which Phoebus Apollo had inspired him. With all sincerity and goodwill he addressed them thus:

[74] “Achilles, loved of heaven, you bid me tell you about the anger of Apollo, I will therefore do so; but consider first and swear that you will stand by me heartily in word and deed, for I know that I shall offend one who rules the Argives with might, to whom all the Achaeans are in subjection. A plain man cannot stand against the anger of a king, who if he swallow his displeasure now, will yet nurse revenge till he has wreaked it. Consider, therefore, whether or not you will protect me.”

[84] And Achilles answered, “Fear not, but speak as it is borne in upon you from heaven, for by Apollo, Calchas, to whom you pray, and whose oracles you reveal to us, not a Danaan at our ships shall lay his hand upon you, while I yet live to look upon the face of the earth- no, not though you name Agamemnon himself, who is by far the foremost of the Achaeans.”

[92] Thereon the seer spoke boldly. “The god,” he said, “is angry neither about vow nor hecatomb, but for his priest's sake, whom Agamemnon has dishonoured, in that he would not free his daughter nor take a ransom for her; therefore has he sent these evils upon us, and will yet send others. He will not deliver the Danaans from this pestilence till Agamemnon has restored the girl without fee or ransom to her father, and has sent a holy hecatomb to Chryse. Thus we may perhaps appease him.”

[101] With these words he sat down, and Agamemnon rose in anger. His heart was black with rage, and his eyes flashed fire as he scowled on Calchas and said, [105] “Seer of evil, you never yet prophesied smooth things concerning me, but have ever loved to foretell that which was evil. You have brought me neither comfort nor performance; and now you come seeing

\textsuperscript{1} Pheobus (bright) is a common epithet for Apollo.
\textsuperscript{2} Literally, a \textit{hecatomb} is a sacrificial offering of one hundred cattle. If ever it was literally meant, it was not by Homer's time and the term is used to refer to animal sacrifices of various quantities and species.
among Danaans, and saying that Apollo has plagued us [110] because I would not take a ransom for this girl, the daughter of Chryses. I have set my heart on keeping her in my own house, for I love her better even than my own wife Clytemnestra, whose peer she is alike in form and feature, in understanding and accomplishments. Still I will give her up if I must, for I would have the people live, not die; but you must find me a prize instead, or I alone among the Argives shall be without one. This is not well; for you behold, all of you, that my prize is to go elsewhere.”

[121] And Achilles answered, “Most noble son of Atreus, covetous beyond all mankind, how shall the Achaeans find you another prize? We have no common store from which to take one. Those we took from the cities have been awarded; we cannot disallow the awards that have been made already. Give this girl, therefore, to the god, and if ever Zeus grants us to sack the city of Troy we will requite you three and fourfold.”

[130] Then Agamemnon said, “Achilles, valiant though you be, you shall not outwit me. You shall not overreach and you shall not persuade me. Are you to keep your own prize, while I sit tamely under my loss and give up the girl at your bidding? Let the Achaeans find me a prize in fair exchange to my liking, or I will come and take your own, or that of Ajax or of Odysseus; and he to whomsoever I may come shall rue my coming. But of this we will take thought hereafter; for the present, let us draw a ship into the sea, and find a crew for her expressly; let us put a hecatomb on board, and let us send Chryseis also; further, let some chief man among us be in command, either Ajax, or Idomeneus, or Odysseus, or yourself, son of Peleus, mighty warrior that you are, that we may offer sacrifice and appease the anger of the god.”

[148] Achilles scowled at him and answered, “You are steeped in insolence and lust of gain. With what heart can any of the Achaeans do your bidding, either on foray or in open fighting? I came not warring here for any ill the Trojans had done me. I have no quarrel with them. They have not raided my cattle nor my horses, nor cut down my harvests on the rich plains of Phthiotis; for between me and them there is a great space, both mountain and sounding sea. We have followed you, Sir Insolence! For your pleasure, not ours- to gain satisfaction from the Trojans for your shameless self and for Menelaus. You forget this, and threaten to rob me of the prize for which I have toiled, and which the sons of the Achaeans have given me. Never when the Achaeans sack any rich city of the Trojans do I receive so good a prize as you do, though it is my hands that do the better part of the fighting. When the sharing comes, your share is far the largest, and I must go back to my ships, take what I can get and be thankful, when my labour of
fighting is done. Now, therefore, I shall go back to Phthiotis; it will be much better for me to return home with my ships, for I will not stay here dishonoured to gather gold and substance for you.”

[172] And Agamemnon, leader of men, answered, “Fly if you will, I shall make you no prayers to stay you. I have others here who will do me honour, and above all Zeus, the lord of counsel. There is no king here so hateful to me as you are, for you are ever quarrelsome and ill affected. What though you be brave? Was it not heaven that made you so? Go home, then, with your ships and comrades to lord it over the Myrmidons. I care neither for you nor for your anger; and thus will I do: since Phoebus Apollo is taking Chryseis from me, I shall send her with my ship and my followers, but I shall come to your tent and take your own prize Briseis, that you may learn how much stronger I am than you are, and that another may fear to set himself up as equal or comparable with me.”

[188] The son of Peleus was furious, and his heart within his shaggy breast was divided whether to draw his sword, push the others aside, and kill the son of Atreus, or to restrain himself and check his anger. While he was thus in two minds, and was drawing his mighty sword from its scabbard, Athena came down from heaven (for Hera had sent her in the love she bore to them both), and seized the son of Peleus by his yellow hair, visible to him alone, for of the others no man could see her. Achilles turned in amaze, and by the fire that flashed from her eyes at once knew that she was Athena. “Why are you here,” said he, “daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus? To see the pride of Agamemnon, son of Atreus? Let me tell you- and it shall surely be- he shall pay for this insolence with his life.”

[205] And Athena said, “I come from heaven, if you will hear me, to bid you stay your anger. Hera has sent me, who cares for both of you alike. Cease, then, this brawling, and do not draw your sword; rail at him if you will, and your railing will not be vain, for I tell you- and it shall surely be- that you shall hereafter receive gifts three times as splendid by reason of this present insult. Hold, therefore, and obey.”

[215] “Goddess,” answered Achilles, “however angry a man may be, he must do as you two command him. This will be best, for the gods ever hear the prayers of him who has obeyed them.”
[219] He stayed his hand on the silver hilt of his sword, and thrust it back into the scabbard as Athena bade him. Then she went back to Olympus among the other gods, and to the house of aegis-bearing Zeus.

[223] But the son of Peleus again began railing at the son of Atreus, for he was still in a rage. “Wine-bibber,” he cried, “with the face of a dog and the heart of a deer, you never dare to go out with the host in fight, nor yet with our chosen men in ambuscade. You shun this as you do death itself. You had rather go round and rob his prizes from any man who contradicts you. You devour your people, for you are king over a feeble folk; otherwise, son of Atreus, henceforward you would insult no man. Therefore I say, and swear it with a great oath- nay, by this my sceptre which shalt sprout neither leaf nor shoot, nor bud anew from the day on which it left its parent stem upon the mountains- for the axe stripped it of leaf and bark, and now the sons of the Achaean bear it as judges and guardians of the decrees of heaven- so surely and solemnly do I swear that hereafter they shall look fondly for Achilles and shall not find him. In the day of your distress, when your men fall dying by the murderous hand of Hector,¹ you shall not know how to help them, and shall rend your heart with rage for the hour when you offered insult to the bravest of the Achaean.

[245] With this the son of Peleus dashed his gold-bestudded sceptre on the ground and took his seat, while the son of Atreus was beginning fiercely from his place upon the other side. Then uprose smooth-tongued Nestor, the facile speaker of the Pylians, and the words fell from his lips sweeter than honey. Two generations of men born and bred in Pylos had passed away under his rule, and he was now reigning over the third. With all sincerity and goodwill, therefore, he addressed them thus:

[224] “Of a truth,” he said, “a great sorrow has befallen the Achaean land. Surely Priam with his sons would rejoice, and the Trojans be glad at heart if they could hear this quarrel between you two, who are so excellent in fight and counsel. I am older than either of you; therefore be guided by me. Moreover I have been the familiar friend of men even greater than you are, and they did not disregard my counsels. Never again can I behold such men as Pirithous and Dryas shepherd of his people, or as Caeneus, Exadius, godlike Polyphemus, [265] and Theseus son of Aegeus, peer of the immortals. These were the mightiest men ever born upon this earth: mightiest were they, and when they fought the fiercest tribes of mountain savages they utterly

¹ Hector, the first son of Priam, is the heir apparent or Troy and the greatest of the Trojan warriors.
Iliad - 7

overthrew them. I came from distant Pylos, and went about among them, for they would have me come, and I fought as it was in me to do. Not a man now living could withstand them, but they heard my words, and were persuaded by them. So be it also with yourselves, for this is the more excellent way. [275] Therefore, Agamemnon, though you be strong, take not this girl away, for the sons of the Achaeans have already given her to Achilles; and you, Achilles, strive not further with the king, for no man who by the grace of Zeus wields a sceptre has like honour with Agamemnon. You are strong, and have a goddess for your mother;¹ but Agamemnon is stronger than you, for he has more people under him. Son of Atreus, check your anger, I implore you; end this quarrel with Achilles, who in the day of battle is a tower of strength to the Achaeans.”

[285] And Agamemnon answered, “Sir, all that you have said is true, but this fellow must needs become our lord and master: he must be lord of all, king of all, and captain of all, and this shall hardly be. Granted that the gods have made him a great warrior, have they also given him the right to speak with railing?”

[292] Achilles interrupted him. “I should be a mean coward,” he cried, “were I to give in to you in all things. Order other people about, not me, for I shall obey no longer. Furthermore I say-and lay my saying to your heart- I shall fight neither you nor any man about this girl, for those that take were those also that gave. But of all else that is at my ship you shall carry away nothing by force. Try, that others may see; if you do, my spear shall be reddened with your blood.”

The Exchange of the Captives: 304 - 488

[304] After they had quarrelled angrily, they rose, and broke up the assembly at the ships of the Achaeans. The son of Peleus went back to his tents and ships with the son of Menoetius² and his company, while Agamemnon drew a vessel into the water and chose a crew of twenty oarsmen.³ He escorted Chryseis on board and sent moreover a hecatomb for the god. And Odysseus went as captain.

¹ Thetis is the daughter of Nereus. She and her sisters, the Nereids, are sea nymphs. Thetis married Peleus and became the mother of Achilles.
² Patroclus, Achilles’ closest friend who had been raised with Achilles in the house of Peleus.
³ Ancient ships did not sit at anchor as modern ships do. Instead, they pulled the ship up onto the beach. With only twenty oarsmen, this would have been a transport ship rather than a warship.
[312] These, then, went on board and sailed their ways over the sea. But the son of Atreus bade the people purify themselves; so they purified themselves and cast their filth into the sea.¹ Then they offered *hecatombs* of bulls and goats without blemish on the sea-shore, and the smoke with the savour of their sacrifice rose curling up towards heaven.

[318] Thus did they busy themselves throughout the host. But Agamemnon did not forget the threat that he had made Achilles, and called his trusty messengers and squires Talthybius and Eurybates. “Go,” said he, “to the tent of Achilles, son of Peleus; take Briseis by the hand and bring her here; if he will not give her I shall come with others and take her- which will press him harder.”

[326] He charged them straightly further and dismissed them, whereon they went their way sorrowfully by the seaside, till they came to the tents and ships of the Myrmidons.² They found Achilles sitting by his tent and his ships, and ill-pleased he was when he beheld them. They stood fearfully and reverently before him, and never a word did they speak, but he knew them and said, “Welcome, heralds, messengers of gods and men; draw near; my quarrel is not with you but with Agamemnon who has sent you for the girl Briseis. Therefore, Patroclus, bring her and give her to them, but let them be witnesses by the blessed gods, by mortal men, and by the fierceness of Agamemnon's anger, that if ever again there be need of me to save the people from ruin, they shall seek and they shall not find. Agamemnon is mad with rage and knows not how to look before and after that the Achaeans may fight by their ships in safety.”

[345] Patroclus did as his dear comrade had bidden him. He brought Briseis from the tent and gave her over to the heralds, who took her with them to the ships of the Achaeans - and the woman was loth to go. Then Achilles went all alone by the side of the hoar sea, weeping and looking out upon the boundless waste of waters. He raised his hands in prayer to his immortal mother,³ “Mother,” he cried, “you bore me doomed to live but for a little season;⁴ surely Zeus,

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¹ This purification was a symbolic washing away of the sin of Agamemnon, which had polluted the entire camp. The water used for washing was then thrown into the sea.
² The Myrmidons are the people of Aegina. Peleus, son of Aeacus, king of Aegina, migrated to Phthiotis and took some of the Myrmidons with him. http://ualbertaclassics.wordpress.com/2014/06/19/visiting-the-myrmidons-in-pharsala/
³ Zeus and Hera ordered Thetis to marry Peleus when they learned, from Themis, the prophecy that Thetis would have a son who would be stronger than his father. In order that she not marry a god, and thereby threaten the balance of power in Olympus, she was forced to marry a mortal.
⁴ Thetis had warned Achilles that he had two fates: If he chose to stay at home he was fated to have a happy life with a loving wife and healthy children and to die at home of old age, never to be remembered by anyone. But if he chose to go to Troy he would die there and his name would be remembered for all time. Achilles chose fame.
who thunders from Olympus, might have made that little glorious. It is not so. Agamemnon, son of Atreus, has done me dishonour, and has robbed me of my prize by force.”

[357] As he spoke he wept aloud, and his mother heard him where she was sitting in the depths of the sea hard by the old man her father. ¹ Forthwith she rose as it were a grey mist out of the waves, sat down before him as he stood weeping, caressed him with her hand, and said, “My son, why are you weeping? What is it that grieves you? Keep it not from me, but tell me, that we may know it together.”

[364] Achilles drew a deep sigh and said, “You know it; why tell you what you know well already? We went to Thebe the strong city of Eetion,² sacked it, and brought hither the spoil. The sons of the Achaeans shared it duly among themselves, and chose lovely Chryseis as the prize of Agamemnon; but Chryses, priest of Apollo, came to the ships of the Achaeans to free his daughter, and brought with him a great ransom: moreover he bore in his hand the sceptre of Apollo, wreathed with a suppliant's wreath, and he besought the Achaeans, but most of all the two sons of Atreus who were their chiefs.

[376] “On this the rest of the Achaeans with one voice were for respecting the priest and taking the ransom that he offered; but not so Agamemnon, who spoke fiercely to him and sent him roughly away. So he went back in anger, and Apollo, who loved him dearly, heard his prayer. Then the god sent a deadly dart upon the Argives, and the people died thick on one another, for the arrows went everwhere among the wide host of the Achaeans. At last a seer in the fulness of his knowledge declared to us the oracles of Apollo, and I was myself first to say that we should appease him. Whereon the son of Atreus rose in anger, and threatened that which he has since done. The Achaeans are now taking the girl in a ship to Chryse, ³ and sending gifts of sacrifice to the god; but the heralds have just taken from my tent the daughter of Briseus, whom the Achaeans had awarded to myself.

[393] “Help your brave son, therefore, if you are able. Go to Olympus, and if you have ever done him service in word or deed, implore the aid of Zeus. Ofttimes in my father's house have I

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¹ Nereus, the god of the Aegean Sea.
² Eetion was the king of Cilicia and an ally of Troy. Their alliance was so close that his daughter Andromache was married to Hector.
³ There were several ancient locations of this name, one of which is very close to Troy and is the source of much confusion over the home of Chryses and Chryseis. But the context is clear enough here and the reference must be to a Chryse in Cilicia.
heard you glory in that you alone of the immortals saved the son of Cronus from ruin, when the others, with Hera, Poseidon, and Pallas Athena would have put him in bonds. It was you, goddess, who delivered him by calling to Olympus the hundred-handed monster whom gods call Briareus, but men Aegaeon, for he is stronger even than his father; when therefore he took his seat all-glorious beside the son of Cronus, the other gods were afraid, and did not bind him. Go, then, to him, remind him of all this, clasp his knees, and bid him give succour to the Trojans. Let the Achaeans be hemmed in at the sterns of their ships, and perish on the sea-shore, that they may reap what joy they may of their king, and that Agamemnon may rue his blindness in offering insult to the foremost of the Achaeans.”

[413] Thetis wept and answered, “My son, woe is me that I should have borne or suckled you. Would indeed that you had lived your span free from all sorrow at your ships, for it is all too brief; alas, that you should be at once short of life and long of sorrow above your peers: woe, therefore, was the hour in which I bore you; nevertheless I will go to the snowy heights of Olympus, and tell this tale to Zeus, if he will hear our prayer: meanwhile stay where you are with your ships, nurse your anger against the Achaeans, and hold aloof from fight. For Zeus went yesterday to Oceanus, to a feast among the Ethiopians, and the other gods went with him. He will return to Olympus twelve days hence; I will then go to his mansion paved with bronze and will beseech him; nor do I doubt that I shall be able to persuade him.”

[428] On this she left him, still furious at the loss of her that had been taken from him. Meanwhile Odysseus reached Chryse with the hecatomb. When they had come inside the harbour they furled the sails and laid them in the ship's hold; they slackened the forestays, lowered the mast into its place, and rowed the ship to the place where they would have her lie; there they cast out their mooring-stones and made fast the hawsers. They then got out upon the sea-shore and landed the hecatomb for Apollo; Chryseis also left the ship, and Odysseus led her to the altar to deliver her into the hands of her father. “Chryses,” said he, “King Agamemnon has sent me to bring you back your child, and to offer sacrifice to Apollo on behalf of the Danaans, that we may propitiate the god, who has now brought sorrow upon the Argives.”

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1 Zeus is the son of Cronus, Time.
2 Aegaeon is one of the sons of Uranus and Gaea (Heaven and Earth), the hundred-armed giants who assisted Zeus in his war against the Titans (Hes. Theog. 145ff; 617ff). When the other gods of Olympus attempted a revolt against Zeus, Thetis summoned Aegaeon to help Zeus once more.
3 Counted from the day on which she is speaking (Seymour) so the gods were in Ethiopia for thirteen days.
[446] So saying he gave the girl over to her father, who received her gladly, and they ranged the holy *hecatomb* all orderly round the altar of the god. They washed their hands and took up the barley-meal to sprinkle over the victims, while Chryses lifted up his hands and prayed aloud on their behalf. “Hear me,” he cried, “O god of the silver bow, who protects Chryse and holy Cilla, and rules Tenedos with your might. Even as you heard me before when I prayed, and did press hardly upon the Achaeans, so hear me yet again, and stay this fearful pestilence from the Danaans.”

[457] Thus did he pray, and Apollo heard his prayer. When they had done praying and sprinkling the barley-meal, they drew back the heads of the victims and killed and flayed them. They cut out the thigh-bones, wrapped them round in two layers of fat, set some pieces of raw meat on the top of them, and then Chryses laid them on the wood fire and poured wine over them, while the young men stood near him with five-pronged spits in their hands.¹ When the thigh-bones were burned and they had tasted the inward meats, they cut the rest up small, put the pieces upon the spits, roasted them till they were done, and drew them off: then, when they had finished their work and the feast was ready, they ate it, and every man had his full share, so that all were satisfied. As soon as they had had enough to eat and drink, pages filled the mixing-bowl with wine and water and handed it round, after giving every man his drink-offering.

[472] Thus all day long the young men worshipped the god with song, hymning him and chanting the joyous paean, and the god took pleasure in their voices; but when the sun went down, and it came on dark, they laid themselves down to sleep by the stern cables of the ship, and when the child of morning, rosy-fingered Dawn, appeared they again set sail for the host of the Achaeans. Apollo sent them a fair wind, so they raised their mast and hoisted their white sails aloft. As the sail bellied with the wind the ship flew through the deep blue water, and the foam hissed against her bows as she sped onward. When they reached the wide-stretching host of the Achaeans, they drew the vessel ashore, high and dry upon the sands, set her strong props beneath her, and went their ways to their own tents and ships.

¹ For the mythical origins of this procedure see Hesiod, *Theogony* 535-60.
Thetis Beseeches Zeus: 488 - 611

[488] But Achilles, son of Peleus, stayed at his ships and nursed his anger. He went not to the honourable assembly, and sallied not forth to fight, but gnawed at his own heart, pining for battle and the war-cry.

[493] Now after twelve days the immortal gods came back in a body to Olympus,¹ and Zeus led the way. Thetis was not unmindful of the charge her son had laid upon her, so she rose from under the sea and went through great heaven with early morning to Olympus, where she found the mighty son of Cronus sitting all alone upon its topmost ridges. She sat herself down before him, and with her left hand seized his knees, while with her right she caught him under the chin, and besought him, saying:

[503] “Father Zeus,² if I ever did you service in word or deed among the immortals, hear my prayer, and do honour to my son, whose life is to be cut short so early. King Agamemnon has dishonoured him by taking his prize and keeping her. Honour him then yourself, Olympian lord of counsel, and grant victory to the Trojans, till the Achaeans give my son his due and load him with riches in requital.”

[511] Zeus sat for a while silent, and without a word, but Thetis still kept firm hold of his knees, and besought him a second time. “Incline your head,” said she, “and promise me surely, or else deny me- for you have nothing to fear- that I may learn how greatly you disdain me.”

[517] At this Zeus was much troubled and answered, “I shall have trouble if you set me quarrelling with Hera, for she will provoke me with her taunting speeches; even now she is always railing at me before the other gods and accusing me of giving aid to the Trojans. Go back now, lest she should find out. I will consider the matter, and will bring it about as you wish. See, I incline my head that you believe me. This is the most solemn oath that I can give to any god. I never recall my word, or deceive, or fail to do what I say, when I have nodded my head.”

[528] As he spoke the son of Cronus bowed his dark brows, and the ambrosial locks swayed on his immortal head, till vast Olympus reeled.

[531] When the pair had thus laid their plans, they parted- Zeus to his house, while the goddess quitted the splendour of Olympus, and plunged into the depths of the sea. The gods rose from their seats, before the coming of their sire. Not one of them dared to remain sitting, but all

¹ That is, twelve days after the quarrel and the plea of Achilles to Thetis. See above i.425.
² Zdeu Pater, in Greek. Say it fast enough and you can see how it became Jupiter in Latin.
stood up as he came among them.\(^1\) There, then, he took his seat.\(^2\) But Hera, when she saw him, knew that he and the old merman's daughter, silver-footed Thetis, had been hatching mischief, so she at once began to upbraid him. “Trickster,” she cried, “which of the gods have you been taking into your counsels now? You are always settling matters in secret behind my back, and have never yet told me, if you could help it, one word of your intentions.”\(^3\)

[544] “Hera,” replied the sire of gods and men, “you must not expect to be informed of all my counsels. You are my wife, but you would find it hard to understand them. When it is proper for you to hear, there is no one, god or man, who will be told sooner, but when I mean to keep a matter to myself, you must not pry nor ask questions.”

[551] “Dread son of Cronus,” answered Hera, “what are you talking about? I? Pry and ask questions? Never. I let you have your own way in everything. Still, I have a strong misgiving that the old man of the sea’s daughter Thetis has been talking you over, for she was with you and had hold of your knees this self-same morning. I believe, therefore, that you have been promising her to give glory to Achilles, and to kill many people at the ships of the Achaeans.”\(^4\)

[560] And Zeus the gatherer of clouds replied: “I can do nothing but you suspect me and find it out. You will take nothing by it, for I shall only dislike you the more, and it will go harder with you. Granted that it is as you say; I mean to have it so; sit down and hold your tongue as I bid you for if I once begin to lay my hands about you, though all heaven were on your side it would profit you nothing.”

[568] On this Hera was frightened, so she curbed her stubborn will and sat down in silence. But the heavenly beings were disquieted throughout the house of Zeus, till the cunning workman Hephaestus began to try and pacify his mother Hera. “It will be intolerable,” said he, “if you two fall to wrangling and setting heaven in an uproar about a pack of mortals. If such ill counsels are to prevail, we shall have no pleasure at our banquet. Let me then advise my mother- and she must herself know that it will be better- to make friends with my dear father Zeus, lest he again scold her and disturb our feast. If the Olympian Thunderer wants to hurl us all from our seats, he

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\(^1\) Three thousand years later it is still custom for people to rise as a dignitary or VIP enters the room.

\(^2\) Each god had his or her own dwelling on Olympus and their own seat in the Great Hall where they met and dined together.

\(^3\) This is typical of the relationship between Zeus and Hera. They were constantly at odds, usually due to Zeus’ many affairs.

\(^4\) Hera was on the side of the Greeks because Paris, prince of Troy, had chosen Aphrodite over Hera and Athena as the most beautiful of the goddesses.
can do so, for he is far the strongest, so give him fair words, and he will then soon be in a good humour with us.”

[584] As he spoke, he took a double cup of nectar, and placed it in his mother's hand. “Cheer up, my dear mother,” said he, “and make the best of it. I love you dearly, and should be very sorry to see you get a thrashing; however grieved I might be, I could not help for there is no standing against Zeus. Once before when I was trying to help you, he caught me by the foot and flung me from the heavenly threshold. All day long from morn till eve, was I falling, till at sunset I came to ground in the island of Lemnos, and there I lay, with very little life left in me, till the Sintians came and tended me.”

[595] Hera smiled at this, and as she smiled she took the cup from her son's hands. Then Hephaestus drew sweet nectar from the mixing-bowl, and served it round among the gods, going from left to right; and the blessed gods laughed out a loud applause as they saw him bustling about the heavenly mansion.

[600] Thus through the livelong day to the going down of the sun they feasted, and every one had his full share, so that all were satisfied. Apollo struck his lyre, and the Muses lifted up their sweet voices, calling and answering one another. But when the sun's glorious light had faded, they went home to bed, each in his own abode, which lame Hephaestus with his consummate skill had fashioned for them. So Zeus, the Olympian Lord of Thunder, hied him to the bed in which he always slept; and when he had got on to it he went to sleep, with Hera of the golden throne by his side.

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1 It seems that Hephaestus had two falls from heaven. He was first thrown from heaven to the Island of Lemnos by Hera because he was born with a deformed leg. On that occasion he was rescued by Thetis (Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo 311-30; Iliad xviii.390-410). The details of his intervention in a dispute between Zeus and Hera, because of which Zeus threw him from heaven again, are unclear and not well attested.
Iliad - 15

Book Two

Zeus Sends a Lie to Agamemnon: 1 - 83

Now the other gods and the armed warriors on the plain slept soundly, but Zeus was wakeful, for he was thinking how to do honour to Achilles, and destroy many people at the ships of the Achaeans. In the end he deemed it would be best to send a lying dream to King Agamemnon; so he called one to him and said to it, “Lying Dream, go to the ships of the Achaeans, into the tent of Agamemnon, and say to him word to word as I now bid you. Tell him to get the long-haired Achaeans instantly under arms, for he shall take Troy. There are no longer divided counsels among the gods; Hera has brought them to her own mind, and woe betides the Trojans.”

[16] The dream went when it had heard its message, and soon reached the ships of the Achaeans. It sought Agamemnon son of Atreus and found him in his tent, wrapped in a profound slumber. It hovered over his head in the likeness of Nestor, son of Neleus, whom Agamemnon honoured above all his councillors, and said:

[22] “You are sleeping, son of Atreus; one who has the welfare of his host and so much other care upon his shoulders should not sleep. Hear me at once, for I come as a messenger from Zeus, who, though he be not near, yet takes thought for you and pities you. He bids you get the Achaeans instantly under arms, for you shall take Troy. There are no longer divided counsels among the gods; Hera has brought them over to her own mind, and woe betides the Trojans at the hands of Zeus. Remember this, and when you wake see that it does not escape you.”

[35] The dream then left him, and he thought of things that were surely not to be accomplished. He thought that on that same day he was to take the city of Priam, but he little knew what was in the mind of Zeus, who had many another hard-fought fight in store for Danaans and Trojans. Then presently he woke, with the divine message still ringing in his ears; so he sat upright, and put on his soft shirt so fair and new, and over this his heavy cloak. He bound his sandals on to his comely feet, and slung his silver-studded sword about his shoulders; then he took the imperishable staff of his father, and sallied forth to the ships of the Achaeans.

[48] The goddess Dawn now wended her way to vast Olympus that she might herald day to Zeus and to the other immortals, and Agamemnon sent the criers round to call the people in assembly; so they called them and the people gathered thereon. But first he summoned a meeting
of the elders at the ship of Nestor king of Pylos, and when they were assembled he laid a cunning counsel before them.

[56] “My friends,” said he, “I have had a dream from heaven in the dead of night, and its face and figure resembled none but Nestor’s. It hovered over my head and said, ‘You are sleeping, son of Atreus; one who has the welfare of his host and so much other care upon his shoulders should dock his sleep. Hear me at once, for I am a messenger from Zeus, who, though he be not near, yet takes thought for you and pities you. He bids you get the Achaeans instantly under arms, for you shall take Troy. There are no longer divided counsels among the gods; Hera has brought them over to her own mind, and woe betides the Trojans at the hands of Zeus. Remember this.’ The dream then vanished and I awoke. Let us now, therefore, arm the sons of the Achaeans. But it will be well that I should first sound them, and to this end I will tell them to fly with their ships; but do you others go about among the host and prevent their doing so.”

[76] He then sat down, and Nestor the prince of Pylos with all sincerity and goodwill addressed them thus: “My friends,” said he, “princes and councillors of the Argives, if any other man of the Achaeans had told us of this dream we should have declared it false, and would have had nothing to do with it. But he who has seen it is the foremost man among us; we must therefore set about getting the people under arms.”

The Assembly of the Army: 84 - 393.

[84] With this he led the way from the assembly, and the other sceptred kings rose with him in obedience to the word of Agamemnon; but the people pressed forward to hear. They swarmed like bees that sally from some hollow cave and flit in countless throng among the spring flowers, bunched in knots and clusters; even so did the mighty multitude pour from ships and tents to the assembly, and range themselves upon the wide-watered shore, while among them ran Wildfire Rumour, messenger of Zeus, urging them ever to the fore. Thus they gathered in a pell-mell of mad confusion, and the earth groaned under the tramp of men as the people sought their places. Nine heralds went crying about among them to stay their tumult and bid them listen to the kings, till at last they were got into their several places and ceased their clamour.

[100] Then King Agamemnon rose, holding his sceptre. This was the work of Hephaestus, who gave it to Zeus the son of Cronus. Zeus gave it to Hermes, slayer of Argus, guide and guardian. Hermes gave it to Pelops, the mighty charioteer, and Pelops to Atreus, shepherd of his
Atreus, when he died, left it to Thyestes, rich in flocks, and Thyestes in his turn left it to be borne by Agamemnon, that he might be lord of all Argos and of the isles. Leaning, then, on his sceptre, he addressed the Argives.

[110] “My friends,” he said, “heroes, servants of Ares, the hand of heaven has been laid heavily upon me. Cruel Zeus gave me his solemn promise that I should sack the city of Priam before returning, but he has played me false, and is now bidding me go ingloriously back to Argos with the loss of much people. Such is the will of Zeus, who has laid many a proud city in the dust, as he will yet lay others, for his power is above all. It will be a sorry tale hereafter that an Achaean host, at once so great and valiant, battled in vain against men fewer in number than themselves; but as yet the end is not in sight. Think that the Achaeans and Trojans have sworn to a solemn covenant, and that they have each been numbered— the Trojans by the roll of their householders, and we by companies of ten; think further that each of our companies desired to have a Trojan householder to pour out their wine; we are so greatly more in number that full many a company would have to go without its cup-bearer. But they have in the town allies from other places, and it is these that hinder me from being able to sack the rich city of Ilium. Nine of Zeus years are gone; the timbers of our ships have rotted; their tackling is sound no longer. Our wives and little ones at home look anxiously for our coming, but the work that we came hither to do has not been done. Now, therefore, let us all do as I say: let us sail back to our own land, for we shall not take Troy.”

[142] With these words he moved the hearts of the multitude, so many of them as knew not the cunning counsel of Agamemnon. They surged to and fro like the waves of the Icarian Sea, when the east and south winds break from heaven's clouds to lash them; or as when the west wind sweeps over a field of corn and the ears bow beneath the blast, even so were they swayed as they flew with loud cries towards the ships, and the dust from under their feet rose heavenward. They cheered each other on to draw the ships into the sea; they cleared the channels in front of them; they began taking away the stays from underneath them, and the welkin rang with their glad cries, so eager were they to return.

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1 Pelops was the son of Tantalus, king of Phrygia. He migrated to Greece and married Hippodamia, daughter of the king of Pisa (later Elis). The southern part of the Greek peninsula is called the Peloponessus, after Pelops. His sons, Atreus and Thyestes, were embroiled in a bitter rivalry.
Then surely the Argives would have returned after a fashion that was not fated. But Hera said to Athena, “Alas, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, unweariable, shall the Argives fly home to their own land over the broad sea, and leave Priam and the Trojans the glory of still keeping Helen, for whose sake so many of the Achaeans have died at Troy, far from their homes? Go about at once among the host, and speak fairly to them, man by man, that they draw not their ships into the sea.”

Athena was not slack to do her bidding. Down she darted from the topmost summits of Olympus, and in a moment she was at the ships of the Achaeans. There she found Odysseus, peer of Zeus in counsel, standing alone. He had not as yet laid a hand upon his ship, for he was grieved and sorry; so she went close up to him and said, “Odysseus, noble son of Laertes, are you going to fling yourselves into your ships and be off home to your own land in this way? Will you leave Priam and the Trojans the glory of still keeping Helen, for whose sake so many of the Achaeans have died at Troy, far from their homes? Go about at once among the host, and speak fairly to them, man by man, that they draw not their ships into the sea.”

Odysseus knew the voice as that of the goddess: he flung his cloak from him and set off to run. His servant Eurybates, a man of Ithaca, who waited on him, took charge of the cloak, whereon Odysseus went straight up to Agamemnon and received from him his ancestral, imperishable staff. With this he went about among the ships of the Achaeans.

Whenever he met a king or chieftain, he stood by him and spoke him fairly. “Sir,” said he, “this flight is cowardly and unworthy. Stand to your post, and bid your people also keep their places. You do not yet know the full mind of Agamemnon; he was sounding us, and ere long will visit the Achaeans with his displeasure. We were not all of us at the council to hear what he then said; see to it lest he be angry and do us a mischief; for the pride of kings is great, and the hand of Zeus is with them.”

But when he came across any common man who was making a noise, he struck him with his staff and rebuked him, saying, “Mister, hold your peace, and listen to better men than yourself. You are a coward and no soldier; you are nobody either in fight or council; we cannot all be kings; it is not well that there should be many masters; one man must be supreme, one king to whom the son of scheming Cronus has given the sceptre of sovereignty over you all.”
Thus masterfully did he go about among the host, and the people hurried back to the
council from their tents and ships with a sound as the thunder of surf when it comes crashing
down upon the shore, and all the sea is in an uproar.

The rest now took their seats and kept to their own several places, but Thersites still
went on wagging his unbridled tongue; a man of many words, and those unseemly; a monger of
sedition, a railer against all who were in authority, who cared not what he said, so that he might
set the Achaeans in a laugh. He was the ugliest man of all those that came before Troy; bandy-
legged, lame of one foot, with his two shoulders rounded and hunched over his chest. His head
ran up to a point, but there was little hair on the top of it. Achilles and Odysseus hated him worst
of all, for it was with them that he was most wont to wrangle; now, however, with a shrill
squeaky voice he began heaping his abuse on Agamemnon. The Achaeans were angry and
disgusted, yet none the less he kept on brawling and bawling at the son of Atreus.

"Agamemnon," he cried, "what ails you now, and what more do you want? Your tents
are filled with bronze and with fair women, for whenever we take a town we give you the pick of
them. Would you have yet more gold, which some Trojan is to give you as a ransom for his son,
when I or another Achaean has taken him prisoner? or is it some young girl to hide and lie with?
It is not well that you, the ruler of the Achaeans, should bring them into such misery. Weakling
cowards, women rather than men, let us sail home, and leave this fellow here at Troy to stew in
his own meeds of honour, and discover whether we were of any service to him or no. Achilles is
a much better man than he is, and see how he has treated him- robbing him of his prize and
keeping it himself. Achilles takes it meekly and shows no fight; if he did, son of Atreus, you
would never again insult him."

Thus railed Thersites, but Odysseus at once went up to him and rebuked him sternly.
"Check your glib tongue, Thersites," said be, "and babble not a word further. Chide not with
princes when you have none to back you. There is no viler creature come before Troy with the
sons of Atreus. Drop this chatter about kings, and neither revile them nor keep harping about
going home. We do not yet know how things are going to be, nor whether the Achaeans are to
return with good success or evil. How dare you gibe at Agamemnon because the Danaans have
awarded him so many prizes? I tell you, therefore- and it shall surely be- that if I again catch you
talking such nonsense, I will either forfeit my own head and be no more called father of
Telemachus, or I will take you, strip you stark naked, and whip you out of the assembly till you go blubbering back to the ships.”

[265] On this he beat him with his staff about the back and shoulders till he dropped and fell a-weeping. The golden sceptre raised a bloody weal on his back, so he sat down frightened and in pain, looking foolish as he wiped the tears from his eyes. The people were sorry for him, yet they laughed heartily, and one would turn to his neighbour saying, “Odysseus has done many a good thing ere now in fight and council, but he never did the Argives a better turn than when he stopped this fellow's mouth from prating further. He will give the kings no more of his insolence.”

[278] Thus said the people. Then Odysseus rose, sceptre in hand, and Athena in the likeness of a herald bade the people be still, that those who were far off might hear him and consider his council. He therefore with all sincerity and goodwill addressed them thus:

“King Agamemnon, the Achaeans are for making you a by-word among all mankind. They forget the promise they made you when they set out from Argos, that you should not return till you had sacked the town of Troy, and, like children or widowed women, they murmur and would set off homeward. True it is that they have had toil enough to be disheartened. A man chafes at having to stay away from his wife even for a single month, when he is on shipboard, at the mercy of wind and sea, but it is now nine long years that we have been kept here; I cannot, therefore, blame the Achaeans if they turn restive; still we shall be shamed if we go home empty after so long a stay. Therefore, my friends, be patient yet a little longer that we may learn whether the prophesying of Calchas were false or true.

[301] “All who have not since perished must remember as though it were yesterday or the day before, how the ships of the Achaeans were detained in Aulis when we were on our way hither to make war on Priam and the Trojans. We were ranged round about a fountain offering hecatombs to the gods upon their holy altars, and there was a fine plane-tree from beneath which there welled a stream of pure water. Then we saw a prodigy; for Zeus sent a fearful serpent out of the ground, with blood-red stains upon its back, and it darted from under the altar on to the plane-tree. Now there was a brood of young sparrows, quite small, upon the topmost bough, peeping out from under the leaves, eight in all, and their mother that hatched them made nine. The serpent ate the poor cheeping things, while the old bird flew about lamenting her little ones; but the serpent threw his coils about her and caught her by the wing as she was screaming. Then,
when he had eaten both the sparrow and her young, the god who had sent him made him become a sign; for the son of scheming Cronus turned him into stone, and we stood there wondering at that which had come to pass. Seeing, then, that such a fearful portent had broken in upon our hecatombs, Calchas forthwith declared to us the oracles of heaven. 'Why, Achaeans,' said he, 'are you thus speechless? Zeus has sent us this sign, long in coming, and long ere it be fulfilled, though its fame shall last for ever. As the serpent ate the eight fledglings and the sparrow that hatched them, which makes nine, so shall we fight nine years at Troy, but in the tenth shall take the town.' This was what he said, and now it is all coming true. Stay here, therefore, all of you, till we take the city of Priam.’

[333] On this the Argives raised a shout, till the ships rang again with the uproar. Nestor, knight of Gerene, then addressed them. “Shame on you,” he cried, “to stay talking here like children, when you should fight like men. Where are our covenants now, and where the oaths that we have taken? Shall our counsels be flung into the fire, with our drink-offerings and the right hands of fellowship wherein we have put our trust? We waste our time in words, and for all our talking here shall be no further forward. Stand, therefore, son of Atreus, by your own steadfast purpose; lead the Argives on to battle, and leave this handful of men to rot, who scheme, and scheme in vain, to get back to Argos ere they have learned whether Zeus be true or a liar. For the mighty son of Cronus surely promised that we should succeed, when we Argives set sail to bring death and destruction upon the Trojans. He showed us favourable signs by flashing his lightning on our right hands; therefore let none make haste to go till he has first lain with the wife of some Trojan, and avenged the toil and sorrow that he has suffered for the sake of Helen. Nevertheless, if any man is in such haste to be at home again, let him lay his hand to his ship that he may meet his doom in the sight of all. But, O king, consider and give ear to my counsel, for the word that I say may not be neglected lightly. Divide your men, Agamemnon, into their several tribes and clans, so that clans and tribes may stand by and help one another. If you do this, and if the Achaeans obey you, you will find out who, both chiefs and peoples, are brave, and who are cowards; for they will vie against the other. Thus you shall also learn whether it is through the counsel of heaven or the cowardice of man that you shall fail to take the town.’

[369] And Agamemnon answered, “Nestor, you have again outdone the sons of the Achaeans in counsel. Would, by Father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo, that I had among them ten more such councillors, for the city of King Priam would then soon fall beneath our hands, and we should
sack it. But the son of Cronus afflicts me with bootless wrangling and strife. Achilles and I are quarrelling about this girl, in which matter I was the first to offend; if we can be of one mind again, the Trojans will not stave off destruction for a day. Now, therefore, get your morning meal, that our hosts join in fight. Whet well your spears; see well to the ordering of your shields; give good feeds to your horses, and look your chariots carefully over, that we may do battle the livelong day; for we shall have no rest, not for a moment, till night falls to part us. The bands that bear your shields shall be wet with the sweat upon your shoulders, your hands shall weary upon your spears, your horses shall steam in front of your chariots, and if I see any man shirking the fight, or trying to keep out of it at the ships, there shall be no help for him, but he shall be a prey to dogs and vultures.”

**Agamemnon's Breakfast: 394 - 493.**

[394] Thus he spoke, and the Achaeans roared applause. As when the waves run high before the blast of the south wind and break on some lofty headland, dashing against it and buffeting it without ceasing, as the storms from every quarter drive them, even so did the Achaeans rise and hurry in all directions to their ships. There they lighted their fires at their tents and got the meal, offering sacrifice every man to one or other of the gods, and praying each one of them that he might live to come out of the fight.

[402] Agamemnon, king of men, sacrificed a fat five-year-old bull to the mighty son of Cronus, and invited the elders and the Achaean nobles of his army\(^1\). First he asked Nestor and King Idomeneus, then the two Ajaxes and the son of Tydeus, and sixthly Odysseus, peer of gods in counsel; but Menelaus came of his own accord, for he knew how busy his brother then was. They stood round the bull with the barley-meal in their hands, and Agamemnon prayed, saying, “Zeus, most glorious, supreme, that dwells in heaven, and rides upon the storm-cloud, grant that the sun may not go down, nor the night fall, till the palace of Priam is laid low, and its gates are consumed with fire. Grant that my sword may pierce the shirt of Hector about his heart, and that full many of his comrades may bite the dust as they fall dying round him.”

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\(^1\) The phrase *aristeas Panachaeon* (ἀριστῆας Παναχαιῶν) literally means 'the bravest of all the Achaeans.' However, the Greek concept of *aristeia* went far beyond the simple and literal meaning and forms the root of the English word *aristocrat*. In that sense, it means *the best*. My translation of the phrase to 'nobles' barely conveys the proper meaning, but Butler's "bravest" is too literal a translation.
Thus he prayed, but the son of Cronus would not fulfil his prayer. He accepted the sacrifice, yet none the less increased their toil continually. When they had done praying and sprinkling the barley-meal upon the victim, they drew back its head, killed it, and then flayed it. They cut out the thigh-bones, wrapped them round in two layers of fat, and set pieces of raw meat on the top of them. These they burned upon the split logs of firewood, but they spitted the inward meats, and held them in the flames to cook. When the thigh-bones were burned, and they had tasted the inward meats, they cut the rest up small, put the pieces upon spits, roasted them till they were done, and drew them off; then, when they had finished their work and the feast was ready, they ate it, and every man had his full share, so that all were satisfied.

As soon as they had had enough to eat and drink, Nestor, knight of Gerene, began to speak. “King Agamemnon,” said he, “let us not stay talking here, nor be slack in the work that heaven has put into our hands. Let the heralds summon the people to gather at their several ships; we will then go about among the host, that we may begin fighting at once.”

Thus did he speak, and Agamemnon heeded his words. He at once sent the criers round to call the people in assembly. So they called them, and the people gathered thereon. The chiefs about the son of Atreus chose their men and marshalled them, while Athena went among them holding her priceless aegis that knows neither age nor death. From it there waved a hundred tassels of pure gold, all deftly woven, and each one of them worth a hundred oxen. With this she darted furiously everywhere among the hosts of the Achaeans, urging them forward, and putting courage into the heart of each, so that he might fight and do battle without ceasing. Thus war became sweeter in their eyes even than returning home in their ships. As when some great forest fire is raging upon a mountain top and its light is seen afar, even so as they marched the gleam of their armour flashed up into the firmament of heaven.

They were like great flocks of geese, or cranes, or swans on the plain about the Asian waters of Cayster, that wing their way hither and thither, glorying in the pride of flight, and crying as they settle till the fen is alive with their screaming. Even thus did their tribes pour from ships and tents on to the plain of the Scamander, and the ground rang as brass under the feet of men and horses. They stood as thick upon the flower-bespangled field as leaves that bloom in summer.
[469] As countless swarms of flies buzz around a herdsman's homestead in the time of spring when the pails are drenched with milk, even so did the Achaeans swarm on to the plain to charge the Trojans and destroy them.

[474] The chiefs disposed their men this way and that before the fight began, drafting them out as easily as goatherds draft their flocks when they have got mixed while feeding; and among them went King Agamemnon, with a head and face like Zeus the lord of thunder, a waist like Ares, and a chest like that of Poseidon. As some great bull that lords it over the herds upon the plain, even so did Zeus make the son of Atreus stand peerless among the multitude of heroes.

[484] And now, O Muses, dwellers in the mansions of Olympus, tell me - for you are goddesses and are in all places so that you see all things, while we know nothing but by report - who were the chiefs and princes of the Danaans? As for the common soldiers, they were so that I could not name every single one of them though I had ten tongues, and though my voice failed not and my heart were of bronze within me, unless you, O Olympian Muses, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, were to recount them to me. Nevertheless, I will tell the captains of the ships and all the fleet together.

The Catalogue of the Ships: 494 - 785

[494] Peneleos, Leitus, Arcesilaus, Prothoenor, and Clonius were captains of the Boeotians. These were they that dwelt in Hyria and rocky Aulis, and who held Schoenus, Scolus, and the highlands of Eteonus, with Thespeia, Graia, and the fair city of Mycalessus. They also held Harma, Eilesium, and Erythrae; and they had Eleon, Hyle, and Peteon; Ocalea and the strong fortress of Medeon; Copae, Eutresis, and Thisbe the haunt of doves; Coronea, and the pastures of Haliartus; Plataea and Glisas; the fortress of Thebes the less; holy Onchestus with its famous grove of Poseidon; Arne rich in vineyards; Midea, sacred Nisa, and Anthedon upon the sea. From these there came fifty ships, and in each there were a hundred and twenty young men of the Boeotians.

[511] Ascalaphus and Ialmenus, sons of Ares, led the people that dwelt in Aspledon and Orchomenus the realm of Minyas. Astyoche a noble maiden bore them in the house of Actor son of Azeus; for she had gone with Ares secretly into an upper chamber, and he had lain with her. With these there came thirty ships.

[517] The Phoceans were led by Schedius and Epistrophus, sons of mighty Iphitus the son of Naubolus. These were they that held Cyparissus, rocky Pytho, holy Crisa, Daulis, and Panopeus;
they also that dwelt in Anemorea and Hyampolis, and about the waters of the river Cephissus, and Lilaea by the springs of the Cephissus; with their chieftains came forty ships, and they Areshalled the forces of the Phoceans, which were stationed next to the Boeotians, on their left.

[526] Ajax, the fleet son of Oileus, commanded the Locrians. He was not so great, nor nearly so great, as Ajax the son of Telamon. He was a little man, and his breastplate was made of linen, but in use of the spear he excelled all the Hellenes and the Achaeans. These dwelt in Cynus, Opous, Calliarus, Bessa, Scarpe, fair Augeae, Tarphe, and Thronium about the river Boagrius. With him there came forty ships of the Locrians who dwell beyond Euboea.

[536] The fierce Abantes held Euboea with its cities, Chalcis, Eretria, Histiaeia rich in vines, Cerinthus upon the sea, and the rock-perched town of Dium; with them were also the men of Carystus and Styra; Elephenor, a descendant of Ares was in command of these; he was son of Chalcodon, and chief over all the Abantes. With him they came, fleet of foot and wearing their hair long behind, brave warriors, who would ever strive to tear open the corslets of their foes with their long ashen spears. Of these there came fifty ships.

[546] And they that held the strong city of Athens, the people of great Erechtheus, who was born of the soil itself, but Zeus’s daughter, Athena, fostered him, and established him at Athens in her own rich sanctuary. There, year by year, the Athenian youths worship him with sacrifices of bulls and rams. These were commanded by Menestheus, son of Peteos. No man living could equal him in the Marshalling of chariots and foot soldiers. Nestor could alone rival him, for he was older. With him there came fifty ships.

[557] Ajax brought twelve ships from Salamis, and stationed them alongside those of the Athenians.

[559] The men of Argos, again, and those who held the walls of Tiryns, with Hermione, and Asine upon the gulf; Troezene, Eionae, and the vineyard lands of Epidaurus; the Achaean youths, moreover, who came from Aegina and Mases; these were led by Diomed of the loud battle-cry, and Sthenelus son of famed Capaneus. With them in command was Euryalus, son of king Mecisteus, son of Talaus; but Diomedes was chief over them all. With these there came eighty ships.

Buttler translated ὄζος Ἀρηος as 'of the race of Ares.' The term ὄζος literally refers to a branch, or twig; a literal translation would require some construction such as 'a branch on the family tree of Ares.'
[569] Those who held the strong city of Mycenae, rich Corinth and Cleonae; Orneae, Araethyrea, and Licyon, where Adrastus reigned of old; Hyperesia, high Gonoessa, and Pellene; Aegium and all the coast-land round about Helice; these sent a hundred ships under the command of King Agamemnon, son of Atreus. His force was far both finest and most numerous, and in their midst was the king himself, all glorious in his armour of gleaming bronze- foremost among the heroes, for he was the greatest king, and had most men under him.

[581] And those that dwelt in Lacedaemon, lying low among the hills, Pharis, Sparta, with Messe the haunt of doves; Bryseae, Augaeae, Amyclae, and Helos upon the sea; Laas, moreover, and Oetylus; these were led by Menelaus of the loud battle-cry, brother to Agamemnon, and of them there were sixty ships, drawn up apart from the others. Among them went Menelaus himself, strong in zeal, urging his men to fight; for he longed to avenge the toil and sorrow that he had suffered for the sake of Helen.

[591] The men of Pylos and Arene, and Thryum where is the ford of the river Alpheus; strong Aipy, Cyparisseis, and Amphigenea; Pteleum, Helos, and Dorium, where the Muses met Thamyris, and stilled his minstrelsy for ever. He was returning from Oechalia, where Eurytus lived and reigned, and boasted that he would surpass even the Muses, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, if they should sing against him; whereon they were angry, and maimed him. They robbed him of his divine power of song, and thenceforth he could strike the lyre no more. These were commanded by Nestor, knight of Gerene, and with him there came ninety ships.

[603] And those that held Arcadia, under the high mountain of Cyllene, near the tomb of Aepytus, where the people fight hand to hand; the men of Pheneus also, and Orchomenus rich in flocks; of Rhipae, Stratie, and bleak Enispe; of Tegea and fair Mantinea; of Stymphelus and Parrhasia; of these King Agapenor son of Ancaeus was commander, and they had sixty ships. Many Arcadians, good soldiers, came in each one of them, but Agamemnon, king of men, found them the ships in which to cross the sea, for they were not a people that occupied their business upon the waters.

[615] The men, moreover, of Buprasium and of Elis, so much of it as is enclosed between Hyrmine, Myrsinus upon the sea-shore, the rock Olene and Alesium. These had four leaders, and each of them had ten ships, with many Epeans on board. Their captains were Amphimachus and Thalpius- the one, son of Cteatus, and the other, of Eurytus- both of the race of Actor. The two others were Diores, son of Amarynces, and Polyxenus, son of King Agasthenes, son of Augeas.
[625] And those of Dulichium with the sacred Echinean islands, who dwelt beyond the sea off Elis; these were led by Meges, peer of Ares, and the son of valiant Phyleus, dear to Zeus, who quarrelled with his father, and went to settle in Dulichium. With him there came forty ships.

[631] Odysseus led the brave Cephallenians, who held Ithaca, Neritum with its forests, Crocylea, rugged Aegilips, Samos and Zacynthus, with the mainland also that was over against the islands. These were led by Odysseus, peer of Zeus in counsel, and with him there came twelve ships.

[638] Thoas, son of Andraemon, commanded the Aetolians, who dwelt in Pleuron, Olenus, Pylene, Chalcis by the sea, and rocky Calydon, for the great king Oeneus had now no sons living, and was himself dead, as was also golden-haired Meleager, who had been set over the Aetolians to be their king. And with Thoas there came forty ships.

[645] The famous spearsman Idomeneus led the Cretans, who held Cnossus, and the well-walled city of Gortys; Lyctus also, Miletus and Lycaustus that lies upon the chalk; the populous towns of Phaestus and Rhytium, with the other peoples that dwelt in the hundred cities of Crete. All these were led by Idomeneus, and by Meriones, peer of murderous Ares. And with these there came eighty ships.

[653] Tlepolemus, son of Heracles, a man both brave and large of stature, brought nine ships of lordly warriors from Rhodes. These dwelt in Rhodes which is divided among the three cities of Lindus, Ielus, and Cameirus, that lies upon the chalk. These were commanded by Tlepolemus, son of Heracles by Astyochea, whom he had carried off from Ephyra, on the river Selleis, after sacking many cities of valiant warriors. When Tlepolemus grew up, he killed his father's uncle Licymnus, who had been a famous warrior in his time, but was then grown old. On this he built himself a fleet, gathered a great following, and fled beyond the sea, for he was menaced by the other sons and grandsons of Heracles. After a voyage, during which he suffered great hardship, he came to Rhodes, where the people divided into three communities, according to their tribes, and were dearly loved by Zeus, the lord, of gods and men; wherefore the son of Cronus showered down great riches upon them.

[671] And Nireus brought three ships from Syme- Nireus, who was the handsomest man that came up under Ilium of all the Danaans after the son of Peleus- but he was a man of no substance, and had but a small following.
And those that held Nisyrus, Crapathus, and Casus, with Cos, the city of Eurypylus, and the Calydnian islands, these were commanded by Pheidippus and Antiphus, two sons of King Thessalus the son of Heracles. And with them there came thirty ships.

Those again who held Pelasgic Argos, Alos, Alope, and Trachis; and those of Phthia and Hellas the land of fair women, who were called Myrmidons, Hellenes, and Achaeans; these had fifty ships, over which Achilles was in command. But they now took no part in the war, inasmuch as there was no one to marshal them; for Achilles stayed by his ships, furious about the loss of the girl Briseis, whom he had taken from Lyrnessus at his own great peril, when he had sacked Lyrnessus and Thebe, and had overthrown Mynes and Epistrophus, sons of king Evenor, son of Selepus. For her sake Achilles was still grieving, but ere long he was again to join them.

And those that held Phylace and the flowery meadows of Pyrasus, sanctuary of Ceres; Iton, the mother of sheep; Antrum upon the sea, and Pteleum that lies upon the grass lands. Of these brave Protesilaus had been captain while he was yet alive, but he was now lying under the earth. He had left a wife behind him in Phylace to tear her cheeks in sorrow, and his house was only half finished, for he was slain by a Dardanian warrior while leaping foremost of the Achaeans upon the soil of Troy. Still, though his people mourned their chieftain, they were not without a leader, for Podarces, of the race of Ares, marshalled them; he was son of Iphiclus, rich in sheep, who was the son of Phylacus, and he was own brother to Protesilaus, only younger, Protesilaus being at once the elder and the more valiant. So the people were not without a leader, though they mourned him whom they had lost. With him there came forty ships.

And those that held Pherae by the Boebean lake, with Boebe, Glaphyrae, and the populous city of Iolcus, these with their eleven ships were led by Eumelus, son of Admetus, whom Alcestis bore to him, loveliest of the daughters of Pelias.

And those that held Methone and Thaumacia, with Meliboea and rugged Olizon, these were led by the skilful archer Philoctetes, and they had seven ships, each with fifty oarsmen all of them good archers; but Philoctetes was lying in great pain in the Island of Lemnos, where the sons of the Achaeans left him, for he had been bitten by a poisonous water snake. There he lay sick and sorry, and full soon did the Argives come to miss him. But his people, though they felt his loss were not leaderless, for Medon, the bastard son of Oileus by Rhene, set them in array.

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1 The Dardans are the Trojans. Dardanus was the son of Zeus and Electra and the first of the family line to settle in the area. His grandson, Tros, was king of the region and named it Troy after himself.
Those, again, of Tricca and the stony region of Ithome, and they that held Oechalia, the city of Oechalian Eurytus, these were commanded by the two sons of Aesculapius, skilled in the art of healing, Podalirius and Machaon. And with them there came thirty ships.

The men, moreover, of Ormenius, and by the fountain of Hypereia, with those that held Asterius, and the white crests of Titanus, these were led by Eurypylus, the son of Euaemon, and with them there came forty ships.

Those that held Argissa and Gyrtone, Orthe, Elone, and the white city of Oloosson, of these brave Polypoetes was leader. He was son of Pirithous, who was son of Zeus himself, for Hippodameia bore him to Pirithous on the day when he took his revenge on the shaggy mountain savages and drove them from Mt. Pelion to the Aithices. But Polypoetes was not sole in command, for with him was Leonteus, of the race of Ares, who was son of Coronus, the son of Caeneus. And with these there came forty ships.

Guneus brought two and twenty ships from Cyphus, and he was followed by the Enienes and the valiant Peraebi, who dwelt about wintry Dodona, and held the lands round the lovely river Titaresius, which sends its waters into the Peneus. They do not mingle with the silver eddies of the Peneus, but flow on the top of them like oil; for the Titaresius is a branch of dread Orcus and of the river Styx.

Of the Magnetes, Prothous son of Tenthredon was commander. They were they that dwelt about the river Peneus and Mt. Pelion. Prothous, fleet of foot, was their leader, and with him there came forty ships.

Such were the chiefs and princes of the Danaans.

Who, then, O Muse, was the foremost, whether man or horse, among those that followed after the sons of Atreus? Of the horses, those of the son of Pheres were by far the finest. They were driven by Eumelus, and were as fleet as birds. They were of the same age and colour, and perfectly matched in height. Apollo, of the silver bow, had bred them in Perea- both of them mares, and terrible as Ares in battle. Of the men, Ajax, son of Telamon, was much the foremost so long as Achilles' anger lasted, for Achilles excelled him greatly and he had also better horses; but Achilles was now holding aloof at his ships by reason of his quarrel with Agamemnon, and his people passed their time upon the sea shore, throwing discs or aiming with spears at a mark, and in archery. Their horses stood each by his own chariot, champing lotus and wild celery. The
chariots were housed under cover, but their owners, for lack of leadership, wandered hither and thither about the host and went not forth to fight.

[780] Thus marched the host like a consuming fire, and the earth groaned beneath them when the lord of thunder is angry and lashes the land about Typhoeus among the Arimi, where they say Typhoeus lies. Even so did the earth groan beneath them as they sped over the plain.

**The Trojan Catalogue: 786 - 877**

[786] And now Iris, fleet as the wind, was sent by Zeus to tell the bad news among the Trojans. They were gathered in assembly, old and young, at Priam's gates, and Iris came close up to Priam, speaking with the voice of Priam's son Polites, who, being fleet of foot, was stationed as watchman for the Trojans on the tomb of old Aesyetes, to look out for any sally of the Achaeans. In his likeness Iris spoke, saying, “Old man, you talk idly, as in time of peace, while war is at hand. I have been in many a battle, but never yet saw such a host as is now advancing. They are crossing the plain to attack the city as thick as leaves or as the sands of the sea. Hector, I charge you above all others, do as I say. There are many allies dispersed about the city of Priam from distant places and speaking divers tongues. Therefore, let each chief give orders to his own people, setting them severally in array and leading them forth to battle.”

[807] Thus she spoke, but Hector knew that it was the goddess, and at once broke up the assembly. The men flew to arms; all the gates were opened, and the people thronged through them, horse and foot, with the tramp as of a great multitude.

[811] Now there is a high mound before the city, rising by itself upon the plain. Men call it Batieia, but the gods know that it is the tomb of lithe Myrine. Here the Trojans and their allies divided their forces.

[816] Priam's son, great Hector of the gleaming helmet, commanded the Trojans, and with him were arrayed by far the greater number and most valiant of those who were longing for the fray.

[819] The Dardanians were led by brave Aeneas, whom Aphrodite bore to Anchises, when she, goddess though she was, had lain with him upon the mountain slopes of Ida. He was not

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1 Iris is the daughter of Thaumas and Electra. She is the messenger of the gods but also the 'joiner' who reconciles disputes. She is, therefore, the rainbow - and arc of light joining two points.
alone, for with him were the two sons of Antenor, Archilochus and Acamas, both skilled in all the arts of war.

[824] They that dwelt in Zelea under the lowest spurs of Mt. Ida, men of substance, who drink the limpid waters of the Aesepus, and are of Trojan blood- these were led by Pandarus son of Lycaon, whom Apollo had taught to use the bow.

[828] They that dwelt in Zelea under the lowest spurs of Mt. Ida, men of substance, who drink the limpid waters of the Aesepus, and are of Trojan blood- these were led by Pandarus son of Lycaon, whom Apollo had taught to use the bow.

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[840] Hippothous led the tribes of Pelasgian spearmen, who dwelt in fertile Larissa- Hippothous, and Pylaeus of the race of Ares, two sons of the Pelasgian Lethus, son of Teutamus.

[844] Acamas and the warrior Peirous commanded the Thracians and those that came from beyond the mighty stream of the Hellespont. Euphemus, son of Troezenus, the son of Ceos, was captain of the Ciconian spearsmen.

[848] Pyraechmes led the Paeonian archers from distant Amydon, by the broad waters of the river Axius, the fairest that flow upon the earth.

[851] The Paphlagonians were commanded by stout-hearted Pylaemanes from Enetae, where the mules run wild in herds. These were they that held Cytorus and the country round Sesamus, with the cities by the river Parthenius, Cromna, Aegialus, and lofty Erithini.

[856] Odius and Epistrophus were captains over the Halizoni from distant Alybe, where there are mines of silver.

[858] Chromis, and Ennomus the augur, led the Mysians, but his skill in augury availed not to save him from destruction, for he fell by the hand of the fleet descendant of Aeacus in the river, where he slew others also of the Trojans.

[862] Phorcys, again, and noble Ascanius led the Phrygians from the far country of Ascania, and both were eager for the fray.
[864] Mesthles and Antiphus commanded the Meonians, sons of Talaemenes, born to him of the Gygaean lake. These led the Meonians, who dwelt under Mt. Tmolus.

[867] Nastes led the Carians, men of a strange speech. These held Miletus and the wooded mountain of Phthires, with the water of the river Maeander and the lofty crests of Mt. Mycale. These were commanded by Nastes and Amphimachus, the brave sons of Nomion. He came into the fight with gold about him, like a girl; fool that he was, his gold was of no avail to save him, for he fell in the river by the hand of the fleet descendant of Aeacus, and Achilles bore away his gold.

[876] Sarpedon and Glaucus led the Lycians from their distant land, by the eddying waters of the Xanthus.
Book Three

A Challenge to a Duel: 1 - 120:

When the companies were thus arrayed, each under its own captain, the Trojans advanced as a flight of wild fowl or cranes that scream overhead when rain and winter drive them over the flowing waters of Oceanus to bring death and destruction on the Pygmies, and they wrangle in the air as they fly; but the Achaeans marched silently, in high heart, and minded to stand by one another.

[10] As when the south wind spreads a curtain of mist upon the mountain tops, bad for shepherds but better than night for thieves, and a man can see no further than he can throw a stone, even so rose the dust from under their feet as they made all speed over the plain.

[16] When they were close up with one another, Alexander came forward as champion on the Trojan side. On his shoulders he bore the skin of a panther, his bow, and his sword, and he brandished two spears shod with bronze as a challenge to the bravest of the Achaeans to meet him in single combat. Menelaus saw him thus stride out before the ranks, and was glad as a hungry lion that lights on the carcase of some goat or horned stag, and devours it there and then, though dogs and youths set upon him. Even thus was Menelaus glad when his eyes caught sight of Alexander, for he deemed that now he should be revenged. He sprang, therefore, from his chariot, clad in his suit of armour.

[27] Alexander quailed as he saw Menelaus come forward, and shrank in fear of his life under cover of his men. As one who starts back affrighted, trembling and pale, when he comes suddenly upon a serpent in some mountain glade, even so did Alexander plunge into the throng of Trojan warriors, terror-stricken at the sight of the son Atreus.

[38] Then Hector upbraided him. “Evil-hearted Alexander,” said he, “fair to see, but woman-mad, and false of tongue, would that you had never been born, or that you had died unwed. Better so, than live to be disgraced and looked at askance. Will not the Achaeans mock at us and say that we have sent one to champion us who is fair to see but who has neither wit nor courage? Did you not, such as you are, get your following together and sail beyond the seas? Did you not from your a far country carry off a lovely woman wedded among a people of warriors - to bring sorrow upon your father, your city, and your whole country, but joy to your enemies, and hang-dog shamefacedness to yourself? And now can you not dare face Menelaus and learn what
manner of man he is whose wife you have stolen? Where indeed would be your lyre and your love-tricks, your comely locks and your fair favour, when you were lying in the dust before him? The Trojans are a weak-kneed people, or before this you would have had a shirt of stones for the wrongs you have done them.”

[58] And Alexander answered, “Hector, your rebuke is just. You are hard as the axe which a shipwright wields at his work, and cleaves the timber to his liking. As the axe in his hand, so keen is the edge of your scorn. Still, taunt me not with the gifts that golden Aphrodite has given me; they are precious; let not a man disdain them, for the gods give them where they are minded, and none can have them for the asking. If you would have me do battle with Menelaus, bid the Trojans and Achaeans take their seats, while he and I fight in their midst for Helen and all her wealth. Let him who shall be victorious and prove to be the better man take the woman and all she has, to bear them to his home, but let the rest swear to a solemn covenant of peace whereby you Trojans shall stay here in Troy, while the others go home to Argos and the land of the Achaeans.”

[76] When Hector heard this he was glad, and went about among the Trojan phalanx holding his spear by the middle to keep them back, and they all sat down at his bidding: but the Achaeans still aimed at him with stones and arrows, till Agamemnon shouted to them saying, “Hold, Argives, shoot not, sons of the Achaeans; Hector desires to speak.”

[84] They ceased taking aim and were still, whereon Hector spoke. “Hear from my mouth,” said he, “Trojans and Achaeans, the saying of Alexander, through whom this quarrel has come about. He bids the Trojans and Achaeans lay their armour upon the ground, while he and Menelaus fight in the midst of you for Helen and all her wealth. Let him who shall be victorious and prove to be the better man take the woman and all she has, to bear them to his own home, but let the rest swear to a solemn covenant of peace.”

[95] Thus he spoke, and they all held their peace, till Menelaus of the loud battle-cry addressed them. “And now,” he said, “hear me too, for it is I who am the most aggrieved. I deem that the parting of Achaeans and Trojans is at hand, as well it may be, seeing how much have suffered for my quarrel with Alexander and the wrong he did me. Let him who shall die, die, and let the others fight no more. Bring, then, two lambs, a white ram and a black ewe, for Earth and

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1 A controversial term. Some have argued that the Greek phalanx was not developed until the 8th century and that this term must indicate change and development in the wording and phrasing of the epic.
Sun, and we will bring a third for Zeus. Moreover, you shall bid Priam come, that he may swear
to the covenant himself; for his sons are high-handed and ill to trust, and the oaths of Zeus must
not be transgressed or taken in vain. Young men's minds are light as air, but when an old man
comes he looks before and after, deeming that which shall be fairest upon both sides.”

[111] The Trojans and Achaeans were glad when they heard this, for they thought that they
should now have rest. They backed their chariots toward the ranks, got out of them, and put off
their armour, laying it down upon the ground; and the hosts were near to one another with a little
space between them. Hector sent two messengers to the city to bring the lambs and to bid Priam
come, while Agamemnon told Talthybius to fetch the other lamb from the ships, and he did as
Agamemnon had said.

Helen Identifies the Achaeans: 121 - 244

[121] Meanwhile Iris\(^1\) went to Helen in the form of her sister-in-law, wife of the son of
Antenor, for Helicaon, son of Antenor, had married Laodice, the fairest of Priam's daughters. She
found her in her own room, working at a great web of purple linen, on which she was
embroidering the battles between Trojans and Achaeans, that Ares had made them fight for her
sake. Iris then came close up to her and said, “Come here, child, and see the strange doings of the
Trojans and Achaeans till now they have been warring upon the plain, mad with lust of battle,
but now they have left off fighting, and are leaning upon their shields, sitting still with their
spears planted beside them. Alexander and Menelaus are going to fight over you, and you are to
be the wife of him who is the victor.”

[139] Thus spoke the goddess, and Helen's heart yearned after her former husband, her city,
and her parents. She threw a white mantle over her head, and hurried from her room, weeping as
she went, not alone, but attended by two of her handmaids, Aethrae, daughter of Pittheus, and
Clymene. And straightway they were at the Scaean gates.

[146] The two sages, Ucalegon and Antenor, elders of the people, were seated by the Scaean
gates, with Priam, Panthous, Thymoetes, Lampus, Clytius, and Hiketaon, a descendant of Ares.
These were too old to fight, but they were fluent orators, and sat on the tower like cicadas that
chirrup delicately from the boughs of some high tree in a wood. When they saw Helen coming
towards the tower, they said softly to one another, “Small wonder that Trojans and Achaeans

\(^1\) A messenger goddess similar in that function to Hermes. Iris is the rainbow, the link between heaven and earth.
should endure so much and so long, for the sake of a woman so marvellously and divinely lovely. Still, fair though she be, let them take her and go, or she will breed sorrow for us and for our children after us.”

[161] But Priam bade her draw nigh. “My child,” said he, “take your seat in front of me that you may see your former husband, your kinsmen and your friends. I lay no blame upon you, it is the gods, not you who are to blame. It is they that have brought about this terrible war with the Achaeans. Tell me, then, who is yonder huge hero so great and goodly? I have seen men taller by a head, but none so comely and so royal. Surely he must be a king.”

[171] “Sir,” answered Helen, “father of my husband, dear and reverend in my eyes, would that I had chosen death rather than to have come here with your son, far from my bridal chamber, my friends, my darling daughter, and all the companions of my girlhood. But it was not to be, and my lot is one of tears and sorrow. As for your question, the hero of whom you ask is Agamemnon, son of Atreus, a good king and a brave soldier, brother-in-law as surely as that he lives, to my abhorred and miserable self.”

[181] The old man marvelled at him and said, “Happy son of Atreus, child of good fortune. I see that the Achaeans are subject to you in great multitudes. When I was in Phrygia I saw much horsemen, the people of Otreus and of Mygdon, who were camping upon the banks of the river Sangarius; I was their ally, and with them when the Amazons, peers of men, came up against them, but even they were not so many as the Achaeans.”

[191] The old man next looked upon Odysseus; “Tell me,” he said, “who is that other, shorter by a head than Agamemnon, but broader across the chest and shoulders? His armour is laid upon the ground, and he stalks in front of the ranks as it were some great woolly ram ordering his ewes.” And Helen answered, “He is Odysseus, a man of great craft, son of Laertes. He was born in rugged Ithaca, and excels in all manner of stratagems and subtle cunning.”

[203] On this Antenor said, “Madam, you have spoken truly. Odysseus once came here as envoy about yourself, and Menelaus with him. I received them in my own house, and therefore know both of them by sight and conversation. When they stood up in presence of the assembled Trojans, Menelaus was the broader shouldered, but when both were seated Odysseus had the more royal presence. After a time they delivered their message, and the speech of Menelaus ran trippingly on the tongue; he did not say much, for he was a man of few words, but he spoke very clearly and to the point, though he was the younger man of the two; Odysseus, on the other hand,
when he rose to speak, was at first silent and kept his eyes fixed upon the ground. There was no play nor graceful movement of his sceptre; he kept it straight and stiff like a man unpractised in oratory- one might have taken him for a mere churl or simpleton; but when he raised his voice, and the words came driving from his deep chest like winter snow before the wind, then there was none to touch him, and no man thought further of what he looked like.”

[225] Priam then caught sight of Ajax and asked, “Who is that great and goodly warrior whose head and broad shoulders tower above the rest of the Argives?”

[228] “That,” answered Helen, “is huge Ajax, bulwark of the Achaeans, and on the other side of him, among the Cretans, stands Idomeneus looking like a god, and with the captains of the Cretans round him. Often did Menelaus receive him as a guest in our house when he came visiting us from Crete. I see, moreover, many other Achaeans whose names I could tell you, but there are two whom I can nowhere find, Castor, breaker of horses, and Pollux the mighty boxer; they are children of my mother, and own brothers to myself. Either they have not left Lacedaemon, or else, though they have brought their ships, they will not show themselves in battle for the shame and disgrace that I have brought upon them.”

[243] She knew not that both these heroes were already lying under the earth in their own land of Lacedaemon. 2

Oaths and Single Combat: 245 - 382

[245] Meanwhile the heralds were bringing the holy oath-offerings through the city- two lambs and a goatskin of wine, the gift of earth; and Idaeus brought the mixing bowl and the cups of gold. He went up to Priam and said, “Son of Laomedon, the princes of the Trojans and Achaeans bid you come down on to the plain and swear to a solemn covenant. Alexander and Menelaus are to fight for Helen in single combat, that she and all her wealth may go with him who is the victor. We are to swear to a solemn covenant of peace whereby we others shall dwell here in Troy, while the Achaeans return to Argos and the land of the Achaeans.”

[259] The old man trembled as he heard, but bade his followers yoke the horses, and they made all haste to do so. He mounted the chariot, gathered the reins in his hand, and Antenor took his seat beside him; they then drove through the Scaean gates on to the plain. When they reached

1 There is no mention of this embassy in other sources.
2 Her brothers, the Dioscuri - the Gemini constellation - had both been killed in a war against the Messenians.
the ranks of the Trojans and Achaeans they left the chariot, and with measured pace advanced into the space between the hosts.

[267] Agamemnon and Odysseus both rose to meet them. The attendants brought on the oath-offerings and mixed the wine in the mixing-bowls; they poured water over the hands of the chieftains, and the son of Atreus drew the dagger that hung by his sword, and cut wool from the lambs' heads; this the men-servants gave about among the Trojan and Achaean princes, and the son of Atreus lifted up his hands in prayer.

[276] “Father Zeus,” he cried, “who rules in Ida,¹ most glorious in power, and you oh Sun, who sees and gives ear to all things, Earth and Rivers, and you who in the realms below chastise the soul of him that has broken his oath, witness these rites and guard them, that they be not vain. If Alexander kills Menelaus, let him keep Helen and all her wealth, while we sail home with our ships; but if Menelaus kills Alexander, let the Trojans give back Helen and all that she has; let them moreover pay such fine to the Achaean as shall be agreed upon, in testimony among those that shall be born hereafter. And if Priam and his sons refuse such fine when Alexander has fallen, then will I stay here and fight on till I have got satisfaction.”

[292] As he spoke he drew his knife across the throats of the victims, and laid them down gasping and dying upon the ground, for the knife had reft them of their strength. Then they poured wine from the mixing-bowl into the cups, and prayed to the everlasting gods, saying, Trojans and Achaeans among one another,

[298] “Zeus, most great and glorious, and you other everlasting gods, grant that the brains of them who shall first sin against their oaths- of them and their children- may be shed upon the ground even as this wine, and let their wives become the slaves of strangers.”

[302] Thus they prayed, but not as yet would Zeus grant them their prayer. Then Priam, descendant of Dardanus, spoke, saying, “Hear me, Trojans and Achaean, I will now go back to the wind-beaten city of Ilium: I dare not with my own eyes witness this fight between my son and Menelaus, for Zeus and the other immortals alone know which shall fall.”

[310] On this he laid the two lambs on his chariot and took his seat. He gathered the reins in his hand, and Antenor sat beside him; the two then went back to Ilium.

[314] Hector and Odysseus measured the ground, and cast lots from a helmet of bronze to see which should take aim first. Meanwhile the two hosts lifted up their hands and prayed saying:

¹ Zeus resides on Olympus in Europe, but on Mt. Ida in Asia.
“Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida, most glorious in power, grant that he who first brought about this war between us may die, and enter the house of Hades, while we others remain at peace and abide by our oaths.”

[323] Great Hector now turned his head aside while he shook the helmet, and the lot of Paris flew out first. The others took their several stations, each by his horses and the place where his arms were lying, while Alexander, husband of lovely Helen, put on his goodly armour. First he greaved his legs with greaves of good make and fitted with ankle-clasps of silver; after this he donned the cuirass of his brother Lycaon, and fitted it to his own body; he hung his silver-studded sword of bronze about his shoulders, and then his mighty shield. On his comely head he set his helmet, well-wrought, with a crest of horse-hair that nodded menacingly above it, and he grasped a redoubtable spear that suited his hands. In like fashion Menelaus also put on his armour.

[340] When they had thus armed, each amid his own people, they strode fierce of aspect into the open space, and both Trojans and Achaeans were struck with awe as they beheld them. They stood near one another on the measured ground, brandishing their spears, and each furious against the other. Alexander aimed first, and struck the round shield of the son of Atreus, but the spear did not pierce it, for the shield turned its point. Menelaus next took aim, praying to Father Zeus as he did so. “King Zeus,” he said, “grant me revenge on Alexander who has wronged me; subdue him under my hand that in ages yet to come a man may shrink from doing ill deeds in the house of his host.”

[355] He poised his spear as he spoke, and hurled it at the shield of Alexander. Through shield and cuirass it went, and tore the shirt by his flank, but Alexander swerved aside, and thus saved his life. Then the son of Atreus drew his sword, and drove at the projecting part of his helmet, but the sword fell shivered in three or four pieces from his hand, and he cried, looking towards Heaven, “Father Zeus, of all gods thou art the most despiteful; I made sure of my revenge, but the sword has broken in my hand, my spear has been hurled in vain, and I have not killed him.”

[369] With this he flew at Alexander, caught him by the horsehair plume of his helmet, and began dragging him towards the Achaeans. The strap of the helmet that went under his chin was choking him, and Menelaus would have dragged him off to his own great glory had not Zeus's daughter Aphrodite been quick to mark and to break the strap of oxhide, so that the empty helmet
came away in his hand. This he flung to his comrades among the Achaeans, and was again springing upon Alexander to run him through with a spear, but Aphrodite snatched him up in a moment (as a god can do), hid him under a cloud of darkness, and conveyed him to his own bedchamber.

**Helen and Alexander: 383 - 461**

[383] Then she went to call Helen, and found her on a high tower with the Trojan women crowding round her. She took the form of an old woman who used to dress wool for her when she was still in Lacedaemon, and of whom she was very fond. Thus disguised she plucked her by perfumed robe and said, “Come hither; Alexander says you are to go to the house; he is on his bed in his own room, radiant with beauty and dressed in gorgeous apparel. No one would think he had just come from fighting, but rather that he was going to a dance, or had done dancing and was sitting down.”

[395] With these words she moved the heart of Helen to anger. When she marked the beautiful neck of the goddess, her lovely bosom, and sparkling eyes, she marvelled at her and said, “Goddess, why do you thus beguile me? Are you going to send me afield still further to some man whom you have taken up in Phrygia or fair Meonia? Menelaus has just vanquished Alexander, and is to take my hateful self back with him. You are come here to betray me. Go sit with Alexander yourself; henceforth be goddess no longer; never let your feet carry you back to Olympus; worry about him and look after him till he make you his wife, or, for the matter of that, his slave- but me? I shall not go; I can garnish his bed no longer; I should be a by-word among all the women of Troy. Besides, I have trouble on my mind.”

[413] Aphrodite was very angry, and said, “Bold hussy,1 do not provoke me; if you do, I shall leave you to your fate and hate you as much as I have loved you. I will stir up fierce hatred between Trojans and Achaeans, and you shall come to a bad end.”2

[418] At this Helen was frightened. She wrapped her mantle about her and went in silence, following the goddess and unnoticed by the Trojan women.

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1 Butler's choice, perhaps revealing the translator's own bias. The Greek is more like 'horrible woman' or 'cruel woman' and is certainly pejorative but perhaps not enough to justify "hussy". The A. T. Murray (1924) translation has "rash woman"; Robert Fitzgerald (1974) whitewashes the line with "Better not be so difficult"

2 Of course, the two sides already hate each other. The line implies that the goddess will make both sides hate Helen. The Alexander Pope interpretation has: "Obey the power from whom thy glories rise: / Should Venus leave thee, every charm must fly, / Fade from thy cheek, and languish in the eye. / Cease to provoke me, lest I make thee more / The world's aversion, than their love before."
When they came to the house of Alexander the maid-servants set about their work, but Helen went into her own room, and the laughter-loving goddess took a seat and set it for her facing Alexander. On this Helen, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, sat down, and with eyes askance began to upbraid her husband.

“So you are come from the fight,” said she; “would that you had fallen rather by the hand of that brave man who was my husband. You used to brag that you were a better man with hands and spear than Menelaus the friend of Ares. Go, then, and challenge him again- but I should advise you not to do so, for if you are foolish enough to meet him in single combat, you will soon die by his spear.”

And Paris answered, “Wife, do not vex me with your reproaches. This time, with the help of Athena, Menelaus has vanquished me; another time I may myself be victor, for I too have gods that will stand by me. Come, let us lie down together and make friends. Never yet was I so passionately enamoured of you as at this moment- not even when I first carried you off from Lacedaemon and sailed away with you- not even when I had converse with you upon the couch of love in the island of Cranae was I so enthralled by desire of you as now.” On this he led her towards the bed, and his wife went with him.

Thus they laid themselves on the bed together.

But the son of Atreus strode among the throng, looking everywhere for Alexander, and no man, neither of the Trojans nor of the allies, could find him. If they had seen him they were in no mind to hide him, for they all of them hated him as they did death itself. Then Agamemnon, king of men, spoke, saying, “Hear me, Trojans, Dardanians, and allies. The victory has been with Menelaus; therefore give back Helen with all her wealth, and pay such fine as shall be agreed upon, in testimony among them that shall be born hereafter.”

Thus spoke the son of Atreus, and the Achaeans shouted in applause.

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1 This is the first time Homer uses the name Paris, rather than Alexander. The choice is likely for poetic metre.
Now the gods were sitting with Zeus in council upon the golden floor while Hebe\(^1\) went round pouring out nectar for them to drink, and as they pledged one another in their cups of gold they looked down upon the Trojan city. The son of Cronus then began to tease Hera, talking at her so as to provoke her. “Menelaus,” said he, “has two good friends among the goddesses, Hera of Argos,\(^2\) and Athena Alalcomene, but they only sit still and look on, while Aphrodite keeps ever by Alexander' side to defend him in any danger; indeed she has just rescued him when he made sure that it was all over with him- for the victory really did lie with Menelaus. We must consider what we shall do about all this; shall we set them fighting anew or make peace between them? If you will agree to this last Menelaus can take back Helen and the city of Priam may remain still inhabited.”

[20] Athena and Hera muttered their discontent as they sat side by side hatching mischief for the Trojans. Athena scowled at her father, for she was in a furious passion with him, and said nothing, but Hera could not contain herself. “Dread son of Cronus,” said she, “what, pray, is the meaning of all this? Is my trouble, then, to go for nothing, and the sweat that I have sweated, to say nothing of my horses, while getting the people together against Priam and his children? Do as you will, but we other gods shall not all of us approve your counsel.”

[30] Zeus was angry and answered, “My dear, what harm have Priam and his sons done you that you are so hotly bent on sacking the city of Ilium? Will nothing do for you but you must within their walls and eat Priam raw, with his sons and all the other Trojans to boot? Have it your own way then; for I would not have this matter become a bone of contention between us. I say further, and lay my saying to your heart, if ever I want to sack a city belonging to friends of yours, you must not try to stop me; you will have to let me do it, for I am giving in to you sorely against my will. Of all inhabited cities under the sun and stars of heaven, there was none that I so much respected as Ilium with Priam and his whole people. Equitable feasts were never wanting about my altar, nor the savour of burning fat, which is honour due to ourselves.”

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1 A daughter of Zeus and Hera, Hebe is a goddess of youth and hand-maid to the gods.
2 Hera is the patron god of Argos. ‘The Protectress’ is one of the many epithets for Athena. Recall that Hera and Athena lost to Aphrodite when Paris judged the most beautiful of the goddesses.
“My own three favourite cities,” answered Hera, “are Argos, Sparta, and Mycenae.¹ Sack them whenever you may be displeased with them. I shall not defend them and I shall not care. Even if I did, and tried to stay you, I should take nothing by it, for you are much stronger than I am, but I will not have my own work wasted. I too am a god and of the same race with yourself. I am Cronus's eldest daughter, and am honourable not on this ground only, but also because I am your wife, and you are king over the gods. Let it be a case, then, of give-and-take between us, and the rest of the gods will follow our lead. Tell Athena to go and take part in the fight at once, and let her contrive that the Trojans shall be the first to break their oaths and set upon the Achaeans.”

The father of gods and men heeded her words, and said to Athena, “Go at once into the Trojan and Achaean hosts, and contrive that the Trojans shall be the first to break their oaths and set upon the Achaeans.”

This was what Athena was already eager to do, so down she darted from the topmost summits of Olympus. She shot through the sky as some brilliant meteor which the son of scheming Cronus has sent as a sign to mariners or to some great army, and a fiery train of light follows in its wake. The Trojans and Achaeans were struck with awe as they beheld, and one would turn to his neighbour, saying, “Either we shall again have war and din of combat, or Zeus the lord of battle will now make peace between us.”

Thus did they converse, both Trojans and Achaeans. Then Athena took the form of Laodocus, son of Antenor, and went through the ranks of the Trojans to find Pandarus, the redoubtable son of Lycaon. She found him standing among the stalwart heroes who had followed him from the banks of the Aesopus, so she went close up to him and said, “Brave son of Lycaon, will you do as I tell you? If you dare send an arrow at Menelaus you will win honour and thanks from all the Trojans, and especially from prince Alexander- he would be the first to requite you very handsomely if he could see Menelaus mount his funeral pyre, slain by an arrow from your hand. Take your home aim then, and pray to Lycian Apollo, the famous archer; vow that when you get home to your strong city of Zelea you will offer a hecatomb of firstling lambs in his honour.”

Thus spoke Athena, and his fool's heart was persuaded, and he took his bow from its case. This bow was made from the horns of a wild ibex which he had killed as it was bounding

¹ Of the three, only Mycenae was destroyed - by the Argives in 463 BC.
from a rock; he had stalked it, and it had fallen as the arrow struck it to the heart. Its horns were
sixteen palms long, and a worker in horn had made them into a bow, smoothing them well down,
and giving them tips of gold. When Pandarus had strung his bow he laid it carefully on the
ground, and his brave followers held their shields before him lest the Achaeans should set upon
him before he had shot Menelaus. Then he opened the lid of his quiver and took out a winged
arrow that had yet been shot, fraught with the pangs of death. He laid the arrow on the string and
prayed to Lycian Apollo, the famous archer, vowing that when he got home to his strong city of
Zelea he would offer a hecatomb of firstling lambs in his honour. He laid the notch of the arrow
on the oxhide bowstring, and drew both notch and string to his breast till the arrow-head was
near the bow; then when the bow was arched into a half-circle he let fly, and the bow twanged,
and the string sang as the arrow flew gladly on over the heads of the throng.

[127] But the blessed gods did not forget you, O Menelaus, and Zeus's daughter, driver of the
spoil, was the first to stand before you and ward off the piercing arrow. She turned it from his
skin as a mother whisks a fly from off her child when it is sleeping sweetly; she guided it to the
part where the golden buckles of the belt that passed over his double cuirass were fastened, so
the arrow struck the belt that went tightly round him. It went right through this and through the
cuirass of cunning workmanship; it also pierced the belt beneath it, which he wore next his skin
to keep out darts or arrows; it was this that served him in the best stead, nevertheless the arrow
went through it and grazed the top of the skin, so that blood began flowing from the wound.

[141] As when some woman of Meonia or Caria strains purple dye on to a piece of ivory that
is to be the cheek-piece of a horse, and is to be laid up in a treasure house- many a knight is fain
to bear it, but the king keeps it as an ornament of which both horse and driver may be proud—
even so, O Menelaus, were your shapely thighs and your legs down to your fair ankles stained
with blood.

[148] When King Agamemnon saw the blood flowing from the wound he was afraid, and so
was brave Menelaus himself till he saw that the barbs of the arrow and the thread that bound the
arrow-head to the shaft were still outside the wound. Then he took heart, but Agamemnon
heaved a deep sigh as he held Menelaus's hand in his own, and his comrades made moan in

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1 Purple dye was very rare and expensive, and for that reason it became and has remained the 'royal' colour. The dye
came only from Phoenicia (in Greek Phoenicia means 'the purple dye place') and is harvested from the murex, a
mollusc found only off the shores of the Levant.
concert. “Dear brother, “he cried, “I have been the death of you in pledging this covenant and letting you come forward as our champion. The Trojans have trampled on their oaths and have wounded you; nevertheless the oath, the blood of lambs, the drink-offerings and the right hands of fellowship in which have put our trust shall not be vain. If he that rules Olympus fulfil it not here and now, he will yet fulfil it hereafter, and they shall pay dearly with their lives and with their wives and children. The day will surely come when mighty Ilium shall be laid low, with Priam and Priam's people, when the son of Cronus from his high throne shall overshadow them with his awful aegis in punishment of their present treachery. This shall surely be; but how, Menelaus, shall I mourn you, if it be your lot now to die? I should return to Argos as a by-word, for the Achaeans will at once go home. We shall leave Priam and the Trojans the glory of still keeping Helen, and the earth will rot your bones as you lie here at Troy with your purpose not fulfilled. Then shall some braggart Trojan leap upon your tomb and say, 'Ever thus may Agamemnon wreak his vengeance; he brought his army in vain; he is gone home to his own land with empty ships, and has left Menelaus behind him.' Thus will one of them say, and may the earth then swallow me.”

[183] But Menelaus reassured him and said, “Take heart, and do not alarm the people; the arrow has not struck me in a mortal part, for my outer belt of burnished metal first stayed it, and under this my cuirass and the belt of mail which the bronze-smiths made me.”

[188] And Agamemnon answered, “I trust, dear Menelaus, that it may be even so, but the surgeon shall examine your wound and lay herbs upon it to relieve your pain.”

[192] He then said to Talthybius, “Talthybius, tell Machaon, son to the great physician, Asclepius¹, to come and see Menelaus immediately. Some Trojan or Lycian archer has wounded him with an arrow to our dismay, and to his own great glory.”

[198] Talthybius did as he was told, and went about the host trying to find Machaon. Presently he found standing amid the brave warriors who had followed him from Tricca; thereon he went up to him and said, “Son of Asclepius, King Agamemnon says you are to come and see Menelaus immediately. Some Trojan or Lycian archer has wounded him with an arrow to our dismay and to his own great glory.”

¹ Asclepius was the god of healing and medicine. He was an orphan who learned the art either from Chiron, the centaur, or from Hermes. He became so adept at healing that Zeus feared he would cure death, so Zeus killed him with a Thunderbolt. Physicians in ancient Greece were all members of the cult called the Asclepiades - or sons of Asclepius.
[208] Thus did he speak, and Machaon was moved to go. They passed through the spreading host of the Achaeans and went on till they came to the place where Menelaus had been wounded and was lying with the chieftains gathered in a circle round him. Machaon passed into the middle of the ring and at once drew the arrow from the belt, bending its barbs back through the force with which he pulled it out. He undid the burnished belt, and beneath this the cuirass and the belt of mail which the bronze-smiths had made; then, when he had seen the wound, he wiped away the blood and applied some soothing drugs which Chiron had given to Aesculapius out of the good will he bore him.

**Agamemnon Rallies the Captains: 220 - 421**

[220] While they were thus busy about Menelaus, the Trojans came forward against them, for they had put on their armour, and now renewed the fight.

[223] You would not have then found Agamemnon asleep nor cowardly and unwilling to fight, but eager rather for the fray. He left his chariot rich with bronze and his panting steeds in charge of Eurymedon, son of Ptolemaeus the son of Peiraeus, and bade him hold them in readiness against the time his limbs should weary of going about and giving orders to so many, for he went among the ranks on foot. When he saw men hastening to the front he stood by them and cheered them on. “Argives,” said he, “slacken not one whit in your onset; father Zeus will be no helper of liars; the Trojans have been the first to break their oaths and to attack us; therefore they shall be devoured of vultures; we shall take their city and carry off their wives and children in our ships.”

[240] But he angrily rebuked those whom he saw shirking and disinclined to fight. “Argives,” he cried, “cowardly miserable creatures, have you no shame to stand here like frightened fawns who, when they can no longer scud over the plain, huddle together, but show no fight? You are as dazed and spiritless as deer. Would you wait till the Trojans reach the sterns of our ships as they lie on the shore, to see, whether the son of Cronus will hold his hand over you to protect you?”

[250] Thus did he go about giving his orders among the ranks. Passing through the crowd, he came presently on the Cretans, arming round Idomeneus, who was at their head, fierce as a wild boar, while Meriones was bringing up the battalions that were in the rear. Agamemnon was glad when he saw him, and spoke him fairly. “Idomeneus,” said he, “I treat you with greater distinction than I do any others of the Achaeans, whether in war or in other things, or at table.
When the princes are mixing my choicest wines in the mixing-bowls,¹ they have each of them a
fixed allowance, but your cup is kept always full like my own, that you may drink whenever you
are minded. Go, therefore, into battle, and show yourself the man you have been always proud to
be.”

[265] Idomeneus answered, “I will be a trusty comrade, as I promised you from the first I
would be. Urge on the other Achaeans, that we may join battle at once, for the Trojans have
trapped upon their covenants. Death and destruction shall be theirs, seeing they have been the
first to break their oaths and to attack us.”

[272] The son of Atreus went on, glad at heart, till he came upon the two Ajaxes arming
themselves amid a host of foot-soldiers. As when a goat-herd from some high post watches a
storm drive over the deep before the west wind- black as pitch is the offing and a mighty
whirlwind draws towards him, so that he is afraid and drives his flock into a cave- even thus did
the ranks of stalwart youths move in a dark mass to battle under the Ajaxes, horrid with shield
and spear. Glad was King Agamemnon when he saw them. “No need,” he cried, “to give orders
to such leaders of the Argives as you are, for of your own selves you spur your men on to fight
with might and main. Would, by father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo that all were so minded as you
are, for the city of Priam would then soon fall beneath our hands, and we should sack it.”

[292] With this he left them and went onward to Nestor, the facile speaker of the Pylians, who
was marshalling his men and urging them on, in company with Pelagon, Alastor, Chromius,
Haemon, and Bias shepherd of his people. He placed his knights with their chariots and horses in
the front rank, while the foot-soldiers, brave men and many, whom he could trust, were in the
rear. The cowards he drove into the middle, that they might fight whether they would or no. He
gave his orders to the knights first, bidding them hold their horses well in hand, so as to avoid
confusion. “Let no man,” he said, “relying on his strength or horsemanship, get before the others
and engage singly with the Trojans, nor yet let him lag behind or you will weaken your attack;
but let each when he meets an enemy's chariot throw his spear from his own; this be much the
best; this is how the men of old took towns and strongholds; in this wise were they minded.”

[310] Thus did the old man charge them, for he had been in many a fight, and King
Agamemnon was glad. “I wish,” he said to him, that your limbs were as supple and your strength

¹ We have no idea how strong the wine was, but it was always mixed with water, and often honey, before it was
consumed.
as sure as your judgment is; but age, the common enemy of mankind, has laid his hand upon you; would that it had fallen upon some other, and that you were still young.”

[317] And Nestor, knight of Gerene, answered, “Son of Atreus, I too would gladly be the man I was when I slew mighty Ereuthalion; but the gods will not give us everything at one and the same time. I was then young, and now I am old; still I can go with my knights and give them that counsel which old men have a right to give. The wielding of the spear I leave to those who are younger and stronger than myself.”

[326] Agamemnon went his way rejoicing, and presently found Menestheus, son of Peteos, tarrying in his place, and with him were the Athenians loud of tongue in battle. Near him also tarried cunning Odysseus, with his sturdy Cephallenians round him; they had not yet heard the battle-cry, for the ranks of Trojans and Achaeans had only just begun to move, so they were standing still, waiting for some other columns of the Achaeans to attack the Trojans and begin the fighting. When he saw this Agamemnon rebuked them and said, “Son of Peteos, and you other, steeped in cunning, heart of guile, why stand you here cowering and waiting on others? You two should be of all men foremost when there is hard fighting to be done, for you are ever foremost to accept my invitation when we councillors of the Achaeans are holding feast. You are glad enough then to take your fill of roast meats and to drink wine as long as you please, whereas now you would not care though you saw ten columns of Achaeans engage the enemy in front of you.”

[349] Odysseus glared at him and answered, “Son of Atreus, what are you talking about? How can you say that we are slack? When the Achaeans are in full fight with the Trojans, you shall see, if you care to do so, that the father of Telemachus will join battle with the foremost of them. You are talking idly.”

[356] When Agamemnon saw that Odysseus was angry, he smiled pleasantly at him and withdrew his words. “Odysseus,” said he, “noble son of Laertes, excellent in all good counsel, I have neither fault to find nor orders to give you, for I know your heart is right, and that you and I are of a mind. Enough; I will make you amends for what I have said, and if any ill has now been spoken may the gods bring it to nothing.”

[364] He then left them and went on to others. Presently he saw the son of Tydeus, noble Diomedes, standing by his chariot and horses, with Sthenelus the son of Capaneus beside him; whereon he began to upbraid him. “Son of Tydeus,” he said, “why stand you cowering here upon
the brink of battle? Tydeus did not shrink thus, but was ever ahead of his men when leading them on against the foe- so, at least, say they that saw him in battle, for I never set eyes upon him myself. They say that there was no man like him. He came once to Mycenae, not as an enemy but as a guest, in company with Polynices to recruit his forces, for they were levying war against the strong city of Thebes, and prayed our people for a body of picked men to help them. ¹ The men of Mycenae were willing to let them have one, but Zeus dissuaded them by showing them unfavourable omens. Tydeus, therefore, and Polynices went their way. When they had got as far the deep-meadowed and rush-grown banks of the Aesopus, the Achaeans sent Tydeus as their envoy, and he found the Cadmeans ² gathered in great numbers to a banquet in the house of Eteocles. Stranger though he was, he knew no fear on finding himself single-handed among so many, but challenged them to contests of all kinds, and in each one of them was at once victorious, so mightily did Athena help him. The Cadmeans were incensed at his success, and set a force of fifty youths with two captains- the godlike hero Maeon, son of Haemon, and Polyphontes, son of Autophonus- at their head, to lie in wait for him on his return journey; but Tydeus slew every man of them, save only Maeon, whom he let go in obedience to heaven's omens. Such was Tydeus of Aetolia. His son can talk more glibly, but he cannot fight as his father did.”

[401] Diomedes made no answer, for he was shamed by the rebuke of Agamemnon; but the son of Capaneus took up his words and said, “Son of Atreus, tell no lies, for you can speak truth if you will. We boast ourselves as even better men than our fathers; we took seven-gated Thebes, ³ though the wall was stronger and our men were fewer in number, for we trusted in the omens of the gods and in the help of Zeus, whereas they perished through their own sheer folly; hold not, then, our fathers in like honour with us.”

[411] Diomedes looked sternly at him and said, “Hold your peace, my friend, as I bid you. It is not amiss that Agamemnon should urge the Achaeans forward, for the glory will be his if we take the city, and his the shame if we are vanquished. Therefore let us acquit ourselves with valour.”

¹ A reference to the Seven Against Thebes, in which Polynices, son of Oedipus, brought six heroes from various parts of Greece in an attempt to oust his brother, Eteocles, from the throne. Both brothers died in the battle.
² Another name for the Thebans. Cadmus, the founder of the city, originally called it Cadmeia, and that name was always used for the acropolis of Thebes.
³ In the war of the Epigoni. The sons of those who fell in the Seven Against Thebes took the city in the next generation.
[419] As he spoke he sprang from his chariot, and his armour rang so fiercely about his body that even a brave man might well have been scared to hear it.

**Battle: 422 - 544**

[422] As when some mighty wave that thunders on the beach when the west wind has lashed it into fury- it has reared its head afar and now comes crashing down on the shore; it bows its arching crest high over the jagged rocks and spews its salt foam in all directions- even so did the serried phalanxes of the Danaans march steadfastly to battle. The chiefs gave orders each to his own people, but the men said never a word; no man would think it, for huge as the host was, it seemed as though there was not a tongue among them, so silent were they in their obedience; and as they marched the armour about their bodies glistened in the sun. But the clamour of the Trojan ranks was as that of many thousand ewes that stand waiting to be milked in the yards of some rich flockmaster, and bleat incessantly in answer to the bleating of their lambs; for they had not one speech nor language, but their tongues were diverse, and they came from many different places. These were inspired of Ares, but the others by Athena-¹ and with them came Terror (*Deimos*), Flight (*Phobos*),² and Discord (*Eris*) whose fury never tires, sister and friend of murderous Ares, who, from being at first but low in stature, grows till she uprears her head to heaven, though her feet are still on earth. She it was that went about among them and flung down discord to the waxing of sorrow with even hand between them.

[446] When they were got together in one place shield clashed with shield and spear with spear in the rage of battle. The bossed shields beat one upon another, and there was a tramp as of a great multitude- death-cry and shout of triumph of slain and slayers, and the earth ran red with blood. As torrents swollen with rain course madly down their deep channels till the angry floods meet in some gorge, and the shepherd the hillside hears their roaring from afar- even such was the toil and uproar of the hosts as they joined in battle.

[457] First Antilochus slew an armed warrior of the Trojans, Echepolus, son of Thalysius, fighting in the foremost ranks. He struck at the projecting part of his helmet and drove the spear into his brow; the point of bronze pierced the bone, and darkness veiled his eyes; headlong as a

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¹ Ares is the god of war - but war in the sense of combat. Athena is the goddess of war - in the sense of military strategy.

² Deimos is terror, but Phobos is the fear that causes one to flee. The latter survives in English in the many phobia based words.
tower he fell amid the press of the fight, and as he dropped King Elephenor, son of Chalcodon and captain of the proud Abantes began dragging him out of reach of the darts that were falling around him, in haste to strip him of his armour. But his purpose was not for long; Agenor saw him hauling the body away, and smote him in the side with his bronze-shod spear - for as he stooped his side was left unprotected by his shield - and thus he perished. Then the fight between Trojans and Achaeans grew furious over his body, and they flew upon each other like wolves, man and man crushing one upon the other.

[473] Forthwith Ajax, son of Telamon, slew the fair youth Simoeisius, son of Anthemion, whom his mother bore by the banks of the Simois, as she was coming down from Mt. Ida, where she had been with her parents to see their flocks. Therefore he was named Simoeisius, but he did not live to pay his parents for his rearing, for he was cut off untimely by the spear of mighty Ajax, who struck him in the breast by the right nipple as he was coming on among the foremost fighters; the spear went right through his shoulder, and he fell as a poplar that has grown straight and tall in a meadow by some mere, and its top is thick with branches. Then the wheelwright lays his axe to its roots that he may fashion a felloe1 for the wheel of some goodly chariot, and it lies seasoning by the waterside.2 In such wise did Ajax fell to earth Simoeisius, son of Anthemion. Thereon Antiphus of the gleaming corslet, son of Priam, hurled a spear at Ajax from amid the crowd and missed him, but he hit Leucus, the brave comrade of Odysseus, in the groin, as he was dragging the body of Simoeisius over to the other side; so he fell upon the body and loosed his hold upon it. Odysseus was furious when he saw Leucus slain, and strode in full armour through the front ranks till he was quite close; then he glared round about him and took aim, and the Trojans fell back as he did so. His dart was not sped in vain, for it struck Democoon, the bastard son of Priam, who had come to him from Abydos, where he had charge of his father's mares. Odysseus, infuriated by the death of his comrade, hit him with his spear on one temple, and the bronze point came through on the other side of his forehead. Thereon darkness veiled his eyes, and his armour rang rattling round him as he fell heavily to the ground. Hector, and they that were in front, then gave round while the Argives raised a shout and drew off the dead, pressing further forward as they did so. But Apollo looked down from Pergamus and called aloud to the Trojans, for he was displeased. “Trojans,” he cried, “rush on the foe, and do not let yourselves be

1 The rim of a wooden wheel, to which the spokes attach.
2 Timber needs to cure, often for over a year, before it is dry enough to be sawn into boards of wood.
thus beaten by the Argives. Their skins are not stone nor iron that when hit them you do them no harm. Moreover, Achilles, the son of lovely Thetis, is not fighting, but is nursing his anger at the ships.”

[514] Thus spoke the mighty god, crying to them from the city, while Zeus's redoubtable daughter, Tritogeneia,\(^1\) went about among the host of the Achaeans, and urged them forward whenever she beheld them slackening.

[517] Then fate fell upon Diores, son of Amarynceus, for he was struck by a jagged stone near the ancle of his right leg. He that hurled it was Peirous, son of Imbrasus, captain of the Thracians, who had come from Aenus; the bones and both the tendons were crushed by the pitiless stone. He fell to the ground on his back, and in his death throes stretched out his hands towards his comrades. But Peirous, who had wounded him, sprang on him and thrust a spear into his belly, so that his bowels came gushing out upon the ground, and darkness veiled his eyes.

[527] As Peirous stepped back, Thoas of Aetolia struck him in the chest near the nipple, and the point fixed itself in his lungs. Thoas came close up to him, pulled the spear out of his chest, and then drawing his sword, smote him in the middle of the belly so that he died; but he did not strip him of his armour, for his Thracian comrades, men who wear their hair in a tuft at the top of their heads, stood round the body and kept him off with their long spears for all his great stature and valour; so he was driven back. Thus the two corpses lay stretched on earth near to one another, the one captain of the Thracians and the other of the Epeans; and many another fell round them.

[539] And now no man would have made light of the fighting if he could have gone about among it scatheless and unwounded, with Athena leading him by the hand, and protecting him from the storm of spears and arrows. For many Trojans and Achaeans on that day lay stretched side by side face downwards upon the earth.

\(^1\) An epithet for Athena.
Book Five: The Aristeia of Diomedes

Diomedes Leads the Charge of the Achaeans: 1 - 94.

Then Pallas Athena¹ put valour into the heart of Diomedes, son of Tydeus, that he might excel all the other Argives, and cover himself with glory. She made a stream of fire flare from his shield and helmet like the star that shines most brilliantly in summer after its bath in the waters of Oceanus- even such a fire did she kindle upon his head and shoulders as she bade him speed into the thickest hurly-burly of the fight.

[9] Now there was a certain rich and honourable man among the Trojans, priest of Hephaestus, and his name was Dares. He had two sons, Phegeus and Idaeus, both of them skilled in all the arts of war. These two came forward from the main body of Trojans, and set upon Diomedes, he being on foot, while they fought from their chariot. When they were close up to one another, Phegeus took aim first, but his spear went over Diomedes' left shoulder without hitting him. Diomedes then threw, and his spear sped not in vain, for it hit Phegeus on the breast near the nipple, and he fell from his chariot. Idaeus did not dare to bestride his brother's body, but sprang from the chariot and took to flight, or he would have shared his brother's fate; whereon Hephaestus saved him by wrapping him in a cloud of darkness, that his old father might not be utterly overwhelmed with grief; but the son of Tydeus drove off with the horses, and bade his followers take them to the ships. The Trojans were scared when they saw the two sons of Dares, one of them in fright and the other lying dead by his chariot. Athena, therefore, took Ares by the hand and said, “Ares, Ares, bane of men, bloodstained stormer of cities, may we not now leave the Trojans and Achaeans to fight it out, and see to which of the two Zeus will vouchsafe the victory? Let us go away, and thus avoid his anger.”

[35] So saying, she drew Ares out of the battle, and set him down upon the steep banks of the Scamander. Upon this the Danaans drove the Trojans back, and each one of their chieftains killed his man. First King Agamemnon flung mighty Odius, captain of the Halizoni, from his chariot. The spear of Agamemnon caught him on the broad of his back, just as he was turning in flight; it struck him between the shoulders and went right through his chest, and his armour rang rattling round him as he fell heavily to the ground.

¹ When the epithet 'Pallas' is used, Athena is in her function as goddess of war.
[48] Then Idomeneus killed Phaesus, son of Borus the Meonian, who had come from Varne. Mighty Idomeneus speared him on the right shoulder as he was mounting his chariot, and the darkness of death enshrouded him as he fell heavily from the car.

[54] The squires of Idomeneus spoiled him of his armour, while Menelaus, son of Atreus, killed Scamandrius the son of Strophius, a mighty huntsman and keen lover of the chase. Artemis\(^1\) herself had taught him how to kill every kind of wild creature that is bred in mountain forests, but neither she nor his famed skill in archery could now save him, for the spear of Menelaus struck him in the back as he was flying; it struck him between the shoulders and went right through his chest, so that he fell headlong and his armour rang rattling round him.

[59] Meriones then killed Phereclus the son of Tecton, who was the son of Hermon, a man whose hand was skilled in all manner of cunning workmanship, for Pallas Athena had dearly loved him. He it was that made the ships for Alexander, which were the beginning of all mischief, and brought evil alike both on the Trojans and on Alexander himself; for he heeded not the decrees of heaven. Meriones overtook him as he was flying, and struck him on the right buttock. The point of the spear went through the bone into the bladder, and death came upon him as he cried aloud and fell forward on his knees.

[69] Meges, moreover, slew Pedaeus, son of Antenor, who, though he was a bastard, had been brought up by Theano as one of her own children, for the love she bore her husband. The son of Phyleus got close up to him and drove a spear into the nape of his neck: it went under his tongue all among his teeth, so he bit the cold bronze, and fell dead in the dust.

[77] And Eurypylus, son of Euaemon, killed Hypsenor, the son of noble Dolopion, who had been made priest of the river Scamander, and was honoured among the people as though he were a god. Eurypylus gave him chase as he was flying before him, smote him with his sword upon the arm, and lopped his strong hand from off it. The bloody hand fell to the ground, and the shades of death, with fate\(^2\) that no man can withstand, came over his eyes.

[84] Thus furiously did the battle rage between them. As for the son of Tydeus, you could not say whether he was more among the Achaeans or the Trojans. He rushed across the plain like a winter torrent that has burst its barrier in full flood; no dykes, no walls of fruitful vineyards can

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\(^1\) The goddess of the hunt and of wild animals.

\(^2\) The Greek here is *moira*, which means a *part or portion*. Greek thought is imbued with the idea of balance, portioning, allotment. A person's fate is, then, what the gods have allotted - your portion as it were.
embank it when it is swollen with rain from heaven, but in a moment it comes tearing onward, and lays many a field waste that many a strong man hand has reclaimed— even so were the dense phalanxes of the Trojans driven in rout by the son of Tydeus, and many though they were, they dared not abide his onslaught.

**Athena Gives Diomedes Divine Sight: 95 - 165**

[95] Now when the son of Lycaon saw him scouring the plain and driving the Trojans pell-mell before him, he aimed an arrow and hit the front part of his cuirass near the shoulder: the arrow went right through the metal and pierced the flesh, so that the cuirass was covered with blood. On this the son of Lycaon shouted in triumph, “Trojans, masters of the horse,1 come on; the bravest of the Achaeans is wounded, and he will not hold out much longer if King Apollo was indeed with me when I sped here from Lycia.”

[106] Thus did he vaunt; but his arrow had not killed Diomedes, who withdrew and made for the chariot and horses of Sthenelus, the son of Capaneus. “Dear son of Capaneus,” said he, “come down from your chariot, and draw the arrow out of my shoulder.”

[111] Sthenelus sprang from his chariot, and drew the arrow from the wound, whereon the blood came spouting out through the hole that had been made in his shirt. Then Diomedes prayed, saying, “Hear me, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, unweariable, if ever you loved my father well and stood by him in the thick of a fight, do the like now by me; grant me to come within a spear's throw of that man and kill him. He has been too quick for me and has wounded me; and now he is boasting that I shall not see the light of the sun much longer.”

[121] Thus he prayed, and Pallas Athena heard him; she made his limbs supple and quickened his hands and his feet. Then she went up close to him and said, “Fear not, Diomedes, to do battle with the Trojans, for I have set in your heart the spirit of your knightly father Tydeus. Moreover, I have withdrawn the veil from your eyes, that you know gods and men apart. If, then, any other god comes here and offers you battle, do not fight him; but should Zeus's daughter Aphrodite come, strike her with your spear and wound her.”

[133] When she had said this Athena Glaucopis2 went away, and the son of Tydeus again took his place among the foremost fighters, three times more fierce even than he had been before. He

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1 This is not to imply that cavalry were on the field - the phrase is a common descriptor for Trojans who were famous for breeding horses.
2 Bright-eyed, glaucopis, is another epithet for Athena.
was like a lion that some mountain shepherd has wounded, but not killed, as he is springing over the wall of a sheep-yard to attack the sheep. The shepherd has roused the brute to fury but cannot defend his flock, so he takes shelter under cover of the buildings, while the sheep, panic-stricken on being deserted, are smothered in heaps one on top of the other, and the angry lion leaps out over the sheep-yard wall. Even thus did Diomedes go furiously about among the Trojans.

[144] He killed Astynous, and shepherd of his people, the one with a thrust of his spear, which struck him above the nipple, the other with a sword-cut on the collar-bone, that severed his shoulder from his neck and back. He let both of them lie, and went in pursuit of Abas and Polyidus, sons of the old reader of dreams Eurydamas: they never came back for him to read them any more dreams, for mighty Diomedes made an end of them. He then gave chase to Xanthus and Thoon, the two sons of Phaenops, both of them very dear to him, for he was now worn out with age, and begat no more sons to inherit his possessions. But Diomedes took both their lives and left their father sorrowing bitterly, for he nevermore saw them come home from battle alive, and his kinsmen divided his wealth among themselves.

[159] Then he came upon two sons of Priam, Echemmon and Chromius, as they were both in one chariot. He sprang upon them as a lion fastens on the neck of some cow or heifer when the herd is feeding in a coppice. For all their vain struggles he flung them both from their chariot and stripped the armour from their bodies. Then he gave their horses to his comrades to take them back to the ships.

**Aeneas Fights Diomedes: 166 - 329**

[166] When Aeneas saw him thus making havoc among the ranks, he went through the fight amid the rain of spears to see if he could find Pandarus. When he had found the brave son of Lycaon he said, “Pandarus, where is now your bow, your winged arrows, and your renown as an archer, in respect of which no man here can rival you nor is there any in Lycia that can beat you? Lift then your hands to Zeus and send an arrow at this fellow who is going so masterfully about, and has done such deadly work among the Trojans. He has killed many a brave man—unless indeed he is some god who is angry with the Trojans about their sacrifices, and and has set his hand against them in his displeasure.”

[179] And the son of Lycaon answered, “Aeneas, I take him for none other than the son of Tydeus. I know him by his shield, the visor of his helmet, and by his horses. It is possible that he may be a god, but if he is the man I say he is, he is not making all this havoc without heaven's
help, but has some god by his side who is shrouded in a cloud of darkness, and who turned my arrow aside when it had hit him. I have taken aim at him already and hit him on the right shoulder; my arrow went through the breastpiece of his cuirass; and I made sure I should send him hurrying to the world below, but it seems that I have not killed him. There must be a god who is angry with me. Moreover I have neither horse nor chariot. In my father's stables there are eleven excellent chariots, fresh from the builder, quite new, with cloths spread over them; and by each of them there stand a pair of horses, champing barley and rye; my old father Lycaon urged me again and again when I was at home and on the point of starting, to take chariots and horses with me that I might lead the Trojans in battle, but I would not listen to him; it would have been much better if I had done so, but I was thinking about the horses, which had been used to eat their fill, and I was afraid that in such a great gathering of men they might be ill-fed, so I left them at home and came on foot to Ilion armed only with my bow and arrows. These it seems, are of no use, for I have already hit two chieftains, the sons of Atreus and of Tydeus, and though I drew blood surely enough, I have only made them still more furious. I did ill to take my bow down from its peg on the day I led my band of Trojans to Ilion in Hector's service, and if ever I get home again to set eyes on my native place, my wife, and the greatness of my house, may some one cut my head off then and there if I do not break the bow and set it on a hot fire- such pranks as it plays me.”

[217] Aeneas answered, “Say no more. Things will not mend till we two go against this man with chariot and horses and bring him to a trial of arms. Mount my chariot, and note how cleverly the horses of Tros can speed hither and thither over the plain in pursuit or flight. If Zeus again vouchsafes glory to the son of Tydeus they will carry us safely back to the city. Take hold, then, of the whip and reins while I stand upon the car to fight, or else do you wait this man's onset while I look after the horses.”

[229] “Aeneas.” replied the son of Lycaon, “take the reins and drive; if we have to fly before the son of Tydeus the horses will go better for their own driver. If they miss the sound of your voice when they expect it they may be frightened, and refuse to take us out of the fight. The son

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1 Tros, the first king of Troy, had a son named Ganymede. Zeus so admired the boy that he took Ganymede to heaven to be the cup-bearer of the gods. In compensation, Zeus gave Tros divine horses, from which the horses of Troy are descendants.
of Tydeus will then kill both of us and take the horses. Therefore drive them yourself and I will be ready for him with my spear.”

[239] They then mounted the chariot and drove full-speed towards the son of Tydeus. Sthenelus, son of Capaneus, saw them coming and said to Diomedes, “Diomedes, son of Tydeus, man after my own heart, I see two heroes speeding towards you, both of them men of might the one a skilful archer, Pandarus son of Lycaon, the other, Aeneas, whose sire is Anchises, while his mother is Aphrodite. Mount the chariot and let us retreat. Do not, I pray you, press so furiously forward, or you may get killed.”

[251] Diomedes looked angrily at him and answered: “Talk not of flight, for I shall not listen to you: I am of a family that knows neither flight nor fear, and my limbs are as yet unwearied. I am in no mind to mount, but will go against them even as I am; Pallas Athena bids me be afraid of no man, and even though one of them escape, their steeds shall not take both back again. I say further, and lay my saying to your heart- if Athena sees fit to vouchsafe me the glory of killing both, stay your horses here and make the reins fast to the rim of the chariot; then be sure you spring Aeneas' horses and drive them from the Trojan to the Achaeans' ranks. They are of the stock that great Zeus gave to Tros in payment for his son Ganymede, and are the finest that live and move under the sun. Anchises, leader of men, stole the blood by putting his mares to them without Laomedon's knowledge, and they bore him six foals. Four are still in his stables, but he gave the other two to Aeneas. We shall win great glory if we can take them.”

[274] Thus did they converse, but the other two had now driven close up to them, and the son of Lycaon spoke first. “Great and mighty son,” said he, “of noble Tydeus, my arrow failed to lay you low, so I will now try with my spear.”

[280] He poised his spear as he spoke and hurled it from him. It struck the shield of the son of Tydeus; the bronze point pierced it and passed on till it reached the breastplate. Thereon the son of Lycaon shouted out and said, “You are hit clean through the belly; you will not stand out for long, and the glory of the fight is mine.”

[286] But Diomedes all undismayed made answer, “You have missed, not hit, and before you two see the end of this matter one or other of you shall glut tough-shielded Ares with his blood.”

[290] With this he hurled his spear, and Athena guided it on to Pandarus's nose near the eye. It went crashing in among his white teeth; the bronze point cut through the root of his to tongue,
coming out under his chin, and his glistening armour rang rattling round him as he fell heavily to
the ground. The horses started aside for fear, and he was reft of life and strength.

[297] Aeneas sprang from his chariot armed with shield and spear, fearing lest the Achaeans
should carry off the body. He bestrode it as a lion in the pride of strength, with shield and on
spear before him and a cry of battle on his lips resolute to kill the first that should dare face him.
But the son of Tydeus caught up a mighty stone, so huge and great that as men now are it would
take two to lift it; nevertheless he bore it aloft with ease unaided, and with this he struck Aeneas
on the groin where the hip turns in the joint that is called the “cup-bone.” The stone crushed this
joint, and broke both the sinews, while its jagged edges tore away all the flesh. The hero fell on
his knees, and propped himself with his hand resting on the ground till the darkness of night fell
upon his eyes.

[311] And now Aeneas, leader of men, would have perished then and there, had not his
mother, Zeus's daughter Aphrodite, who had conceived him by Anchises when he was herding
cattle, been quick to mark, and thrown her two white arms about the body of her dear son. She
protected him by covering him with a fold of her own fair garment, lest some Danaan should
drive a spear into his breast and kill him.

[318] Thus, then, did she bear her dear son out of the fight.

[319] But the son of Capaneus was not unmindful of the orders that Diomedes had given him.
He made his own horses fast, away from the hurly-burly, by binding the reins to the rim of the
chariot. Then he sprang upon Aeneas's horses and drove them from the Trojan to the Achaean
ranks. When he had so done he gave them over to his chosen comrade Deipylus, whom he
valued above all others as the one who was most like-minded with himself, to take them on to
the ships. He then remounted his own chariot, seized the reins, and drove with all speed in search
of the son of Tydeus.

**Diomedes Wounds Aphrodite: 330 - 430**

[330] Now the son of Tydeus was in pursuit of the Cyprian goddess,¹ spear in hand, for he
knew her to be feeble and not one of those goddesses that can lord it among men in battle like
Athena or Enyo² the waster of cities, and when at last after a long chase he caught her up, he

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¹ Aphrodite emerged from the sea on the shores of Cyprus.
² A lesser goddess of war, Enyo accompanies Ares into battle.
flew at her and thrust his spear into the flesh of her delicate hand. The point tore through the ambrosial robe which the Graces had woven for her, and pierced the skin between her wrist and the palm of her hand, so that the immortal blood, or ichor, that flows in the veins of the blessed gods, came pouring from the wound; for the gods do not eat bread nor drink wine, hence they have no blood such as ours, and are immortal. Aphrodite screamed aloud, and let her son fall, but Phoebus Apollo caught him in his arms, and hid him in a cloud of darkness, lest some Danaan should drive a spear into his breast and kill him; and Diomedes shouted out as he left her, “Daughter of Zeus, leave war and battle alone, can you not be contented with beguiling silly women? If you meddle with fighting you will get what will make you shudder at the very name of war.”

[352] The goddess went dazed and discomfited away, and Iris, fleet as the wind, drew her from the throng, in pain and with her fair skin all besmirched. She found fierce Ares waiting on the left of the battle, with his spear and his two fleet steeds resting on a cloud; whereon she fell on her knees before her brother and implored him to let her have his horses. “Dear brother,” she cried, “save me, and give me your horses to take me to Olympus where the gods dwell. I am badly wounded by a mortal, the son of Tydeus, who would now fight even with father Zeus.”

[363] Thus she spoke, and Ares gave her his gold-bedizened steeds. She mounted the chariot sick and sorry at heart, while Iris sat beside her and took the reins in her hand. She lashed her horses on and they flew forward nothing loth, till in a trice they were at high Olympus, where the gods have their dwelling. There she stayed them, unloosed them from the chariot, and gave them their ambrosial forage; but Aphrodite flung herself on to the lap of her mother Dione,1 who threw her arms about her and caressed her, saying, “Which of the heavenly beings has been treating you in this way, as though you had been doing something wrong in the face of day?”

[375] And laughter-loving Aphrodite answered, “Proud Diomeds, the son of Tydeus, wounded me because I was bearing my dear son Aeneas, whom I love best of all mankind, out of the fight. The war is no longer one between Trojans and Achaeans, for the Danaans have now taken to fighting with the immortals.”

[381] “Bear it, my child,” replied Dione, “and make the best of it. We dwellers in Olympus have to put up with much at the hands of men, and we lay much suffering on one another. Ares

1 In contradiction to Hesiod, who says that Aphrodite was born of the foam of the sea, Homer follows the tradition that she was the daughter of Zeus and Dione, a female Titan
had to suffer when Otus and Ephialtes, children of Aloeus, bound him in cruel bonds, so that he lay thirteen months imprisoned in a vessel of bronze.¹ Ares would have then perished had not fair Eriboea, stepmother to the sons of Aloeus, told Hermes, who stole him away when he was already well-nigh worn out by the severity of his bondage. Hera, again, suffered when the mighty son of Amphitryon² wounded her on the right breast with a three-barbed arrow, and nothing could assuage her pain. So, also, did huge Hades, when this same man, the son of aegis-bearing Zeus, hit him with an arrow even at the gates of hell, and hurt him badly. Thereon Hades went to the house of Zeus on great Olympus, angry and full of pain; and the arrow in his brawny shoulder caused him great anguish till Paeeon³ healed him by spreading soothing herbs on the wound, for Hades was not of mortal mould. Daring, head-strong, evildoer who recked not of his sin in shooting the gods that dwell in Olympus. And now Athena has egged this son of Tydeus on against you, fool that he is for not reflecting that no man who fights with gods will live long or hear his children prattling about his knees when he returns from battle. Let, then, the son of Tydeus see that he does not have to fight with one who is stronger than you are. Then shall his brave wife Aegialeia, daughter of Adrestus, rouse her whole house from sleep, wailing for the loss of her wedded lord, Diomedes the bravest of the Achaeans.”

[416] So saying, she wiped the ichor from the wrist of her daughter with both hands, whereon the pain left her, and her hand was healed. But Athena and Hera, who were looking on, began to taunt Zeus with their mocking talk, and Athena was first to speak. “Father Zeus,” said she, “do not be angry with me, but I think the Cyprian must have been persuading some one of the Achaean women to go with the Trojans of whom she is so very fond, and while caressing one or other of them she must have torn her delicate hand with the gold pin of the woman's brooch.”

[426] The sire of gods and men smiled, and called golden Aphrodite to his side. “My child,” said he, “it has not been given you to be a warrior. Attend, henceforth, to your own delightful matrimonial duties, and leave all this fighting to Ares and to Athena.”

¹ Otus and Ephialtes, the Aloeidae, were the sons of Poseidon and the wife of Aolus, Iphimedeia. They were superhums who made war on the gods, but were killed by Apollo. There are many and various traditions about these two. Only Homer calls the wife of Aolus, Eriboea.
² Heracles. This is the only source that suggests actual violence between Hera and Heracles. He wounded Hades while on his labour to bring Cerberus, the dog of the underworld, to Mycenae.
³ A god of healing of uncertain provenance, Paeeon is often associated with Apollo.
Apollo Saves Aeneas: 431 - 459

[431] Thus did they converse. But Diomedes sprang upon Aeneas, though he knew him to be in the very arms of Apollo. Not one whit did he fear the mighty god, so set was he on killing Aeneas and stripping him of his armour. Thrice did he spring forward with might and main to slay him, and thrice did Apollo beat back his gleaming shield. When he was coming on for the fourth time, as though he were a god, Apollo shouted to him with an awful voice and said, “Take heed, son of Tydeus, and draw off; think not to match yourself against gods, for men that walk the earth cannot hold their own with the immortals.”

[443] The son of Tydeus then gave way for a little space, to avoid the anger of the god, while Apollo took Aeneas out of the crowd and set him in sacred Pergamus, where his temple stood. There, within the mighty sanctuary, Leto and Artemis healed him and made him glorious to behold, while Apollo of the silver bow fashioned a wraith in the likeness of Aeneas, and armed as he was. Round this the Trojans and Achaeans hacked at the bucklers about one another's breasts, hewing each other's round shields and light hide-covered targets. Then Phoebus Apollo said to Ares, “Ares, Ares, bane of men, blood-stained stormer of cities, can you not go to this man, the son of Tydeus, who would now fight even with father Zeus, and draw him out of the battle? He first went up to the Cyprian and wounded her in the hand near her wrist, and afterwards sprang upon me too, as though he were a god.”

Battle: 460 - 698

[460] He then took his seat on the top of Pergamus, while murderous Ares went about among the ranks of the Trojans, cheering them on, in the likeness of fleet Acamas chief of the Thracians. “Sons of Priam,” said he, “how long will you let your people be thus slaughtered by the Achaeans? Would you wait till they are at the walls of Troy? Aeneas the son of Anchises has fallen, he whom we held in as high honour as Hector himself. Help me, then, to rescue our brave comrade from the stress of the fight.”

[470] With these words he put heart and soul into them all. Then Sarpedon rebuked Hector very sternly. “Hector,” said he, “where is your prowess now? You used to say that though you had neither people nor allies you could hold the town alone with your brothers and brothers-in-law. I see not one of them here; they cower as hounds before a lion; it is we, your allies, who bear the brunt of the battle. I have come from afar, even from Lycia and the banks of the river
Xanthus, where I have left my wife, my infant son, and much wealth to tempt whoever is needy; nevertheless, I head my Lycian soldiers and stand my ground against any who would fight me though I have nothing here for the Achaeans to plunder, while you look on, without even bidding your men stand firm in defence of their wives. See that you fall not into the hands of your foes as men caught in the meshes of a net, and they sack your fair city forthwith. Keep this before your mind night and day, and beseech the captains of your allies to hold on without flinching, and thus put away their reproaches from you.”

[493] So spoke Sarpedon, and Hector smarted under his words. He sprang from his chariot clad in his suit of armour, and went about among the host brandishing his two spears, exhorting the men to fight and raising the terrible cry of battle. Then they rallied and again faced the Achaeans, but the Argives stood compact and firm, and were not driven back. As the breezes sport with the chaff upon some goodly threshing-floor, when men are winnowing- while golden haired Demeter\(^1\) blows with the wind to sift the chaff from the grain, and the chaff- heaps grow whiter and whiter- even so did the Achaeans whiten in the dust which the horses' hoofs raised to the firmament of heaven, as their drivers turned them back to battle, and they bore down with might upon the foe. Fierce Ares, to help the Trojans, covered them in a veil of darkness, and went about everywhere among them, inasmuch as Phoebus Apollo had told him that when he saw Pallas Athena leave the fray he was to put courage into the hearts of the Trojans- for it was she who was helping the Danaans. Then Apollo sent Aeneas forth from his rich sanctuary, and filled his heart with valour, whereon he took his place among his comrades, who were overjoyed at seeing him alive, sound, and of a good courage; but they could not ask him how it had all happened, for they were too busy with the turmoil raised by Ares and by Eris, who raged insatiably in their midst.

[519] The two Ajaxes, Odysseus and Diomedes, cheered the Danaans on, fearless of the fury and onset of the Trojans. They stood as still as clouds which the son of Cronus has spread upon the mountain tops when there is no air and fierce Boreas\(^2\) sleeps with the other boisterous winds whose shrill blasts scatter the clouds in all directions- even so did the Danaans stand firm and unflinching against the Trojans. The son of Atreus went about among them and exhorted them.

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\(^1\) Demeter is the goddess of agriculture and is most often associated with wheat.

\(^2\) The north wind, personified as the god Boreas. Hence the English *Boreal*, referring to the subarctic zone of the northern hemisphere.
“My friends,” said he, “quit yourselves like brave men, and shun dishonour in one another's eyes amid the stress of battle. They that shun dishonour more often live than get killed, but they that fly save neither life nor name.”

[533] As he spoke he hurled his spear and hit one of those who were in the front rank, the comrade of Aeneas, Deicoon son of Pergasus, whom the Trojans held in no less honour than the sons of Priam, for he was ever quick to place himself among the foremost. The spear of King Agamemnon struck his shield and went right through it, for the shield stayed it not. It drove through his belt into the lower part of his belly, and his armour rang rattling round him as he fell heavily to the ground.

[541] Then Aeneas killed two champions of the Danaans, Crethon and Orsilochus. Their father was a rich man who lived in the strong city of Phere and was descended from the river Alpheus, whose broad stream flows through the land of the Pylians. The river begat Orsilochus, who ruled over much people and was father to Diocles, who in his turn begat twin sons, Crethon and Orsilochus, well skilled in all the arts of war. These, when they grew up, went to Ilium with the Argive fleet in the cause of Menelaus and Agamemnon sons of Atreus, and there they both of them fell. As two lions whom their dam has reared in the depths of some mountain forest to plunder homesteads and carry off sheep and cattle till they get killed by the hand of man, so were these two vanquished by Aeneas, and fell like high pine-trees to the ground.

[561] Menelaus, dear to Ares, pitied them in their fall, and made his way to the front, clad in gleaming bronze and brandishing his spear, for Ares egged him on to do so with intent that he should be killed by Aeneas; but Antilochus the son of Nestor saw him and sprang forward, fearing that the king might come to harm and thus bring all their labour to nothing; when, therefore Aeneas and Menelaus were setting their hands and spears against one another eager to do battle, Antilochus placed himself by the side of Menelaus. Aeneas, bold though he was, drew back on seeing the two heroes side by side in front of him, so they drew the bodies of Crethon and Orsilochus to the ranks of the Achaeans and committed the two poor fellows into the hands of their comrades. They then turned back and fought in the front ranks.

[576] They killed Pylaemenes peer of Ares, leader of the Paphlagonian warriors. Menelaus struck him on the collar-bone as he was standing on his chariot, while Antilochus hit his charioteer and squire Mydon, the son of Atymniius, who was turning his horses in flight. He hit him with a stone upon the elbow, and the reins, enriched with white ivory, fell from his hands.
into the dust. Antilochus rushed towards him and struck him on the temples with his sword, whereon he fell head first from the chariot to the ground. There he stood for a while with his head and shoulders buried deep in the dust— for he had fallen on sandy soil till his horses kicked him and laid him flat on the ground, as Antilochus lashed them and drove them off to the host of the Achaeans.

[590] But Hector marked them from across the ranks, and with a loud cry rushed towards them, followed by the strong battalions of the Trojans. Ares and dread Enyo led them on, she fraught with ruthless turmoil of battle, while Ares wielded a monstrous spear, and went about, now in front of Hector and now behind him.

[596] Diomedes of the great voice shook with passion as he saw them. As a man crossing a wide plain is dismayed to find himself on the brink of some great river rolling swiftly to the sea—he sees its boiling waters and starts back in fear— even so did the son of Tydeus give ground. Then he said to his men, “My friends, how can we wonder that Hector wields the spear so well? Some god is ever by his side to protect him, and now Ares is with him in the likeness of mortal man. Keep your faces therefore towards the Trojans, but give ground, for we dare not fight with gods.”

[607] As he spoke the Trojans drew close up, and Hector killed two men, both in one chariot, Menesthes and Anchialus, heroes well versed in war. Ajax son of Telamon pitied them in their fall; he came close up and hurled his spear, hitting Amphius the son of Selagus, a man of great wealth who lived in Paesus and owned many cultivated fields, but his lot had led him to come to the aid of Priam and his sons. Ajax struck him in the belt; the spear pierced the lower part of his belly, and he fell heavily to the ground. Then Ajax ran towards him to strip him of his armour, but the Trojans rained spears upon him, many of which fell upon his shield. He planted his heel upon the body and drew out his spear, but the darts pressed so heavily upon him that he could not strip the goodly armour from his shoulders. The Trojan chieftains, moreover, many and valiant, came about him with their spears, so that he dared not stay; great, brave and valiant though he was, they drove him from them and he was beaten back.

[627] Thus, then, did the battle rage between them. Presently the strong hand of fate impelled Tlepolemus, the son of Heracles, a man both brave and of great stature, to fight Sarpedon; so the two, son and grandson of great Zeus, drew near to one another, and Tlepolemus spoke first.

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1 The ‘Retreat in Order.’ The most ignoble death, in Homeric and Classical times, was from a wound to the back.
“Sarpedon,” said he, “councillor of the Lycians, why should you come skulking here you who are a man of peace?\footnote{For the whole story see below: vi.144ff.: Bellerophon was king and on his death his two sons, Hippolochus and Isandrus disputed the succession. But Bellerophon also had a daughter, Laodameia, who had Sarpedon by Zeus. In the end, it was Sarpedon who became king.} They lie who call you son of aegis-bearing Zeus, for you are little like those who were of old his children. Far other was Heracles, my own brave and lion-hearted father, who came here for the horses of Laomedon, and though he had six ships only, and few men to follow him, sacked the city of Ilium and made a wilderness of her highways. You are a coward, and your people are falling from you. For all your strength, and all your coming from Lycia, you will be no help to the Trojans but will pass the gates of Hades vanquished by my hand.”

[647] And Sarpedon, captain of the Lycians, answered, “Tlepolemus, your father overthrew Ilium by reason of Laomedon's folly in refusing payment to one who had served him well.\footnote{When Troy was attacked by a monster from the sea, Heracles agreed to kill the monster in exchange for the horses which Zeus had given to Tros. Laomedon, then king of Troy, agreed to the deal, but after Heracles killed the monster Laomedon reneged. Heracles returned later to destroy Troy. The only male of the royal family who survived was Priam, at that time a young boy.} He would not give your father the horses which he had come so far to fetch. As for yourself, you shall meet death by my spear. You shall yield glory to myself, and your soul to Hades of the noble steeds.”

[655] Thus spoke Sarpedon, and Tlepolemus upraised his spear. They threw at the same moment, and Sarpedon struck his foe in the middle of his throat; the spear went right through, and the darkness of death fell upon his eyes. Tlepolemus's spear struck Sarpedon on the left thigh with such force that it tore through the flesh and grazed the bone, but his father as yet warded off destruction from him.

[663] His comrades bore Sarpedon out of the fight, in great pain by the weight of the spear that was dragging from his wound. They were in such haste and stress as they bore him that no one thought of drawing the spear from his thigh so as to let him walk uprightly.

[668] Meanwhile the Achaeans carried off the body of Tlepolemus, whereon Odysseus was moved to pity, and panted for the fray as he beheld them. He doubted whether to pursue the son of Zeus, or to make slaughter of the Lycian rank and file; it was not decreed, however, that he should slay the son of Zeus; Athena, therefore, turned him against the main body of the Lycians. He killed Coeranus, Alastor, Chromius, Alcandrus, Halius, Noemon, and Prytanis, and would have slain yet more, had not great Hector marked him, and sped to the front of the fight clad in...
his suit of mail, filling the Danaans with terror. Sarpedon was glad when he saw him coming, and besought him, saying, “Son of Priam, let me not be here to fall into the hands of the Danaans. Help me, and since I may not return home to gladden the hearts of my wife and of my infant son, let me die within the walls of your city.”

[689] Hector made him no answer, but rushed onward to fall at once upon the Achaeans and kill many among them. His comrades then bore Sarpedon away and laid him beneath Zeus's spreading oak tree. Pelagon, his friend and comrade drew the spear out of his thigh, but Sarpedon fainted and a mist came over his eyes. Presently he came to himself again, for the breath of the north wind as it played upon him gave him new life, and brought him out of the deep swoon into which he had fallen.

Athena and Hera Intervene: 699 - 909

[699] Meanwhile the Argives were neither driven towards their ships by Ares and Hector, nor yet did they attack them; when they knew that Ares was with the Trojans they retreated, but kept their faces still turned towards the foe. Who, then, was first and who last to be slain by Ares and Hector? They were valiant Teuthras, and Orestes the renowned charioteer, Trechus the Aetolian warrior, Oenomaus, Helenus the son of Oenops, and Oresbius of the gleaming girdle, who was possessed of great wealth, and dwelt by the Cephisian lake with the other Boeotians who lived near him, owners of a fertile country.

[711] Now when the white-armed goddess Hera saw the Argives thus falling, she said to Athena, “Alas, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, unweariable, the promise we made Menelaus that he should not return till he had sacked the city of Ilium will be of no effect if we let Ares rage thus furiously. Let us go into the fray at once.”

[719] Athena did not gainsay her. Thereon the august goddess, daughter of great Cronus, began to harness her gold-bedizened steeds. Hebe with all speed fitted on the eight-spoked wheels of bronze that were on either side of the iron axle-tree. The felloes of the wheels were of gold, imperishable, and over these there was a tire of bronze, wondrous to behold. The naves of the wheels were silver, turning round the axle upon either side. The car itself was made with plaited bands of gold and silver, and it had a double top-rail running all round it. From the body of the car there went a pole of silver, on to the end of which she bound the golden yoke, with the bands of gold that were to go under the necks of the horses Then Hera put her steeds under the yoke, eager for battle and the war-cry.
Meanwhile Athena flung her richly embroidered vesture, made with her own hands, on to her father's threshold, and donned the shirt of Zeus, arming herself for battle.¹ She threw her tasselled aegis about her shoulders, wreathed round with Rout as with a fringe, and on it were Strife, and Strength, and Panic whose blood runs cold; moreover there was the head of the dread monster Gorgon,² grim and awful to behold, portent of aegis-bearing Zeus. On her head she set her helmet of gold, with four plumes, and coming to a peak both in front and behind- decked with the emblems of a hundred cities; then she stepped into her flaming chariot and grasped the spear, so stout and sturdy and strong, with which she quells the ranks of heroes who have displeased her.

Hera lashed the horses on, and the gates of heaven bellowed as they flew open of their own accord - gates over which the Horae³ preside, in whose hands are Heaven and Olympus, either to open the dense cloud that hides them, or to close it. Through these the goddesses drove their obedient steeds, and found the son of Cronus sitting all alone on the topmost ridges of Olympus. There Hera stayed her horses, and spoke to Zeus the son of Cronus, lord of all. “Father Zeus,” said she, “are you not angry with Ares for these high doings? how great and goodly a host of the Achaeans he has destroyed to my great grief, and without either right or reason, while the Cyprian and Apollo are enjoying it all at their ease and setting this unrighteous madman on to do further mischief. I hope, Father Zeus, that you will not be angry if I hit Ares hard, and chase him out of the battle.”

And Zeus, the cloud-gatherer, answered, “Set Athena on to him, for she punishes him more often than any one else does.”

Hera did as he had said. She lashed her horses, and they flew forward nothing less than midway betwixt earth and sky. As far as a man can see when he looks out upon the sea from some high beacon, so far can the loud-neighing horses of the gods spring at a single bound. When they reached Troy and the place where its two flowing streams Simois and Scamander meet, there Hera stayed them and took them from the chariot. She hid them in a thick cloud, and

¹ The peplos, or robes, that she wears as Athena Parthenos she made with her own hands in her capacity as goddess of fine handiwork and crafts. When she becomes goddess of war, she switches to the clothing and armour of a warrior.
² The Gorgon, Medusa. Perseus beheaded Medusa and gave the head to Athena. Athena mounted the head as the centerpiece of her shield.
³ Goddesses of the weather (and so often translated as Seasons) and of time in general (and so, often translated as Hours), these female goddesses of uncertain number where also goddesses of order, and therefore justice.
Simois made ambrosia spring up for them to eat; the two goddesses then went on, flying like
turtledoves in their eagerness to help the Argives. When they came to the part where the bravest
and most in number were gathered about mighty Diomedes, fighting like lions or wild boars of
great strength and endurance, there Hera stood still and raised a shout like that of brazen-voiced
Stentor, whose cry was as loud as that of fifty men together. “Argives,” she cried; “shame on
cowardly creatures, brave in semblance only; as long as Achilles was fighting, his spear was so
deadly that the Trojans dared not show themselves outside the Dardanian gates, but now they
sally far from the city and fight even at your ships.”

[792] With these words she put heart and soul into them all, while Athena sprang to the side
of the son of Tydeus, whom she found near his chariot and horses, cooling the wound that
Pandarus had given him. For the sweat caused by the hand that bore the weight of his shield
irritated the hurt: his arm was weary with pain, and he was lifting up the strap to wipe away the
blood. The goddess laid her hand on the yoke of his horses and said, “The son of Tydeus is not
such another as his father. Tydeus was a little man, but he could fight, and rushed madly into the
fray even when I told him not to do so. When he went all unattended as envoy to the city of
Thebes among the Cadmeans, I bade him feast in their houses and be at peace; but with that high
spirit which was ever present with him, he challenged the youth of the Cadmeans, and at once
beat them in all that he attempted, so mightily did I help him. I stand by you too to protect you,
and I bid you be instant in fighting the Trojans; but either you are tired out, or you are afraid and
out of heart, and in that case I say that you are no true son of Tydeus the son of Oeneus.”

[814] Diomedes answered, “I know you, goddess, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, and will
hide nothing from you. I am not afraid nor out of heart, nor is there any slackness in me. I am
only following your own instructions; you told me not to fight any of the blessed gods; but if
Zeus's daughter Aphrodite came into battle I was to wound her with my spear. Therefore I am
retreating, and biding the other Argives gather in this place, for I know that Ares is now lording
it in the field.”

neither Ares nor any other of the immortals, for I will befriend you. Nay, drive straight at Ares,
and smite him in close combat; fear not this raging madman, villain incarnate, first on one side
and then on the other. But now he was holding talk with Hera and myself, saying he would help
the Argives and attack the Trojans; nevertheless he is with the Trojans, and has forgotten the Argives.”

[835] With this she caught hold of Sthenelus and lifted him off the chariot on to the ground. In a second he was on the ground, whereupon the goddess mounted the car and placed herself by the side of Diomedes. The oaken axle groaned aloud under the burden of the awful goddess and the hero; Pallas Athena took the whip and reins, and drove straight at Ares. He was in the act of stripping huge Periphas, son of Ochesius and bravest of the Aetolians. Bloody Ares was stripping him of his armour, and Athena donned the helmet of Hades, that he might not see her.

[846] When, therefore, he saw Diomedes, he made straight for him and let Periphas lie where he had fallen. As soon as they were at close quarters he let fly with his bronze spear over the reins and yoke, thinking to take Diomedes' life, but Athena caught the spear in her hand and made it fly harmlessly over the chariot. Diomedes then threw, and Pallas Athena drove the spear into the pit of Ares' stomach where his under-girdle went round him. There Diomedes wounded him, tearing his fair flesh and then drawing his spear out again. Ares roared as loudly as nine or ten thousand men in the thick of a fight, and the Achaeans and Trojans were struck with panic, so terrible was the cry he raised.

[864] As a dark cloud in the sky when it comes on to blow after heat, even so did Diomedes son of Tydeus see Ares ascend into the broad heavens. With all speed he reached high Olympus, home of the gods, and in great pain sat down beside Zeus the son of Cronus. He showed Zeus the immortal blood that was flowing from his wound, and spoke piteously, saying, “Father Zeus, are you not angered by such doings? We gods are continually suffering in the most cruel manner at one another's hands while helping mortals; and we all owe you a grudge for having begotten that mad termagant of a daughter, who is always committing outrage of some kind. We other gods must all do as you bid us, but her you neither scold nor punish; you encourage her because the pestilent creature is your daughter. See how she has been inciting proud Diomedes to vent his rage on the immortal gods. First he went up to the Cyprian and wounded her in the hand near her wrist, and then he sprang upon me too as though he were a god. Had I not run for it I must either have lain there for long enough in torments among the ghastly corpes, or have been eaten alive with spears till I had no more strength left in me.”

[888] Zeus looked angrily at him and said, “Do not come whining here, Sir Facing-bothways. I hate you worst of all the gods in Olympus, for you are ever fighting and making mischief. You
have the intolerable and stubborn spirit of your mother Hera: it is all I can do to manage her, and it is her doing that you are now in this plight: still, I cannot let you remain longer in such great pain; you are my own off-spring, and it was by me that your mother conceived you; if, however, you had been the son of any other god, you are so destructive that by this time you should have been lying lower than the sons of Heaven.”¹

[899] He then bade Paeon heal him, whereon Paeon spread pain-killing herbs upon his wound and cured him, for he was not of mortal mould. As the juice of the fig-tree curdles milk, and thickens it in a moment though it is liquid, even so instantly did Paeon cure fierce Ares. Then Hebe washed him, and clothed him in goodly raiment, and he took his seat by his father Zeus all glorious to behold.

But Hera of Argos and Athena of Alalcomene, now that they had put a stop to the murderous doings of Ares, went back again to the house of Zeus.

¹ The Titans are the "sons of Heaven" are the Titans whom Zeus defeated in a war and imprisoned in Tartarus, deep beneath the earth.
Book Six

The Achaeans Rally: 1 - 71

The fight between Trojans and Achaeans was now left to rage as it would, and the tide of war surged hither and thither over the plain as they aimed their bronze-shod spears at one another between the streams of Simois and Xanthus.

[5] First, Ajax son of Telamon, tower of strength to the Achaeans, broke a phalanx of the Trojans, and came to the assistance of his comrades by killing Acamas son of Eussorus, the best man among the Thracians, being both brave and of great stature. The spear struck the projecting peak of his helmet: its bronze point then went through his forehead into the brain, and darkness veiled his eyes.

[12] Then Diomedes killed Axylus son of Teuthranus, a rich man who lived in the strong city of Arisbe, and was beloved by all men; for he had a house by the roadside, and entertained everyone who passed; how is it, then, that not one of his guests stood before him to save his life, and Diomedes killed both him and his squire Calesius, who was then his charioteer? So the pair passed beneath the earth.

[20] Euryalus killed Dresus and Opheltius, and then went in pursuit of Aesepus and Pedasus, whom the naiad nymph Abarbarea had borne to noble Bucolion. Bucolion was eldest son to Laomedon, but he was a bastard. While tending his sheep he had converse with the nymph, and she conceived twin sons; these the son of Mecisteus now slew, and he stripped the armour from their shoulders. Polypoetes then killed Astyalus, Odysseus Pidytes of Percote, and Teucer Aretaon. Ablerus fell by the spear of Nestor's son Antilochus, and Agamemnon, king of men, killed Elatus who dwelt in Pedasus by the banks of the river Satnioeis. Leitus killed Phylacus as he was flying, and Eurypylus slew Melanthus.

[37] Then Menelaus of the loud war-cry took Adrestus alive, for his horses ran into a tamarisk bush, as they were flying wildly over the plain, and broke the pole from the car; they went on towards the city along with the others in full flight, but Adrestus rolled out, and fell in the dust flat on his face by the wheel of his chariot; Menelaus came up to him spear in hand, but Adrestus caught him by the knees begging for his life. “Take me alive,” he cried, “son of Atreus, and you shall have a full ransom for me: my father is rich and has much treasure of gold, bronze, and
wrought iron laid by in his house. From this store he will give you a large ransom should he hear of my being alive and at the ships of the Achaeans.”

[51] Thus did he plead, and Menelaus was for yielding and giving him to a squire to take to the ships of the Achaeans, but Agamemnon came running up to him and rebuked him. “My good Menelaus,” said he, “this is no time for giving quarter. Has, then, your house fared so well at the hands of the Trojans? Let us not spare a single one of them- not even the child unborn and in its mother's womb; let not a man of them be left alive, but let all in Ilium perish, unheeded and forgotten.”

[61] Thus did he speak, and his brother was persuaded by him, for his words were just. Menelaus, therefore, thrust Adrestus from him, whereon King Agamemnon struck him in the flank, and he fell: then the son of Atreus planted his foot upon his breast to draw his spear from the body.

[66] Meanwhile Nestor shouted to the Argives, saying, “My friends, Danaan warriors, servants of Ares, let no man lag that he may spoil the dead, and bring back much booty to the ships. Let us kill as many as we can; the bodies will lie upon the plain, and you can despoil them later at your leisure.”

**Hector Rallies the Trojans: 72 - 118**

[72] With these words he put heart and soul into them all. And now the Trojans would have been routed and driven back into Ilium, had not Priam's son Helenus, wisest of augurs, said to Hector and Aeneas, “Hector and Aeneas, you two are the mainstays of the Trojans and Lycians, for you are foremost at all times, alike in fight and counsel; hold your ground here, and go about among the host to rally them in front of the gates, or they will fling themselves into the arms of their wives, to the great joy of our foes. Then, when you have put heart into all our companies, we will stand firm here and fight the Danaans however hard they press us, for there is nothing else to be done. Meanwhile do you, Hector, go to the city and tell our mother what is happening. Tell her to bid the matrons gather at the temple of Athena in the acropolis; let her then take her key and open the doors of the sacred building; there, upon the knees of Athena, let her lay the largest, fairest robe she has in her house- the one she sets most store by; let her, moreover, promise to sacrifice twelve yearling heifers that have never yet felt the goad, in the temple of the goddess, if she will take pity on the town, with the wives and little ones of the Trojans, and keep the son of Tydeus from falling on the goodly city of Ilium; for he fights with fury and fills men's
souls with panic. I hold him mightiest of them all; we did not fear even their great champion Achilles, son of a goddess though he be, as we do this man: his rage is beyond all bounds, and there is none can vie with him in prowess”

[101] Hector did as his brother bade him. He sprang from his chariot, and went about everywhere among the host, brandishing his spears, urging the men on to fight, and raising the dread cry of battle. Thereon they rallied and again faced the Achaeans, who gave ground and ceased their murderous onset, for they deemed that some one of the immortals had come down from starry heaven to help the Trojans, so strangely had they rallied. And Hector shouted to the Trojans, “Trojans and allies, be men, my friends, and fight with might and main, while I go to Troy and tell the old men of our council and our wives to pray to the gods and vow hecatombs in their honour.”

[117] With this he went his way, and the black rim of hide that went round his shield beat against his neck and his ankles.

**Diomedes and Glaucus: 119 - 236**

[119] Then Glaucus son of Hippolochus, and the son of Tydeus went into the open space between the hosts to fight in single combat. When they were close up to one another Diomedes of the loud war-cry was the first to speak. “Who, my good sir,” said he, “who are you among men? I have never seen you in battle until now, but you are daring beyond all others if you abide my onset. Woe to those fathers whose sons face my might. If, however, you are one of the immortals and have come down from heaven, I will not fight you; for even valiant Lycurgus, son of Dryas, did not live long when he took to fighting with the gods. He it was that drove the nursing women who were in charge of frenzied Dionysus through the land of Nysa, and they flung their thyrsi on the ground as murderous Lycurgus beat them with his oxgoad. Dionysus himself plunged terror-stricken into the sea, and Thetis took him to her bosom to comfort him, for he was scared by the fury with which the man reviled him. Thereon the gods who live at ease were angry with Lycurgus and the son of Cronus struck him blind, nor did he live much longer after he had become hateful to the immortals. Therefore I will not fight with the blessed gods; but if you are of them that eat the fruit of the ground, draw near and meet your doom.”

[144] And the son of Hippolochus answered, son of Tydeus, why ask me of my lineage? Men come and go as leaves year by year upon the trees. Those of autumn the wind sheds upon the ground, but when spring returns the forest buds forth with fresh vines. Even so is it with the
generations of mankind, the new spring up as the old are passing away. If, then, you would learn
my descent, it is one that is well known to many. There is a city in the heart of Argos, pasture
land of horses, called Ephyra, where Sisyphus lived, who was the craftiest of all mankind. He
was the son of Aeolus, and had a son named Glaucus, who was father to Bellerophon, whom
heaven endowed with the most surpassing comeliness and beauty. But Proetus devised his ruin,
and being stronger than he, drove him from the land of the Argives, over which Zeus had made
him ruler. For Antea, wife of Proetus, lusted after him, and would have had him lie with her in
secret; but Bellerophon was an honourable man and would not, so she told lies about him to
Proteus. 'Proetus,' said she, 'kill Bellerophon or die, for he would have had converse with me
against my will.' The king was angered, but shrank from killing Bellerophon, so he sent him to
Lycia with lying letters of introduction, written on a folded tablet, and containing much ill
against the bearer. He bade Bellerophon show these letters to his father-in-law, to the end that he
might thus perish; Bellerophon therefore went to Lycia, and the gods convoyed him safely.

[172] “When he reached the river Xanthus, which is in Lycia, the king received him with all
goodwill, feasted him nine days, and killed nine heifers in his honour, but when rosy-fingered
dawn appeared upon the tenth day, he questioned him and desired to see the letter from his son-
in-law Proetus. When he had received the wicked letter he first commanded Bellerophon to kill
that savage monster, the Chimaera, who was not a human being, but a goddess, for she had the
head of a lion and the tail of a serpent, while her body was that of a goat, and she breathed forth
flames of fire; but Bellerophon slew her, for he was guided by signs from heaven.¹ He next
fought the far-famed Solymi, and this, he said, was the hardest of all his battles. Thirdly, he
killed the Amazons, women who were the peers of men, and as he was returning thence the king
devised yet another plan for his destruction; he picked the bravest warriors in all Lycia, and
placed them in ambuscade, but not a man ever came back, for Bellerophon killed every one of
them. Then the king knew that he must be the valiant offspring of a god, so he kept him in Lycia,
gave him his daughter in marriage, and made him of equal honour in the kingdom with himself;
and the Lycians gave him a piece of land, the best in all the country, fair with vineyards and
tilled fields, to have and to hold.

[196] “The king's daughter bore Bellerophon three children, Isander, Hippolochus, and
Laodameia. Zeus, the lord of counsel, lay with Laodameia, and she bore him noble Sarpedon; but

¹ According to other versions, Pegasus helped him kill the Chimaera.
when Bellerophon came to be hated by all the gods, he wandered all desolate and dismayed upon the Alean plain, gnawing at his own heart, and shunning the path of man. Ares, insatiate of battle, killed his son Isander while he was fighting the Solymi; his daughter was killed by Artemis of the golden reins, for she was angered with her; but Hippolochus was father to me, and when he sent me to Troy he urged me again and again to fight ever among the foremost and outvie my peers, so as not to shame the blood of my fathers who were the noblest in Ephyra and in all Lycia. This, then, is the descent I claim.”

[212] Thus did he speak, and the heart of Diomedes was glad. He planted his spear in the ground, and spoke to him with friendly words. “Then,” he said, you are an old friend of my father's house. Great Oeneus once entertained Bellerophon for twenty days, and the two exchanged presents. Oeneus gave a belt rich with purple, and Bellerophon a double cup, which I left at home when I set out for Troy. I do not remember Tydeus, for he was taken from us while I was yet a child, when the army of the Achaeans was cut to pieces before Thebes. Henceforth, however, I must be your host in middle Argos, and you mine in Lycia, if I should ever go there; let us avoid one another's spears even during a general engagement; there are many noble Trojans and allies whom I can kill, if I overtake them and heaven delivers them into my hand; so again with yourself, there are many Achaeans whose lives you may take if you can; we two, then, will exchange armour, that all present may know of the old ties that subsist between us.”

[232] With these words they sprang from their chariots, grasped one another's hands, and plighted friendship. But the son of Cronus made Glaucus take leave of his wits, for he exchanged golden armour for bronze, the worth of a hundred head of cattle for the worth of nine.

**Hector and Hecuba: 237 - 311**

[237] Now when Hector reached the Scaean gates and the oak tree, the wives and daughters of the Trojans came running towards him to ask after their sons, brothers, kinsmen, and husbands: he told them to set about praying to the gods, and many were made sorrowful as they heard him.

[242] Presently he reached the splendid palace of King Priam, adorned with colonnades of hewn stone. In it there were fifty bedchambers- all of hewn stone- built near one another, where the sons of Priam slept, each with his wedded wife. Opposite these, on the other side the courtyard, there were twelve upper rooms also of hewn stone for Priam's daughters, built near one another, where his sons-in-law slept with their wives. When Hector got there, his fond mother came up to him with Laodice the fairest of her daughters. She took his hand within her
own and said, “My son, why have you left the battle to come hither? Are the Achaeans, woe betide them, pressing you hard about the city that you have thought fit to come and uplift your hands to Zeus from the citadel? Wait till I can bring you wine that you may make offering to Zeus and to the other immortals, and may then drink and be refreshed. Wine gives a man fresh strength when he is wearied, as you now are with fighting on behalf of your kinsmen.”

[263] And Hector answered, “Honoured mother, bring no wine, lest you unman me and I forget my strength. I dare not make a drink-offering to Zeus with unwashed hands; one who is bespattered with blood and filth may not pray to the son of Cronus. Get the matrons together, and go with offerings to the temple of Athena driver of the spoil; there, upon the knees of Athena, lay the largest and fairest robe you have in your house- the one you set most store by; promise, moreover, to sacrifice twelve yearling heifers that have never yet felt the goad, in the temple of the goddess if she will take pity on the town, with the wives and little ones of the Trojans, and keep the son of Tydeus from off the goodly city of Ilium, for he fights with fury, and fills men's souls with panic. Go, then, to the temple of Athena, while I seek Paris and exhort him, if he will hear my words. Would that the earth might open her jaws and swallow him, for Zeus bred him to be the bane of the Trojans, and of Priam and Priam's sons. Could I but see him go down into the house of Hades, my heart would forget its heaviness.”

[286] His mother went into the house and called her waiting-women who gathered the matrons throughout the city. She then went down into her fragrant store-room, where her embroidered robes were kept, the work of Sidonian women, whom Alexander had brought over from Sidon when he sailed the seas upon that voyage during which he carried off Helen. Hecuba took out the largest robe, and the one that was most beautifully enriched with embroidery, as an offering to Athena: it glittered like a star, and lay at the very bottom of the chest. With this she went on her way and many matrons with her.

[298] When they reached the temple of Athena, lovely Theano, daughter of Cisseus and wife of Antenor, opened the doors, for the Trojans had made her priestess of Athena. The women lifted up their hands to the goddess with a loud cry, and Theano took the robe to lay it upon the knees of Athena, praying the while to the daughter of great Zeus. “Holy Athena,” she cried, “protectress of our city, mighty goddess, break the spear of Diomedes and lay him low before the

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1 Sidon, in what is now Lebanon, is well off course for a journey between Sparta and Troy. Many legends have it that Paris and Helen went to Egypt first, and then made their way to Troy.
Scaean gates. Do this, and we will sacrifice twelve heifers that have never yet known the goad, in your temple, if you will have pity upon the town, with the wives and little ones If the Trojans.”

Thus she prayed, but Pallas Athena granted not her prayer.

**Hector and Paris: 312 - 368**

[312] While they were thus praying to the daughter of great Zeus, Hector went to the fair house of Alexander, which he had built for him by the foremost builders in the land. They had built him his house, storehouse, and courtyard near those of Priam and Hector on the acropolis. Here Hector entered, with a spear five meters long in his hand; the bronze point gleamed in front of him, and was fastened to the shaft of the spear by a ring of gold. He found Alexander within the house, busied about his armour, his shield and cuirass, and handling his curved bow; there, too, sat Argive Helen with her women, setting them their several tasks; and as Hector saw him he rebuked him with words of scorn. “Sir,” said he, “you do ill to nurse this rancour; the people perish fighting round this our town; you would yourself chide one whom you saw shirking his part in the combat. Up then, or ere long the city will be in a blaze.”

[332] And Alexander answered, “Hector, your rebuke is just; listen therefore, and believe me when I tell you that I am not here so much through rancour or ill-will towards the Trojans, as from a desire to indulge my grief. My wife was even now gently urging me to battle, and I hold it better that I should go, for victory is ever fickle. Wait, then, while I put on my armour, or go first and I will follow. I shall be sure to overtake you.”

[342] Hector made no answer, but Helen tried to soothe him. “Brother,” said she, “to my abhorred and sinful self, would that a whirlwind had caught me up on the day my mother brought me forth, and had borne me to some mountain or to the waves of the roaring sea that should have swept me away ere this mischief had come about. But, since the gods have devised these evils, would, at any rate, that I had been wife to a better man- to one who could smart under dishonour and men's evil speeches. This fellow was never yet to be depended upon, nor never will be, and he will surely reap what he has sown. Still, brother, come in and rest upon this seat, for it is you who bear the brunt of that toil that has been caused by my hateful self and by the sin of Alexander- both of whom Zeus has doomed to be a theme of song among those that shall be born hereafter.”

[359] And Hector answered, “Bid me not be seated, Helen, for all the goodwill you bear me. I cannot stay. I am in haste to help the Trojans, who miss me greatly when I am not among them;
but urge your husband, and of his own self also let him make haste to overtake me before I am out of the city. I must go home to see my household, my wife and my little son, for I know not whether I shall ever again return to them, or whether the gods will cause me to fall by the hands of the Achaeans.”

**Hector and Andromache: 369 - 529**

[369] Then Hector left her, and forthwith was at his own house. He did not find Andromache, for she was on the wall with her child and one of her maids, weeping bitterly. Seeing, then, that she was not within, he stood on the threshold of the women's rooms and said, “Women, tell me, and tell me true, where did Andromache go when she left the house? Was it to my sisters, or to my brothers' wives? Or is she at the temple of Athena where the other women are propitiating the awful goddess?”

[381] His good housekeeper answered, “Hector, since you bid me tell you truly, she did not go to your sisters nor to your brothers' wives, nor yet to the temple of Athena, where the other women are propitiating the awful goddess, but she is on the high wall of Ilium, for she had heard the Trojans were being hard pressed, and that the Achaeans were in great force: she went to the wall in frenzied haste, and the nurse went with her carrying the child.”

[390] Hector hurried from the house when she had done speaking, and went down the streets by the same way that he had come. When he had gone through the city and had reached the Scaean gates through which he would go out on to the plain, his wife came running towards him, Andromache, daughter of great Eetion who ruled in Thebe under the wooded slopes of Mt. Placus, and was king of the Cilicians. His daughter had married Hector, and now came to meet him with a nurse who carried his little child in her bosom- a mere babe. Hector's darling son, and lovely as a star. Hector had named him Scamandrius, but the people called him Astyanax, for his father stood alone as chief guardian of Ilium.¹

[404] Hector smiled as he looked upon the boy, but he did not speak, and Andromache stood by him weeping and taking his hand in her own. “Dear husband,” said she, “your valour will bring you to destruction; think on your infant son, and on my hapless self who before long shall be your widow- for the Achaeans will set upon you in a body and kill you. It would be better for

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¹ He stood at the doorway because men were not permitted to enter the women's area of a house - not even the man of the house.

² In Greek, the name Astyanax means *Leader of the City.*
me, should I lose you, to lie dead and buried, for I shall have nothing left to comfort me when you are gone, save only sorrow. I have neither father nor mother now. Achilles slew my father, Eetion, when he sacked Thebe the goodly city of the Cilicians. He slew him, but did not for very shame despoil him; when he had burned him in his wondrous armour, he raised a barrow over his ashes and the mountain nymphs, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, planted a grove of elms about his tomb. I had seven brothers in my father's house, but on the same day they all went within the house of Hades. Achilles killed them as they were with their sheep and cattle.

[425] My mother- her who had been queen of all the land under Mt. Placus- he brought hither with the spoil, and freed her for a great sum, but the archer- queen Artemis took her in the house of your father. Nay- Hector- you who to me are father, mother, brother, and dear husband- have mercy upon me; stay here upon this wall; make not your child fatherless, and your wife a widow; as for the host, place them near the fig-tree, where the city can be best scaled, and the wall is weakest. Thrice have the bravest of them come there and assailed it, under the two Ajaxes, Idomeneus, the sons of Atreus, and the brave son of Tydeus, either of their own bidding, or because some soothsayer had told them.”

[440] And Hector answered, “Wife, I too have thought upon all this, but with what face should I look upon the Trojans, men or women, if I shirked battle like a coward? I cannot do so: I know nothing save to fight bravely in the forefront of the Trojan host and win renown alike for my father and myself. Well do I know that the day will surely come when mighty Ilium shall be destroyed with Priam and Priam's people, but I grieve for none of these- not even for Hecuba, nor King Priam, nor for my brothers many and brave who may fall in the dust before their foes- for none of these do I grieve as for yourself when the day shall come on which some one of the Achaeans shall rob you for ever of your freedom, and bear you weeping away. It may be that you will have to ply the loom in Argos at the bidding of a mistress, or to fetch water from the springs Messeis or Hypereia, treated brutally by some cruel task-master; then will one say who sees you weeping, 'She was wife to Hector, the bravest warrior among the Trojans during the war before Ilium.' On this your tears will break forth anew for him who would have put away the day of captivity from you. May I lie dead under the barrow that is heaped over my body before I hear your cry as they carry you into bondage.”

1 On the scalable section of the walls, see Pindar, Odes, Olympian 8.
He stretched his arms towards his child, but the boy cried and nestled in his nurse's bosom, scared at the sight of his father's armour, and at the horse-hair plume that nodded fiercely from his helmet. His father and mother laughed to see him, but Hector took the helmet from his head and laid it all gleaming upon the ground. Then he took his darling child, kissed him, and dandled him in his arms, praying over him the while to Zeus and to all the gods. “Zeus,” he cried, “grant that this my child may be even as myself, chief among the Trojans; let him be not less excellent in strength, and let him rule Ilium with his might. Then may one say of him as he comes from battle, 'The son is far better than the father.' May he bring back the blood-stained spoils of him whom he has laid low, and let his mother's heart be glad.”

With this he laid the child again in the arms of his wife, who took him to her own soft bosom, smiling through her tears. As her husband watched her his heart yearned towards her and he caressed her fondly, saying, “My own wife, do not take these things too bitterly to heart. No one can hurry me down to Hades before my time, but if a man's hour is come, be he brave or be he coward, there is no escape for him when he has once been born. Go, then, within the house, and busy yourself with your daily duties, your loom, your distaff, and the ordering of your servants; for war is man's matter, and mine above all others of them that have been born in Ilium.”

He took his plumed helmet from the ground, and his wife went back again to her house, weeping bitterly and often looking back towards him. When she reached her home she found her maidens within, and bade them all join in her lament; so they mourned Hector in his own house though he was yet alive, for they deemed that they should never see him return safe from battle, and from the furious hands of the Achaeans.

Paris did not remain long in his house. He donned his goodly armour overlaid with bronze, and hasted through the city as fast as his feet could take him. As a horse, stabled and fed, breaks loose and gallops gloriously over the plain to the place where he is wont to bathe in the fair-flowing river- he holds his head high, and his mane streams upon his shoulders as he exults in his strength and flies like the wind to the haunts and feeding ground of the mares- even so went forth Paris from high Pergamus, gleaming like sunlight in his armour, and he laughed aloud.

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1 There is a profound poetry here: Many of the stories of the Greek myth cycles involve a prophecy warning a man that his son will be better than he - and the man then attempts first to avoid having a son and then to kill the son that is born. Ironically, that is exactly the plot of the birth of Paris.
as he sped swiftly on his way. Forthwith he came upon his brother Hector, who was then turning away from the place where he had held converse with his wife, and he was himself the first to speak. “Sir,” said he, “I fear that I have kept you waiting when you are in haste, and have not come as quickly as you bade me.”

[515] “My good brother,” answered Hector, you fight bravely, and no man with any justice can make light of your doings in battle. But you are careless and wilfully remiss. It grieves me to the heart to hear the ill that the Trojans speak about you, for they have suffered much on your account. Let us be going, and we will make things right hereafter, should Zeus vouchsafe us to set the cup of our deliverance before ever-living gods of heaven in our own homes, when we have chased the Achaeans from Troy.”
Book Seven,

Summary to 344:

Hector and Paris then enter the battle, but Athena and Apollo convince Hector to challenge the Achaeans to put up a champion to fight in single combat. Menelaus is the first to volunteer but Agamemnon convinces him not to fight Hector. Nestor then gives a speech that shames the other Greek heroes into stepping forward. The volunteers cast lots and Ajax son of Telamon is chosen. Ajax and Hector fight but neither is able to gain an advantage on the other and the duel is called with the coming of nightfall.

Both sides retire from the field of battle and Agamemnon hosts a feast for the Greek captains. At this dinner, Nestor suggests that they build a wall and a trench to protect the Greek camp and the ships from the Trojans and it is resolved that they will do so.

The Trojans also meet in council that night:

An Offer of Peace, and a Truce: 345 - 482

[345] Meanwhile the Trojans held a council, angry and full of discord, on the acropolis by the gates of King Priam's palace; and wise Antenor spoke. “Hear me he said, “Trojans, Dardanians, and allies, that I may speak even as I am minded. Let us give up Argive Helen and her wealth to the sons of Atreus, for we are now fighting in violation of our solemn covenants, and shall not prosper till we have done as I say.”

[354] He then sat down and Alexander husband of lovely Helen rose to speak. “Antenor,” said he, “your words are not to my liking; you can find a better saying than this if you will; if, however, you have spoken in good earnest, then indeed has heaven robbed you of your reason. I will speak plainly, and hereby notify to the Trojans that I will not give up the woman; but the wealth that I brought home with her from Argos I will restore, and will add yet further of my own.”

[365] On this, when Paris had spoken and taken his seat, Priam of the race of Dardanus, peer of gods in council, rose and with all sincerity and goodwill addressed them thus: “Hear me, Trojans, Dardanians, and allies, that I may speak even as I am minded. Get your suppers now as hitherto throughout the city, but keep your watches and be wakeful. At daybreak let Idaeus go to the ships, and tell Agamemnon and Menelaus sons of Atreus the saying of Alexander through whom this quarrel has come about; and let him also be instant with them that they now cease
fighting till we burn our dead; hereafter we will fight anew, till heaven decide between us and
give victory to one or to the other.”

[379] Thus did he speak, and they did even as he had said. They took supper in their
companies and at daybreak Idaeus went his way to the ships. He found the Danaans, servants of
Ares, in council at the stern of Agamemnon's ship, and took his place in the midst of them. “Son
of Atreus,” he said, “and princes of the Achaeian host, Priam and the other noble Trojans have
sent me to tell you the saying of Alexander through whom this quarrel has come about, if so be
that you may find it acceptable. All the treasure he took with him in his ships to Troy- would that
he had sooner perished- he will restore, and will add yet further of his own, but he will not give
up the wedded wife of Menelaus, though the Trojans would have him do so. Priam bade me
inquire further if you will cease fighting till we burn our dead; hereafter we will fight anew, till
heaven decide between us and give victory to one or to the other.”

[398] They all held their peace, but presently Diomedes of the loud war-cry spoke, saying,
“Let there be no taking, neither treasure, nor yet Helen, for even a child may see that the doom of
the Trojans is at hand.”

[403] The sons of the Achaeans shouted applause at the words that Diomedes had spoken, and
thereon King Agamemnon said to Idaeus, “Idaeus, you have heard the answer the Achaeans
make you-and I with them. But as concerning the dead, I give you leave to burn them, for when
men are once dead there should be no grudging them the rites of fire. Let Zeus the mighty
husband of Hera be witness to this covenant.”

[412] As he spoke he upheld his sceptre in the sight of all the gods, and Idaeus went back to
the strong city of Ilium. The Trojans and Dardanians were gathered in council waiting his return;
when he came, he stood in their midst and delivered his message. As soon as they heard it they
set about their twofold labour, some to gather the corpses, and others to bring in wood. The
Argives on their part also hastened from their ships, some to gather the corpses, and others to
bring in wood.

[421] The sun was beginning to beat upon the fields, fresh risen into the vault of heaven from
the slow still currents of deep Oceanus, when the two armies met. They could hardly recognise
their dead, but they washed the clotted gore from off them, shed tears over them, and lifted them
upon their waggons. Priam had forbidden the Trojans to wail aloud, so they heaped their dead
sadly and silently upon the pyre, and having burned them went back to the city of Ilium. The
Achaeans in like manner heaped their dead sadly and silently on the pyre, and having burned them went back to their ships.

[433] Now in the twilight when it was not yet dawn, chosen bands of the Achaeans were gathered round the pyre and built one barrow that was raised in common for all, and hard by this they built a high wall to shelter themselves and their ships; they gave it strong gates that there might be a way through them for their chariots, and close outside it they dug a trench deep and wide, and they planted it within with stakes.

[442] Thus did the Achaeans toil, and the gods, seated by the side of Zeus the lord of lightning, marvelled at their great work; but Poseidon, lord of the earthquake, spoke, saying, “Father Zeus, what mortal in the whole world will again take the gods into his counsel? See you not how the Achaeans have built a wall about their ships and driven a trench all round it, without offering hecatombs to the gods? The fame of this wall will reach as far as dawn itself, and men will no longer think anything of the one which Phoebus Apollo and I built with so much labour for Laomedon.”

[453] Zeus was displeased and answered, “What, O shaker of the earth, are you talking about? A god less powerful than you might be alarmed at what they are doing, but your fame reaches as far as dawn itself. Surely when the Achaeans have gone home with their ships, you can shatter their wall and fling it into the sea; you can cover the beach with sand again, and the great wall of the Achaeans will then be utterly effaced.”

[464] Thus did they converse, and by sunset the work of the Achaeans was completed; they then slaughtered oxen at their tents and got their supper. Many ships had come with wine from Lemnos, sent by Euneus the son of Jason, born to him by Hypsipyle. The son of Jason freighted them with ten thousand measures of wine, which he sent specially to the sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaus. From this supply the Achaeans bought their wine, some with bronze, some with iron, some with hides, some with whole heifers, and some again with captives. They spread a goodly banquet and feasted the whole night through, as also did the Trojans and their allies in the city. But all the time Zeus boded them ill and roared with his portentous thunder. Pale fear got hold upon them, and they spilled the wine from their cups on to

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1 Apollo and Poseidon had joined in the conspiracy to overthrow Zeus. Their punishment was that they help Laomedon build the walls of Troy. Laomedon refused to reward them for their help, and that is why Poseidon sent the sea monster.
the ground, nor did any dare drink till he had made offerings to the most mighty son of Cronus. Then they laid themselves down to rest and enjoyed the boon of sleep.
Book Eight

Zeus' Warning to the Gods: 1 - 52

Now when Morning, clad in her robe of saffron, had begun to suffuse light over the earth, Zeus called the gods in council on the topmost crest of serrated Olympus. Then he spoke and all the other gods gave ear. “Hear me,” said he, “gods and goddesses, that I may speak even as I am minded. Let none of you neither goddess nor god try to cross me, but obey me every one of you that I may bring this matter to an end. If I see anyone acting apart and helping either Trojans or Danaans, he shall be beaten inordinately as soon as he comes back again to Olympus; or I will hurl him down into dark Tartarus far into the deepest pit under the earth, where the gates are iron and the floor bronze, as far beneath Hades as heaven is high above the earth, that you may learn how much the mightiest I am among you. Try me and find out for yourselves. Hang me a golden chain from heaven, and lay hold of it all of you, gods and goddesses together- tug as you will, you will not drag Zeus the supreme counsellor from heaven to earth; but were I to pull at it myself I should draw you up with earth and sea into the bargain, then would I bind the chain about some pinnacle of Olympus and leave you all dangling in the mid firmament. So far am I above all others either of gods or men.”

[28] They were frightened and all of them of held their peace, for he had spoken masterfully; but at last Athena answered, “Father, son of Cronus, king of kings, we all know that your might is not to be gainsaid, but we are also sorry for the Danaan warriors, who are perishing and coming to a bad end. We will, however, since you so bid us, refrain from actual fighting, but we will make serviceable suggestions to the Argives that they may not all of them perish in your displeasure.”

[38] Zeus smiled at her and answered, “Take heart, my child, Trito-born; I am not really in earnest, and I wish to be kind to you.”

[41] With this he yoked his fleet horses, with hoofs of bronze and manes of glittering gold. He girded himself also with gold about the body, seized his gold whip and took his seat in his chariot. Thereon he lashed his horses and they flew forward nothing loth midway twixt earth and starry heaven. After a while he reached many-fountained Ida, mother of wild beasts, and Gargarus, where are his grove and fragrant altar. There the father of gods and men stayed his horses, took them from the chariot, and hid them in a thick cloud; then he took his seat all
glorious upon the topmost crests, looking down upon the city of Troy and the ships of the
Achaeans.

**Summary of Book Eight; 53 - 334**

In the morning the Greeks and Trojans take to the field again and the battle remains even until
midday, when Zeus sends lightning to the right of the Trojan lines, signifying that he is blessing
their victory.

The Greeks understand the omen and begin a retreat, but Nestor's horses are disabled and he
is able to escape only with the aid of Diomedes.

Hector and the Trojans charge and the Greeks retreat inside their wall. Agamemnon then
rallies the Greek forces and they push the Trojans back beyond the trench.

**Hera and Athena Attempt to Intervene: 335 - 488**

[335] Zeus now again put heart into the Trojans, and they drove the Achaeans to their deep
trench with Hector in all his glory at their head. As a hound grips a wild boar or lion in flank or
buttock when he gives him chase, and watches warily for his wheeling, even so did Hector
follow close upon the Achaeans, ever killing the hindmost as they rushed panic-stricken
onwards. When they had fled through the set stakes and trench and many Achaeans had been laid
low at the hands of the Trojans, they halted at their ships, calling upon one another and praying
every man instantly as they lifted up their hands to the gods; but Hector wheeled his horses this
way and that, his eyes glaring like those of Gorgo\(^1\) or murderous Ares.

[350] Hera when she saw them had pity upon them, and at once said to Athena, “Alas, child
of aegis-bearing Zeus, shall you and I take no more thought for the dying Danaans, though it be
the last time we ever do so? See how they perish and come to a bad end before the onset of but a
single man. Hector the son of Priam rages with intolerable fury, and has already done great
mischief.”

Athena answered, “Would, indeed, this fellow might die in his own land, and fall by the hands
of the Achaeans; but my father Zeus is mad with spleen, ever foiling me, ever headstrong and
unjust. He forgets how often I saved his son when he was worn out by the labours Eurystheus

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\(^1\) Homer mentions only Gorgo, the monstrous woman who resides in Hades, but later traditions have three sisters,
the Gorgons or Gorgones: Medusa, Stheno and Euryale.
had laid on him. He would weep till his cry came up to heaven, and then Zeus would send me
down to help him; if I had had the sense to foresee all this, when Eurystheus sent him to the
house of Hades, to fetch the hell-hound from Erebus, he would never have come back alive out
of the deep waters of the river Styx. And now Zeus hates me, while he lets Thetis have her way
because she kissed his knees and took hold of his beard, when she was begging him to do honour
to Achilles. I shall know what to do next time he begins calling me his bright-eyed darling.2 Get
our horses ready, while I go within the house of aegis-bearing Zeus and put on my armour; we
shall then find out whether Priam's son Hector will be glad to meet us in the highways of battle,
or whether the Trojans will glut hounds and vultures with the fat of their flesh as they he dead by
the ships of the Achaeans.”

[381] Thus did she speak and white-armed Hera, daughter of great Cronus, obeyed her words;
she set about harnessing her gold-bedizened steeds, while Athena daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus
flung her rich vesture, made with her own hands, on to the threshold of her father, and donned
the shirt of Zeus, arming herself for battle. Then she stepped into her flaming chariot, and
grasped the spear so stout and sturdy and strong with which she quells the ranks of heroes who
have displeased her. Hera lashed her horses, and the gates of heaven bellowed as they flew open
of their own accord- gates over which the Hours preside, in whose hands are heaven and
Olympus, either to open the dense cloud that hides them or to close it. Through these the
goddesses drove their obedient steeds.

[397] But father Zeus when he saw them from Ida was very angry, and sent winged Iris with a
message to them. “Go,” said he, “fleas Iris, turn them back, and see that they do not come near
me, for if we come to fighting there will be mischief. This is what I say, and this is what I mean
to do. I will lame their horses for them; I will hurl them from their chariot, and will break it in
pieces. It will take them all ten years to heal the wounds my lightning shall inflict upon them; my
bright-eyed daughter will then learn what quarrelling with her father means. I am less surprised
and angry with Hera, for whatever I say she always contradicts me.”

[409] With this Iris went her way, fleet as the wind, from the heights of Ida to the lofty
summits of Olympus. She met the goddesses at the outer gates of its many valleys and gave them

1 A provocative statement considering that the labours were intended, by Hera's design, to kill Heracles.
2 Butler, as other translators, often renders "grey-eyed" for glaucopis. In every instance I have changed it to the more
litteral 'bright-eyed.'
her message. “What,” said she, “are you about? Are you mad? The son of Cronus forbids going. This is what he says, and this is what he means to do, he will lame your horses for you, he will hurl you from your chariot, and will break it in pieces. It will take you all of ten years to heal the wounds his lightning will inflict upon you, that you may learn, bright-eyed goddess, what quarrelling with your father means. He is less hurt and angry with Hera, for whatever he says she always contradicts him but you, awful bitch\(^1\), will you really dare to raise your huge spear in defiance of Zeus?”

[425] With this she left them, and Hera said to Athena, “Of a truth, child of aegis-bearing Zeus, I am not for fighting men's battles further in defiance of Zeus. Let them live or die as luck will have it, and let Zeus mete out his judgements upon the Trojans and Danaans according to his own pleasure.”

[432] She turned her steeds; the Hours presently unyoked them, made them fast to their ambrosial mangers, and leaned the chariot against the end wall of the courtyard. The two goddesses then sat down upon their golden thrones, amid the company of the other gods; but they were very angry.

[438] Presently father Zeus drove his chariot to Olympus, and entered the assembly of gods. The mighty lord of the earthquake unyoked his horses for him, set the car upon its stand, and threw a cloth over it. Zeus then sat down upon his golden throne and Olympus reeled beneath him. Athena and Hera sat alone, apart from Zeus, and neither spoke nor asked him questions, but Zeus knew what they meant, and said, “Athena and Hera, why are you so angry? Are you fatigued with killing so many of your dear friends the Trojans? Be this as it may, such is the might of my hands that all the gods in Olympus cannot turn me; you were both of you trembling all over ere ever you saw the fight and its terrible doings. I tell you therefore-and it would have surely been- I should have struck you with lighting, and your chariots would never have brought you back again to Olympus.”

[457] Athena and Hera groaned in spirit as they sat side by side and brooded mischief for the Trojans. Athena sat silent without a word, for she was in a furious passion and bitterly incensed against her father; but Hera could not contain herself and said, “What, dread son of Cronus, are you talking about? We know how great your power is, nevertheless we have compassion for the

\(^1\) Butler had “bold hussy”, which makes no sense: Athena is a virgin goddess. The Greek is *ainotate kuon*, literally as I have offered.
Danaan warriors who are perishing and coming to a bad end. We will, however, since you so bid us, refrain from actual fighting, but we will make serviceable suggestions to the Argives, that they may not all of them perish in your displeasure.”

[474] And Zeus answered, “To-morrow morning, Hera, if you choose to do so, you will see the son of Cronus destroying large numbers of the Argives, for fierce Hector shall not cease fighting till he has roused the son of Peleus when they are fighting in dire straits at their ships' sterns about the body of Patroclus. Like it or no, this is how it is decreed; for aught I care, you may go to the lowest depths beneath earth and sea, where Iapetus and Cronus dwell in lone Tartarus with neither ray of light nor breath of wind to cheer them. You may go on and on till you get there, and I shall not care one whit for your displeasure; you are the greatest bitch living.”¹

[484] Hera made him no answer. The sun's glorious orb now sank into Oceanus and drew down night over the land. Sorry indeed were the Trojans when light failed them, but welcome and thrice prayed for did darkness fall upon the Achaeans.

The Trojans Camp on the Plain: 489 - 561

[489] Then Hector led the Trojans back from the ships, and held a council on the open space near the river, where there was a spot clear of corpses. They left their chariots and sat down on the ground to hear the speech he made them. He grasped a spear five meters long,² the bronze point of which gleamed in front of it, while the ring round the spear-head was of gold Spear in hand he spoke. “Hear me,” said he, “Trojans, Dardanians, and allies. I deemed but now that I should destroy the ships and all the Achaeans with them ere I went back to Ilium, but darkness came on too soon. It was this alone that saved them and their ships upon the seashore. Now, therefore, let us obey the behests of night, and prepare our suppers. Take your horses out of their chariots and give them their feeds of corn; then make speed to bring sheep and cattle from the city; bring wine also and corn for your horses and gather much wood, that from dark till dawn we may burn watchfires whose flare may reach to heaven. For the Achaeans may try to fly beyond the sea by night, and they must not embark scatheless and unmolested; many a man among them must take a dart with him to nurse at home, hit with spear or arrow as he is leaping

¹ Again, Butler's "vixen" makes no sense, but the Greek is clear.
² See above, 6.319.
on board his ship, that others may fear to bring war and weeping upon the Trojans. Moreover let
the heralds tell it about the city that the growing youths and grey-bearded men are to camp upon
its heaven-built walls. Let the women each of them light a great fire in her house, and let watch
be safely kept lest the town be entered by surprise while the host is outside. See to it, brave
Trojans, as I have said, and let this suffice for the moment; at daybreak I will instruct you
further. I pray in hope to Zeus and to the gods that we may then drive those fate-spied hounds
from our land, for it is the fates that have borne them and their ships hither. This night, therefore,
let us keep watch, but with early morning let us put on our armour and rouse fierce war at the
ships of the Achaeans; I shall then know whether brave Diomedes the son of Tydeus will drive
me back from the ships to the wall, or whether I shall myself slay him and carry off his
bloodstained spoils. Tomorrow let him show his mettle, abide my spear if he dare. I wager that at
break of day, he shall be among the first to fall and many another of his comrades round him.
Would that I were as sure of being immortal and never growing old, and of being worshipped
like Athena and Apollo, as I am that this day will bring evil to the Argives.”

[542] Thus spoke Hector and the Trojans shouted applause. They took their sweating steeds
from under the yoke, and made them fast each by his own chariot. They made haste to bring
sheep and cattle from the city, they brought wine also and corn from their houses and gathered
much wood. They then offered unblemished hecatombs to the immortals, and the wind carried
the sweet savour of sacrifice to heaven - but the blessed gods partook not thereof, for they
bitterly hated Ilium with Priam and Priam's people. Thus high in hope they sat through the
livelong night by the highways of war, and many a watchfire did they kindle. As when the stars
shine clear, and the moon is bright- there is not a breath of air, not a peak nor glade nor jutting
headland but it stands out in the ineffable radiance that breaks from the serene of heaven; the
stars can all of them be told and the heart of the shepherd is glad- even thus shone the watchfires
of the Trojans before Ilium midway between the ships and the river Xanthus. A thousand camp-
fires gleamed upon the plain, and in the glow of each there sat fifty men, while the horses,
champing oats and corn beside their chariots, waited till dawn should come.
The Assembly of the Achaeans: 1 - 88

Thus did the Trojans watch. But Panic, comrade of blood-stained Rout, had taken fast hold of the Achaeans and their princes were all of them in despair. As when the two winds that blow from Thrace- the north and the northwest - spring up of a sudden and rouse the fury of the main- in a moment the dark waves uprear their heads and scatter their sea-wrack in all directions - even thus troubled were the hearts of the Achaeans.

[9] The son of Atreus in dismay bade the heralds call the people to a council man by man, but not to cry the matter aloud; he made haste also himself to call them, and they sat sorry at heart in their assembly. Agamemnon shed tears as it were a running stream or cataract on the side of some sheer cliff; and thus, with many a heavy sigh he spoke to the Achaeans.

[17] “My friends,” said he, “princes and councillors of the Argives, the hand of heaven has been laid heavily upon me. Cruel Zeus gave me his solemn promise that I should sack the city of Troy before returning, but he has played me false, and is now bidding me go ingloriously back to Argos with the loss of many people. Such is the will of Zeus, who has laid many a proud city in the dust as he will yet lay others, for his power is above all. Now, therefore, let us all do as I say and sail back to our own country, for we shall not take Troy.”

[29] Thus he spoke, and the sons of the Achaeans for a long while sat sorrowful there, but they all held their peace, till at last Diomedes of the loud battle-cry made answer saying, “Son of Atreus, I will chide your folly, as is my right in council. Be not then aggrieved that I should do so. In the first place you attacked me before all the Danaans and said that I was a coward and no soldier.1 The Argives young and old know that you did so. But the son of scheming Cronus endowed you by halves only. He gave you honour as the chief ruler over us, but valour, which is the highest both right and might he did not give you. Sir, think you that the sons of the Achaeans are indeed as unwarlike and cowardly as you say they are? If your own mind is set upon going home, go, the way is open to you; the many ships that followed you from Mycenae stand ranged upon the seashore; but the rest of us stay here till we have sacked Troy. Nay though these too should turn homeward with their ships, Sthenelus and myself will still fight on till we reach the goal of Ilium, for heaven was with us when we came.”

1 See above, 4.364 - 400.
[50] The sons of the Achaeans shouted applause at the words of Diomedes, master of horses, and presently Nestor rose to speak. “Son of Tydeus,” said he, “in war your prowess is beyond question, and in council you excel all who are of your own years; no one of the Achaeans can make light of what you say nor gainsay it, but you have not yet come to the end of the whole matter. You are still young - you might be the youngest of my own children - still you have spoken wisely and have counselled the chief of the Achaeans not without discretion; nevertheless I am older than you and I will tell you everything; therefore let no man, not even King Agamemnon, disregard my saying, for he that foments civil discord is a clanless, hearthless outlaw.

[65] “Now, however, let us obey the behests of night and get our suppers, but let the sentinels every man of them camp by the trench that is without the wall. I am giving these instructions to the young men; when they have been attended to, do you, son of Atreus, give your orders, for you are the most royal among us all. Prepare a feast for your councillors; it is right and reasonable that you should do so; there is abundance of wine in your tents, which the ships of the Achaeans bring from Thrace daily. You have everything at your disposal wherewith to entertain guests, and you have many subjects. When many are got together, you can be guided by him whose counsel is wisest- and sorely do we need shrewd and prudent counsel, for the foe has lit his watchfires hard by our ships. Who can be other than dismayed? This night will either be the ruin of our host, or save it.”

[79] Thus did he speak, and they did even as he had said. The sentinels went out in their armour under command of Nestor's son Thrasymedes, a captain of the host, and the sons of Ares, Ascalaphus and Ialmenus: there were also Meriones, Aphareus and Deipyrus, and the son of Creion, noble Lycomedes. There were seven captains of the sentinels, and with each there went a hundred youths armed with long spears: they took their places midway between the trench and the wall, and when they had done so they lit their fires and got every man his supper.

Agamemnon's Offer: 89 - 306

[89] The son of Atreus then bade many councillors of the Achaeans to his quarters prepared a great feast in their honour. They laid their hands on the good things that were before them, and as soon as they had enough to eat and drink, old Nestor, whose counsel was ever truest, was the first to lay his mind before them. He, therefore, with all sincerity and goodwill addressed them thus.
“With yourself, most noble son of Atreus, king of men, Agamemnon, will I both begin my speech and end it, for you are king over many people. Zeus, moreover, has vouchsafed you to wield the sceptre and to uphold righteousness, that you may take thought for your people under you; therefore it behooves you above all others both to speak and to give ear to the counsel of another who shall have been minded to speak wisely. All turns on you and on your commands, therefore I will say what I think will be best. No man will be of a truer mind than that which has been mine from the hour when you, sir, angered Achilles by taking the girl Briseis from his tent against my judgment. I urged you not to do so, but you yielded to your own pride, and dishonoured a hero whom heaven itself had honoured - for you still hold the prize that had been awarded to him. Now, however, let us think how we may appease him, both with presents and fair speeches that may conciliate him.”

And King Agamemnon answered, “Sir, you have reproved my folly justly. I was wrong. I own it. One whom heaven befriends is in himself a host, and Zeus has shown that he befriends this man by destroying many people of the Achaeans. I was blinded with passion and yielded to my worser mind; therefore I will make amends, and will give him great gifts by way of atonement. I will tell them in the presence of you all. I will give him seven tripods that have never yet been on the fire, and ten talents of gold. I will give him twenty iron cauldrons and twelve strong horses that have won races and carried off prizes. Rich, indeed, both in land and gold is he that has as many prizes as my horses have won me. I will give him seven excellent workwomen whom I chose for myself when he took Lesbos - all of surpassing beauty. I will give him these, and with them her whom I took from him, the daughter of Briseus; and I swear a great oath that I never went up into her couch, nor have been with her after the manner of men and women.

“All these things will I give him now, and if hereafter the gods vouchsafe me to sack the city of Priam, let him come when we Achaeans are dividing the spoil, and load his ship with gold and bronze to his liking; furthermore let him take twenty Trojan women, the loveliest after Helen herself. Then, when we reach Achaean Argos, wealthiest of all lands, he shall be my son-in-law and I will show him like honour with my own dear son Orestes, who is being nurtured in all abundance. I have three daughters, Chrysothemis, Laodice, and Iphianassa, let him take the one of his choice, freely and without gifts of wooing, to the house of Peleus; I will add such dower to boot as no man ever yet gave his daughter, and will give him seven well established cities,
Iliad - 96

Cardamyle, Enope, and Hire, where there is grass; holy Pherae and the rich meadows of Anthea; Aepea also, and the vine-clad slopes of Pedasus, all near the sea, and on the borders of sandy Pylos. The men that dwell there are rich in cattle and sheep; they will honour him with gifts as though he were a god, and be obedient to his comfortable ordinances. All this will I do if he will now forgo his anger. Let him then yield it is only Hades who is utterly ruthless and unyielding - and hence he is of all gods the one most hateful to mankind. Moreover I am older and more royal than himself. Therefore, let him now obey me.”

[162] Then Nestor answered, “Most noble son of Atreus, king of men, Agamemnon. The gifts you offer are no small ones, let us then send chosen messengers, who may go to the tent of Achilles son of Peleus without delay. Let those go whom I shall name. Let Phoenix, dear to Zeus, lead the way; let Ajax and Odysseus follow, and let the heralds Odius and Eurybates go with them. Now bring water for our hands, and bid all keep silence while we pray to Zeus the son of Cronus, if so be that he may have mercy upon us.”

[173] Thus did he speak, and his saying pleased them well. Men-servants poured water over the hands of the guests, while pages filled the mixing-bowls with wine and water, and handed it round after giving every man his drink-offering; then, when they had made their offerings, and had drunk each as much as he was minded, the envoys set out from the tent of Agamemnon son of Atreus; and Nestor, looking first to one and then to another, but most especially at Odysseus, was instant with them that they should prevail with the noble son of Peleus.

[182] They went their way by the shore of the sounding sea, and prayed earnestly to earth-encircling Poseidon that the high spirit of the son of Aeacus might incline favourably towards them. ¹ When they reached the ships and tents of the Myrmidons, they found Achilles playing on a lyre, fair, of cunning workmanship, and its cross-bar was of silver. It was part of the spoils which he had taken when he sacked the city of Eetion, and he was now diverting himself with it and singing the feats of heroes. He was alone with Patroclus, who sat opposite to him and said nothing, waiting till he should cease singing. Odysseus and Ajax now came in - Odysseus leading the way - and stood before him. Achilles sprang from his seat with the lyre still in his hand, and Patroclus, when he saw the strangers, rose also. Achilles then greeted them saying, “All hail and welcome - you must come upon some great matter, you, who for all my anger are still dearest to me of the Achaeans.”

¹ Peleus was the son of Aeacus. The hope is that Achilles will be as noble as his father and accept their offer.
With this he led them forward, and bade them sit on seats covered with purple rugs; then he said to Patroclus who was close by him, “Son of Menoetius, set a larger bowl upon the table, mix less water with the wine, and give every man his cup, for these are very dear friends, who are now under my roof.”

Patroclus did as his comrade bade him; he set the chopping-block in front of the fire, and on it he laid the loin of a sheep, the loin also of a goat, and the chine1 of a fat hog. Automedon held the meat while Achilles chopped it; he then sliced the pieces and put them on spits while the son of Menoetius made the fire burn high. When the flame had died down, he spread the embers, laid the spits on top of them, lifting them up and setting them upon the spit-racks; and he sprinkled them with salt. When the meat was roasted, he set it on platters, and handed bread round the table in fair baskets, while Achilles dealt them their portions. Then Achilles took his seat facing Odysseus against the opposite wall, and bade his comrade Patroclus offer sacrifice to the gods; so he cast the offerings into the fire, and they laid their hands upon the good things that were before them. As soon as they had had enough to eat and drink, Ajax made a sign to Phoenix, and when he saw this, Odysseus filled his cup with wine and pledged Achilles.

“Hail,” said he, “Achilles, we have had no scant of good cheer, neither in the tent of Agamemnon, nor yet here; there has been plenty to eat and drink, but our thought turns upon no such matter. Sir, we are in the face of great disaster, and without your help know not whether we shall save our fleet or lose it. The Trojans and their allies have camped hard by our ships and by the wall; they have lit watchfires throughout their host and deem that nothing can now prevent them from falling on our fleet. Zeus, moreover, has sent his lightnings on their right; Hector, in all his glory, rages like a maniac; confident that Zeus is with him he fears neither god nor man, but is gone raving mad, and prays for the approach of day. He vows that he will hew the high sterns of our ships in pieces, set fire to their hulls, and make havoc of the Achaeans while they are dazed and smothered in smoke; I much fear that heaven will make good his boasting, and it will prove our lot to perish at Troy far from our home in Argos. Up, then, and late though it be, save the sons of the Achaeans who faint before the fury of the Trojans. You will repent bitterly hereafter if you do not, for when the harm is done there will be no curing it; consider ere it be too late, and save the Danaans from destruction.

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1 A cut of meat along the backbone.
“My good friend, when your father Peleus sent you from Phthia to Agamemnon, did he not charge you saying, 'Son, Athena and Hera will make you strong if they choose, but check your high temper, for the better part is in goodwill. Eschew vain quarrelling, and the Achaeans old and young will respect you more for doing so.' These were his words, but you have forgotten them. Even now, however, be appeased, and put away your anger from you. Agamemnon will make you great amends if you will forgive him; listen, and I will tell you what he has said in his tent that he will give you. He will give you seven tripods that have never yet been on the fire, and ten talents of gold; twenty iron cauldrons, and twelve strong horses that have won races and carried off prizes. Rich indeed both in land and gold is he who has as many prizes as these horses have won for Agamemnon. Moreover he will give you seven excellent workwomen whom he chose for himself when you took Lesbos - all of surpassing beauty. He will give you these, and with them her whom he took from you, the daughter of Briseus, and he will swear a great oath, he has never gone up into her couch nor been with her after the manner of men and women. All these things will he give you now, and if hereafter the gods vouchsafe him to sack the city of Priam, you can come when we Achaeans are dividing the spoil, and load your ship with gold and bronze to your liking. You can take twenty Trojan women, the loveliest after Helen herself. Then, when we reach Achaean Argos, wealthiest of all lands, you shall be his son-in-law, and he will show you like honour with his own dear son Orestes, who is being nurtured in all abundance. Agamemnon has three daughters, Chrysothemis, Laodice, and Iphianassa; you may take the one of your choice, freely and without gifts of wooing, to the house of Peleus; he will add such dower to boot as no man ever yet gave his daughter, and will give you seven well-established cities, Cardamyle, Enope, and Hire where there is grass; holy Pheras and the rich meadows of Anthea; Aepea also, and the vine-clad slopes of Pedasus, all near the sea, and on the borders of sandy Pylos. The men that dwell there are rich in cattle and sheep; they will honour you with gifts as though were a god, and be obedient to your comfortable ordinances. All this will he do if you will now forgo your anger. Moreover, though you hate both him and his gifts with all your heart, yet pity the rest of the Achaeans who are being harassed in all their host; they will honour you as a god, and you will earn great glory at their hands. You might even kill Hector; he will come within your reach, for he is infatuated, and declares that not a Danaan whom the ships have brought can hold his own against him.”
Achilles' Reply: 307 - 429

[307] Achilles answered, “Odysseus, noble son of Laertes, I should give you formal notice plainly and in all fixity of purpose that there be no more of this cajoling, from whatsoever quarter it may come. Him do I hate even as the gates of hell who says one thing while he hides another in his heart; therefore I will say what I mean. I will be appeased neither by Agamemnon son of Atreus nor by any other of the Danaans, for I see that I have no thanks for all my fighting. He that fights fares no better than he that does not; coward and hero are held in equal honour, and death deals like measure to him who works and him who is idle. I have taken nothing by all my hardships - with my life ever in my hand; as a bird when she has found a morsel takes it to her nestlings, and herself fares hardly, even so man a long night have I been wakeful, and many a bloody battle have I waged by day against those who were fighting for their women. With my ships I have taken twelve cities, and eleven round about Troy have I stormed with my men by land; I took great store of wealth from every one of them, but I gave all up to Agamemnon son of Atreus. He stayed where he was by his ships, yet of what came to him he gave little, and kept much himself.

[334] “Nevertheless he did distribute some meeds of honour among the chieftains and kings, and these have them still; from me alone of the Achaeans did he take the woman in whom I delighted- let him keep her and sleep with her. Why, pray, must the Argives needs fight the Trojans? What made the son of Atreus gather the host and bring them? Was it not for the sake of Helen? Are the sons of Atreus the only men in the world who love their wives? Any man of common right feeling will love and cherish her who is his own, as I this woman, with my whole heart, though she was but a fruitling of my spear. Agamemnon has taken her from me; he has played me false; I know him; let him tempt me no further, for he shall not move me. Let him look to you, Odysseus, and to the other princes to save his ships from burning. He has done much without me already. He has built a wall; he has dug a trench deep and wide all round it, and he has planted it within with stakes; but even so he stays not the murderous might of Hector. So long as I fought the Achaeans Hector suffered not the battle range far from the city walls; he would come to the Scaean gates and to the oak tree, but no further. Once he stayed to meet me and hardly did he escape my onset: now, however, since I am in no mood to fight him, I will to-morrow offer sacrifice to Zeus and to all the gods; I will draw my ships into the water and then victual them duly; to-morrow morning, if you care to look, you will see my ships on the
Hellespont, and my men rowing out to sea with might and main. If great Poseidon vouchsafes me a fair passage, in three days I shall be in Phthia. I have much there that I left behind me when I came here to my sorrow, and I shall bring back still further store of gold, of red copper, of fair women, and of iron, my share of the spoils that we have taken; but one prize, he who gave has insolently taken away. Tell him all as I now bid you, and tell him in public that the Achaeans may hate him and beware of him should he think that he can yet dupe others for his effrontery never fails him.

[373] “As for me, hound that he is, he dares not look me in the face. I will take no counsel with him, and will undertake nothing in common with him. He has wronged me and deceived me enough, he shall not cozen me further; let him go his own way, for Zeus has robbed him of his reason. I loathe his presents, and for himself care not one straw. He may offer me ten or even twenty times what he has now done, nay- not though it be all that he has in the world, both now or ever shall have; he may promise me the wealth of Orchomenus or of Egyptian Thebes, which is the richest city in the whole world, for it has a hundred gates through each of which two hundred men may drive at once with their chariots and horses; he may offer me gifts as the sands of the sea or the dust of the plain in multitude, but even so he shall not move me till I have been revenged in full for the bitter wrong he has done me. I will not marry his daughter; she may be fair as Aphrodite, and skilful as Athena, but I will have none of her: let another take her, who may be a good match for her and who rules a larger kingdom. If the gods spare me to return home, Peleus will find me a wife; there are Achaean women in Hellas and Phthia, daughters of kings that have cities under them; of these I can take whom I will and marry her. Many a time was I minded when at home in Phthia to woo and wed a woman who would make me a suitable wife, and to enjoy the riches of my old father Peleus. My life is more to me than all the wealth of Ilium while it was yet at peace before the Achaeans went there, or than all the treasure that lies on the stone floor of Apollo's temple beneath the cliffs of Pytho. Cattle and sheep are to be had for harrying, and a man buy both tripods and horses if he wants them, but when his life has once left him it can neither be bought nor harried back again.

[410] “My mother Thetis tells me that there are two ways in which I may meet my end. If I stay here and fight, I shall not return alive but my name will live for ever: whereas if I go home my name will die, but it will be long before death shall take me. To the rest of you, then, I say, 'Go home, for you will not take Ilius.' Zeus has held his hand over her to protect her, and her
people have taken heart. Go, therefore, as in duty bound, and tell the princes of the Achaeans the message that I have sent them; tell them to find some other plan for the saving of their ships and people, for so long as my displeasure lasts the one that they have now hit upon may not be. As for Phoenix, let him sleep here that he may sail with me in the morning if he so will. But I will not take him by force.”

**The Speech of Phoenix: 430 - 601**

[430] They all held their peace, dismayed at the sternness with which he had denied them, till presently the old knight Phoenix in his great fear for the ships of the Achaeans, burst into tears and said, “Noble Achilles, if you are now minded to return, and in the fierceness of your anger will do nothing to save the ships from burning, how, my son, can I remain here without you? Your father Peleus bade me go with you when he sent you as a mere lad from Phthia to Agamemnon. You knew nothing neither of war nor of the arts whereby men make their mark in council, and he sent me with you to train you in all excellence of speech and action. Therefore, my son, I will not stay here without you - no, not though heaven itself vouchsafe to strip my years from off me, and make me young as I was when I first left Hellas the land of fair women. I was then fleeing the anger of father Amyntor, son of Ormenus, who was furious with me in the matter of his concubine, of whom he was enamoured to the wronging of his wife my mother.

[451] My mother, therefore, prayed me without ceasing to lie with the woman myself, so that she hate my father, and in the course of time I yielded. But my father soon came to know, and cursed me bitterly, calling the dread Erinyes\(^1\) to witness. He prayed that no son of mine might ever sit upon knees - and the gods, Zeus of the world below and awful Persephone, fulfilled his curse.\(^2\) I took counsel to kill him, but some god stayed my rashness and bade me think on men's evil tongues and how I should be branded as the murderer of my father: nevertheless I could not bear to stay in my father's house with him so bitter a against me. My cousins and clansmen came about me, and pressed me sorely to remain; many a sheep and many an ox did they slaughter, and many a fat hog did they set down to roast before the fire; many a jar, too, did they broach of my father's wine. Nine whole nights did they set a guard over me taking it in turns to watch, and they kept a fire always burning, both in the cloister of the outer court and in the inner court at the

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1 Often called *The Furies*, these are the avenging goddesses who pursue wrongdoers to exact punishment.
2 “Zeus of the world below” is Hades. Many Greeks refused to say his name. Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, was his wife.
doors of the room wherein I lay; but when the darkness of the tenth night came, I broke through the closed doors of my room, and climbed the wall of the outer court after passing quickly and unperceived through the men on guard and the women servants. I then fled through Hellas till I came to fertile Phthia, mother of sheep, and to King Peleus, who made me welcome and treated me as a father treats an only son who will be heir to all his wealth. He made me rich and set me over much people, establishing me on the borders of Phthia where I was chief ruler over the Doloipians.

[481] “It was I, Achilles, who had the making of you; I loved you with all my heart: for you would eat neither at home nor when you had gone out elsewhere, till I had first set you upon my knees, cut up the dainty morsel that you were to eat, and held the wine-cup to your lips. Many a time have you slobbered your wine in baby helplessness over my shirt; I had infinite trouble with you, but I knew that heaven had vouchsafed me no offspring of my own, and I made a son of you, Achilles, that in my hour of need you might protect me. Now, therefore, I say battle with your pride and beat it; cherish not your anger for ever; the might and majesty of heaven are more than ours, but even heaven may be appeased; and if a man has sinned he prays the gods, and reconciles them to himself by his piteous cries and by frankincense, with drink-offerings and the savour of burnt sacrifice. For prayers are as daughters to great Zeus; halt, wrinkled, with eyes askance, they follow in the footsteps of sin, who, being fierce and fleet of foot, leaves them far behind him, and ever baneful to mankind outruns them even to the ends of the world; but nevertheless the prayers come hobbling and healing after. If a man has pity upon these daughters of Zeus when they draw near him, they will bless him and hear him too when he is praying; but if he deny them and will not listen to them, they go to Zeus the son of Cronus and pray that he may presently fall into sin-to his ruin bitterly hereafter. Therefore, Achilles, give these daughters of Zeus due reverence, and bow before them as all good men will bow. Were not the son of Atreus offering you gifts and promising others later- if he were still furious and implacable- I am not he that would bid you throw off your anger and help the Achaeans, no matter how great their need; but he is giving much now, and more hereafter; he has sent his captains to urge his suit, and has chosen those who of all the Argives are most acceptable to you; make not then their words and their coming to be of none effect. Your anger has been righteous so far. We have heard in song how heroes of old time quarrelled when they were roused to fury, but still they could be won by gifts, and fair words could soothe them.
Iliad - 103

[523] “I have an old story in my mind- a very old one- but you are all friends and I will tell it. The Curetes and the Aetolians were fighting and killing one another round Calydon- the Aetolians defending the city and the Curetes trying to destroy it. For Artemis of the golden throne was angry and did them hurt because Oeneus had not offered her his harvest first-fruits. The other gods had all been feasted with hecatombs, but to the daughter of great Zeus alone he had made no sacrifice. He had forgotten her, or somehow or other it had escaped him, and this was a grievous sin. Thereon the archer goddess in her displeasure sent a prodigious creature against him- a savage wild boar with great white tusks that did much harm to his orchard lands, uprooting apple-trees in full bloom and throwing them to the ground. But Meleager son of Oeneus got huntsmen and hounds from many cities and killed it- for it was so monstrous that not a few were needed, and many a man did it stretch upon his funeral pyre. On this the goddess set the Curetes and the Aetolians fighting furiously about the head and skin of the boar.

[546] “So long as Meleager was in the field things went badly with the Curetes, and for all their numbers they could not hold their ground under the city walls; but in the course of time Meleager was angered as even a wise man will sometimes be. He was incensed with his mother Althaea, and therefore stayed at home with his wedded wife fair Cleopatra, who was daughter of Marpessa daughter of Euenus, and of Ides the man then living. He it was who took his bow and faced Pheobus Apollo himself for fair Marpessa's sake; her father and mother then named her Alcyone, because her mother had mourned with the plaintive strains of the halcyon-bird when Phoebus Apollo had carried her off. Meleager, then, stayed at home with Cleopatra, nursing the anger which he felt by reason of his mother's curses. His mother, grieving for the death of her brother, prayed the gods, and beat the earth with her hands, calling upon Hades and on awful Persephone; she went down upon her knees and her bosom was wet with tears as she prayed that they would kill her son- and Erinys that walks in darkness and knows no ruth heard her from Erebus.

[569] “Then was heard the din of battle about the gates of Calydon, and the dull thump of the battering against their walls. Thereon the elders of the Aetolians besought Meleager; they sent the chiefest of their priests, and begged him to come out and help them, promising him a great reward. They bade him choose fifty plough-gates, the most fertile in the plain of Calydon, the one-half vineyard and the other open plough-land. The old warrior Oeneus implored him, standing at the threshold of his room and beating the doors in supplication. His sisters and his
mother herself besought him sore, but he the more refused them; those of his comrades who were
nearest and dearest to him also prayed him, but they could not move him till the foe was
battering at the very doors of his chamber, and the Curetes had scaled the walls and were setting
fire to the city. Then at last his sorrowing wife detailed the horrors that befall those whose city is
taken; she reminded him how the men are slain, and the city is given over to the flames, while
the women and children are carried into captivity; when he heard all this, his heart was touched,
and he donned his armour to go forth. Thus of his own inward motion he saved the city of the
Aetolians; but they now gave him nothing of those rich rewards that they had offered earlier, and
though he saved the city he took nothing by it. Be not then, my son, thus minded; let not heaven
lure you into any such course. When the ships are burning it will be a harder matter to save them.
Take the gifts, and go, for the Achaeans will then honour you as a god; whereas if you fight
without taking them, you may beat the battle back, but you will not be held in like honour.”

Achilles Second Refusal: 602 - 709

[602] And Achilles answered, “Phoenix, old friend and father, I have no need of such honour.
I have honour from Zeus himself, which will abide with me at my ships while I have breath in
my body, and my limbs are strong. I say further- and lay my saying to your heart- vex me no
more with this weeping and lamentation, all in the cause of the son of Atreus. Love him so well,
and you may lose the love I bear you. You ought to help me rather in troubling those that trouble
me; be king as much as I am, and share like honour with myself; the others shall take my answer;
stay here yourself and sleep comfortably in your bed; at daybreak we will consider whether to
remain or go.”

[616] On this he nodded quietly to Patroclus as a sign that he was to prepare a bed for
Phoenix, and that the others should take their leave. Ajax son of Telamon then said, “Odysseus,
noble son of Laertes, let us be gone, for I see that our journey is vain. We must now take our
answer, unwelcome though it be, to the Danaans who are waiting to receive it. Achilles is savage
and remorseless; he is cruel, and cares nothing for the love his comrades lavished upon him more
than on all the others. He is implacable- and yet if a man's brother or son has been slain he will
accept a fine by way of amends from him that killed him, and the wrong-doer having paid in full
remains in peace among his own people; but as for you, Achilles, the gods have put a wicked
unforgiving spirit in your heart, and this, all about one single girl, whereas we now offer you the
seven best we have, and much else into the bargain. Be then of a more gracious mind, respect the
hospitality of your own roof. We are with you as messengers from the host of the Danaans, and would fain he held nearest and dearest to yourself of all the Achaeans.”

[639] “Ajax,” replied Achilles, “noble son of Telamon, you have spoken much to my liking, but my blood boils when I think it all over, and remember how the son of Atreus treated me with contumely as though I were some vile tramp, and that too in the presence of the Argives. Go, then, and deliver your message; say that I will have no concern with fighting till Hector, son of noble Priam, reaches the tents of the Myrmidons in his murderous course, and flings fire upon their ships. For all his lust of battle, I take it he will be held in check when he is at my own tent and ship.”

[652] On this they took every man his double cup, made their drink-offerings, and went back to the ships, Odysseus leading the way. But Patroclus told his men and the maid-servants to make ready a comfortable bed for Phoenix; they therefore did so with sheepskins, a rug, and a sheet of fine linen. The old man then laid himself down and waited till morning came. But Achilles slept in an inner room, and beside him the daughter of Phorbas lovely Diomede, whom he had carried off from Lesbos. Patroclus lay on the other side of the room, and with him fair Iphis whom Achilles had given him when he took Scyros the city of Enyeus.

[655] When the envoys reached the tents of the son of Atreus, the Achaeans rose, pledged them in cups of gold, and began to question them. King Agamemnon was the first to do so. Tell me, Odysseus,” said he, “will he save the ships from burning, or did be refuse, and is he still furious?”

[672] Odysseus answered, “Most noble son of Atreus, king of men, Agamemnon, Achilles will not be calmed, but is more fiercely angry than ever, and spurns both you and your gifts. He bids you take counsel with the Achaeans to save the ships and host as you best may; as for himself, he said that at daybreak he should draw his ships into the water. He said further that he should advise every one to sail home likewise, for that you will not reach the goal of Ilium. 'Zeus,' he said, 'has laid his hand over the city to protect it, and the people have taken heart.' This is what he said, and the others who were with me can tell you the same story- Ajax and the two heralds, men, both of them, who may be trusted. The old man Phoenix stayed where he was to sleep, for so Achilles would have it, that he might go home with him in the morning if he so would; but he will not take him by force.”
They all held their peace, sitting for a long time silent and dejected, by reason of the sternness with which Achilles had refused them, till presently Diomedes said, “Most noble son of Atreus, king of men, Agamemnon, you ought not to have sued the son of Peleus nor offered him gifts. He is proud enough as it is, and you have encouraged him in his pride even further. Let him stay or go as he will. He will fight later when he is in the humour, and heaven puts it in his mind to do so. Now, therefore, let us all do as I say; we have eaten and drunk our fill, let us then take our rest, for in rest there is both strength and stay. But when fair rosy-fingered morn appears, forthwith bring out your host and your horsemen in front of the ships, urging them on, and yourself fighting among the foremost.”

Thus he spoke, and the other chieftains approved his words. They then made their drink-offerings and went every man to his own tent, where they laid down to rest and enjoyed the boon of sleep.
Summary of Book Ten

None of the Greek captains can sleep, worried that the Trojans will attack at night, so they hold a council outside of the wall and decide that Diomedes and Odysseus will reconnoitre the Trojan camp in an attempt to discover their plans.

In the meantime, Hector is also restless, afraid that the Greeks will pack up their ships and flee in the night, so he sends Dolon to reconnoitre the Greek camp. Dolon, however, is ambushed by Diomedes and Odysseus midway between the camps. They first promise to ransom him if he gives them information about the disposition and intentions of the Trojans - which he does - but Odysseus beheads Dolon there and then.

With the new information, Odysseus and Diomedes use the information to locate the camp of the Thracians. There, while Diomedes surprises and kills the sentries, Odysseus steals their horses. Unsated, Diomedes also kills the king of the Thracians in his sleep and would kill more but for the intervention of Athena, warning him to return to the Greek camp.

Just then, Apollo roused the Trojans to come to the aid of the Thracians. The Trojans pursue, but Diomedes and Odysseus are able to return safely with the stolen horses.
Summary of Book Eleven; to line 595

These lines include the sections called the Aristeia of Agamemnon and the Aristeia of Hector.

The next morning, the battle resumes and the Greeks, led by Agamemnon, push the Trojans nearly to the walls of the city. Agamemnon's fury is such that even Hector will not confront him.

At the very walls, however, Agamemnon takes a spear through the forearm and, overcome by the pain and loss of blood, retires from the field.

With Agamemnon gone, Hector rallies the Trojans but Diomedes and Odysseus recover the Greek momentum. Paris, however, is able to hit Diomedes in the foot with an arrow and Odysseus has to cover Diomedes' retreat. Odysseus is then wounded in the stomach by a spear and he too has to withdraw, Ajax and Menelaus helping him.

Finally, when Machaon, one of the Achaeans physicians, is also wounded, the Greeks begin an orderly retreat.

Patroclus and Nestor: 595 - 802

[595] Thus then did they fight as it were a flaming fire. Meanwhile the mares of Neleus, all in a lather with sweat, were bearing Nestor out of the fight, and with him Machaon shepherd of his people. Achilles saw and took note, for he was standing on the stern of his ship watching the hard stress and struggle of the fight. He called from the ship to his comrade Patroclus, who heard him in the tent and came out looking like Ares himself- here indeed was the beginning of the ill that presently befell him. “Why,” said he, “Achilles do you call me? What do you want with me?” And Achilles answered, “Noble son of Menoetius, man after my own heart, I take it that I shall now have the Achaeans praying at my knees, for they are in great straits; go, Patroclus, and ask Nestor who is that he is bearing away wounded from the field; from his back I should say it was Machaon son of Aesculapius, but I could not see his face for the horses went by me at full speed.”

[615] Patroclus did as his dear comrade had bidden him, and set off running by the ships and tents of the Achaeans.

[617] When Nestor and Machaon had reached the tents of the son of Neleus, they dismounted, and an esquire, Eurymedon, took the horses from the chariot. The pair then stood in the breeze by the seaside to dry the sweat from their shirts, and when they had so done they came inside and
took their seats. Fair Hecamede, whom Nestor had awarded to him from Tenedos when Achilles took it, mixed them a mess; she was daughter of wise Arsinous, and the Achaeans had given her to Nestor because he excelled all of them in counsel. First she set for them a fair and well-made table that had feet of cyanus; on it there was a vessel of bronze and an onion to give relish to the drink, with honey and cakes of barley-meal. There was also a cup of rare workmanship which the old man had brought with him from home, studded with bosses of gold; it had four handles, on each of which there were two golden doves feeding, and it had two feet to stand on. Anyone else would hardly have been able to lift it from the table when it was full, but Nestor could do so quite easily. In this the woman, as fair as a goddess, mixed them a mess with Pramnian wine;¹ she grated goat's milk cheese into it with a bronze grater, threw in a handful of white barley-meal, and having thus prepared the mess she bade them drink it. When they had done so and had thus quenched their thirst, they fell talking with one another, and at this moment Patroclus appeared at the door.

[644] When the old man saw him he sprang from his seat, seized his hand, led him into the tent, and bade him take his place among them; but Patroclus stood where he was and said, “Noble sir, I may not stay, you cannot persuade me to come in; he that sent me is not one to be trifled with, and he bade me ask who the wounded man was whom you were bearing away from the field. I can now see for myself that he is Machaon shepherd of his people. I must go back and tell Achilles. You, sir, know what a terrible man he is, and how ready to blame even where no blame should lie.”

[654] And Nestor answered, “Why should Achilles care to know how many of the Achaeans may be wounded? He cares not of the dismay that reigns in our host; our most valiant chieftains lie disabled, brave Diomedes son of Tydeus is wounded; so are Odysseus and Agamemnon; Eurypylus has been hit with an arrow in the thigh, and I have just been bringing this man from the field - he too wounded - with an arrow; nevertheless Achilles, so valiant though he be, cares not and knows no truth. Will he wait till the ships, do what we may, are in a blaze, and we perish one upon the other? As for me, I have no strength nor stay in me any longer.

[669] Would that I were still young and strong as in the days when there was a fight between us and the men of Elis about some cattle-raiding. I then killed Itymoneus the valiant son of

¹ A wine still famous in the first century BC, it was produced in the area around Smyrna and Ephesus in Anatolia, and on Lesbos (Pliny M. N.H. 14.6).
Hypeirochus a dweller in Elis, as I was driving in the spoil; he was hit by a dart thrown by my hand while fighting in the front rank in defence of his cows, so he fell and the country people around him were in great fear. We drove off a vast quantity of booty from the plain, fifty herds of cattle and as many flocks of sheep; fifty droves also of pigs, and as many wide-spreading flocks of goats. Of horses moreover we seized a hundred and fifty, all of them mares, and many had foals running with them. All these did we drive by night to Pylus the city of Neleus, taking them within the city; and the heart of Neleus was glad in that I had taken so much, though it was the first time I had ever been in the field. At daybreak the heralds went round crying that all in Elis to whom there was a debt owing should come; and the leading Pylians assembled to divide the spoils. There were many to whom the Epeans owed chattels, for we men of Pylus were few and had been oppressed with wrong; in former years Heracles had come, and had laid his hand heavy upon us, so that all our best men had perished. Neleus had had twelve sons, but I alone was left; the others had all been killed.1 The Epeans presuming upon all this had looked down upon us and had done us much evil. My father chose a herd of cattle and a great flock of sheep-three hundred in all - and he took their shepherds with him, for there was a great debt due to him in Elis, to wit four horses, winners of prizes. They and their chariots with them had gone to the games and were to run for a tripod, but King Augeas took them, and sent back their driver grieving for the loss of his horses. Neleus was angered by what he had both said and done, and took great value in return, but he divided the rest, that no man might have less than his full share.

[705] “Thus did we order all things, and offer sacrifices to the gods throughout the city; but three days afterwards the Epeans came in a body, many in number, they and their chariots, in full array, and with them the two Moliones in their armour, though they were still lads and unused to fighting. Now there is a certain town, Thryoessa, perched upon a rock on the river Alpheus,2 the border city of Pylos; this they would destroy, and pitched their camp about it, but when they had crossed their whole plain, Athena darted down by night from Olympus and bade us set ourselves in array; and she found willing soldiers in Pylos, for the men were eager for war. Neleus would not let me arm, and hid my horses, for he said that as yet I could know nothing about war;

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1 For Heracles' war against Pylos see Apollodorus ii.7.2-3. Hades tried to defend Neleus and was wounded by Heracles (see above v.395). Heracles left Messenia in the trust of Nestor, and Nestor's great grandson, Alcmaeon, was expelled when the Heraclidae returned (Paus. ii.18.7). The descendants of Alcmaon, the Alcaionidae, were the most prominent political family in Athens throughout the Classical period. They include Cleisthenes, the founder of democracy, and Pericles, the great statesman.

2 The Alpheus River, modern Alféios, enters the Ionian Sea just south of Olympia, and divides Elis from Messenia.
nevertheless Athena so ordered the fight that, all on foot as I was, I fought among our mounted forces and vied with the foremost of them. There is a river Minyeius that falls into the sea near Arene, and there they that were mounted (and I with them) waited till morning, when the companies of foot soldiers came up with us in force. Thence in full panoply and equipment we came towards noon to the sacred waters of the Alpheus, and there we offered victims to almighty Zeus, with a bull to Alpheus, another to Poseidon, and a herd-heifer to Athena. After this we took supper in our companies, and laid us down to rest each in his armour by the river.

[731] “The Epeans were beleaguering the city and were determined to take it, but ere this might be there was a desperate fight in store for them. When the sun's rays began to fall upon the earth we joined battle, praying to Zeus and to Athena, and when the fight had begun, I was the first to kill my man and take his horses - to wit the warrior Mulius. He was son-in-law to Augeas, having married his eldest daughter, golden-haired Agamede, who knew the virtues of every herb which grows upon the face of the earth. I speared him as he was coming towards me, and when he fell headlong in the dust, I sprang upon his chariot and took my place in the front ranks. The Epeans fled in all directions when they saw the captain of their horsemen (the best man they had) laid low, and I swept down on them like a whirlwind, taking fifty chariots - and in each of them two men bit the dust, slain by my spear. I should have even killed the two Moliones sons of Actor, unless their real father, Poseidon lord of the earthquake, had hidden them in a thick mist and borne them out of the fight. Thereon Zeus vouchsafed the Pylians a great victory, for we chased them far over the plain, killing the men and bringing in their armour, till we had brought our horses to Buprasium rich in wheat and to the Olenian rock, with the hill that is called Alision, at which point Athena turned the people back. There I slew the last man and left him; then the Achaeans drove their horses back from Buprasium to Pylos and gave thanks to Zeus among the gods, and among mortal men to Nestor.

[761] “Such was I among my peers, as surely as ever was, but Achilles is for keeping all his valour for himself; bitterly will he rue it hereafter when the host is being cut to pieces. My good friend, did not Menoetius charge you thus, on the day when he sent you from Phthia to Agamemnon? Odysseus and I were in the house, inside, and heard all that he said to you; for we came to the fair house of Peleus while beating up recruits throughout all Achaea, and when we got there we found Menoetius and yourself, and Achilles with you. The old knight Peleus was in the outer court, roasting the fat thigh-bones of a heifer to Zeus the lord of thunder; and he held a
gold chalice in his hand from which he poured drink-offerings of wine over the burning sacrifice. You two were busy cutting up the heifer, and at that moment we stood at the gates, whereon Achilles sprang to his feet, led us by the hand into the house, placed us at table, and set before us such hospitable entertainment as guests expect. When we had satisfied ourselves with meat and drink, I said my say and urged both of you to join us. You were ready enough to do so, and the two old men charged you much and straightly. Old Peleus bade his son Achilles fight ever among the foremost and out vie his peers, while Menoetius the son of Actor spoke thus to you: 'My son,' said he, 'Achilles is of nobler birth than you are, but you are older than he, though he is far the better man of the two. Counsel him wisely, guide him in the right way, and he will follow you to his own profit.' Thus did your father charge you, but you have forgotten; nevertheless, even now, say all this to Achilles if he will listen to you. Who knows but with heaven's help you may talk him over, for it is good to take a friend's advice. If, however, he is fearful about some oracle, or if his mother has told him something from Zeus, then let him send you, and let the rest of the Myrmidons follow with you, if perchance you may bring light and salvation to the Danaans. And let him send you into battle clad in his own armour, that the Trojans may mistake you for him and leave off fighting; the sons of the Achaeans may thus have time to get their breath, for they are hard pressed and there is little breathing time in battle. You, who are fresh, might easily drive a tired enemy back to his walls and away from the tents and ships.”

Patroclus and Eurypylus: 803 - 847

[803] With these words he moved the heart of Patroclus, who set off running by the line of the ships to Achilles, descendant of Aeacus. When he had got as far as the ships of Odysseus, where was their place of assembly and court of justice, with their altars dedicated to the gods, Eurypylus son of Euaemon met him, wounded in the thigh with an arrow, and limping out of the fight. Sweat rained from his head and shoulders, and black blood welled from his cruel wound, but his mind did not wander. The son of Menoetius when he saw him had compassion upon him and spoke piteously saying, “O unhappy princes and counsellors of the Danaans, are you then doomed to feed the hounds of Troy with your fat, far from your friends and your native land? Say, noble Eurypylus, will the Achaeans be able to hold great Hector in check, or will they fall now before his spear?”

[821] Wounded Eurypylus made answer, “Noble Patroclus, there is no hope left for the Achaeans but they will perish at their ships. All they that were princes among us are lying struck
down and wounded at the hands of the Trojans, who are waxing stronger and stronger. But save me and take me to your ship; cut out the arrow from my thigh; wash the black blood from off it with warm water, and lay upon it those gracious herbs which, so they say, have been shown you by Achilles, who was himself shown them by Chiron, most righteous of all the centaurs. For of the physicians Podalirius and Machaon, I hear that the one is lying wounded in his tent and is himself in need of healing, while the other stays on the Trojan plain to face keen Ares.”

[836] “Hero Eurypylus,” replied the brave son of Menoetius, “how may these things be? What can I do? I am on my way to bear a message to noble Achilles from Nestor of Gerenia, bulwark of the Achaeans, but even so I will not be unmindful your distress.”

[841] With this he clasped him round the middle and led him into the tent, and a servant, when he saw him, spread bullock-skins on the ground for him to lie on. He laid him at full length and cut out the sharp arrow from his thigh; he washed the black blood from the wound with warm water; he then crushed a bitter herb, rubbing it between his hands, and spread it upon the wound; this was a virtuous herb which killed all pain; so the wound presently dried and the blood left off flowing.

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1 The last line here has been retranslated to better reflect the original.
Summary of Books Twelve, Thirteen and Fourteen to 153.

The Greek withdrawal turns into a rout and Hector leads the Trojans to the trench. There, unable to cross with their chariots, the Trojans dismount and cross on foot.

Much of Book Twelve is dedicated to very detailed descriptions of the fighting before the wall. After a desperate battle, Sarpedon is able to initiate a breach and Hector leads the Trojans over the wall. Once inside, Hector breaks open the gate.

In Book Thirteen, Poseidon comes to the aid of the Achaeans and the battle rages between the ships and the wall. The entire book is given to descriptions of combat.

Book Fourteen opens with the Greeks in full rout, and it is only by the intervention of Poseidon that Agamemnon is prevented from pushing his ship into the sea and fleeing.

Hera, concerned that Zeus will also intervene, comes up with a plan:

**Hera SEDUCES Zeus: 14. 154 - 361**

[154] Hera of the golden throne looked down as she stood upon a peak of Olympus and her heart was gladdened at the sight of him who was at once her brother and her brother-in-law, hurrying hither and thither amid the fighting. Then she turned her eyes to Zeus as he sat on the topmost crests of many-fountained Ida, and loathed him. She set herself to think how she might hoodwink him, and in the end she deemed that it would be best for her to go to Ida and array herself in rich attire, in the hope that Zeus might become enamoured of her, and wish to embrace her. While he was thus engaged a sweet and careless sleep might be made to steal over his eyes and senses.

[166] She went, therefore, to the room which her son Hephaestus had made her, and the doors of which he had cunningly fastened by means of a secret key so that no other god could open them. Here she entered and closed the doors behind her. She cleansed all the dirt from her fair body with ambrosia, then she anointed herself with olive oil, ambrosial, very soft, and scented specially for herself - if it were so much as shaken in the bronze-floored house of Zeus, the scent pervaded the universe of heaven and earth. With this she anointed her delicate skin, and then she plaited the fair ambrosial locks that flowed in a stream of golden tresses from her immortal head. She put on the wondrous robe which Athena had worked for her with consummate art, and had embroidered with manifold devices; she fastened it about her bosom with golden clasps, and she girded herself with a girdle that had a hundred tassels: then she fastened her earrings, three
brilliant pendants that glistened most beautifully, through the pierced lobes of her ears, and threw a lovely new veil over her head. She bound her sandals on to her feet, and when she had arrayed herself perfectly to her satisfaction, she left her room and called Aphrodite to come aside and speak to her. “My dear child,” said she, “will you do what I am going to ask of you, or will refuse me because you are angry at my being on the Danaan side, while you are on the Trojan?”

[193] Zeus's daughter Aphrodite answered, “Hera, august queen of goddesses, daughter of mighty Cronus, say what you want, and I will do it for at once, if I can, and if it can be done at all.”

[197] Then Hera told her a lying tale and said, “I want you to endow me with some of those fascinating charms, the spells of which bring all things mortal and immortal to your feet. I am going to the world's end to visit Oceanus (from whom all we gods proceed) and mother Tethys: they received me in their house, took care of me, and brought me up, having taken me over from Rhea when Zeus imprisoned great Cronus in the depths that are under earth and sea. I must go and see them that I may make peace between them; they have been quarrelling, and are so angry that they have not slept with one another this long while; if I can bring them round and restore them to one another's embraces, they will be grateful to me and love me for ever afterwards.”

[212] Thereon laughter-loving Aphrodite said, “I cannot and must not refuse you, for you sleep in the arms of Zeus who is our king.”

[215] As she spoke she loosed from her bosom the curiously embroidered girdle into which all her charms had been wrought - love, desire, and that sweet flattery which steals the judgement even of the most prudent. She gave the girdle to Hera and said, “Take this girdle wherein all my charms reside and lay it in your bosom. If you will wear it I promise you that your errand, be it what it may, will not be bootless.” When she heard this Hera smiled, and still smiling she laid the girdle in her bosom. Aphrodite now went back into the house of Zeus, while Hera darted down from the summits of Olympus. She passed over Pieria and fair Emathia, and went on and on till she came to the snowy ranges of the Thracian horsemen, over whose topmost crests she sped without ever setting foot to ground. When she came to Athos she went on over the waves of the sea till she reached Lemnos, the city of noble Thoas. There she met Sleep, own brother to Death, and caught him by the hand, saying, “Sleep, you who lord it alike over mortals and immortals, if you ever did me a service in times past, do one for me now, and I shall be grateful to you ever after. Close Zeus's keen eyes for me in slumber while I hold him clasped in my
embrace, and I will give you a beautiful golden seat, that can never fall to pieces; my clubfooted son Hephaestus shall make it for you, and he shall give it a footstool for you to rest your fair feet upon when you are at table."

[242] Then Sleep answered, “Hera, great queen of goddesses, daughter of mighty Cronus, I would lull any other of the gods to sleep without compunction, not even excepting the waters of Oceanus from whom all of them proceed, but I dare not go near Zeus, nor send him to sleep unless he bids me. I have had one lesson already through doing what you asked me, on the day when Zeus's mighty son Heracles set sail from Ilium after having sacked the city of the Trojans. At your bidding I suffused my sweet self over the mind of aegis-bearing Zeus, and laid him to rest; meanwhile you hatched a plot against Heracles, and set the blasts of the angry winds beating upon the sea, till you took him to the goodly city of Cos away from all his friends. Zeus was furious when he awoke, and began hurling the gods about all over the house; he was looking more particularly for me, and would have flung me down through space into the sea where I should never have been heard of any more, had not Night who cows both men and gods protected me. I fled to her and Zeus left off looking for me in spite of his being so angry, for he did not dare do anything to displease Night. And now you are again asking me to do something on which I cannot venture.”

[263] And Hera said, “Sleep, why do you take such notions as those into your head? Do you think Zeus will be as anxious to help the Trojans, as he was about his own son? Come, I will marry you to one of the youngest of the Graces, and she shall be your own- Pasithea, whom you have always wanted to marry.”

[270] Sleep was pleased when he heard this, and answered, “Then swear it to me by the dread waters of the river Styx; lay one hand on the bounteous earth, and the other on the sheen of the sea, so that all the gods who dwell down below with Cronus may be our witnesses, and see that you really do give me one of the youngest of the Graces- Pasithea, whom I have always wanted to marry.”

[277] Hera did as he had said. She swore, and invoked all the gods of the nether world, who are called Titans, to witness. When she had completed her oath, the two enshrouded themselves in a thick mist and sped lightly forward, leaving Lemnos and Imbrus behind them. Presently they reached many-fountained Ida, mother of wild beasts, and Lectum where they left the sea to go on by land, and the tops of the trees of the forest soughed under the going of their feet. Here Sleep
halted, and ere Zeus caught sight of him he climbed a lofty pine-tree- the tallest that reared its head towards heaven on all Ida. He hid himself behind the branches and sat there in the semblance of the sweet-singing bird that haunts the mountains and is called Chalcis by the gods, but men call it Cymindis. Hera then went to Gargarus, the topmost peak of Ida, and Zeus, driver of the clouds, set eyes upon her. As soon as he did so he became inflamed with the same passionate desire for her that he had felt when they had first enjoyed each other's embraces, and slept with one another without their dear parents knowing anything about it. He went up to her and said, “What do you want that you have come here from Olympus- and that too with neither chariot nor horses to convey you?”

[300] Then Hera told him a lying tale and said, “I am going to the world's end, to visit Oceanus, from whom all we gods proceed, and mother Tethys; they received me into their house, took care of me, and brought me up. I must go and see them that I may make peace between them: they have been quarrelling, and are so angry that they have not slept with one another this long time. The horses that will take me over land and sea are stationed on the lowermost spurs of many-fountained Ida, and I have come here from Olympus on purpose to consult you. I was afraid you might be angry with me later on, if I went to the house of Oceanus without letting you know.”

[312] And Zeus said, “Hera, you can choose some other time for paying your visit to Oceanus- for the present let us devote ourselves to love and to the enjoyment of one another. Never yet have I been so overpowered by passion neither for goddess nor mortal woman as I am at this moment for you - not even when I was in love with the wife of Ixion who bore me Pirithous, peer of gods in counsel, nor yet with Danae the daintily-ancled daughter of Acrisius, who bore me the famed hero Perseus. Then there was the daughter of Phoenix, who bore me Minos and Rhadamanthus:¹ there was Semele, and Alcmena in Thebes by whom I begot my lion-hearted son Heracles, while Semele became mother to Dionysus the comforter of mankind. There was queen Ceres² again, and lovely Leto,³ and yourself- but with none of these was I ever so much enamoured as I now am with you.”

¹ Europa, whom Zeus took to Crete.
² Ceres is another name for Demeter. Persephone is the daughter of Demeter and Zeus.
³ Who bore Hellen.
[329] Hera again answered him with a lying tale. “Most dread son of Cronus,” she exclaimed, “what are you talking about? Would you have us enjoy one another here on the top of Mount Ida, where everything can be seen? What if one of the ever-living gods should see us sleeping together, and tell the others? It would be such a scandal that when I had risen from your embraces I could never show myself inside your house again; but if you are so minded, there is a room which your son Hephaestus has made me, and he has given it good strong doors; if you would so have it, let us go thither and lie down."

[341] And Zeus answered, “Hera, you need not be afraid that either god or man will see you, for I will enshroud both of us in such a dense golden cloud, that the very sun for all his bright piercing beams shall not see through it.”

[346] With this the son of Cronus caught his wife in his embrace; whereon the earth sprouted them a cushion of young grass, with dew-bespangled lotus, crocus, and hyacinth, so soft and thick that it raised them well above the ground. Here they laid themselves down and overhead they were covered by a fair cloud of gold, from which there fell glittering dew-drops.

[352] Thus, then, did the sire of all things repose peacefully on the crest of Ida, overcome at once by sleep and love, and he held his spouse in his arms. Meanwhile Sleep made off to the ships of the Achaeans, to tell earth-encircling Poseidon, lord of the earthquake. When he had found him he said, “Now, Poseidon, you can help the Danaans with a will, and give them victory though it be only for a short time while Zeus is still sleeping. I have sent him into a sweet slumber, and Hera has beguiled him into going to bed with her.”

**Summary of Book 14. 362 - 522**

Poseidon now rallies the Greeks once more and even the wounded kings, Agamemnon, Diomedes and Odysseus, re-join the battle. Ajax the son of Telamon throws a stone that knocks Hector to the ground unconscious. The Trojans were able to rescue Hector and remove him from the battle, but the loss of Hector caused the Trojans to lose their momentum, and the Greeks to gain new confidence. The Trojans begin to fall back, and the Greek forces push them from the perimeter of the wall.
Zeus Rebukes Hera: 1 - 148

But when their flight had taken them past the trench and the set stakes, and many had fallen by the hands of the Danaans, the Trojans made a halt on reaching their chariots, routed and pale with fear. Zeus now woke on the crests of Ida, where he was lying with golden-throned Hera by his side, and starting to his feet he saw the Trojans and Achaeans, the one thrown into confusion, and the others driving them pell-mell before them with King Poseidon in their midst. He saw Hector lying on the ground with his comrades gathered round him, gasping for breath, wandering in mind and vomiting blood, for it was not the feeblest of the Achaeans who struck him.

12 The sire of gods and men had pity on him, and looked fiercely on Hera. “I see, Hera,” said he, “you mischief-making trickster, that your cunning has stayed Hector from fighting and has caused the rout of his host. I am in half a mind to thrash you, in which case you will be the first to reap the fruits of your knavery. Do you not remember how once upon a time I had you hanged? I fastened two anvils on to your feet, and bound your hands in a chain of gold which none might break, and you hung in mid-air among the clouds. All the gods in Olympus were in a fury, but they could not reach you to set you free; when I caught any one of them I gripped him and hurled him from the heavenly threshold till he came fainting down to earth; yet even this did not relieve my mind from the incessant anxiety which I felt about noble Heracles whom you and Boreas had spitefully conveyed beyond the seas to Cos, after suborning the tempests; but I rescued him, and notwithstanding all his mighty labours I brought him back again to Argos. I would remind you of this that you may learn to leave off being so deceitful, and discover how much you are likely to gain by the embraces out of which you have come here to trick me.”

34 Hera trembled as he spoke, and said, “May heaven above and earth below be my witnesses, with the waters of the river Styx - and this is the most solemn oath that a blessed god can take - nay, I swear also by your own almighty head and by our bridal bed - things over which I could never possibly perjure myself - that Poseidon is not punishing Hector and the Trojans and helping the Achaeans through any doing of mine; it is all of his own mere motion because he was sorry to see the Achaeans hard pressed at their ships: if I were advising him, I should tell him to do as you bid him.”
The sire of gods and men smiled and answered, “If you, Hera, were always to support me when we sit in council of the gods, Poseidon, like it or no, would soon come round to your and my way of thinking. If, then, you are speaking the truth and mean what you say, go among the rank and file of the gods, and tell Iris and Apollo lord of the bow, that I want them - Iris, that she may go to the Achaean host and tell Poseidon to leave off fighting and go home, and Apollo, that he may send Hector again into battle and give him fresh strength; he will thus forget his present sufferings, and drive the Achaean host back in confusion till they fall among the ships of Achilles son of Peleus. Achilles will then send his comrade Patroclus into battle, and Hector will kill him in front of Ilium after he has slain many warriors, and among them my own noble son Sarpedon. Achilles will kill Hector to avenge Patroclus, and from that time I will bring it about that the Achaean host shall persistently drive the Trojans back till they fulfil the counsels of Athena and take Ilium. But I will not stay my anger, nor permit any god to help the Danaans till I have accomplished the desire of the son of Peleus, according to the promise I made by bowing my head on the day when Thetis touched my knees and besought me to give him honour.”

Hera heeded his words and went from the heights of Ida to great Olympus. Swift as the thought of one whose fancy carries him over vast continents, and he says to himself, “Now I will be here, or there,” and he would have all manner of things - even so swiftly did Hera wing her way till she came to high Olympus and went in among the gods who were gathered in the house of Zeus. When they saw her they all of them came up to her, and held out their cups to her by way of greeting. She let the others be, but took the cup offered her by lovely Themis, who was first to come running up to her. “Hera,” said she, “why are you here? And you seem troubled - has your husband the son of Cronus been frightening you?”

And Hera answered, “Themis, do not ask me about it. You know what a proud and cruel disposition my husband has. Lead the gods to table, where you and all the immortals can hear the wicked designs which he has avowed. Many a one, mortal and immortal, will be angered by them, however peaceably he may be feasting now.”

And Hera answered, “Themis, do not ask me about it. You know what a proud and cruel disposition my husband has. Lead the gods to table, where you and all the immortals can hear the wicked designs which he has avowed. Many a one, mortal and immortal, will be angered by them, however peaceably he may be feasting now.”

On this Hera sat down, and the gods were troubled throughout the house of Zeus. Laughter was on her lips but her brow was furrowed with care, and she spoke up in a rage. “Fools that we are,” she cried, “to be thus madly angry with Zeus; we keep on wanting to go up to him and stay him by force or by persuasion, but he sits aloof and cares for nobody, for he knows that he is much stronger than any other of the immortals. Make the best, therefore, of
whatever ills he may choose to send each one of you; Ares, I take it, has had a taste of them already, for his son Ascalaphus has fallen in battle - the man whom of all others he loved most dearly and whose father he owns himself to be.”

[113] When he heard this Ares smote his two sturdy thighs with the flat of his hands, and said in anger, “Do not blame me, you gods that dwell in heaven, if I go to the ships of the Achaeans and avenge the death of my son, even though it end in my being struck by Zeus's lightning and lying in blood and dust among the corpses.”

[119] As he spoke he gave orders to yoke his horses Panic and Rout, while he put on his armour. On this, Zeus would have been roused to still more fierce and implacable enmity against the other immortals, had not Athena, alarmed for the safety of the gods, sprung from her seat and hurried outside. She tore the helmet from his head and the shield from his shoulders, and she took the bronze spear from his strong hand and set it on one side; then she said to Ares, “Madman, you are undone; you have ears that hear not, or you have lost all judgement and understanding; have you not heard what Hera has said on coming straight from the presence of Olympian Zeus? Do you wish to go through all kinds of suffering before you are brought back sick and sorry to Olympus, after having caused infinite mischief to all us others? Zeus would instantly leave the Trojans and Achaeans to themselves; he would come to Olympus to punish us, and would grip us up one after another, guilty or not guilty. Therefore lay aside your anger for the death of your son; better men than he have either been killed already or will fall hereafter, and one cannot protect every one's whole family.”

[142] With these words she took Ares back to his seat. Meanwhile Hera called Apollo outside, with Iris the messenger of the gods. “Zeus,” she said to them, “desires you to go to him at once on Mt. Ida; when you have seen him you are to do as he may then bid you.”

Zeus orders Poseidon to Withdraw: 149 - 219

[149] Thereon Hera left them and resumed her seat inside, while Iris and Apollo made all haste on their way. When they reached many-fountained Ida, mother of wild beasts, they found Zeus seated on topmost Gargarus with a fragrant cloud encircling his head as with a diadem. They stood before his presence, and he was pleased with them for having been so quick in obeying the orders his wife had given them.

[157] He spoke to Iris first. “Go,” said he, “fleef Iris, tell King Poseidon what I now bid you - and tell him true. Bid him leave off fighting, and either join the company of the gods, or go down
into the sea. If he takes no heed and disobeys me, let him consider well whether he is strong enough to hold his own against me if I attack him. I am older and much stronger than he is; yet he is not afraid to set himself up as on a level with me, of whom all the other gods stand in awe.”

[168] Iris, fleet as the wind, obeyed him, and as the cold hail or snowflakes that fly from out the clouds before the blast of Boreas, even so did she wing her way till she came close up to the great shaker of the earth. Then she said, “I have come, O dark-haired king that holds the world in his embrace, to bring you a message from Zeus. He bids you leave off fighting, and either join the company of the gods or go down into the sea; if, however, you take no heed and disobey him, he says he will come down here and fight you. He would have you keep out of his reach, for he is older and much stronger than you are, and yet you are not afraid to set yourself up as on a level with himself, of whom all the other gods stand in awe.”

[184] Poseidon was very angry and said, “Great heavens! Strong as Zeus may be, he has said more than he can do if he has threatened violence against me, who am of like honour with himself. We were three brothers whom Rhea bore to Cronus - Zeus, myself, and Hades who rules the world below. Heaven and earth were divided into three parts, and each of us was to have an equal share. When we cast lots, it fell to me to have my dwelling in the sea for evermore; Hades took the darkness of the realms under the earth, while air and sky and clouds were the portion that fell to Zeus; but earth and great Olympus are the common property of all. Therefore I will not walk as Zeus would have me. For all his strength, let him keep to his own third share and be contented without threatening to lay hands upon me as though I were nobody.¹ Let him keep his bragging talk for his own sons and daughters, who must perforce obey him.

[200] Iris fleet as the wind then answered, “Am I really, Poseidon, to take this daring and unyielding message to Zeus, or will you reconsider your answer? Sensible people are open to argument, and you know that the Erinyes always range themselves on the side of the older person.”

[205] Poseidon answered, “Goddess Iris, your words have been spoken in season. It is well when a messenger shows so much discretion. Nevertheless it cuts me to the very heart that any one should rebuke so angrily another who is his own peer, and of like empire with himself. Now,

¹ The importance of this statement should not be underestimated. The concept here, moira, apportioned lots, refers to the natural and necessary divisions of the universe, to boundaries, definitions and limits: All of critical importance to the Greek world-view.
however, I will give way in spite of my displeasure; furthermore let me tell you, and I mean what I say - if contrary to the desire of myself, Athena driver of the spoil, Hera, Hermes, and Lord Hephaestus, Zeus spares steep Ilium, and will not let the Achaeans have the great triumph of sacking it, let him understand that he will incur our implacable resentment.”

[218] Poseidon now left the field to go down under the sea, and sorely did the Achaeans miss him.

**Apollo Restores Hector to the Fight: 220 - 280**

[220] Then Zeus said to Apollo, “Go, dear Phoebus, to Hector, for Poseidon who holds the earth in his embrace has now gone down under the sea to avoid the severity of my displeasure. Had he not done so those gods who are below with Cronus would have come to hear of the fight between us. It is better for both of us that he should have curbed his anger and kept out of my reach, for I should have had much trouble with him. Take, then, your tasselled aegis, and shake it furiously, so as to set the Achaean heroes in a panic; take, moreover, brave Hector into your own care, Lord of the Arrows, and rouse him to deeds of daring, till the Achaeans are sent flying back to their ships and to the Hellespont. From that point I will think it well over, how the Achaeans may have a respite from their troubles.”

[236] Apollo obeyed his father's saying, and left the crests of Ida, flying like a falcon, bane of doves and swiftest of all birds. He found Hector no longer lying upon the ground, but sitting up, for he had just come to himself again. He knew those who were about him, and the sweat and hard breathing had left him from the moment when the will of aegis-bearing Zeus had revived him. Apollo stood beside him and said, “Hector, son of Priam, why are you so faint, and why are you here away from the others? Has any mishap befallen you?”

[246] Hector in a weak voice answered, “And which, kind sir, of the gods are you, who now ask me thus? Do you not know that Ajax struck me on the chest with a stone as I was killing his comrades at the ships of the Achaeans, and compelled me to leave off fighting? I made sure that this very day I should breathe my last and go down into the house of Hades.”

[253] Then King Apollo said to him, “Take heart; the son of Cronus has sent you a mighty helper from Ida to stand by you and defend you, even me, Phoebus Apollo of the golden sword, who have been guardian hitherto not only of yourself but of your city. Now, therefore, order your horsemen to drive their chariots to the ships in great multitudes. I will go before your horses to smooth the way for them, and will turn the Achaeans in flight.”
[262] As he spoke he infused great strength into the shepherd of his people. And as a horse, stabled and full-fed, breaks loose and gallops gloriously over the plain to the place where he is wont to take his bath in the river- he tosses his head, and his mane streams over his shoulders as in all the pride of his strength he flies full speed to the pastures where the mares are feeding- even so Hector, when he heard what the god said, urged his horsemen on, and sped forward as fast as his limbs could take him.

[271] As country peasants set their hounds on to a homed stag or wild goat - he has taken shelter under rock or thicket, and they cannot find him, but, lo, a bearded lion whom their shouts have roused stands in their path, and they are in no further humour for the chase - even so the Danaans were still charging on in a body, using their swords and spears pointed at both ends, but when they saw Hector going about among his men they were afraid, and their hearts fell down into their feet.

**The Greeks Withdraw, the Trojans Breach the Wall: 281 - 389**

[281] Then spoke Thoas son of Andraemon, leader of the Aetolians, a man who could throw a good throw, and who was staunch also in close fight, while few could surpass him in debate when opinions were divided. He then with all sincerity and goodwill addressed them thus: “What, in heaven's name, do I now see? Is it not Hector come to life again? Every one was sure he had been killed by Ajax son of Telamon, but it seems that one of the gods has again rescued him. He has killed many of us Danaans already, and I take it will yet do so, for the hand of Zeus must be with him or he would never dare show himself so masterful in the forefront of the battle. Now, therefore, let us all do as I say; let us order the main body of our forces to fall back upon the ships, but let those of us who profess to be the flower of the army stand firm, and see whether we cannot hold Hector back at the point of our spears as soon as he comes near us; I conceive that he will then think better of it before he tries to charge into the press of the Danaans.”

[300] Thus did he speak, and they did even as he had said. Those who were about Ajax and King Idomeneus, the followers moreover of Teucer, Meriones, and Meges peer of Ares called all their best men about them and sustained the fight against Hector and the Trojans, but the main body fell back upon the ships of the Achaeans.

[306] The Trojans pressed forward in a dense body, with Hector striding on at their head. Before him went Phoebus Apollo shrouded in cloud about his shoulders. He bore aloft the
terrible aegis with its shaggy fringe, which Hephaestus the smith had given Zeus to strike terror into the hearts of men. With this in his hand he led on the Trojans.

[312] The Argives held together and stood their ground. The cry of battle rose high from either side, and the arrows flew from the bowstrings. Many a spear sped from strong hands and fastened in the bodies of many a valiant warrior, while others fell to earth midway, before they could taste of man's fair flesh and glut themselves with blood. So long as Phoebus Apollo held his aegis quietly and without shaking it, the weapons on either side took effect and the people fell, but when he shook it straight in the face of the Danaans and raised his mighty battle-cry their hearts fainted within them and they forgot their former prowess. As when two wild beasts spring in the dead of night on a herd of cattle or a large flock of sheep when the herdsman is not there- even so were the Danaans struck helpless, for Apollo filled them with panic and gave victory to Hector and the Trojans.

[328] The fight then became more scattered and they killed one another where they best could. Hector killed Stichius and Arcesilaus, the one, leader of the Boeotians, and the other, friend and comrade of Menestheus. Aeneas killed Medon and Iasus. The first was bastard son to Oileus, and brother to Ajax, but he lived in Phylace away from his own country, for he had killed a man, a kinsman of his stepmother Eriopis whom Oileus had married. Iasus had become a leader of the Athenians, and was son of Sphelus the son of Boucolos. Polydamas killed Mecisteus, and Polites Echius, in the front of the battle, while Agenor slew Clonius. Paris struck Deiochus from behind in the lower part of the shoulder, as he was flying among the foremost, and the point of the spear went clean through him.

[343] While they were spoiling these heroes of their armour, the Achaeans were flying pellmell to the trench and the set stakes, and were forced back within their wall. Hector then cried out to the Trojans, “Forward to the ships, and let the spoils be. If I see any man keeping back on the other side the wall away from the ships I will have him killed: his kinsmen and kinswomen shall not give him his dues of fire, but dogs shall tear him in pieces in front of our city.”

[352] As he spoke he laid his whip about his horses' shoulders and called to the Trojans throughout their ranks; the Trojans shouted with a cry that rent the air, and kept their horses neck and neck with his own. Phoebus Apollo went before, and kicked down the banks of the deep trench into its middle so as to make a great broad bridge, as broad as the throw of a spear when a
man is trying his strength. The Trojan battalions poured over the bridge, and Apollo with his redoubtable aegis led the way. He kicked down the wall of the Achaeans as easily as a child who playing on the sea-shore has built a house of sand and then kicks it down again and destroys it- even so did you, O Apollo, shed toil and trouble upon the Argives, filling them with panic and confusion.

[367] Thus then were the Achaeans hemmed in at their ships, calling out to one another and raising their hands with loud cries every man to heaven. Nestor of Gerenia, tower of strength to the Achaeans, lifted up his hands to the starry firmament of heaven, and prayed more fervently than any of them. “Father Zeus,” said he, “if ever any one in wheat-growing Argos burned you fat thigh-bones of sheep or heifer and prayed that he might return safely home, whereon you bowed your head to him in assent, bear it in mind now, and suffer not the Trojans to triumph thus over the Achaeans.”

[377] All counselling Zeus thundered loudly in answer to the prayer of the aged son of Neleus. When they heard Zeus thunder they flung themselves yet more fiercely on the Achaeans. As a wave breaking over the bulwarks of a ship when the sea runs high before a gale - for it is the force of the wind that makes the waves so great - even so did the Trojans spring over the wall with a shout, and drive their chariots onwards. The two sides fought with their double-pointed spears in hand-to-hand encounter-the Trojans from their chariots, and the Achaeans climbing up into their ships and wielding the long pikes that were lying on the decks ready for use in a sea-fight, jointed and shod with bronze.

**Patroclus Goes to Warn Achilles: 390 - 405**

[390] Now Patroclus, so long as the Achaeans and Trojans were fighting about the wall, but were not yet within it and at the ships, remained sitting in the tent of good Eurypylus, entertaining him with his conversation and spreading herbs over his wound to ease his pain. When, however, he saw the Trojans swarming through the breach in the wall, while the Achaeans were clamouring and struck with panic, he cried aloud, and smote his two thighs with the flat of his hands. “Eurypylus,” said he in his dismay, “I know you need me, but I cannot stay with you any longer, for there is hard fighting going on; a servant shall take care of you now, for I must make all speed to Achilles, and induce him to fight if I can; who knows but with heaven's help I may persuade him. A man does well to listen to the advice of a friend.”

[405] When he had thus spoken he went his way.
Summary of 15. 406 - 746

With the help of Apollo and Zeus, Hector and the Trojans fight their war to the ships of the Greeks and begin to set fire to the ships.
Book Sixteen

Patroclus asks to re-join the Fight: 1 - 45

[1] Thus did they fight about the ship of Protesilaus. Then Patroclus drew near to Achilles with tears welling from his eyes, as from some spring whose crystal stream falls over the ledges of a high precipice. When Achilles saw him thus weeping he was sorry for him and said, “Why, Patroclus, do you stand there weeping like some silly child that comes running to her mother, and begs to be taken up and carried - she catches hold of her mother's dress to stay her though she is in a hurry, and looks tearfully up until her mother carries her - even such tears, Patroclus, are you now shedding. Have you anything to say to the Myrmidons or to me, or have you had news from Phthia which you alone know? They tell me Menoetius son of Actor is still alive, as also Peleus son of Aeacus, among the Myrmidons - men whose loss we two should bitterly deplore; or are you grieving about the Argives and the way in which they are being killed at the ships, through their own high-handed doings? Do not hide anything from me but tell me that both of us may know about it.”

[20] Then, O knight Patroclus, with a deep sigh you answered, “Achilles, son of Peleus, foremost champion of the Achaeans, do not be angry, but I weep for the disaster that has now befallen the Argives. All those who have been their champions so far are lying at the ships, wounded by sword or spear. Brave Diomedes son of Tydeus has been wounded, and famed Odysseus and Agamemnon have each been hit by spears; Eurypylus again has been struck with an arrow in the thigh; skilled physicians are attending to these heroes, and healing them of their wounds; are you still, O Achilles, so inexorable? May it never be my lot to nurse such a passion as you have done, to the baning of your own good name. Who in future story will speak well of you unless you now save the Argives from ruin? You know no pity; knight Peleus was not your father nor Thetis your mother, but the grey sea bore you and the sheer cliffs begot you, so cruel and remorseless are you. If however you are kept back through knowledge of some oracle, or if your mother Thetis has told you something from the mouth of Zeus, at least send me and the Myrmidons with me, if I may bring deliverance to the Danaans. Let me moreover wear your armour; the Trojans may thus mistake me for you and quit the field, so that the hard-pressed sons of the Achaeans may have breathing time- which while they are fighting may hardly be. We who are fresh might soon drive tired men back from our ships and tents to their own city.”
Achilles Gives his Armour to Patroclus: 46 - 100

[46] He knew not what he was asking, nor that he was suing for his own destruction. Achilles was deeply moved and answered, “What, noble Patroclus, are you saying? I know no prophesy which I am heeding, nor has my mother told me anything from the mouth of Zeus, but I am cut to the very heart that one of my own rank should dare to rob me because he is more powerful than I am. This, after all that I have gone through, is more than I can endure. The girl whom the sons of the Achaeans chose for me, whom I won as the fruit of my spear on having sacked a city-her has King Agamemnon taken from me as though I were some common vagrant. Still, let bygones be bygones: no man may keep his anger for ever; I said I would not relent till battle and the cry of war had reached my own ships; nevertheless, now gird my armour about your shoulders, and lead the Myrmidons to battle, for the dark cloud of Trojans has burst furiously over our fleet; the Argives are driven back on to the beach, cooped within a narrow space, and the whole people of Troy has taken heart to sally out against them, because they see not the visor of my helmet gleaming near them. Had they seen this, there would not have been a creek nor grip that had not been filled with their dead as they fled back again. And so it would have been, if only King Agamemnon had dealt fairly by me. As it is the Trojans have beset our host. Diomedes son of Tydeus no longer wields his spear to defend the Danaans, neither have I heard the voice of the son of Atreus coming from his hated head, whereas that of murderous Hector rings in my cars as he gives orders to the Trojans, who triumph over the Achaeans and fill the whole plain with their cry of battle. But even so, Patroclus, fall upon them and save the fleet, lest the Trojans fire it and prevent us from being able to return. Do, however, as I now bid you, that you may win me great honour from all the Danaans, and that they may restore the girl to me again and give me rich gifts into the bargain. When you have driven the Trojans from the ships, come back again. Though Hera's thundering husband should put triumph within your reach, do not fight the Trojans further in my absence, or you will rob me of glory that should be mine. And do not for lust of battle go on killing the Trojans nor lead the Achaeans on to Ilium, lest one of the ever-living gods from Olympus attack you- for Phoebus Apollo loves them well: return when you have freed the ships from peril, and let others wage war upon the plain. Would, by father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo, that not a single man of all the Trojans might be left alive, nor yet of the Argives, but that we two might be alone left to tear aside the mantle that veils the brow of Troy.”
Hector Fires the Ship: 101 - 129

[101] Thus did they converse. But Ajax could no longer hold his ground for the shower of darts that rained upon him; the will of Zeus and the javelins of the Trojans were too much for him; the helmet that gleamed about his temples rang with the continuous clatter of the missiles that kept pouring on to it and on to the cheek-pieces that protected his face. Moreover his left shoulder was tired with having held his shield so long, yet for all this, let fly at him as they would, they could not make him give ground. He could hardly draw his breath, the sweat rained from every pore of his body, he had not a moment's respite, and on all sides he was beset by danger upon danger.

[112] And now, tell me, O Muses that hold your mansions on Olympus, how fire was thrown upon the ships of the Achaeans.

[114] Hector came close up and let drive with his great sword at the ashen spear of Ajax. He cut it clean in two just behind where the point was fastened on to the shaft of the spear. Ajax, therefore, had now nothing but a headless spear, while the bronze point flew some way off and came ringing down on to the ground. Ajax knew the hand of heaven in this, and was dismayed at seeing that Zeus had now left him utterly defenceless and was willing victory for the Trojans. Therefore he drew back, and the Trojans flung fire upon the ship which was at once wrapped in flame.

[124] The fire was now flaring about the ship's stern, whereon Achilles smote his two thighs and said to Patroclus, “Up, noble knight, for I see the glare of hostile fire at our fleet; up, lest they destroy our ships, and there be no way by which we may retreat. Gird on your armour at once while I call our people together.”

The Mymidons Prepare for Battle: 130 - 256

[130] As he spoke Patroclus put on his armour. First he greaved his legs with greaves of good make, and fitted with ankle-clasps of silver; after this he donned the cuirass of the son of Aeacus, richly inlaid and studded. He hung his silver-studded sword of bronze about his shoulders, and then his mighty shield. On his comely head he set his helmet, well wrought, with a crest of horse-hair that nodded menacingly above it. He grasped two redoubtable spears that suited his hands, but he did not take the spear of noble Achilles, so stout and strong, for none other of the Achaeans could wield it, though Achilles could do so easily. This was the ashen spear from
Mount Pelion, which Chiron had cut upon a mountain top and had given to Peleus, wherewith to deal out death among heroes. He bade Automedon yoke his horses with all speed, for he was the man whom he held in honour next after Achilles, and on whose support in battle he could rely most firmly. Automedon therefore yoked the fleet horses Xanthus and Balius, steeds that could fly like the wind: these were they whom the harpy Podarge bore to the west wind, as she was grazing in a meadow by the waters of the river Oceanus. In the side traces he set the noble horse Pedasus, whom Achilles had brought away with him when he sacked the city of Eetion, and who, mortal steed though he was, could take his place along with those that were immortal.

[155] Meanwhile Achilles went about everywhere among the tents, and bade his Myrmidons put on their armour. Even as fierce ravening wolves that are feasting upon a homed stag which they have killed upon the mountains, and their jaws are red with blood - they go in a pack to lap water from the clear spring with their long thin tongues; and they reek of blood and slaughter; they know not what fear is, for it is hunger drives them - even so did the leaders and counsellors of the Myrmidons gather round the good squire of the fleet descendant of Aeacus, and among them stood Achilles himself cheering on both men and horses.

[168] Fifty ships had Achilles, dear to Zeus, brought to Troy, and in each there was a crew of fifty oarsmen, his companions all. Over these he set five captains whom he could trust, while he was himself commander over them all. Menesthius of the gleaming corslet, son to the river Spercheius that streams from heaven, was captain of the first company. Fair Polydora daughter of Peleus bore him to ever-flowing Spercheius - a woman mated with a god - but he was called son of Borus son of Perieres, with whom his mother was living as his wedded wife, and who gave great wealth to gain her. The second company was led by noble Eudorus, son to an unwedded woman. Polymele, daughter of Phylas the graceful dancer, bore him; the mighty slayer of Argus\(^1\) was enamoured of her as he saw her among the singing women at a dance held in honour of Artemis the rushing huntress of the golden arrows; he therefore - Hermes, giver of all good - went with her into an upper chamber, and lay with her in secret, whereon she bore him a noble son Eudorus, singularly fleet of foot and in fight valiant. When Eileitheia goddess of the pains of child-birth brought him to the light of day, and he saw the face of the sun, mighty Echecles son of Actor took the mother to wife, and gave great wealth to gain her, but her father Phylas brought the child up, and took care of him, doting as fondly upon him as though he were

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\(^1\) A common epithet for Hermes. The story of the slaying of Argus is associated with the myth of Io.
his own son. The third company was led by Pisander son of Maemalus, the finest spearman among all the Myrmidons next to Achilles' own comrade Patroclus. The old knight Phoenix was captain of the fourth company, and Alcimedon, noble son of Laerceus of the fifth.

[198] When Achilles had chosen his men and had stationed them all with their captains, he charged them saying, “Myrmidons, remember your threats against the Trojans while you were at the ships in the time of my anger, and you were all complaining of me. 'Cruel son of Peleus,' you would say, 'your mother must have suckled you on gall, so ruthless are you. You keep us here at the ships against our will; if you are so relentless it were better we went home over the sea.' Often have you gathered and thus chided with me. The hour is now come for those high feats of arms that you have so long been pining for, therefore keep high hearts each one of you to do battle with the Trojans.”

[200] With these words he put heart and soul into them all, and they serried their companies yet more closely when they heard the words of their king. As the stones which a builder sets in the wall of some high house which is to give shelter from the winds - even so closely were the helmets and bossed shields set against one another. Shield pressed on shield, helm on helm, and man on man; so close were they that the horse-hair plumes on the gleaming ridges of their helmets touched each other as they bent their heads.

[209] In front of them all two men put on their armour - Patroclus and Automedon - two men, with but one mind to lead the Myrmidons. Then Achilles went inside his tent and opened the lid of the strong chest which silver-footed Thetis had given him to take on board ship, and which she had filled with shirts, cloaks to keep out the cold, and good thick rugs. In this chest he had a cup of rare workmanship, from which no man but himself might drink, nor would he make offering from it to any other god save only to father Zeus. He took the cup from the chest and cleansed it with sulphur; this done he rinsed it with clean water, and after he had washed his hands he drew wine. Then he stood in the middle of the court and prayed, looking towards heaven, and making his drink-offering of wine; nor was he unseen of Zeus whose joy is in thunder. “King Zeus,” he cried, “lord of Dodona,¹ god of the Pelasgi, who dwell afar, you who hold wintry Dodona in your sway, where your prophets the Selli dwell around you with their feet unwashed and their couches made upon the ground - if you heard me when I prayed to you before, and did me honour while you sent disaster on the Achaeans, vouchsafe me now the fulfilment of yet this

¹ Dodona is in north-western Greece and is the site of a very ancient temple of Zeus famous for issuing prophesies.
further prayer. I shall stay here where my ships are lying, but I shall send my comrade into battle at the head of many Myrmidons. Grant, O all-seeing Zeus, that victory may go with him; put your courage into his heart that Hector may learn whether my squire is man enough to fight alone, or whether his might is only then so indomitable when I myself enter the turmoil of war. Afterwards when he has chased the fight and the cry of battle from the ships, grant that he may return unharmed, with his armour and his comrades, fighters in close combat.”

[249] Thus did he pray, and all-counselling Zeus heard his prayer. Part of it he did indeed vouchsafe him - but not the whole. He granted that Patroclus should thrust back war and battle from the ships, but refused to let him come safely out of the fight. When he had made his drink-offering and had thus prayed, Achilles went inside his tent and put back the cup into his chest. Then he again came out, for he still loved to look upon the fierce fight that raged between the Trojans and Achaeans.

Patroclus Leads the Myrmidons Into Battle: 257 - 418

[257] Meanwhile the armed band that was about Patroclus marched on till they sprang high in hope upon the Trojans. They came swarming out like wasps whose nests are by the roadside, and whom silly children love to tease, whereon any one who happens to be passing may get stung - or again, if a wayfarer going along the road vexes them by accident, every wasp will come flying out in a fury to defend his little ones- even with such rage and courage did the Myrmidons swarm from their ships, and their cry of battle rose heavenwards. Patroclus called out to his men at the top of his voice, “Myrmidons, followers of Achilles son of Peleus, be men my friends, fight with might and with main, that we may win glory for the son of Peleus, who is far the foremost man at the ships of the Argives - he, and his close fighting followers. The son of Atreus King Agamemnon will thus learn his folly in showing no respect to the bravest of the Achaeans.”

[275] With these words he put heart and soul into them all, and they fell in a body upon the Trojans. The ships rang again with the cry which the Achaeans raised, and when the Trojans saw the brave son of Menoetius and his squire all gleaming in their armour, they were daunted and their battalions were thrown into confusion, for they thought the fleet son of Peleus must now have put aside his anger, and have been reconciled to Agamemnon; every one, therefore, looked round about to see whither he might fly for safety.

[284] Patroclus first aimed a spear into the middle of the press where men were packed most closely, by the stern of the ship of Protesilaus. He hit Pyraechmes who had led his Paonian
horsemen from the Amydon and the broad waters of the river Axius; the spear struck him on the right shoulder, and with a groan he fell backwards in the dust; on this his men were thrown into confusion, for by killing their leader, who was the finest soldier among them, Patroclus struck panic into them all. He thus drove them from the ship and quenched the fire that was then blazing - leaving the half-burnt ship to lie where it was. The Trojans were now driven back with a shout that rent the skies, while the Danaans poured after them from their ships, shouting also without ceasing. As when Zeus, gatherer of the thunder-cloud, spreads a dense canopy on the top of some lofty mountain, and all the peaks, the jutting headlands, and forest glades show out in the great light that flashes from the bursting heavens, even so when the Danaans had now driven back the fire from their ships, they took breath for a little while; but the fury of the fight was not yet over, for the Trojans were not driven back in utter rout, but still gave battle, and were ousted from their ground only by sheer fighting.

[306] The fight then became more scattered, and the chieftains killed one another when and how they could. The valiant son of Menoetius first drove his spear into the thigh of Areilycus just as he was turning round; the point went clean through, and broke the bone so that he fell forward. Meanwhile Menelaus struck Thoas in the chest, where it was exposed near the rim of his shield, and he fell dead. The son of Phyleus saw Amphiclus about to attack him, and ere he could do so took aim at the upper part of his thigh, where the muscles are thicker than in any other part; the spear tore through all the sinews of the leg, and his eyes were closed in darkness. Of the sons of Nestor one, Antilochus, speared Atymnius, driving the point of the spear through his throat, and down he fell. Maris then sprang on Antilochus in hand-to-hand fight to avenge his brother, and bestrode the body spear in hand; but valiant Thrasymedes was too quick for him, and in a moment had struck him in the shoulder ere he could deal his blow; his aim was true, and the spear severed all the muscles at the root of his arm, and tore them right down to the bone, so he fell heavily to the ground and his eyes were closed in darkness. Thus did these two noble comrades of Sarpedon go down to Erebus slain by the two sons of Nestor; they were the warrior sons of Amisodorus, who had reared the invincible Chimaera, to the bane of many. Ajax son of Oileus sprang on Cleobulus and took him alive as he was entangled in the crush; but he killed him then and there by a sword-blows on the neck. The sword reeked with his blood, while dark death and the strong hand of fate gripped him and closed his eyes.
[335] Peneleos and Lycon now met in close fight, for they had missed each other with their spears. They had both thrown without effect, so now they drew their swords. Lycon struck the plumed crest of Peneleos' helmet but his sword broke at the hilt, while Peneleos smote Lycon on the neck under the ear. The blade sank so deep that the head was held on by nothing but the skin, and there was no more life left in him. Meriones gave chase to Acamas on foot and caught him up just as he was about to mount his chariot; he drove a spear through his right shoulder so that he fell headlong from the car, and his eyes were closed in darkness. Idomeneus speared Erymas in the mouth; the bronze point of the spear went clean through it beneath the brain, crashing in among the white bones and smashing them up. His teeth were all of them knocked out and the blood came gushing in a stream from both his eyes; it also came gurgling up from his mouth and nostrils, and the darkness of death enfolded him round about.

[351] Thus did these chieftains of the Danaans each of them kill his man. As ravening wolves seize on kids or lambs, fastening on them when they are alone on the hillsides and have strayed from the main flock through the carelessness of the shepherd- and when the wolves see this they pounce upon them at once because they cannot defend themselves- even so did the Danaans now fall on the Trojans, who fled with ill-omened cries in their panic and had no more fight left in them.

[358] Meanwhile great Ajax kept on trying to drive a spear into Hector, but Hector was so skilful that he held his broad shoulders well under cover of his ox-hide shield, ever on the lookout for the whizzing of the arrows and the heavy thud of the spears. He well knew that the fortunes of the day had changed, but still stood his ground and tried to protect his comrades.

[364] As when a cloud goes up into heaven from Olympus, rising out of a clear sky when Zeus is brewing a gale - even with such panic stricken rout did the Trojans now fly, and there was no order in their going. Hector's fleet horses bore him and his armour out of the fight, and he left the Trojan host penned in by the deep trench against their will. Many a yoke of horses snapped the pole of their chariots in the trench and left their master's car behind them. Patroclus gave chase, calling impetuously on the Danaans and full of fury against the Trojans, who, being now no longer in a body, filled all the ways with their cries of panic and rout; the air was darkened with the clouds of dust they raised, and the horses strained every nerve in their flight from the tents and ships towards the city.
[377] Patroclus kept on heading his horses wherever he saw most men flying in confusion, cheering on his men the while. Chariots were being smashed in all directions, and many a man came tumbling down from his own car to fall beneath the wheels of that of Patroclus, whose immortal steeds, given by the gods to Peleus, sprang over the trench at a bound as they sped onward. He was intent on trying to get near Hector, for he had set his heart on spearing him, but Hector's horses were now hurrying him away. As the whole dark earth bows before some tempest on an autumn day when Zeus rains his hardest to punish men for giving crooked judgement in their courts, and arriving justice therefrom without heed to the decrees of heaven - all the rivers run full and the torrents tear many a new channel as they roar headlong from the mountains to the dark sea, and it fares ill with the works of men - even such was the stress and strain of the Trojan horses in their flight.

[394] Patroclus now cut off the battalions that were nearest to him and drove them back to the ships. They were doing their best to reach the city, but he would not let them, and bore down on them between the river and the ships and wall. Many a fallen comrade did he then avenge. First he hit Pronous with a spear on the chest where it was exposed near the rim of his shield, and he fell heavily to the ground. Next he sprang on Thestor son of Enops, who was sitting all huddled up in his chariot, for he had lost his head and the reins had been torn out of his hands. Patroclus went up to him and drove a spear into his right jaw; he thus hooked him by the teeth and the spear pulled him over the rim of his car, as one who sits at the end of some jutting rock and draws a strong fish out of the sea with a hook and a line- even so with his spear did he pull Thestor all gaping from his chariot; he then threw him down on his face and he died while falling. On this, as Erylaus was on to attack him, he struck him full on the head with a stone, and his brains were all battered inside his helmet, whereon he fell headlong to the ground and the pangs of death took hold upon him. Then he laid low, one after the other, Erymas, Amphoterus, Epaltes, Tlepolemus, Echius son of Damastor, Pyris, Ipheus, Euippus and Polymelus son of Argeas.

The Death of Sarpedon: 419 - 683

[419] Now when Sarpedon saw his comrades, men who wore ungirdled tunics, being overcome by Patroclus son of Menoetius, he rebuked the Lycians saying. “Shame on you, where are you flying to? Show your mettle; I will myself meet this man in fight and learn who it is that
is so masterful; he has done us much hurt, and has stretched many a brave man upon the ground.”

[426] He sprang from his chariot as he spoke, and Patroclus, when he saw this, leaped on to the ground also. The two then rushed at one another with loud cries like eagle-beaked crook-taloned vultures that scream and tear at one another in some high mountain fastness.

[431] The son of scheming Cronus looked down upon them in pity and said to Hera who was his wife and sister, “Alas, that it should be the lot of Sarpedon whom I love so dearly to perish by the hand of Patroclus. I am in two minds whether to catch him up out of the fight and set him down safe and sound in the fertile land of Lycia, or to let him now fall by the hand of the son of Menoetius.”

[439] And Hera answered, “Most dread son of Cronus, what is this that you are saying? Would you snatch a mortal man, whose doom has long been fated, out of the jaws of death? Do as you will, but we shall not all of us be of your mind. I say further, and lay my saying to your heart, that if you send Sarpedon safely to his own home, some other of the gods will be also wanting to escort his son out of battle, for there are many sons of gods fighting round the city of Troy, and you will make every one jealous. If, however, you are fond of him and pity him, let him indeed fall by the hand of Patroclus, but as soon as the life is gone out of him, send Death and sweet Sleep to bear him off the field and take him to the broad lands of Lycia, where his brothers and his kinsmen will bury him with mound and pillar, in due honour to the dead.”

[458] The sire of gods and men assented, but he shed a rain of blood upon the earth in honour of his son whom Patroclus was about to kill on the rich plain of Troy far from his home.

[463] When they were now come close to one another Patroclus struck Thrasydemus, the brave squire of Sarpedon, in the lower part of the belly, and killed him. Sarpedon then aimed a spear at Patroclus and missed him, but he struck the horse Pedasus in the right shoulder, and it screamed aloud as it lay, groaning in the dust until the life went out of it. The other two horses began to plunge; the pole of the chariot cracked and they got entangled in the reins through the fall of the horse that was yoked along with them; but Automedon knew what to do; without the loss of a moment he drew the keen blade that hung by his sturdy thigh and cut the third horse

\[1\] Even Zeus cannot change what has been fated, and if he does interfere with fate he may be subject to the same punishment as any mortal.
adrift; whereon the other two righted themselves, and pulling hard at the reins again went together into battle.

[477] Sarpedon now took a second aim at Patroclus, and again missed him, the point of the spear passed over his left shoulder without hitting him. Patroclus then aimed in his turn, and the spear sped not from his hand in vain, for he hit Sarpedon just where the midriff surrounds the ever-beating heart. He fell like some oak or silver poplar or tall pine to which woodmen have laid their axes upon the mountains to make timber for ship-building- even so did he lie stretched at full length in front of his chariot and horses, moaning and clutching at the blood-stained dust. As when a lion springs with a bound upon a herd of cattle and fastens on a great black bull which dies bellowing in its clutches - even so did the leader of the Lycian warriors struggle in death as he fell by the hand of Patroclus. He called on his trusty comrade and said, “Glaucus, my brother, hero among heroes, put forth all your strength, fight with might and main, now if ever quit yourself like a valiant soldier. First go about among the Lycian captains and bid them fight for Sarpedon; then yourself also do battle to save my armour from being taken. My name will haunt you henceforth and for ever if the Achaeans rob me of my armour now that I have fallen at their ships. Do your very utmost and call all my people together.”

[502] Death closed his eyes as he spoke. Patroclus planted his heel on his breast and drew the spear from his body, whereon his senses came out along with it, and he drew out both spear-point and Sarpedon's soul at the same time. Hard by the Myrmidons held his snorting steeds, who were wild with panic at finding themselves deserted by their lords.

[508] Glaucus was overcome with grief when he heard what Sarpedon said, for he could not help him. He had to support his arm with his other hand, being in great pain through the wound which Teucer's arrow had given him when Teucer was defending the wall as he, Glaucus, was assailing it. Therefore he prayed to far-darting Apollo saying, “Hear me O king from your seat, maybe in the rich land of Lycia, or maybe in Troy, for in all places you can hear the prayer of one who is in distress, as I now am. I have a grievous wound; my hand is aching with pain, there is no staunching the blood, and my whole arm drags by reason of my hurt, so that I cannot grasp my sword nor go among my foes and fight them, you our prince, Zeus's son Sarpedon, is slain. Zeus defended not his son, do you, therefore, O king, heal me of my wound, ease my pain and grant me strength both to cheer on the Lycians and to fight along with them round the body of him who has fallen.”
Thus did he pray, and Apollo heard his prayer. He eased his pain, staunched the black blood from the wound, and gave him new strength. Glaucus perceived this, and was thankful that the mighty god had answered his prayer; forthwith, therefore, he went among the Lycian captains, and bade them come to fight about the body of Sarpedon. From these he strode on among the Trojans to Polydamas son of Panthous and Agenor; he then went in search of Aeneas and Hector, and when he had found them he said, “Hector, you have utterly forgotten your allies, who languish here for your sake far from friends and home while you do nothing to support them. Sarpedon leader of the Lycian warriors has fallen - he who was at once the right and might of Lycia; Ares has laid him low by the spear of Patroclus. Stand by him, my friends, and suffer not the Myrmidons to strip him of his armour, nor to treat his body with contumely in revenge for all the Danaans whom we have speared at the ships.”

As he spoke the Trojans were plunged in extreme and ungovernable grief; for Sarpedon, alien though he was, had been one of the main stays of their city, both as having much people with him, and himself the foremost among them all. Led by Hector, who was infuriated by the fall of Sarpedon, they made instantly for the Danaans with all their might, while the undaunted spirit of Patroclus son of Menoetius cheered on the Achaeans. First he spoke to the two Ajaxes, men who needed no bidding. “Ajaxes,” said he, “may it now please you to show yourselves the men you have always been, or even better - Sarpedon is fallen - he who was first to overleap the wall of the Achaeans; let us take the body and outrage it; let us strip the armour from his shoulders, and kill his comrades if they try to rescue his body.”

He spoke to men who of themselves were full eager; both sides, therefore, the Trojans and Lycians on the one hand, and the Myrmidons and Achaeans on the other, strengthened their battalions, and fought desperately about the body of Sarpedon, shouting fiercely the while. Mighty was the din of their armour as they came together, and Zeus shed a thick darkness over the fight, to increase the of the battle over the body of his son.

At first the Trojans made some headway against the Achaeans, for one of the best men among the Myrmidons was killed, Epeigeus, son of noble Agacles who had erewhile been king in the good city of Budeum; but presently, having killed a valiant kinsman of his own, he took refuge with Peleus and Thetis, who sent him to Ilium the land of noble steeds to fight the Trojans under Achilles. Hector now struck him on the head with a stone just as he had caught hold of the body, and his brains inside his helmet were all battered in, so that he fell face foremost upon the
body of Sarpedon, and there died. Patroclus was enraged by the death of his comrade, and sped through the front ranks as swiftly as a hawk that swoops down on a flock of daws or starlings. Even so swiftly, O noble knight Patroclus, did you make straight for the Lycians and Trojans to avenge your comrade. Forthwith he struck Sthenelaus the son of Ithaemenes on the neck with a stone, and broke the tendons that join it to the head and spine. On this Hector and the front rank of his men gave ground. As far as a man can throw a javelin when competing for some prize, or even in battle - so far did the Trojans now retreat before the Achaeans.

[593] Glaucus, captain of the Lycians, was the first to rally them, by killing Bathycles son of Chalcon who lived in Hellas and was the richest man among the Myrmidons. Glaucus turned round suddenly, just as Bathycles who was pursuing him was about to lay hold of him, and drove his spear right into the middle of his chest, whereon he fell heavily to the ground, and the fall of so good a man filled the Achaeans with dismay, while the Trojans were exultant, and came up in a body round the corpse. Nevertheless the Achaeans, mindful of their prowess, bore straight down upon them.

[603] Meriones then killed a helmed warrior of the Trojans, Laogonus son of Onetor, who was priest of Zeus of Mt. Ida, and was honoured by the people as though he were a god. Meriones struck him under the jaw and ear, so that life went out of him and the darkness of death laid hold upon him. Aeneas then aimed a spear at Meriones, hoping to hit him under the shield as he was advancing, but Meriones saw it coming and stooped forward to avoid it, whereon the spear flew past him and the point stuck in the ground, while the butt-end went on quivering till Ares robbed it of its force. The spear, therefore, sped from Aeneas's hand in vain and fell quivering to the ground. Aeneas was angry and said, “Meriones, you are a good dancer, but if I had hit you my spear would soon have made an end of you.”

[619] And Meriones answered, “Aeneas, for all your bravery, you will not be able to make an end of every one who comes against you. You are only a mortal like myself, and if I were to hit you in the middle of your shield with my spear, however strong and self-confident you may be, I should soon vanquish you, and you would yield your life to Hades of the noble steeds.”

[626] On this the son of Menoetius rebuked him and said, “Meriones, hero though you be, you should not speak thus; taunting speeches, my good friend, will not make the Trojans draw away from the dead body; some of them must go under ground first; blows for battle, and words for council; fight, therefore, and say nothing.”
[632] He led the way as he spoke and the hero went forward with him. As the sound of woodcutters in some forest glade upon the mountains- and the thud of their axes is heard afar-even such a din now rose from earth-clash of bronze armour and of good ox-hide shields, as men smote each other with their swords and spears pointed at both ends. A man had need of good eyesight now to know Sarpedon, so covered was he from head to foot with spears and blood and dust. Men swarmed about the body, as flies that buzz round the full milk-pails in spring when they are brimming with milk - even so did they gather round Sarpedon; nor did Zeus turn his keen eyes away for one moment from the fight, but kept looking at it all the time, for he was settling how best to kill Patroclus, and considering whether Hector should be allowed to end him now in the fight round the body of Sarpedon, and strip him of his armour, or whether he should let him give yet further trouble to the Trojans. In the end, he deemed it best that the brave squire of Achilles son of Peleus should drive Hector and the Trojans back towards the city and take the lives of many. First, therefore, he made Hector turn fainthearted, whereon he mounted his chariot and fled, biding the other Trojans fly also, for he saw that the scales of Zeus had turned against him. Neither would the brave Lycians stand firm; they were dismayed when they saw their king lying struck to the heart amid a heap of corpses- for when the son of Cronus made the fight wax hot many had fallen above him. The Achaeans, therefore stripped the gleaming armour from his shoulders and the brave son of Menoetius gave it to his men to take to the ships.

[666] Then Zeus lord of the storm-cloud said to Apollo, “Dear Phoebus, go, I pray you, and take Sarpedon out of range of the weapons; cleanse the black blood from off him, and then bear him a long way off where you may wash him in the river, anoint him with ambrosia, and clothe him in immortal raiment; this done, commit him to the arms of the two fleet messengers, Death, and Sleep, who will carry him straightway to the rich land of Lycia, where his brothers and kinsmen will inter him, and will raise both mound and pillar to his memory, in due honour to the dead.”

[676] Thus he spoke. Apollo obeyed his father's saying, and came down from the heights of Ida into the thick of the fight; forthwith he took Sarpedon out of range of the weapons, and then bore him a long way off, where he washed him in the river, anointed him with ambrosia and clothed him in immortal raiment; this done, he committed him to the arms of the two fleet messengers, Death, and Sleep, who presently set him down in the rich land of Lycia.
The Death of Patroclus: 684 - 867

[684] Meanwhile Patroclus, with many a shout to his horses and to Automedon, pursued the Trojans and Lycians in the pride and foolishness of his heart. Had he but obeyed the bidding of the son of Peleus, he would have, escaped death and have been scatheless; but the counsels of Zeus pass man's understanding; he will put even a brave man to flight and snatch victory from his grasp, or again he will set him on to fight, as he now did when he put a high spirit into the heart of Patroclus.

[692] Who then first, and who last, was slain by you, O Patroclus, when the gods had now called you to meet your doom? First Adrestus, Autonous, Echeclus, Perimus the son of Megas, Epistor and Melanippus; after these he killed Elasus, Mulius, and Pylartes. These he slew, but the rest saved themselves by flight.

[698] The sons of the Achaeans would now have taken Troy by the hands of Patroclus, for his spear flew in all directions, had not Phoebus Apollo taken his stand upon the wall to defeat his purpose and to aid the Trojans. Thrice did Patroclus charge at an angle of the high wall, and thrice did Apollo beat him back, striking his shield with his own immortal hands. When Patroclus was coming on like a god for yet a fourth time, Apollo shouted to him with an awful voice and said, “Draw back, noble Patroclus, it is not your lot to sack the city of the Trojan chieftains, nor yet will it be that of Achilles who is a far better man than you are.” On hearing this, Patroclus withdrew to some distance and avoided the anger of Apollo.

[712] Meanwhile Hector was waiting with his horses inside the Scaean gates, in doubt whether to drive out again and go on fighting, or to call the army inside the gates. As he was thus doubting Phoebus Apollo drew near him in the likeness of a young and lusty warrior Asius, who was Hector's uncle, being own brother to Hecuba, and son of Dymas who lived in Phrygia by the waters of the river Sangarius; in his likeness Zeus's son Apollo now spoke to Hector saying, “Hector, why have you left off fighting? It is ill done of you. If I were as much better a man than you, as I am worse, you should soon rue your slackness. Drive straight towards Patroclus, if so be that Apollo may grant you a triumph over him, and you may rull him.”

[726] With this the god went back into the hurly-burly, and Hector bade Cebriones drive again into the fight. Apollo passed in among them, and struck panic into the Argives, while he gave triumph to Hector and the Trojans. Hector let the other Danaans alone and killed no man, but drove straight at Patroclus. Patroclus then sprang from his chariot to the ground, with a spear
in his left hand, and in his right a jagged stone as large as his hand could hold. He stood still and threw it, nor did it go far without hitting some one; the cast was not in vain, for the stone struck Cebriones, Hector's charioteer, a bastard son of Priam, as he held the reins in his hands. The stone hit him on the forehead and drove his brows into his head for the bone was smashed, and his eyes fell to the ground at his feet. He dropped dead from his chariot as though he were diving, and there was no more life left in him. Over him did you then vaunt, O knight Patroclus, saying, "Bless my heart, how active he is, and how well he dives. If we had been at sea this fellow would have dived from the ship's side and brought up as many oysters as the whole crew could stomach, even in rough water, for he has dived beautifully off his chariot on to the ground. It seems, then, that there are divers also among the Trojans."

[751] As he spoke he flung himself on Cebriones with the spring, as it were, of a lion that while attacking a stockyard is himself struck in the chest, and his courage is his own bane - even so furiously, O Patroclus, did you then spring upon Cebriones. Hector sprang also from his chariot to the ground. The pair then fought over the body of Cebriones. As two lions fight fiercely on some high mountain over the body of a stag that they have killed, even so did these two mighty warriors, Patroclus son of Menoetius and brave Hector, hack and hew at one another over the corpse of Cebriones. Hector would not let him go when he had once got him by the head, while Patroclus kept fast hold of his feet, and a fierce fight raged between the other Danaans and Trojans.

[765] As the east and south wind buffet one another when they beat upon some dense forest on the mountains - there is beech and ash and spreading cornel and the trees roar as they beat on one another, and one can hear the boughs cracking and breaking - even so did the Trojans and Achaeans spring upon one another and lay about each other, and neither side would give way. Many a pointed spear fell to ground and many a winged arrow sped from its bow-string about the body of Cebriones; many a great stone, moreover, beat on many a shield as they fought around his body, but there he lay in the whirling clouds of dust, all huge and hugely, heedless of his driving now.

[777] So long as the sun was still high in mid-heaven the weapons of either side were alike deadly, and the people fell; but when he went down towards the time when men loose their oxen, the Achaeans proved to be beyond all forecast stronger, so that they drew Cebriones out of range of the darts and tumult of the Trojans, and stripped the armour from his shoulders. Then
Patroclus sprang like Ares with fierce intent and a terrific shout upon the Trojans, and thrice did he kill nine men; but as he was coming on like a god for a time, then, O Patroclus, was the hour of your end approaching, for Phoebus met you in combat. Patroclus did not see him as he moved about in the crush, for he was enshrouded in thick darkness, and the god struck him from behind on his back and his broad shoulders with the flat of his hand, so that his eyes turned dizzy. Phoebus Apollo beat the helmet from off his head, and it rolled rattling off under the horses' feet, where its horse-hair plumes were all begrimed with dust and blood. Never indeed had that helmet fared so before, for it had served to protect the head and comely forehead of the godlike hero Achilles. Now, however, Zeus delivered it over to be worn by Hector. Nevertheless the end of Hector also was near. The bronze-shod spear, so great and so strong, was broken in the hand of Patroclus, while his shield that covered him from head to foot fell to the ground as did also the band that held it, and Apollo undid the fastenings of his corslet.

[805] On this his mind became clouded; his limbs failed him, and he stood as one dazed; whereon Euphorbus son of Panthous a Dardanian, the best spearman of his time, as also the finest horseman and fleetest runner, came behind him and struck him in the back with a spear, midway between the shoulders. This man as soon as ever he had come up with his chariot had dismounted twenty men, so proficient was he in all the arts of war - he it was, O knight Patroclus, that first drove a weapon into you, but he did not quite overpower you. Euphorbus then ran back into the crowd, after drawing his ashen spear out of the wound; he would not stand firm and wait for Patroclus, unarmed though he now was, to attack him; but Patroclus unnerved, alike by the blow the god had given him and by the spear-wound, drew back under cover of his men in fear for his life.

[818] Hector on this, seeing him to be wounded and giving ground, forced his way through the ranks, and when close up with him struck him in the lower part of the belly with a spear, driving the bronze point right through it, so that he fell heavily to the ground, to the grief of the Achaeans. As when a lion has fought some fierce wild-boar and worsted him - the two fight furiously upon the mountains over some little fountain at which they would both drink, and the lion has beaten the boar till he can hardly breathe - even so did Hector son of Priam take the life of the brave son of Menoetius who had killed so many, striking him from close at hand, and vaunting over him the while. “Patroclus,” said he, “you deemed that you should sack our city, rob our Trojan women of their freedom, and carry them off in your ships to your own country.
Fool; Hector and his fleet horses were ever straining their utmost to defend them. I am foremost of all the Trojan warriors to stave the day of bondage from off them; as for you, vultures shall devour you here. Poor wretch, Achilles with all his bravery availed you nothing; and yet I wager when you left him he charged you straitly saying, 'Come not back to the ships, knight Patroclus, till you have rent the bloodstained shirt of murderous Hector about his body. Thus I wager did he charge you, and your fool's heart answered him 'yea' within you.'

[843] Then, as the life ebbed out of you, you answered, O knight Patroclus: “Hector, vaunt as you will, for Zeus the son of Cronus and Apollo have vouchsafed you victory; it is they who have vanquished me so easily, and they who have stripped the armour from my shoulders; had twenty such men as you attacked me, all of them would have fallen before my spear. Fate and the son of Leto have overpowered me, and among mortal men Euphorbus; you are yourself third only in the killing of me. I say further, and lay my saying to your heart, you too shall live but for a little season; death and the day of your doom are close upon you, and they will lay you low by the hand of Achilles descendant of Aeacus.”

[855] When he had thus spoken his eyes were closed in death, his soul left his body and flitted down to the house of Hades, mourning its sad fate and bidding farewell to the youth and vigor of its manhood. Dead though he was, Hector still spoke to him saying, “Patroclus, why should you thus foretell my doom? Who knows but Achilles, son of lovely Thetis, may be smitten by my spear and die before me?”

[862] As he spoke he drew the bronze spear from the wound, planting his foot upon the body, which he thrust off and let lie on its back. He then went spear in hand after Automedon, squire of the fleet descendant of Aeacus, for he longed to lay him low, but the immortal steeds which the gods had given as a rich gift to Peleus bore him swiftly from the field.
Book Seventeen

Summary:

A battle now rages over the body of Patroclus. Menelaus tries to defend the body but he is driven away by a charge from Hector, who strips the body of armour. As Menelaus and Ajax attempt to recover the body, Hector puts on the armour - that was once the armour of Achilles - and re-joins the battle.

The fight for the corpse intensifies - the Greeks wanting to bring Patroclus' body to Achilles so it can be given a proper funeral; the Trojans intending to use the body to ransom the armour of Sarpedon - and Zeus allows Athena and Apollo to give assistance. Finally, Menelaus is able to recover the body and the Greeks carry it from the field.
Thus then did they fight as it were a flaming fire. Meanwhile the fleet runner Antilochus, who had been sent as messenger, reached Achilles, and found him sitting by his tall ships and boding that which was indeed too surely true. “Alas,” said he to himself in the heaviness of his heart, “why are the Achaeans again scouring the plain and flocking towards the ships? Heaven grant the gods be not now bringing that sorrow upon me of which my mother Thetis spoke, saying that while I was yet alive the bravest of the Myrmidons should fall before the Trojans, and see the light of the sun no longer. I fear the brave son of Menoetius has fallen through his own daring and yet I bade him return to the ships as soon as he had driven back those that were bringing fire against them, and not join battle with Hector.”

[15] As he was thus pondering, the son of Nestor came up to him and told his sad tale, weeping bitterly the while. “Alas,” he cried, “son of noble Peleus, I bring you bad tidings, would indeed that they were untrue. Patroclus has fallen, and a fight is raging about his naked body— for Hector holds his armour.”

[22] A dark cloud of grief fell upon Achilles as he listened. He filled both hands with dust from off the ground, and poured it over his head, disfiguring his comely face, and letting the refuse settle over his shirt so fair and new. He flung himself down all huge and hugely at full length, and tore his hair with his hands. The women whom Achilles and Patroclus had taken captive screamed aloud for grief, beating their breasts, and with their limbs failing them for sorrow. ¹ Antilochus bent over him the while, weeping and holding both his hands as he lay groaning for he feared that he might plunge a knife into his own throat. Then Achilles gave a loud cry and his mother heard him as she was sitting in the depths of the sea by the old man her father, whereon she screamed, and all the goddesses, daughters of Nereus that dwelt at the bottom of the sea, came gathering round her. There were Glauce, Thalia and Cymodoce, Nesaia, Speo, thoe and dark-eyed Halie, Cymothoe, Actaea and Limnorea, Melite, Iaera, Amphithoe and Agave, Doto and Proto, Pherusa and Dynamene, Dexamene, Amphinome and Callianeira, Doris, Panope, and the famous sea-nymph Galatea, Nemertes, Apsides and Callianassa. There were

¹ These women, reduced to slavery because they were 'property' captured in war, would have been the servants, maids, cooks etc. in Achilles' household.
also Clymene, Ianeira and Ianassa, Maera, Oreithuia and Amatheia of the lovely locks, with other Nereids who dwell in the depths of the sea.\textsuperscript{1} The crystal cave was filled with their multitude and they all beat their breasts while Thetis led them in their lament.

[50] “Listen,” she cried, “sisters, daughters of Nereus, that you may hear the burden of my sorrows. Alas, woe is me, woe in that I have borne the most glorious of offspring. I bore him fair and strong, hero among heroes, and he shot up as a sapling; I tended him as a plant in a goodly garden, and sent him with his ships to Ilium to fight the Trojans, but never shall I welcome him back to the house of Peleus. So long as he lives to look upon the light of the sun he is in heaviness, and though I go to him I cannot help him. Nevertheless I will go, that I may see my dear son and learn what sorrow has befallen him though he is still holding aloof from battle.”

[65] She left the cave as she spoke, while the others followed weeping after, and the waves opened a path before them. When they reached the rich plain of Troy, they came up out of the sea in a long line on to the sands, at the place where the ships of the Myrmidons were drawn up in close order round the tents of Achilles. His mother went up to him as he lay groaning; she laid her hand upon his head and spoke piteously, saying, “My son, why are you thus weeping? What sorrow has now befallen you? Tell me; hide it not from me. Surely Zeus has granted you the prayer you made him, when you lifted up your hands and besought him that the Achaeans might all of them be pent up at their ships, and rue it bitterly in that you were no longer with them.”

[78] Achilles groaned and answered, “Mother, Olympian Zeus has indeed vouchsafed me the fulfilment of my prayer, but what good is it to me, seeing that my dear comrade Patroclus has fallen - he whom I valued more than all others, and loved as dearly as my own life? I have lost him; aye, and Hector when he had killed him stripped the wondrous armour, so glorious to behold, which the gods gave to Peleus when they laid you in the couch of a mortal man. Would that you were still dwelling among the immortal sea-nymphs, and that Peleus had taken to himself some mortal bride. For now you shall have grief infinite by reason of the death of that son whom you can never welcome home- nay, I will not live nor go about among mankind unless Hector fall by my spear, and thus pay me for having slain Patroclus son of Menoetius.”

[94] Thetis wept and answered, “Then, my son, is your end near at hand- for your own death awaits you full soon after that of Hector.”

\textsuperscript{1} A slightly different list of 50 names is given by Hesiod, \textit{Theogony} 240 - 264.
[97] Then said Achilles in his great grief, “I would die here and now, in that I could not save my comrade. He has fallen far from home, and in his hour of need my hand was not there to help him. What is there for me? Return to my own land I shall not, and I have brought no saving neither to Patroclus nor to my other comrades of whom so many have been slain by mighty Hector; I stay here by my ships a bootless burden upon the earth, I, who in fight have no peer among the Achaeans, though in council there are better than I. Therefore, may Strife perish both from among gods and men, and anger, wherein even a righteous man will harden his heart - which rises up in the soul of a man like smoke, and the taste thereof is sweeter than drops of honey. Even so has Agamemnon angered me. And yet - so be it, for it is over; I will force my soul into subjection as I needs must; I will go; I will pursue Hector who has slain him whom I loved so dearly, and will then abide my doom when it may please Zeus and the other gods to send it. Even Heracles, the best beloved of Zeus - even he could not escape the hand of death, but fate and Hera's fierce anger laid him low, as I too shall lie when I am dead if a like doom awaits me. Till then I will win fame, and will bid Trojan and Dardanian women wring tears from their tender cheeks with both their hands in the grievousness of their great sorrow; thus shall they know that he who has held aloof so long will hold aloof no longer. Hold me not back, therefore, in the love you bear me, for you shall not move me.”

[127] Then silver-footed Thetis answered, “My son, what you have said is true. It is well to save your comrades from destruction, but your armour is in the hands of the Trojans; Hector bears it in triumph upon his own shoulders. Full well I know that his vaunt shall not be lasting, for his end is close at hand; go not, however, into the press of battle till you see me return hither; to-morrow at break of day I shall be here, and will bring you goodly armour from King Hephaestus.”

[138] On this she left her brave son, and as she turned away she said to the sea-nymphs her sisters, “Dive into the bosom of the sea and go to the house of the old sea-god my father. Tell him everything; as for me, I will go to the cunning workman Hephaestus on high Olympus, and ask him to provide my son with a suit of splendid armour.”

[145] When she had so said, they dived forthwith beneath the waves, while silver-footed Thetis went her way that she might bring the armour for her son.
The Appearance of Achilles: 148 - 242

[148] Thus, then, did her feet bear the goddess to Olympus, and meanwhile the Achaeans were flying with loud cries before murderous Hector till they reached the ships and the Hellespont, and they could not draw the body of Ares's servant Patroclus out of reach of the weapons that were showered upon him, for Hector son of Priam with his host and horsemen had again caught up to him like the flame of a fiery furnace; thrice did brave Hector seize him by the feet, striving with might and main to draw him away and calling loudly on the Trojans, and thrice did the two Ajaxes, clothed in valour as with a garment, beat him from off the body; but all undaunted he would now charge into the thick of the fight, and now again he would stand still and cry aloud, but he would give no ground. As upland shepherds that cannot chase some famished lion from a carcase, even so could not the two Ajaxes scare Hector son of Priam from the body of Patroclus.

[165] And now he would even have dragged it off and have won imperishable glory, had not Iris fleet as the wind, winged her way as messenger from Olympus to the son of Peleus and bidden him arm. She came secretly without the knowledge of Zeus and of the other gods, for Hera sent her, and when she had got close to him she said, “Up, son of Peleus, mightiest of all mankind; rescue Patroclus about whom this fearful fight is now raging by the ships. Men are killing one another, the Danaans in defence of the dead body, while the Trojans are trying to hale it away, and take it to windy Ilium: Hector is the most furious of them all; he is for cutting the head from the body and fixing it on the stakes of the wall. Up, then, and bide here no longer; shrink from the thought that Patroclus may become meat for the dogs of Troy. Shame on you, should his body suffer any kind of outrage.”

[181] And Achilles said, “Iris, which of the gods was it that sent you to me?”

[183] Iris answered, “It was Hera the royal spouse of Zeus, but the son of Cronus does not know of my coming, nor yet does any other of the immortals who dwell on the snowy summits of Olympus.”

[186] Then fleet Achilles answered her saying, “How can I go up into the battle? They have my armour. My mother forbade me to arm till I should see her come, for she promised to bring me goodly armour from Hephaestus; I know no man whose arms I can put on, save only the shield of Ajax son of Telamon, and he surely must be fighting in the front rank and wielding his spear about the body of dead Patroclus.”
[196] Iris said, 'We know that your armour has been taken, but go as you are; go to the deep trench and show yourself before the Trojans, that they may fear you and cease fighting. Thus will the fainting sons of the Achaeans gain some brief breathing-time, which in battle may hardly be.”

[201] Iris left him when she had so spoken. But Achilles dear to Zeus arose, and Athena flung her tasselled aegis round his strong shoulders; she crowned his head with a halo of golden cloud from which she kindled a glow of gleaming fire. As the smoke that goes up into heaven from some city that is being beleaguered on an island far out at sea- all day long do men sally from the city and fight their hardest, and at the going down of the sun the line of beacon-fires blazes forth, flaring high for those that dwell near them to behold, if so be that they may come with their ships and succour them- even so did the light flare from the head of Achilles, as he stood by the trench, going beyond the wall- but he aid not join the Achaeans for he heeded the charge which his mother laid upon him.

[216] There did he stand and shout aloud. Athena also raised her voice from afar, and spread terror unspeakable among the Trojans. Ringing as the note of a trumpet that sounds alarm then the foe is at the gates of a city, even so brazen was the voice of the son of Aeacus, and when the Trojans heard its clarion tones they were dismayed; the horses turned back with their chariots for they boded mischief, and their drivers were awe-struck by the steady flame which the grey-eyed goddess had kindled above the head of the great son of Peleus.

[228] Thrice did Achilles raise his loud cry as he stood by the trench, and thrice were the Trojans and their brave allies thrown into confusion; whereon twelve of their noblest champions fell beneath the wheels of their chariots and perished by their own spears. The Achaeans to their great joy then drew Patroclus out of reach of the weapons, and laid him on a litter: his comrades stood mourning round him, and among them fleet Achilles who wept bitterly as he saw his true comrade lying dead upon his bier. He had sent him out with horses and chariots into battle, but his return he was not to welcome.

[239] Then Hera sent the busy sun, loth though he was, into the waters of Oceanus; so he set, and the Achaeans had rest from the tug and turmoil of war.

The Trojans Camp on the Plain: 243 - 313

[243] Now the Trojans when they had come out of the fight, unyoked their horses and gathered in assembly before preparing their supper. They kept their feet, nor would any dare to
sit down, for fear had fallen upon them all because Achilles had shown himself after having held aloof so long from battle. Polydamas son of Panthous was first to speak, a man of judgement, who alone among them could look both before and after. He was comrade to Hector, and they had been born upon the same night; with all sincerity and goodwill, therefore, he addressed them thus:

[254] “Look to it well, my friends; I would urge you to go back now to your city and not wait here by the ships till morning, for we are far from our walls. So long as this man was at enmity with Agamemnon the Achaeans were easier to deal with, and I would have gladly camped by the ships in the hope of taking them; but now I go in great fear of the fleet son of Peleus; he is so daring that he will never bide here on the plain whereon the Trojans and Achaeans fight with equal valour, but he will try to storm our city and carry off our women. Do then as I say, and let us retreat. For this is what will happen. The darkness of night will for a time stay the son of Peleus, but if he find us here in the morning when he sallies forth in full armour, we shall have knowledge of him in good earnest. Glad indeed will he be who can escape and get back to Ilium, and many a Trojan will become meat for dogs and vultures may I never live to hear it. If we do as I say, little though we may like it, we shall have strength in counsel during the night, and the great gates with the doors that close them will protect the city. At dawn we can arm and take our stand on the walls; he will then rue it if he sallies from the ships to fight us. He will go back when he has given his horses their fill of being driven all whithers under our walls, and will be in no mind to try and force his way into the city. Neither will he ever sack it, dogs shall devour him ere he do so.”

[284] Hector looked fiercely at him and answered, “Polydamas, your words are not to my liking in that you bid us go back and be pent within the city. Have you not had enough of being cooped up behind walls? In the old-days the city of Priam was famous the whole world over for its wealth of gold and bronze, but our treasures are wasted out of our houses, and much goods have been sold away to Phrygia and fair Meonia, for the hand of Zeus has been laid heavily upon us. Now, therefore, that the son of scheming Cronus has vouchsafed me to win glory here and to hem the Achaeans in at their ships, prate no more in this fool's wise among the people. You will have no man with you; it shall not be; do all of you as I now say; take your suppers in your companies throughout the host, and keep your watches and be wakeful every man of you. If any Trojan is uneasy about his possessions, let him gather them and give them out among the people.
Better let these, rather than the Achaeans, have them. At daybreak we will arm and fight about
the ships; granted that Achilles has again come forward to defend them, let it be as he will, but it
shall go hard with him. I shall not shun him, but will fight him, to fall or conquer. The god of
war deals out like measure to all, and the slayer may yet be slain."

[310] Thus spoke Hector; and the Trojans, fools that they were, shouted in applause, for
Pallas Athena had robbed them of their understanding. They gave ear to Hector with his evil
counsel, but the wise words of Polydamas no man would heed.

_Baroclus' Body Prepared for Cremation: 314 - 355_

[314] They took their supper throughout the host, and meanwhile through the whole night the
Achaeans mourned Patroclus, and the son of Peleus led them in their lament. He laid his
murderous hands upon the breast of his comrade, groaning again and again as a bearded lion
when a man who was chasing deer has robbed him of his young in some dense forest; when the
lion comes back he is furious, and searches dingle and dell to track the hunter if he can find him,
for he is mad with rage - even so with many a sigh did Achilles speak among the Myrmidons
saying, “Alas! Vain were the words with which I cheered the hero Menoetius in his own house; I
said that I would bring his brave son back again to Opoeis after he had sacked Ilium and taken
his share of the spoils - but Zeus does not give all men their heart's desire. The same soil shall be
redden here at Troy by the blood of us both, for I too shall never be welcomed home by the old
knight Peleus, nor by my mother Thetis, but even in this place shall the earth cover me.
Nevertheless, O Patroclus, now that I am left behind you, I will not bury you, till I have brought
hither the head and armour of mighty Hector who has slain you. Twelve noble sons of Trojans
will I behead before your bier to avenge you; till I have done so you shall lie as you are by the
ships, and fair women of Troy and Dardanus, whom we have taken with spear and strength of
arm when we sacked men's goodly cities, shall weep over you both night and day.”

[343] Then Achilles told his men to set a large tripod upon the fire that they might wash the
cotted gore from off Patroclus. Thereon they set a tripod full of bath water on to a clear fire:
they threw sticks on to it to make it blaze, and the water became hot as the flame played about
the belly of the tripod. When the water in the cauldron was boiling they washed the body,
anointed it with oil, and closed its wounds with ointment that had been kept nine years. Then
they laid it on a bier and covered it with a linen cloth from head to foot, and over this they laid a
fair white robe. Thus all night long did the Myrmidons gather round Achilles to mourn Patroclus.
Thetis Asks Hephaestus for New Armour: 356 - 467

[356] Then Zeus said to Hera his sister-wife, “So, Queen Hera, you have gained your end, and have roused fleet Achilles. One would think that the Achaeans were of your own flesh and blood.”

[360] And Hera answered, “Dread son of Cronus, why should you say this thing? May not a man though he be only mortal and knows less than we do, do what he can for another person? And shall not I - foremost of all goddesses both by descent and as wife to you who reign in heaven - devise evil for the Trojans if I am angry with them?”

[368] Thus did they converse. Meanwhile Thetis came to the house of Hephaestus, imperishable, star-bespangled, fairest of the abodes in heaven, a house of bronze wrought by the lame god's own hands. She found him busy with his bellows, sweating and hard at work, for he was making twenty tripods that were to stand by the wall of his house, and he set wheels of gold under them all that they might go of their own selves to the assemblies of the gods, and come back again - marvels indeed to see. They were finished all but the ears of cunning workmanship which yet remained to be fixed to them: these he was now fixing, and he was hammering at the rivets. While he was thus at work silver-footed Thetis came to the house. Charis,1 of graceful head-dress, wife2 to the far-famed lame god, came towards her as soon as she saw her, and took her hand in her own, saying, “Why have you come to our house, Thetis, honoured and ever welcome - for you do not visit us often? Come inside and let me set refreshment3 before you.”

[388] The goddess led the way as she spoke, and bade Thetis sit on a richly decorated seat inlaid with silver; there was a footstool also under her feet. Then she called Hephaestus and said, “Hephaestus, come here, Thetis wants you”; and the far-famed lame god answered, “Then it is indeed an august and honoured goddess who has come here; she it was that took care of me when I was suffering from the heavy fall which I had through my cruel mother's anger- for she would have got rid of me because I was lame. It would have gone hardly with me when I was suffering from the heavy fall which I had through my cruel mother's anger- for she would have got rid of me because I was lame. It would have gone hardly with me had not Eurynome, daughter of the ever-encircling waters of Oceanus, and Thetis, taken me to their bosom. Nine

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1 The Greek concept of charis, personified here in the wife of Hephaestus, is the origin of the English charity but is most often translated as Grace. The Charites, for example, the handmaids of Aphrodite, are usually called The Graces. Charis, as a concept, is a sense, a feeling, of having given or received a favour. There is an inherent sense of reciprocity.

2 In other traditions Aphrodite is the wife of Hephaestus - perhaps just for the irony.

3 The Greek here, xéinia, is a gift from a host to a guest - I mention this because the theme here seems to be reciprocity.
years did I stay with them, and many beautiful works in bronze, brooches, spiral armlets, cups, and chains, did I make for them in their cave, with the roaring waters of Oceanus foaming as they rushed ever past it; and no one knew, neither of gods nor men, save only Thetis and Eurynome who took care of me. If, then, Thetis has come to my house I must make her due requital for having saved me; entertain her, therefore, with all hospitality, while I put by my bellows and all my tools.”

[410] On this the mighty monster hobbled off from his anvil, his thin legs plying lustily under him. He set the bellows away from the fire, and gathered his tools into a silver chest. Then he took a sponge and washed his face and hands, his shaggy chest and brawny neck; he donned his shirt, grasped his strong staff, and limped towards the door. There were golden handmaids also who worked for him, and were like real young women, with sense and reason, voice also and strength, and all the learning of the immortals; these busied themselves as the king bade them, while he drew near to Thetis, seated her upon a goodly seat, and took her hand in his own, saying, “Why have you come to our house, Thetis honoured and ever welcome - for you do not visit us often? Say what you want, and I will do it for you at once if I can, and if it can be done at all.”

[428] Thetis wept and answered, “Hephaestus, is there another goddess in Olympus whom the son of Cronus has been pleased to try with so much affliction as he has me? Me alone of the marine goddesses did he make subject to a mortal husband, Peleus son of Aeacus, and sorely against my will did I submit to the embraces of one who was but mortal, and who now stays at home worn out with age. Neither is this all. Heaven vouchsafed me a son, hero among heroes, and he shot up as a sapling. I tended him as a plant in a goodly garden and sent him with his ships to Ilius to fight the Trojans, but never shall I welcome him back to the house of Peleus. So long as he lives to look upon the light of the sun, he is in heaviness, and though I go to him I cannot help him; King Agamemnon has made him give up the maiden whom the sons of the Achaeans had awarded him, and he wastes with sorrow for her sake. Then the Trojans hemmed the Achaeans in at their ships' sterns and would not let them come forth; the elders, therefore, of the Argives besought Achilles and offered him great treasure, whereon he refused to bring deliverance to them himself, but put his own armour on Patroclus and sent him into the fight with much people after him. All day long they fought by the Scaean gates and would have taken the city there and then, had not Apollo vouchsafed glory to Hector and slain the valiant son of
Menoetius after he had done the Trojans much evil. Therefore I am suppliant at your knees if haply you may be pleased to provide my son, whose end is near at hand, with helmet and shield, with goodly greaves fitted with ankle-clasps, and with a breastplate, for he lost his own when his true comrade fell at the hands of the Trojans, and he now lies stretched on earth in the bitterness of his soul.”

[461] And Hephaestus answered, “Take heart, and be no more disquieted about this matter; would that I could hide him from death's sight when his hour is come, so surely as I can find him armour that shall amaze the eyes of all who behold it.”

The Shield of Achilles: 468 - 617

[468] When he had so said he left her and went to his bellows, turning them towards the fire and bidding them do their office. Twenty bellows blew upon the melting-pots, and they blew blasts of every kind, some fierce to help him when he had need of them, and others less strong as Hephaestus willed it in the course of his work. He threw tough copper into the fire, and tin, with silver and gold; he set his great anvil on its block, and with one hand grasped his mighty hammer while he took the tongs in the other.

[478] First he shaped the shield so great and strong, adorning it all over and binding it round with a gleaming circuit in three layers; and the baldric was made of silver. He made the shield in five thicknesses, and with many a wonder did his cunning hand enrich it.

[483] He wrought the earth, the heavens, and the sea; the moon also at her full and the untiring sun, with all the signs that glorify the face of heaven - the Pleiads, the Hyads, huge Orion, and the Bear, which men also call the Wagon and which turns round ever in one place, facing. Orion, and alone never dips into the stream of Oceanus.

[490] He wrought also two cities, fair to see and busy with the hum of men. In the one were weddings and wedding-feasts, and they were going about the city with brides whom they were escorting by torchlight from their chambers. Loud rose the wedding song,¹ and the youths danced to the music of flute and lyre, while the women stood each at her house door to see them.

¹ The lyrics of this song are not known, nor might we want them to be. The Greeks entertained none of our queasiness and discomfort where sex was concerned and quite openly celebrated all things human, organic and sexual. This song, for example, is called the hymen song and this part of the wedding celebration is presided over by the Hymen, one of the many gods of marriage.
Meanwhile the people were gathered in assembly, for there was a quarrel, and two men were wrangling about the blood-money for a man who had been killed, the one saying before the people that he had paid damages in full, and the other that he had not been paid. Each was trying to make his own case good, and the people took sides, each man backing the side that he had taken; but the heralds kept them back, and the elders sat on their seats of stone in a solemn circle, holding the staves which the heralds had put into their hands. Then they rose and each in his turn gave judgement, and there were two talents laid down, to be given to him whose judgement should be deemed the fairest.\footnote{The section above is one of the most celebrated passages in the Iliad because it gives us our earliest detailed description of archaic law and the blood-feud system. A man has been killed - we don't know, or need to know, how or why - and his surviving family members have asked for compensation. Someone has taken responsibility for the death and has offered to pay a sum of money. By early Greek law, the victim's family are obligated to accept the offer of compensation, although the actual amount may then be in dispute, which is the case here. Unable to agree, the two parties have commissioned the elders to offer judgement. Whosoever's judgement is deemed acceptable to both parties will collect the fee. If compensation was not offered, if the responsible party did not accept responsibility, the victim's family had the right to seek compensation in blood: ie, an eye for an eye.}

About the other city there lay encamped two hosts in gleaming armour, and they were divided whether to sack it, or to spare it and accept the half of what it contained. But the men of the city would not yet consent, and armed themselves for a surprise; their wives and little children kept guard upon the walls, and with them were the men who were past fighting through age; but the others sallied forth with Ares and Pallas Athena at their head - both of them wrought in gold and clad in golden raiment, great and fair with their armour as befitting gods, while they that followed were smaller. When they reached the place where they would lay their ambush, it was on a riverbed to which live stock of all kinds would come from far and near to water; here, then, they lay concealed, clad in full armour. Some way off them there were two scouts who were on the look-out for the coming of sheep or cattle, which presently came, followed by two shepherds who were playing on their pipes, and had not so much as a thought of danger. When those who were in ambush saw this, they cut off the flocks and herds and killed the shepherds. Meanwhile the besiegers, when they heard much noise among the cattle as they sat in council, sprang to their horses, and made with all speed towards them; when they reached them they set battle in array by the banks of the river, and the hosts aimed their bronze-shod spears at one another. With them were Strife and Riot, and fell Fate who was dragging three men after her, one with a fresh wound, and the other unwounded, while the third was dead, and she was dragging
him along by his heel: and her robe was bedabbled in men's blood. They went in and out with one another and fought as though they were living people haling away one another's dead.

[541] He wrought also a fair fallow field, large and thrice ploughed already. Many men were working at the plough within it, turning their oxen to and fro, furrow after furrow. Each time that they turned on reaching the headland a man would come up to them and give them a cup of wine, and they would go back to their furrows looking forward to the time when they should again reach the headland. The part that they had ploughed was dark behind them, so that the field, though it was of gold, still looked as if it were being ploughed - very curious to behold.

[550] He wrought also a field in of crown land, and the labourers were reaping with sharp sickles in their hands. Swathe after swathe fell to the ground in a straight line behind them, and the binders bound them in bands of twisted straw. There were three binders, and behind them there were boys who gathered the cut corn in armfuls and kept on bringing them to be bound: among them all the king watched in silence and was glad. Heralds were getting a meal ready under an oak, for they had sacrificed a great ox, and were busy cutting him up, while the women were making a porridge of much white barley for the labourers' dinner.

[561] He wrought also a vineyard, golden and fair to see, and the vines were loaded with grapes. The bunches overhead were black, but the vines were trained on poles of silver. He ran a ditch of dark metal all round it, and fenced it with a fence of tin; there was only one path to it, and by this the vintagers went when they would gather the vintage. Youths and maidens all blithe and full of glee, carried the luscious fruit in plaited baskets; and with them there went a boy who made sweet music with his lyre, and sang the Linus-song with his clear boyish voice.

[574] He wrought also a herd of homed cattle. He made the cows of gold and tin, and they lowed as they came full speed out of the yards to go and feed among the waving reeds that grow by the banks of the river. Along with the cattle there went four shepherds, all of them in gold, and their nine fleet dogs went with them. Two terrible lions had fastened on a bellowing bull that was with the foremost cows, and bellow as he might they haled him, while the dogs and men gave chase: the lions tore through the bull's thick hide and were gorging on his blood and

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1 Butler's translation: "...a field of harvest corn, and the reapers were reaping", in inexplicable, except to say that translation, as will all creative and intellectual activities, is a political act. There is no ambiguity here, τέμενος βασιλεύον is crown land, land reserved for the use of the king.
2 Again, Butler has "the owner of the land" for βασιλεύον, 'the king.'
3 Linus is the mythical minstrel who taught. The song is traditionally played to accompany the harvest of the grapes.
bowels, but the herdsmen were afraid to do anything, and only hounded on their dogs; the dogs
dared not fasten on the lions but stood by barking and keeping out of harm's way.

[587] The god wrought also a pasture in a fair mountain dell, and large flock of sheep, with a
homestead and huts, and sheltered sheepfolds.

[590] Furthermore he wrought a green, like that which Daedalus once made in Cnossus for
lovely Ariadne. Hereon there danced youths and maidens whom all would woo, with their hands
on one another's wrists. The maidens wore robes of light linen, and the youths well woven shirts
that were slightly oiled. The girls were crowned with garlands, while the young men had daggers
of gold that hung by silver baldric; sometimes they would dance deftly in a ring with merry
twinkling feet, as it were a potter sitting at his work and making trial of his wheel to see whether
it will run, and sometimes they would go all in line with one another, and much people was
gathered joyously about the green. There was a bard also to sing to them and play his lyre, while
two tumblers went about performing in the midst of them when the man struck up with his tune.

[607] All round the outermost rim of the shield he set the mighty stream of the river Oceanus.

[609] Then when he had fashioned the shield so great and strong, he made a breastplate also
that shone brighter than fire. He made helmet, close fitting to the brow, and richly worked, with a
golden plume overhanging it; and he made greaves also of beaten tin.

[614] Lastly, when the famed lame god had made all the armour, he took it and set it before
the mother of Achilles; whereon she darted like a falcon from the snowy summits of Olympus
and bore away the gleaming armour from the house of Hephaestus.
Book Nineteen

Thetis Brings the Armour to Achilles: 1 - 53

Now when Dawn in robe of saffron was hasting from the streams of Oceanus, to bring light to mortals and immortals, Thetis reached the ships with the armour that the god had given her. She found her son fallen about the body of Patroclus and weeping bitterly. Many also of his followers were weeping round him, but when the goddess came among them she clasped his hand in her own, saying, “My son, grieve as we may we must let this man lie, for it is by heaven's will that he has fallen; now, therefore, accept from Hephaestus this rich and goodly armour, which no man has ever yet borne upon his shoulders.”

[12] As she spoke she set the armour before Achilles, and it rang out bravely as she did so. The Myrmidons were struck with awe, and none dared look full at it, for they were afraid; but Achilles was roused to still greater fury, and his eyes gleamed with a fierce light, for he was glad when he handled the splendid present which the god had made him. Then, as soon as he had satisfied himself with looking at it, he said to his mother, “Mother, the god has given me armour, meet handiwork for an immortal and such as no living could have fashioned; I will now arm, but I much fear that flies will settle upon the son of Menoetius and breed worms about his wounds, so that his body, now he is dead, will be disfigured and the flesh will rot.”

[28] Silver-footed Thetis answered, “My son, be not disquieted about this matter. I will find means to protect him from the swarms of noisome flies that prey on the bodies of men who have been killed in battle. He may lie for a whole year, and his flesh shall still be as sound as ever, or even sounder. Call, therefore, the Achaean heroes in assembly; unsay your anger against Agamemnon; arm at once, and fight with might and main.”

[37] As she spoke she put strength and courage into his heart, and she then dropped ambrosia and red nectar into the wounds of Patroclus, that his body might suffer no change.

[40] Then Achilles went out upon the seashore, and with a loud cry called on the Achaean heroes. On this even those who as yet had stayed always at the ships, the pilots and helmsmen, and even the stewards who were about the ships and served out rations, all came to the place of assembly because Achilles had shown himself after having held aloof so long from fighting. Two sons of Ares, Odysseus and the son of Tydeus, came limping, for their wounds still pained them; nevertheless they came, and took their seats in the front row of the assembly. Last of all came
Agamemnon, king of men, he too wounded, for Coon son of Antenor had struck him with a spear in battle.

**Achilles Calls an Assembly: 54 - 237**

[54] When the Achaeans were got together Achilles rose and said, “Son of Atreus, surely it would have been better alike for both you and me, when we two were in such high anger about Briseis, surely it would have been better, had Artemis's arrow slain her at the ships on the day when I took her after having sacked Lyrnessus. For so, many an Achaean the less would have bitten dust before the foe in the days of my anger. It has been well for Hector and the Trojans, but the Achaeans will long indeed remember our quarrel. Now, however, let it be, for it is over. If we have been angry, necessity has schooled our anger. I put it from me: I dare not nurse it for ever; therefore, bid the Achaeans arm forthwith that I may go out against the Trojans, and learn whether they will be in a mind to sleep by the ships or no. Glad, I ween, will he be to rest his knees who may fly my spear when I wield it.”

[74] Thus did he speak, and the Achaeans rejoiced in that the son of Peleus had put away his anger.

[76] Then Agamemnon spoke, rising in his place, and not going into the middle of the assembly. “Danaan heroes,” said he, “servants of Ares, it is well to listen when a man stands up to speak, and it is not seemly to interrupt him, or it will go hard even with a practised speaker. Who can either hear or speak in an uproar? Even the finest orator will be disconcerted by it. I will expound to the son of Peleus, and do you other Achaeans heed me and mark me well. Often have the Achaeans spoken to me of this matter and upbraided me, but it was not I that did it: [87] Zeus, and Moira, and Erinys that walks in darkness struck me mad when we were assembled on the day that I took from Achilles the meed that had been awarded to him. [90] What could I do? All things are in the hand of heaven, and Até, eldest of Zeus's daughters, shuts men's eyes to their destruction. She walks delicately, not on the solid earth, but hovers over the heads of men to make them stumble or to ensnare them.

[95] “Time was when she fooled Zeus himself, who they say is greatest whether of gods or men; for Hera, woman though she was, beguiled him on the day when Alcmena was to bring forth mighty Heracles in the fair city of Thebes. He told it out among the gods saying, 'Hear me all gods and goddesses, that I may speak even as I am minded; this day shall Eileithia, helper of women who are in labour, bring a man child into the world who shall be lord over all that dwell
about him who are of my blood and lineage.' Then said Hera all crafty and full of guile, 'You will play false, and will not hold to your word. Swear me, O Olympian, swear me a great oath, that he who shall this day fall between the feet of a woman, shall be lord over all that dwell about him who are of your blood and lineage.'

[112] "Thus she spoke, and Zeus suspected her not, but swore the great oath, to his much ruining thereafter. For Hera darted down from the high summit of Olympus, and went in haste to Achaean Argos where she knew that the noble wife of Sthenelus son of Perseus then was. She being with child and in her seventh month, Hera brought the child to birth though there was a month still wanting, but she stayed the offspring of Alcmena, and kept back Eileitheia. [120] Then she went to tell Zeus the son of Cronus, and said, 'Father Zeus, lord of the lightning- I have a word for your ear. There is a fine child born this day, Eurystheus, son to Sthenelus the son of Perseus; he is of your lineage; it is well, therefore, that he should reign over the Argives.'

[125] "On this Zeus was stung to the very quick, and in his rage he caught Até by the hair, and swore a great oath that never should she again invade starry heaven and Olympus, for she was the bane of all. Then he whirled her round with a twist of his hand, and flung her down from heaven so that she fell on to the fields of mortal men; and he was ever angry with her when he saw his son groaning under the cruel labours that Eurystheus laid upon him.

[134] Even so did I grieve when mighty Hector was killing the Argives at their ships, and all the time I kept thinking of Até who had so baned me. I was blind, and Zeus robbed me of my reason; I will now make atonement, and will add much treasure by way of amends. Go, therefore, into battle, you and your people with you. I will give you all that Odysseus offered you yesterday in your tents: or if it so please you, wait, though you would fain fight at once, and my squires shall bring the gifts from my ship, that you may see whether what I give you is enough.”

[145] And Achilles answered, “Son of Atreus, king of men Agamemnon, you can give such gifts as you think proper, or you can withhold them: it is in your own hands. Let us now set battle in array; it is not well to tarry talking about trifles, for there is a deed which is as yet to do. Achilles shall again be seen fighting among the foremost, and laying low the ranks of the Trojans: bear this in mind each one of you when he is fighting.”

[154] Then Odysseus said, “Achilles, godlike and brave, send not the Achaeans thus against Ilium to fight the Trojans fasting, for the battle will be no brief one, when it is once begun, and heaven has filled both sides with fury; bid them first take food both bread and wine by the ships,
for in this there is strength and stay. No man can do battle the livelong day to the going down of
the sun if he is without food; however much he may want to fight his strength will fail him
before he knows it; hunger and thirst will find him out, and his limbs will grow weary under him.
But a man can fight all day if he is full fed with meat and wine; his heart beats high, and his
strength will stay till he has routed all his foes; therefore, send the people away and bid them
prepare their meal; King Agamemnon will bring out the gifts in presence of the assembly, that all
may see them and you may be satisfied. Moreover let him swear an oath before the Argives that
he has never gone up into the couch of Briseis, nor been with her after the manner of men and
women; and do you, too, show yourself of a gracious mind; let Agamemnon entertain you in his
tents with a feast of reconciliation, that so you may have had your dues in full. As for you, son of
Atreus, treat people more righteously in future; it is no disgrace even to a king that he should
make amends if he was wrong in the first instance."

[184] And King Agamemnon answered, “Son of Laertes, your words please me well, for
throughout you have spoken wisely. I will swear as you would have me do; I do so of my own
free will, neither shall I take the name of heaven in vain. Let, then, Achilles wait, though he
would fain fight at once, and do you others wait also, till the gifts come from my tent and we
ratify the oath with sacrifice. Thus, then, do I charge you: take some noble young Achaeans with
you, and bring from my tents the gifts that I promised yesterday to Achilles, and bring the
women also; furthermore let Talthybius find me a boar from those that are with the host, and
make it ready for sacrifice to Zeus and to the sun.”

[198] Then said Achilles, “Son of Atreus, king of men Agamemnon, see to these matters at
some other season, when there is breathing time and when I am calmer. Would you have men eat
while the bodies of those whom Hector son of Priam slew are still lying mangled upon the plain?
Let the sons of the Achaeans, say I, fight fasting and without food, till we have avenged them;
afterwards at the going down of the sun let them eat their fill. As for me, Patroclus is lying dead
in my tent, all hacked and hewn, with his feet to the door, and his comrades are mourning round
him. Therefore I can take thought of nothing save only slaughter and blood and the rattle in the
throat of the dying.”

[215] Odysseus answered, “Achilles, son of Peleus, mightiest of all the Achaeans, in battle
you are better than I, and that more than a little, but in counsel I am much before you, for I am
older and of greater knowledge. Therefore be patient under my words. Fighting is a thing of
which men soon surfeit, and when Zeus, who is war's steward, weighs the upshot, it may well prove that the straw which our sickles have reaped is far heavier than the grain. It may not be that the Achaeans should mourn the dead with their bellies; day by day men fall thick and threefold continually; when should we have respite from our sorrow? Let us mourn our dead for a day and bury them out of sight and mind, but let those of us who are left eat and drink that we may arm and fight our foes more fiercely. In that hour let no man hold back, waiting for a second summons; such summons shall bode ill for him who is found lagging behind at our ships; let us rather sally as one man and loose the fury of war upon the Trojans.”

**Briseis Returned: 238 - 348**

[238] When he had thus spoken he took with him the sons of Nestor, with Meges son of Phyleus, Thoas, Meriones, Lycomedes son of Creontes, and Melanippus, and went to the tent of Agamemnon son of Atreus. The word was not sooner said than the deed was done: they brought out the seven tripods which Agamemnon had promised, with the twenty metal cauldrons and the twelve horses; they also brought the women skilled in useful arts, seven in number, with Briseis, which made eight. Odysseus weighed out the ten talents of gold and then led the way back, while the young Achaeans brought the rest of the gifts, and laid them in the middle of the assembly.

[249] Agamemnon then rose, and Talthybius whose voice was like that of a god came to him with the boar. The son of Atreus drew the knife which he wore by the scabbard of his mighty sword, and began by cutting off some bristles from the boar, lifting up his hands in prayer as he did so. The other Achaeans sat where they were all silent and orderly to hear the king, and Agamemnon looked into the vault of heaven and prayed saying, “I call Zeus the first and mightiest of all gods to witness, I call also Earth and Sun and the Erinyes who dwell below and take vengeance on him who shall swear falsely, that I have laid no hand upon the girl Briseis, neither to take her to my bed nor otherwise, but that she has remained in my tents inviolate. If I swear falsely may heaven visit me with all the penalties which it metes out to those who perjure themselves.”

[266] He cut the boar's throat as he spoke, whereon Talthybius whirled it round his head, and flung it into the wide sea to feed the fishes. Then Achilles also rose and said to the Argives, “Father Zeus, of a truth you blind men's eyes and bane them. The son of Atreus had not else stirred me to so fierce an anger, nor so stubbornly taken Briseis from me against my will. Surely
Zeus must have counselled the destruction of many an Argive. Go, now, and take your food that we may begin fighting.”

[276] On this he broke up the assembly, and every man went back to his own ship. The Myrmidons attended to the presents and took them away to the ship of Achilles. They placed them in his tents, while the stable-men drove the horses in among the others.

[282] Briseis, fair as Aphrodite, when she saw the mangled body of Patroclus, flung herself upon it and cried aloud, tearing her breast, her neck, and her lovely face with both her hands. Beautiful as a goddess she wept and said, “Patroclus, dearest friend, when I went hence I left you living; I return, O prince, to find you dead; thus do fresh sorrows multiply upon me one after the other. I saw him to whom my father and mother married me, cut down before our city, and my three own dear brothers perished with him on the self-same day; but you, Patroclus, even when Achilles slew my husband and sacked the city of noble Mynes, told me that I was not to weep, for you said you would make Achilles marry me, and take me back with him to Phthia, we should have a wedding feast among the Myrmidons. You were always kind to me and I shall never cease to grieve for you.”

[301] She wept as she spoke, and the women joined in her lament-making as though their tears were for Patroclus, but in truth each was weeping for her own sorrows. The elders of the Achaeans gathered round Achilles and prayed him to take food, but he groaned and would not do so. “I pray you,” said he, “if any comrade will hear me, bid me neither eat nor drink, for I am in great heaviness, and will stay fasting even to the going down of the sun.”

[309] On this he sent the other princes away, save only the two sons of Atreus and Odysseus, Nestor, Idomeneus, and the knight Phoenix, who stayed behind and tried to comfort him in the bitterness of his sorrow: but he would not be comforted till he should have flung himself into the jaws of battle, and he fetched sigh on sigh, thinking ever of Patroclus. Then he said:

[315] “Hapless and dearest comrade, you it was who would get a good dinner ready for me at once and without delay when the Achaeans were hasting to fight the Trojans; now, therefore, though I have meat and drink in my tents, yet will I fast for sorrow. Grief greater than this I could not know, not even though I were to hear of the death of my father, who is now in Phthia weeping for the loss of me his son, who am here fighting the Trojans in a strange land for the accursed sake of Helen, nor yet though I should hear that my son is no more- he who is being
brought up in Scyros- if indeed Neoptolemus is still living. Till now I made sure that I alone was to fall here at Troy away from Argos, while you were to return to Phthia, bring back my son with you in your own ship, and show him all my property, my bondsmen, and the greatness of my house - for Peleus must surely be either dead, or what little life remains to him is oppressed alike with the infirmities of age and ever present fear lest he should hear the sad tidings of my death.”

[338] He wept as he spoke, and the elders sighed in concert as each thought on what he had left at home behind him. The son of Cronus looked down with pity upon them, and said presently to Athena, “My child, you have quite deserted your hero; is he then gone so clean out of your recollection? There he sits by the ships all desolate for the loss of his dear comrade, and though the others are gone to their dinner he will neither eat nor drink. Go then and drop nectar and ambrosia into his breast, that he may know no hunger.”

Achilles Prepares for Battle: 349 - 424

[349] With these words he urged Athena, who was already of the same mind. She darted down from heaven into the air like some falcon sailing on his broad wings and screaming. Meanwhile the Achaeans were arming throughout the host, and when Athena had dropped nectar and ambrosia into Achilles so that no cruel hunger should cause his limbs to fail him, she went back to the house of her mighty father. Thick as the chill snow-flakes shed from the hand of Zeus and borne on the keen blasts of the north wind, even so thick did the gleaming helmets, the bossed shields, the strongly plated breastplates, and the ashen spears stream from the ships. The sheen pierced the sky, the whole land was radiant with their flashing armour, and the sound of the tramp of their treading rose from under their feet. In the midst of them all Achilles put on his armour; he gnashed his teeth, his eyes gleamed like fire, for his grief was greater than he could bear. Thus, then, full of fury against the Trojans, did he don the gift of the god, the armour that Hephaestus had made him.

[369] First he put on the goodly greaves fitted with ancle-clasps, and next he did on the breastplate about his chest. He slung the silver-studded sword of bronze about his shoulders, and

1 Achilles was sent to Sciros when he was nine years old and there he met Deidameia, by whom he had a son, Neoptolemus. When Odysseus found Achilles on Sciros and took him to join Agamemnon, Neoptolemus was left with his mother. After the death of Achilles, Neoptolemus went to Troy and, during the sack of the city, it was he who killed Priam.
then took up the shield so great and strong that shone afar with a splendour as of the moon. As the light seen by sailors from out at sea, when men have lit a fire in their homestead high up among the mountains, but the sailors are carried out to sea by wind and storm far from the haven where they would be - even so did the gleam of Achilles’ wondrous shield strike up into the heavens. He lifted the redoubtable helmet, and set it upon his head, from whence it shone like a star, and the golden plumes which Hephaestus had set thick about the ridge of the helmet, waved all around it. Then Achilles made trial of himself in his armour to see whether it fitted him, so that his limbs could play freely under it, and it seemed to buoy him up as though it had been wings.

[387] He also drew his father's spear out of the spear-stand, a spear so great and heavy and strong that none of the Achaeans save only Achilles had strength to wield it; this was the spear of Pelian ash from the topmost ridges of Mt. Pelion, which Chiron had once given to Peleus, fraught with the death of heroes. Automedon and Alcimus busied themselves with the harnessing of his horses; they made the bands fast about them, and put the bit in their mouths, drawing the reins back towards the chariot. Automedon, whip in hand, sprang up behind the horses, and after him Achilles mounted in full armour, resplendent as the sun-god Hyperion. Then with a loud voice he chided with his father's horses saying, “Xanthus and Balius, famed offspring of Podarge - this time when we have done fighting be sure and bring your driver safely back to the host of the Achaeans, and do not leave him dead on the plain as you did Patroclus.”

[404] Then fleet Xanthus answered under the yoke - for white-armed Hera had endowed him with human speech - and he bowed his head till his mane touched the ground as it hung down from under the yoke-band. “Dread Achilles,” said he, “we will indeed save you now, but the day of your death is near, and the blame will not be ours, for it will be the gods and stern fate that will destroy you. Neither was it through any sloth or slackness on our part that the Trojans stripped Patroclus of his armour; it was the mighty god whom lovely Leto bore that slew him as he fought among the foremost, and vouchsafed a triumph to Hector. We two can fly as swiftly as Zephyrus who they say is fleetest of all winds; nevertheless it is your doom to fall by the hand of a man and of a god.”

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1 Hyperion, one of the Titans, is the father of Dawn, Moon and Helios, the Sun.
2 Zephyrus is the west wind.
When he had thus said the Erinyes stayed his speech, and Achilles answered him in great sadness, saying, “Why, O Xanthus, do you thus foretell my death? You need not do so, for I well know that I am to fall here, far from my dear father and mother; none the more, however, shall I stay my hand till I have given the Trojans their fill of fighting.”

So saying, with a loud cry he drove his horses to the front.
Book Twenty

The Gods Enter the War: 1 - 155

Thus, then, did the Achaeans arm by their ships round you, O son of Peleus, who were hungering for battle; while the Trojans over against them armed upon the rise of the plain.

[4] Meanwhile Zeus from the top of many-delled Olympus, bade Themis gather the gods in council, whereon she went about and called them to the house of Zeus. There was not a river absent except Oceanus, nor a single one of the nymphs that haunt fair groves, or springs of rivers and meadows of green grass. When they reached the house of cloud-compelling Zeus, they took their seats in the arcades of polished marble which Hephaestus with his consummate skill had made for father Zeus.

[13] In such wise, therefore, did they gather in the house of Zeus. Poseidon also, lord of the earthquake, obeyed the call of the goddess, and came up out of the sea to join them. There, sitting in the midst of them, he asked what Zeus's purpose might be. “Why,” said he, “wielder of the lightning, have you called the gods in council? Are you considering some matter that concerns the Trojans and Achaeans- for the blaze of battle is on the point of being kindled between them?”

[19] And Zeus answered, “You know my purpose, shaker of earth, and wherefore I have called you hither. I take thought for them even in their destruction. For my own part I shall stay here seated on Mt. Olympus and look on in peace, but do you others go about among Trojans and Achaeans, and help either side as you may be severally disposed. If Achilles fights the Trojans without hindrance they will make no stand against him; they have ever trembled at the sight of him, and now that he is roused to such fury about his comrade, he will override fate itself and storm their city.”

[31] Thus spoke Zeus and gave the word for war, whereon the gods took their several sides and went into battle. Hera, Pallas Athena, earth-encircling Poseidon, Hermes bringer of good luck and excellent in all cunning- all these joined the host that came from the ships; with them also came Hephaestus in all his glory, limping, but yet with his thin legs plying lustily under him. Ares of gleaming helmet joined the Trojans, and with him Apollo of locks unshorn, and the archer goddess Artemis, Leto, Xanthus, and laughter-loving Aphrodite.
[41] So long as the gods held themselves aloof from mortal warriors the Achaeans were triumphant, for Achilles who had long refused to fight was now with them. There was not a Trojan but his limbs failed him for fear as he beheld the fleet son of Peleus all glorious in his armour, and looking like Ares himself. When, however, the Olympians came to take their part among men, forthwith uprose strong Strife, rouser of hosts, and Athena raised her loud voice, now standing by the deep trench that ran outside the wall, and now shouting with all her might upon the shore of the sounding sea. Ares also bellowed out upon the other side, dark as some black thunder-cloud, and called on the Trojans at the top of his voice, now from the acropolis, and now speeding up the side of the river Simois till he came to the hill Callicolone.

[54] Thus did the gods spur on both hosts to fight, and rouse fierce contention also among themselves. The sire of gods and men thundered from heaven above, while from beneath Poseidon shook the vast earth, and bade the high hills tremble. The spurs and crests of many-fountained Ida quaked, as also the city of the Trojans and the ships of the Achaeans. Hades, king of the realms below, was struck with fear; he sprang panic-stricken from his throne and cried aloud in terror lest Poseidon, lord of the earthquake, should crack the ground over his head, and lay bare his mouldy mansions to the sight of mortals and immortals—mansions so ghastly grim that even the gods shudder to think of them. Such was the uproar as the gods came together in battle. Apollo with his arrows took his stand to face King Poseidon, while Athena took hers against the god of war; the archer-goddess Artemis with her golden arrows, sister of far-darting Apollo, stood to face Hera; Hermes the lusty bringer of good luck faced Leto, while the mighty eddying river whom men can Scamander, but gods Xanthus, matched himself against Hephaestus.

[75] The gods, then, were thus ranged against one another. But the heart of Achilles was set on meeting Hector son of Priam, for it was with his blood that he longed above all things else to glut the stubborn lord of battle. Meanwhile Apollo set Aeneas on to attack the son of Peleus, and put courage into his heart, speaking with the voice of Lycaon son of Priam. In his likeness therefore, he said to Aeneas, “Aeneas, counsellor of the Trojans, where are now the brave words with which you vaunted over your wine before the Trojan princes, saying that you would fight Achilles son of Peleus in single combat?”

[86] And Aeneas answered, “Why do you thus bid me fight the proud son of Peleus, when I am in no mind to do so? Were I to face him now, it would not be for the first time. His spear has
already put me to flight from Ida, when he attacked our cattle and sacked Lyrnessus and Pedasus; Zeus indeed saved me in that he vouchsafed me strength to fly, else had I fallen by the hands of Achilles and Athena, who went before him to protect him and urged him to fall upon the Lelegae and Trojans. No man may fight Achilles, for one of the gods is always with him as his guardian, and even were it not so, his weapon flies ever straight, and fails not to pierce the flesh of him who is against him; if heaven would let me fight him on even terms he should not soon overcome me, though he boasts that he is made of bronze.”

[103] Then said King Apollo, son of Zeus, “Nay, hero, pray to the ever-living gods, for men say that you were born of Zeus's daughter Aphrodite, whereas Achilles is son to a goddess of inferior rank. Aphrodite is child to Zeus, while Thetis is but daughter to the old man of the sea. Bring, therefore, your spear to bear upon him, and let him not scare you with his taunts and menaces.”

[110] As he spoke he put courage into the heart of the shepherd of his people, and he strode in full armour among the ranks of the foremost fighters. Nor did the son of Anchises escape the notice of white-armed Hera, as he went forth into the throng to meet Achilles. She called the gods about her, and said, “Look to it, you two, Poseidon and Athena, and consider how this shall be; Phoebus Apollo has been sending Aeneas clad in full armour to fight Achilles. Shall we turn him back at once, or shall one of us stand by Achilles and endow him with strength so that his heart fail not, and he may learn that the chiefs of the immortals are on his side, while the others who have all along been defending the Trojans are but vain helpers? Let us all come down from Olympus and join in the fight, that this day he may take no hurt at the hands of the Trojans. Hereafter let him suffer whatever fate may have spun out for him when he was begotten and his mother bore him. If Achilles be not thus assured by the voice of a god, he may come to fear presently when one of us meets him in battle, for the gods are terrible if they are seen face to face.”

[131] Poseidon lord of the earthquake answered her saying, “Hera, restrain your fury; it is not well; I am not in favour of forcing the other gods to fight us, for the advantage is too greatly on our own side; let us take our places on some hill out of the beaten track, and let mortals fight it out among themselves. If Ares or Phoebus Apollo begin fighting, or keep Achilles in check so

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1 This battle took place prior to the time-line of the Iliad.
that he cannot fight, we too, will at once raise the cry of battle, and in that case they will soon
leave the field and go back vanquished to Olympus among the other gods.”

[144] With these words the dark-haired god led the way to the high earth-barrow of Heracles,
built round solid masonry, and made by the Trojans and Pallas Athena for him to fly to when the
sea-monster was chasing him from the shore onto the plain. Here Poseidon and those that were
with him took their seats, wrapped in a thick cloud of darkness; but the other gods seated
themselves on the brow of Callicolone round you, O Phoebus, and Ares the waster of cities.

[153] Thus did the gods sit apart and form their plans, but neither side was willing to begin
battle with the other, and Zeus from his seat on high was in command over them all.

Achilles Fights Aeneas: 156 - 352

[156] Meanwhile the whole plain was alive with men and horses, and blazing with the gleam
of armour. The earth rang again under the tramp of their feet as they rushed towards each other,
and two champions, by far the foremost of them all, met between the hosts to fight- to wit, Aeneas son of Anchises, and noble Achilles.

[161] Aeneas was first to stride forward in attack, his doughty helmet tossing defiance as he
came on. He held his strong shield before his breast, and brandished his bronze spear. The son of
Peleus from the other side sprang forth to meet him, like some fierce lion that the whole country-
side has met to hunt and kill - at first he bodes no ill, but when some daring youth has struck him
with a spear, he crouches openmouthed, his jaws foam, he roars with fury, he lashes his tail from
side to side about his ribs and loins, and glares as he springs straight before him, to find out
whether he is to slay, or be slain, among the foremost of his foes - even with such fury did
Achilles rush to spring upon Aeneas.

[176] When they were now close up with one another Achilles was first to speak. “Aeneas,”
said he, “why do you stand thus out before the host to fight me? Is it that you hope to reign over
the Trojans in the seat of Priam? Nay, though you kill me Priam will not hand his kingdom over
to you. He is a man of sound judgement, and he has sons of his own. Or have the Trojans been
allotting you a demesne of passing richness, fair with orchard lawns and corn lands, if you
should slay me? This you shall hardly do. I have discomfited you once already. Have you
forgotten how when you were alone I chased you from your herds helter-skelter down the slopes
of Ida? You did not turn round to look behind you; you took refuge in Lyrnessus, but I attacked
the city, and with the help of Athena and father Zeus I sacked it and carried its women into
Iliad - 173

captivity, though Zeus and the other gods rescued you. You think they will protect you now, but they will not do so; therefore I say go back into the host, and do not face me, or you will rue it. Even a fool may be wise after the event.”

[199] Then Aeneas answered, “Son of Peleus, think not that your words can scare me as though I were a child. I too, if I will, can brag and talk unseemly. We know one another's race and parentage as matters of common fame, though neither have you ever seen my parents nor I yours. Men say that you are son to noble Peleus, and that your mother is Thetis, fair-haired daughter of the sea. I have noble Anchises for my father, and Aphrodite for my mother; the parents of one or other of us shall this day mourn a son, for it will be more than silly talk that shall part us when the fight is over. Learn, then, my lineage if you will- and it is known to many.

[215] “In the beginning Dardanus was the son of Zeus,¹ and founded Dardania, for Ilium was not yet established on the plain for men to dwell in, and her people still abode on the spurs of many-fountained Ida. Dardanus had a son, king Erichthonius, who was wealthiest of all men living; he had three thousand mares that fed by the water-meadows, they and their foals with them. Boreas was enamoured of them as they were feeding, and covered them in the semblance of a dark-maned stallion. Twelve filly foals did they conceive and bear him, and these, as they sped over the rich plain, would go bounding on over the ripe ears of corn and not break them; or again when they would disport themselves on the broad back of Ocean they could gallop on the crest of a breaker. Erichthonius begat Tros, king of the Trojans, and Tros had three noble sons, Ilus, Assaracus, and Ganymede who was comeliest of mortal men; wherefore the gods carried him off to be Zeus's cupbearer, for his beauty's sake, that he might dwell among the immortals. Ilus begat Laomedon, and Laomedon begat Tithonus, Priam, Lampus, Clytius, and Hiketaon of the stock of Ares. But Assaracus was father to Capys, and Capys to Anchises, who was my father, while Hector is son to Priam.²

[241] “Such do I declare my blood and lineage, but as for valour, Zeus gives it or takes it as he will, for he is lord of all. And now let there be no more of this prating in mid-battle as though we were children. We could fling taunts without end at one another; a hundred-oared galley would not hold them. The tongue can run all whithers and talk all wise; it can go here and there, and as a man says, so shall he be gainsaid. What is the use of our bandying hard like women who

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¹ By Electra, the daughter of Atlas and one of the Pleiades.
² This same lineage, although likely derivative, is given by Apollodorus, iii.12.1-2. See also Diodorus vi.75.1
when they fall foul of one another go out and wrangle in the streets, one half true and the other
lies, as rage inspires them? No words of yours shall turn me now that I am fain to fight -
therefore let us make trial of one another with our spears.”

[259] As he spoke he drove his spear at the great and terrible shield of Achilles, which rang
out as the point struck it. The son of Peleus held the shield before him with his strong hand, and
he was afraid, for he deemed that Aeneas's spear would go through it quite easily, not reflecting
that the god's glorious gifts were little likely to yield before the blows of mortal men; and indeed
Aeneas's spear did not pierce the shield, for the layer of gold, gift of the god, stayed the point. It
went through two layers, but the god had made the shield in five, two of bronze, the two
innermost ones of tin, and one of gold; it was in this that the spear was stayed.

[273] Achilles in his turn threw, and struck the round shield of Aeneas at the very edge, where
the bronze was thinnest; the spear of Pelian ash went clean through, and the shield rang under the
blow; Aeneas was afraid, and crouched backwards, holding the shield away from him; the spear,
however, flew over his back, and stuck quivering in the ground, after having gone through both
circles of the sheltering shield. Aeneas though he had avoided the spear, stood still, blinded with
fear and grief because the weapon had gone so near him; then Achilles sprang furiously upon
him, with a cry as of death and with his keen blade drawn, and Aeneas seized a great stone, so
huge that two men, as men now are, would be unable to lift it, but Aeneas wielded it quite easily.

[288] Aeneas would then have struck Achilles as he was springing towards him, either on the
helmet, or on the shield that covered him, and Achilles would have closed with him and
despitched him with his sword, had not Poseidon lord of the earthquake been quick to mark, and
said forthwith to the immortals, “Alas, I am sorry for great Aeneas, who will now go down to the
house of Hades, vanquished by the son of Peleus. Fool that he was to give ear to the counsel of
Apollo. Apollo will never save him from destruction. Why should this man suffer when he is
guiltless, to no purpose, and in another's quarrel? Has he not at all times offered acceptable
sacrifice to the gods that dwell in heaven? Let us then snatch him from death's jaws, lest the son
of Cronus be angry should Achilles slay him. It is fated, moreover, that he should escape, and
that the race of Dardanus, whom Zeus loved above all the sons born to him of mortal women,
shall not perish utterly without seed or sign. For now indeed has Zeus hated the blood of Priam,
while Aeneas shall reign over the Trojans, he and his children's children that shall be born hereafter.”¹

[309] Then answered Hera, “Earth-shaker, look to this matter yourself, and consider concerning Aeneas, whether you will save him, or suffer him, brave though he be, to fall by the hand of Achilles son of Peleus. For of a truth we two, I and Pallas Athena, have sworn full many a time before all the immortals, that never would we shield Trojans from destruction, not even when all Troy is burning in the flames that the Achaeans shall kindle.”²

[318] When Poseidon the Earthshaker heard this he went into the battle amid the clash of spears, and came to the place where Achilles and Aeneas were. Forthwith he shed a darkness before the eyes of the son of Peleus, drew the bronze-headed ashen spear from the shield of Aeneas, and laid it at the feet of Achilles. Then he lifted Aeneas on high from off the earth and hurried him away. Over the heads of many a band of warriors both horse and foot did he soar as the god's hand sped him, till he came to the very fringe of the battle where the Cauconians were arming themselves for fight. Poseidon, shaker of the earth, then came near to him and said, Aeneas, what god has egged you on to this folly in fighting the son of Peleus, who is both a mightier man of valour and more beloved of heaven than you are? Give way before him whensoever you meet him, lest you go down to the house of Hades even though fate would have it otherwise. When Achilles is dead you may then fight among the foremost undaunted, for none other of the Achaeans shall slay you.”

[340] The god left him when he had given him these instructions, and at once removed the darkness from before the eyes of Achilles, who opened them wide indeed and said in great anger, “Alas! what marvel am I now beholding? Here is my spear upon the ground, but I see not him whom I meant to kill when I hurled it. Of a truth Aeneas also must be under heaven's protection, although I had thought his boasting was idle. Let him go hang; he will be in no mood to fight me further, seeing how narrowly he has missed being killed. I will now give my orders to the Danaans and attack some other of the Trojans.”

¹ A very suspect passage indeed! Could Homer have known that the descendants of Aeneas were, by the time this was composed, already rulers of a small town in central Italy? Aneas did indeed survive the Trojan war and emigrated to Italy where his family intermarried with the royal family of the Latins. Descendants of Aeneas, Romulus and Remus, founded Rome in 753 BC. At the south-eastern most end of the Imperial Fora in Rome stood the Temple of Venus and Roma and a Temple of Venus Genetrix stood in the Forum of Caesar, both in honour of the mother of Aeneas.

² Hera hates the Trojans because Zeus raped Electra and begat Dardanus. Hera always tries to destroy the descendants of Zeus' infidelities.
Summary of Book Twenty, Lines 353 - 503.

Achilles charges forward killing several of the Trojan elite. Hector comes forward to meet him but is warned by Apollo to avoid Achilles. However, when Achilles kills Polydorus, the son of Priam, Hector cannot resist avenging his brother. Achilles attempts to engage Hector but Apollo lifts him out of the way each time, so Achilles moves to easier targets.
Summary of Book Twenty One

Book Twenty One might be titled *The Wrath of Achilles*, just as was the *Iliad* originally: Much of the book is dedicated to the list of Trojans killed by Achilles, some of whom supplicated themselves and begged for mercy but where slain nonetheless. The slaughter angers the river god, Scamander - also called Xanthus - and Achilles even fights the river god until Hera and Hephaestus come to Achilles' rescue.

Unable to stop the rout, the Trojans withdraw to the city and seek refuge behind the walls. Apollo then baits Achilles and draws him away from the gates of the city so that the Trojans have time to get everyone inside and close the gates again.
Book Twenty Two

Hector Outside the Walls: 1 - 89

Thus the Trojans in the city, scared like fawns, wiped the sweat from off them and drank to quench their thirst, leaning against the goodly battlements, while the Achaeans with their shields laid upon their shoulders drew close up to the walls. But stern fate bade Hector stay where he was before Ilium and the Scaean gates. Then Phoebus Apollo spoke to the son of Peleus saying, “Why, son of Peleus, do you, who are but man, give chase to me who am immortal? Have you not yet found out that it is a god whom you pursue so furiously? You did not harass the Trojans whom you had routed, and now they are within their walls, while you have been decoyed here away from them. Me you cannot kill, for death can take no hold upon me.”

[14] Achilles was greatly angered and said, “You have baulked me, Far-Darter, most malicious of all gods, and have drawn me away from the wall, where many another man would have bitten the dust before he got within Ilium; you have robbed me of great glory and have saved the Trojans at no risk to yourself, for you have nothing to fear, but I would indeed have my revenge if it were in my power to do so.”

[21] On this, with fell intent he made towards the city, and as the winning horse in a chariot race strains every nerve when he is flying over the plain, even so fast and furiously did the limbs of Achilles bear him onwards.

[25] King Priam was first to note him as he scoured the plain, all radiant as the star which men call Orion's Hound,¹ and whose beams blaze forth in time of harvest more brilliantly than those of any other that shines by night; brightest of them all though he be, he yet bodes ill for mortals, for he brings fire and fever in his train - even so did Achilles' armour gleam on his breast as he sped onwards. Priam raised a cry and beat his head with his hands as he lifted them up and shouted out to his dear son, imploring him to return; but Hector still stayed before the gates, for his heart was set upon doing battle with Achilles. The old man reached out his arms towards him and bade him for pity's sake come within the walls.

[38] “Hector,” he cried, “my son, stay not to face this man alone and unsupported, or you will meet death at the hands of the son of Peleus, for he is mightier than you. Monster that he is; would indeed that the gods loved him no better than I do, for so, dogs and vultures would soon

¹ Sirius, also called the Dog Star. Visible from 27 July to 30 November.
devour him as he lay stretched on earth, and a load of grief would be lifted from my heart, for
many a brave son has he reft from me, either by killing them or selling them away in the islands
that are beyond the sea: even now I miss two sons from among the Trojans who have thronged
within the city, Lycaon and Polydorus, whom Laothoe peerless among women bore me. Should
they be still alive and in the hands of the Achaeans, we will ransom them with gold and bronze,
of which we have store, for the old man Altes endowed his daughter richly; but if they are
already dead and in the house of Hades, sorrow will it be to us two who were their parents; albeit
the grief of others will be more short-lived unless you too perish at the hands of Achilles. Come,
then, my son, within the city, to be the guardian of Trojan men and Trojan women, or you will
both lose your own life and afford a mighty triumph to the son of Peleus. Have pity also on your
unhappy father while life yet remains to him - on me, whom the son of Cronus will destroy by a
terrible doom on the threshold of old age, after I have seen my sons slain and my daughters haled
away as captives, my bridal chambers pillaged, little children dashed to earth amid the rage of
battle, and my sons' wives dragged away by the cruel hands of the Achaeans; in the end fierce
hounds will tear me in pieces at my own gates after some one has beaten the life out of my body
with sword or spear -hounds that I myself reared and fed at my own table to guard my gates, but
who will yet lap my blood and then lie all distraught at my doors. When a young man falls by the
sword in battle, he may lie where he is and there is nothing unseemly; let what will be seen, all is
honourable in death, but when an old man is slain there is nothing in this world more pitiable
than that dogs should defile his grey hair and beard and all that men hide for shame.”

[76] The old man tore his grey hair as he spoke, but he moved not the heart of Hector. His
mother hard by wept and moaned aloud as she bared her bosom and pointed to the breast which
had suckled him. “Hector,” she cried, weeping bitterly the while, “Hector, my son, spurn not this
breast, but have pity upon me too: if I have ever given you comfort from my own bosom, think
on it now, dear son, and come within the wall to protect us from this man; stand not without to
meet him. Should the wretch kill you, neither I nor your richly dowered wife shall ever weep,
dear offshoot of myself, over the bed on which you lie, for dogs will devour you at the ships of
the Argives.”

Achilles Pursues Hector: 90 - 207

[90] Thus did the two with many tears implore their son, but they moved not the heart of
Hector, and he stood his ground awaiting huge Achilles as he drew nearer towards him. As a
serpent in its den upon the mountains, full fed with deadly poisons, waits for the approach of man - he is filled with fury and his eyes glare terribly as he goes writhing round his den - even so Hector leaned his shield against a tower that jutted out from the wall and stood where he was, undaunted.

[99] “Alas,” said he to himself in the heaviness of his heart, “if I go within the gates, Polydamas will be the first to heap reproach upon me, for it was he that urged me to lead the Trojans back to the city on that awful night when Achilles again came forth against us. I would not listen, but it would have been indeed better if I had done so. Now that my folly has destroyed the host, I dare not look Trojan men and Trojan women in the face, lest a worse man should say, 'Hector has ruined us by his self-confidence.' Surely it would be better for me to return after having fought Achilles and slain him, or to die gloriously here before the city.

[111] What, again, if were to lay down my shield and helmet, lean my spear against the wall and go straight up to noble Achilles? What if I were to promise to give up Helen, who was the fountainhead of all this war, and all the treasure that Alexander brought with him in his ships to Troy, aye, and to let the Achaeans divide the half of everything that the city contains among themselves? I might make the Trojans, by the mouths of their princes, take a solemn oath that they would hide nothing, but would divide into two shares all that is within the city - but why argue with myself in this way? Were I to go up to him he would show me no kind of mercy; he would kill me then and there as easily as though I were a woman, when I had off my armour. There is no parleying with him from some rock or oak tree as young men and maidens prattle with one another. Better fight him at once, and learn to which of us Zeus will vouchsafe victory.”

[131] Thus did he stand and ponder, but Achilles came up to him as it were Ares himself, plumed lord of battle. From his right shoulder he brandished his terrible spear of Pelian ash, and the bronze gleamed around him like flashing fire or the rays of the rising sun. Fear fell upon Hector as he beheld him, and he dared not stay longer where he was but fled in dismay from before the gates, while Achilles darted after him at his utmost speed. As a mountain falcon, swiftest of all birds, swoops down upon some cowering dove - the dove flies before him but the falcon with a shrill scream follows close after, resolved to have her - even so did Achilles make straight for Hector with all his might, while Hector fled under the Trojan wall as fast as his limbs could take him.
[145] On they flew along the waggon-road that ran hard by under the wall, past the lookout station, and past the weather-beaten wild fig-tree, till they came to two fair springs which feed the river Scamander. One of these two springs is warm, and steam rises from it as smoke from a burning fire, but the other even in summer is as cold as hail or snow, or the ice that forms on water. Here, hard by the springs, are the goodly washing-troughs of stone, where in the time of peace before the coming of the Achaeans the wives and fair daughters of the Trojans used to wash their clothes. Past these did they fly, the one in front and the other giving chase behind him: good was the man that fled, but better far was he that followed after, and swiftly indeed did they run, for the prize was no mere beast for sacrifice or bullock's hide, as it might be for a common foot-race, but they ran for the life of Hector. As horses in a chariot race speed round the turning-posts when they are running for some great prize- a tripod or woman- at the games in honour of some dead hero, so did these two run full speed three times round the city of Priam. All the gods watched them, and the sire of gods and men was the first to speak.

[168] “Alas,” said he, “my eyes behold a man who is dear to me being pursued round the walls of Troy; my heart is full of pity for Hector, who has burned the thigh-bones of many a heifer in my honour, at one while on the of many-valleyed Ida, and again on the citadel of Troy; and now I see noble Achilles in full pursuit of him round the city of Priam. What say you? Consider among yourselves and decide whether we shall now save him or let him fall, valiant though he be, before Achilles, son of Peleus.”

[177] Then Athena said, “Father, wielder of the lightning, lord of cloud and storm, what mean you? Would you pluck this mortal whose doom has long been decreed out of the jaws of death? Do as you will, but we others shall not be of a mind with you.”

[182] And Zeus answered, “My child, Trito-born, take heart. I did not speak in full earnest, and I will let you have your way. Do what you will without any further interference.” Thus did he urge Athena who was already eager, and down she darted from the topmost summits of Olympus.

[188] Achilles was still in full pursuit of Hector, as a hound chasing a fawn which he has started from its covert on the mountains, and hunts through glade and thicket. The fawn may try to elude him by crouching under cover of a bush, but he will scent her out and follow her up until he gets her - even so there was no escape for Hector from the fleet son of Peleus. Whenever he made a set to get near the Dardanian gates and under the walls, that his people might help him by
showering down weapons from above, Achilles would gain on him and head him back towards
the plain, keeping himself always on the city side. As a man in a dream who fails to lay hands
upon another whom he is pursuing - the one cannot escape nor the other overtake - even so
neither could Achilles come up with Hector, nor Hector break away from Achilles; nevertheless
he might even yet have escaped death had not the time come when Apollo, who thus far had
sustained his strength and nerved his running, was now no longer to stay by him. Achilles made
signs to the Achaean host, and shook his head to show that no man was to aim a dart at Hector,
lest another might win the glory of having hit him and he might himself come in second.

Achilles and Hector: 208 - 404

[208] Then, at last, as they were nearing the fountains for the fourth time, the father of all
balanced his golden scales and placed a doom in each of them, one for Achilles and the other for
Hector. As he held the scales by the middle, the doom of Hector fell down deep into the house of
Hades - and then Phoebus Apollo left him. Thereon Athena went close up to the son of Peleus
and said, “Noble Achilles, favoured of heaven, we two shall surely take back to the ships a
triumph for the Achaeans by slaying Hector, for all his lust of battle. Do what Apollo may as he
lies grovelling before his father, aegis-bearing Zeus, Hector cannot escape us longer. Stay here
and take breath, while I go up to him and persuade him to make a stand and fight you.”

[224] Thus spoke Athena. Achilles obeyed her gladly, and stood still, leaning on his bronze-
pointed ashen spear, while Athena left him and went after Hector in the form and with the voice
of Deiphobus. She came close up to him and said, “Dear brother, I see you are hard pressed by
Achilles who is chasing you at full speed round the city of Priam, let us await his onset and stand
on our defence.”

[232] And Hector answered, “Deiphobus, you have always been dearest to me of all my
brothers, children of Hecuba and Priam, but henceforth I shall rate you yet more highly,
inasmuch as you have ventured outside the wall for my sake when all the others remain inside.”

[238] Then Athena said, “Dear brother, my father and mother went down on their knees and
implored me, as did all my comrades, to remain inside, so great a fear has fallen upon them all;
but I was in an agony of grief when I beheld you; now, therefore, let us two make a stand and
fight, and let there be no keeping our spears in reserve, that we may learn whether Achilles shall
kill us and bear off our spoils to the ships, or whether he shall fall before you.”
Thus did Athena inveigle him by her cunning, and when the two were now close to one another great Hector was first to speak. “I will no longer fly from you, son of Peleus,” said he, “as I have been doing hitherto. Three times have I fled round the mighty city of Priam, without daring to withstand you, but now, let me either slay or be slain, for I am in the mind to face you. Let us, then, give pledges to one another by our gods, who are the fittest witnesses and guardians of all covenants; let it be agreed between us that if Zeus vouchsafes me the longer stay and I take your life, I am not to treat your dead body in any unseemly fashion, but when I have stripped you of your armour, I am to give up your body to the Achaeans. And do you likewise.”

Achilles glared at him and answered, “Fool, prate not to me about covenants. There can be no covenants between men and lions, wolves and lambs can never be of one mind, but hate each other out and out and through. Therefore there can be no understanding between you and me, nor may there be any covenants between us, till one or other shall fall and glut grim Ares with his life’s blood. Put forth all your strength; you have need now to prove yourself indeed a bold soldier and man of war. You have no more chance, and Pallas Athena will forthwith vanquish you by my spear: you shall now pay me in full for the grief you have caused me on account of my comrades whom you have killed in battle.”

He poised his spear as he spoke and hurled it. Hector saw it coming and avoided it; he watched it and crouched down so that it flew over his head and stuck in the ground beyond; Athena then snatched it up and gave it back to Achilles without Hector’s seeing her; Hector thereon said to the son of Peleus, “You have missed your aim, Achilles, peer of the gods, and Zeus has not yet revealed to you the hour of my doom, though you made sure that he had done so. You were a false-tongued liar when you deemed that I should forget my valour and quail before you. You shall not drive spear into the back of a runaway - drive it, should heaven so grant you power, drive it into me as I make straight towards you; and now for your own part avoid my spear if you can - would that you might receive the whole of it into your body; if you were once dead the Trojans would find the war an easier matter, for it is you who have harmed them most.”

He poised his spear as he spoke and hurled it. His aim was true for he hit the middle of Achilles’ shield, but the spear rebounded from it, and did not pierce it. Hector was angry when he saw that the weapon had sped from his hand in vain, and stood there in dismay for he had no second spear. With a loud cry he called Diphobus and asked him for one, but there was no man;
then he saw the truth and said to himself, “Alas! the gods have lured me on to my destruction. I
deemed that the hero Deiphobus was by my side, but he is within the wall, and Athena has
invited me; death is now indeed exceedingly near at hand and there is no way out of it - for so
Zeus and his son Apollo the far-darter have willed it, though heretofore they have been ever
ready to protect me. My doom has come upon me; let me not then die ingloriously and without a
struggle, but let me first do some great thing that shall be told among men hereafter.”

[306] As he spoke he drew the keen blade that hung so great and strong by his side, and
gathering himself together be sprang on Achilles like a soaring eagle which swoops down from
the clouds on to some lamb or timid hare - even so did Hector brandish his sword and spring
upon Achilles. Achilles mad with rage darted towards him, with his wondrous shield before his
breast, and his gleaming helmet, made with four layers of metal, nodding fiercely forward. The
thick tresses of gold with which Hephaestus had crested the helmet floated round it, and as the
evening star that shines brighter than all others through the stillness of night, even such was the
gleam of the spear which Achilles poised in his right hand, fraught with the death of noble
Hector.

[321] He eyed his fair flesh over and over to see where he could best wound it, but all was
protected by the goodly armour of which Hector had spoiled Patroclus after he had slain him,
save only the throat where the collar-bones divide the neck from the shoulders, and this is a most
deadly place: here then did Achilles strike him as he was coming on towards him, and the point
of his spear went right through the fleshy part of the neck, but it did not sever his windpipe so
that he could still speak. Hector fell headlong, and Achilles vaunted over him saying, “Hector,
you deemed that you should come off scatheless when you were spoiling Patroclus, and recked
not of myself who was not with him. Fool that you were: for I, his comrade, mightier far than he,
was still left behind him at the ships, and now I have laid you low. The Achaeans shall give him
all due funeral rites, while dogs and vultures shall work their will upon yourself.”

[337] Then Hector said, as the life ebbed out of him, “I pray you by your life and knees, and
by your parents, let not dogs devour me at the ships of the Achaeans, but accept the rich treasure
of gold and bronze which my father and mother will offer you, and send my body home, that the
Trojans and their wives may give me my dues of fire when I am dead.”

[344] Achilles glared at him and answered, “Dog, talk not to me neither of knees nor parents;
would that I could be as sure of being able to cut your flesh into pieces and eat it raw, for the ill
you have done me, as I am that nothing shall save you from the dogs - it shall not be, though they bring ten or twenty-fold ransom and weigh it out for me on the spot, with promise of yet more hereafter. Though Priam son of Dardanus should bid them offer me your weight in gold, even so your mother shall never lay you out and make lament over the son she bore, but dogs and vultures shall eat you utterly up."

[355] Hector with his dying breath then said, "I know what you are, and was sure that I should not move you, for your heart is hard as iron; look to it that I bring not heaven's anger upon you on the day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo, valiant though you be, shall slay you at the Scaean gates."

[361] When he had thus said the shrouds of death enfolded him, whereon his soul went out of him and flew down to the house of Hades, lamenting its sad fate that it should enjoy youth and strength no longer. But Achilles said, speaking to the dead body, "Die; for my part I will accept my fate whencesoever Zeus and the other gods see fit to send it."

[367] As he spoke he drew his spear from the body and set it on one side; then he stripped the blood-stained armour from Hector's shoulders while the other Achaeans came running up to view his wondrous strength and beauty; and no one came near him without giving him a fresh wound. Then would one turn to his neighbour and say, "It is easier to handle Hector now than when he was flinging fire on to our ships" and as he spoke he would thrust his spear into him anew.

[375] When Achilles had done spoiling Hector of his armour, he stood among the Argives and said, "My friends, princes and counsellors of the Argives, now that heaven has vouchsafed us to overcome this man, who has done us more hurt than all the others together, consider whether we should not attack the city in force, and discover in what mind the Trojans may be. We should thus learn whether they will desert their city now that Hector has fallen, or will still hold out even though he is no longer living. But why argue with myself in this way, while Patroclus is still lying at the ships unburied, and unmourned - he whom I can never forget so long as I am alive and my strength fails not? Though men forget their dead when once they are within the house of Hades, yet not even there will I forget the comrade whom I have lost. Now, therefore, Achaean youths, let us raise the song of victory and go back to the ships taking this man along with us; for we have achieved a mighty triumph and have slain noble Hector to whom the Trojans prayed throughout their city as though he were a god."
[395] On this he treated the body of Hector with contumely: he pierced the sinews at the back of both his feet from heel to ankle and passed thongs of ox-hide through the slits he had made: thus he made the body fast to his chariot, letting the head trail upon the ground. Then when he had put the goodly armour on the chariot and had himself mounted, he lashed his horses on and they flew forward nothing loth. The dust rose from Hector as he was being dragged along, his dark hair flew all abroad, and his head once so comely was laid low on earth, for Zeus had now delivered him into the hands of his foes to do him outrage in his own land.

**Hector's Family Reacts: 405 - 515**

[405] Thus was the head of Hector being dishonoured in the dust. His mother tore her hair, and flung her veil from her with a loud cry as she looked upon her son. His father made piteous moan, and throughout the city the people fell to weeping and wailing. It was as though the whole of frowning Ilion was being smirched with fire. Hardly could the people hold Priam back in his hot haste to rush without the gates of the city. He grovelled in the mire and besought them, calling each one of them by his name. “Let be, my friends,” he cried, “and for all your sorrow, suffer me to go single-handed to the ships of the Achaeans. Let me beseech this cruel and terrible man, if maybe he will respect the feeling of his fellow-men, and have compassion on my old age. His own father is even such another as myself - Peleus, who bred him and reared him to be the bane of us Trojans, and of myself more than of all others. Many a son of mine has he slain in the flower of his youth, and yet, grieve for these as I may, I do so for one, Hector, more than for them all, and the bitterness of my sorrow will bring me down to the house of Hades. Would that he had died in my arms, for so both his ill-starred mother who bore him, and myself, should have had the comfort of weeping and mourning over him.”

[429] Thus did he speak with many tears, and all the people of the city joined in his lament. Hecuba then raised the cry of wailing among the Trojans. “Alas, my son,” she cried, “what have I left to live for now that you are no more? Night and day did I glory in you throughout the city, for you were a tower of strength to all in Troy, and both men and women alike hailed you as a god. So long as you lived you were their pride, but now death and destruction have fallen upon you.”

[437] So she spoke, but Hector's wife had as yet heard nothing, for no one had come to tell her that her husband had remained without the gates. She was at her loom in an inner part of the house, weaving a double purple web, and embroidering it with many flowers. She told her maids
to set a large tripod on the fire, so as to have a warm bath ready for Hector when he came out of battle; poor woman, she knew not that he was now beyond the reach of baths, and that Athena had laid him low by the hands of Achilles. She heard the cry coming as from the wall, and trembled in every limb; the shuttle fell from her hands, and again she spoke to her waiting-women. “Two of you,” she said, “come with me that I may learn what it is that has befallen; I heard the voice of my husband's honoured mother; my own heart beats as though it would come into my mouth and my limbs refuse to carry me; some great misfortune for Priam's children must be at hand. May I never live to hear it, but I greatly fear that Achilles has cut off the retreat of brave Hector and has chased him on to the plain where he was singlehanded; I fear he may have put an end to the reckless daring which possessed my husband, who would never remain with the body of his men, but would dash on far in front, foremost of them all in valour.”

[460] Her heart beat fast, and as she spoke she flew from the house like a maniac, with her waiting-women following after. When she reached the battlements and the crowd of people, she stood looking out upon the wall, and saw Hector being borne away in front of the city - the horses dragging him without heed or care over the ground towards the ships of the Achaeans. Her eyes were then shrouded as with the darkness of night and she fell fainting backwards. She tore off her head-band and flung it away, the frontlet and net with its plaited band, and the veil which golden Aphrodite had given her on the day when Hector took her with him from the house of Eetion, after having given countless gifts of wooing for her sake.

[473] Her husband's sisters and the wives of his brothers crowded round her and supported her, for she was fain to die in her distraction; when she again presently breathed and came to herself, she sobbed and made lament among the Trojans saying, 'Woe is me, O Hector; woe, indeed, that to share a common lot we were born, you at Troy in the house of Priam, and I at Thebes under the wooded mountain of Placus in the house of Eetion who brought me up when I was a child - ill-starred sire of an ill-starred daughter - would that he had never begotten me. You are now going into the house of Hades under the secret places of the earth, and you leave me a sorrowing widow in your house. The child, of whom you and I are the unhappy parents, is as yet a mere infant. Now that you are gone, O Hector, you can do nothing for him nor he for you.

[487] Even though he escape the horrors of this woeful war with the Achaeans, yet shall his life henceforth be one of labour and sorrow, for others will seize his lands. The day that robs a child of his parents severs him from his own kind; his head is bowed, his cheeks are wet with
tears, and he will go about destitute among the friends of his father, plucking one by the cloak and another by the shirt. Some one or other of these may so far pity him as to hold the cup for a moment towards him and let him moisten his lips, but he must not drink enough to wet the roof of his mouth; then one whose parents are alive will drive him from the table with blows and angry words. 'Out with you,' he will say, 'you have no father here,' and the child will go crying back to his widowed mother - [500] he, Astyanax, who erewhile would sit upon his father's knees, and have none but the daintiest and choicest morsels set before him. When he had played till he was tired and went to sleep, he would lie in a bed, in the arms of his nurse, on a soft couch, knowing neither want nor care, whereas now that he has lost his father his lot will be full of hardship- he, whom the Trojans name Astyanax, because you, O Hector, were the only defence of their gates and battlements.

[508] The wriggling writhing worms will now eat you at the ships, far from your parents, when the dogs have glutted themselves upon you. You will lie naked, although in your house you have fine and goodly raiment made by hands of women. This will I now burn; it is of no use to you, for you can never again wear it, and thus you will have respect shown you by the Trojans both men and women.”

[515] In such wise did she cry aloud amid her tears, and the women joined in her lament.
Book Twenty Three

Mourning for Patroclus: 1 - 107

Thus did they make their moan throughout the city, while the Achaeans when they reached the Hellespont went back every man to his own ship. But Achilles would not let the Myrmidons go, and spoke to his brave comrades saying, “Myrmidons, famed horsemen and my own trusted friends, we should not yet unyoke, but with horse and chariot draw near to the body and mourn Patroclus, in due honour to the dead. When we have had full comfort of lamentation we will unyoke our horses and take supper all of us here.”

[12] So he spoke, and they all joined in a cry of wailing and Achilles led them in their lament. Thrice did they drive their chariots all sorrowing round the body, and Thetis stirred within them a still deeper yearning. The sands of the seashore and the men's armour were wet with their weeping, so great a minister of fear was he whom they had lost. Chief in all their mourning was the son of Peleus: he laid his bloodstained hand on the breast of his friend. “Fare well,” he cried, “Patroclus, even in the house of Hades. I will now do all that I erewhile promised you; I will drag Hector hither and let dogs devour him raw; twelve noble sons of Trojans will I also slay before your pyre to avenge you.”

[24] As he spoke he enacted a shameful deed upon the body of noble Hector, laying it at full length in the dust beside the bier of Patroclus. The others then put off every man his armour, took the horses from their chariots, and seated themselves in great multitude by the ship of the fleet descendant of Aeacus, who thereon feasted them with an abundant funeral banquet. Many a goodly ox, with many a sheep and bleating goat did they butcher and cut up; many a tusked boar moreover, fat and well-fed, did they singe and set to roast in the flames of Hephaestus; and rivulets of blood flowed all round the place where the body was lying.

[35] Then the princes of the Achaeans took the son of Peleus to Agamemnon, but hardly could they persuade him to come with them, so wroth was he for the death of his comrade. As soon as they reached Agamemnon's tent they told the serving-men to set a large tripod over the fire in case they might persuade the son of Peleus to wash the clotted gore from this body, but he denied them sternly, and swore it with a solemn oath, saying, “No, by King Zeus, first and mightiest of all gods, it is not meet that water should touch my body, till I have laid Patroclus on the flames, have built him a barrow, and shaved my head - for so long as I live no such second
sorrow shall ever draw nigh me. Now, therefore, let us do all that this sad festival demands, but
at break of day, King Agamemnon, bid your men bring wood, and provide all else that the dead
may duly take into the realm of darkness; the fire shall thus burn him out of our sight the sooner,
and the people shall turn again to their own labours.”

[54] Thus did he speak, and they did even as he had said. They made haste to prepare the
meal, they ate, and every man had his full share so that all were satisfied. As soon as they had
had had enough to eat and drink, the others went to their rest each in his own tent, but the son of
Peleus lay grieving among his Myrmidons by the shore of the sounding sea, in an open place
where the waves came surging in one after another. Here a very deep slumber took hold upon
him and eased the burden of his sorrows, for his limbs were weary with chasing Hector round
windy Ilium. Presently the sad spirit of Patroclus drew near him, like what he had been in stature,
voice, and the light of his beaming eyes, clad, too, as he had been clad in life. The spirit hovered
over his head and said:

[69] “You sleep, Achilles, and have forgotten me; you loved me living, but now that I am
dead you think for me no further. Bury me with all speed that I may pass the gates of Hades; the
ghosts, vain shadows of men that can labour no more, drive me away from them; they will not
yet suffer me to join those that are beyond the river, and I wander all desolate by the wide gates
of the house of Hades. Give me now your hand I pray you, for when you have once given me my
dues of fire, never shall I again come forth out of the house of Hades. Nevermore shall we sit
apart and take sweet counsel among the living; the cruel fate which was my birth-right has
yawned its wide jaws around me- nay, you too Achilles, peer of gods, are doomed to die beneath
the wall of the noble Trojans.

[82] “One prayer more will I make you, if you will grant it; let not my bones be laid apart
from yours, Achilles, but with them; even as we were brought up together in your own home,
what time Menoetius brought me to you as a child from Opoeis because by a sad spite I had
killed the son of Amphidamas - not of set purpose, but in childish quarrel over the dice. The
knight Peleus took me into his house, entreated me kindly, and named me to be your squire;
therefore let our bones lie in but a single urn, the two-handed golden vase given to you by your
mother.”

1 The practice of cremation and the burial of the bones in an urn comes after the Mycenaean period. The text is, here,
representative of the audience's practices rather than the subject's.
[93] And Achilles answered, “Why, true heart, are you come hither to lay these charges upon me? will of my own self do all as you have bidden me. Draw closer to me, let us once more throw our arms around one another, and find sad comfort in the sharing of our sorrows.”

[99] He opened his arms towards him as he spoke and would have clasped him in them, but there was nothing, and the spirit vanished as a vapour, gibbering and whining into the earth. Achilles sprang to his feet, smote his two hands, and made lamentation saying, “Of a truth even in the house of Hades there are ghosts and phantoms that have no life in them; all night long the sad spirit of Patroclus has hovered over head making piteous moan, telling me what I am to do for him, and looking wondrously like himself.”

The Funeral Pyre: 108 - 225

[108] Thus did he speak and his words set them all weeping and mourning about the poor dumb dead, till rosy-fingered morn appeared.

Then King Agamemnon sent men and mules from all parts of the camp, to bring wood, and Meriones, squire to Idomeneus, was in charge over them. They went out with woodmen's axes and strong ropes in their hands, and before them went the mules. Up hill and down dale did they go, by straight ways and crooked, and when they reached the heights of many-fountained Ida, they laid their axes to the roots of many a tall branching oak that came thundering down as they felled it. They split the trees and bound them behind the mules, which then wended their way as they best could through the thick brushwood on to the plain. All who had been cutting wood bore logs, for so Meriones squire to Idomeneus had bidden them, and they threw them down in a line upon the seashore at the place where Achilles would make a mighty monument for Patroclus and for himself.

[127] When they had thrown down their great logs of wood over the whole ground, they stayed all of them where they were, but Achilles ordered his brave Myrmidons to gird on their armour, and to yoke each man his horses; they therefore rose, girded on their armour and mounted each his chariot - they and their charioteers with them. The chariots went before, and they that were on foot followed as a cloud in their tens of thousands. In the midst of them his comrades bore Patroclus and covered him with the locks of their hair which they cut off and threw upon his body. Last came Achilles with his head bowed for sorrow, so noble a comrade was he taking to the house of Hades.
[138] When they came to the place of which Achilles had told them they laid the body down and built up the wood. Achilles then bethought him of another matter. He went a space away from the pyre, and cut off the yellow lock which he had let grow for the river Spercheius. He looked all sorrowfully out upon the dark sea, and said, “Spercheius, in vain did my father Peleus vow to you that when I returned home to my loved native land I should cut off this lock and offer you a holy hecatomb; fifty she-goats was I to sacrifice to you there at your springs, where is your grove and your altar fragrant with burnt-offerings. Thus did my father vow, but you have not fulfilled his prayer; now, therefore, that I shall see my home no more, I give this lock as a keepsake to the hero Patroclus.”

[152] As he spoke he placed the lock in the hands of his dear comrade, and all who stood by were filled with yearning and lamentation. The sun would have gone down upon their mourning had not Achilles presently said to Agamemnon, “Son of Atreus, for it is to you that the people will give ear, there is a time to mourn and a time to cease from mourning; bid the people now leave the pyre and set about getting their dinners: we, to whom the dead is dearest, will see to what is wanted here, and let the other princes also stay by me.”

[161] When King Agamemnon heard this he dismissed the people to their ships, but those who were about the dead heaped up wood and built a pyre a hundred feet this way and that; then they laid the dead all sorrowfully upon the top of it. They flayed and dressed many fat sheep and oxen before the pyre, and Achilles took fat from all of them and wrapped the body therein from head to foot, heaping the flayed carcases all round it. Against the bier he leaned two-handed jars of honey and unguents; four proud horses did he then cast upon the pyre, groaning the while he did so. The dead hero had had house-dogs; two of them did Achilles slay and threw upon the pyre; he also put twelve brave sons of noble Trojans to the sword and laid them with the rest, for he was full of bitterness and fury. Then he committed all to the resistless and devouring might of the fire; he groaned aloud and called on his dead comrade by name. “Farewell,” he cried, “Patroclus, even in the house of Hades; I am now doing all that I have promised you. Twelve brave sons of noble Trojans shall the flames consume along with yourself, but dogs, not fire, shall devour the flesh of Hector son of Priam.”

[184] Thus did he vaunt, but the dogs came not about the body of Hector, for Zeus's daughter Aphrodite kept them off him night and day, and anointed him with ambrosial oil of roses that his flesh might not be torn when Achilles was dragging him about. Phoebus Apollo moreover sent a
dark cloud from heaven to earth, which gave shade to the whole place where Hector lay, that the heat of the sun might not parch his body.

[192] Now the pyre about dead Patroclus would not kindle. Achilles therefore bethought him of another matter; he went apart and prayed to the two winds Boreas and Zephyrus vowing them goodly offerings. He made them many drink-offerings from the golden cup and besought them to come and help him that the wood might make haste to kindle and the dead bodies be consumed. Fleet Iris heard him praying and started off to fetch the winds. They were holding high feast in the house of boisterous Zephyrus when Iris came running up to the stone threshold of the house and stood there, but as soon as they set eyes on her they all came towards her and each of them called her to him, but Iris would not sit down. “I cannot stay,” she said, “I must go back to the streams of Oceanus and the land of the Ethiopians who are offering hecatombs to the immortals, and I would have my share; but Achilles prays that Boreas and shrill Zephyrus will come to him, and he vows them goodly offerings; he would have you blow upon the pyre of Patroclus for whom all the Achaeans are lamenting.”

[212] With this she left them, and the two winds rose with a cry that rent the air and swept the clouds before them. They blew on and on until they came to the sea, and the waves rose high beneath them, but when they reached Troy they fell upon the pyre till the mighty flames roared under the blast that they blew. All night long did they blow hard and beat upon the fire, and all night long did Achilles grasp his double cup, drawing wine from a mixing-bowl of gold, and calling upon the spirit of dead Patroclus as he poured it upon the ground until the earth was drenched. As a father mourns when he is burning the bones of his bridegroom son whose death has wrung the hearts of his parents, even so did Achilles mourn while burning the body of his comrade, pacing round the bier with piteous groaning and lamentation.

Funeral Games: 226 - 623

[226] At length as the Morning Star was beginning to herald the light which saffron-mantled Dawn was soon to suffuse over the sea, the flames fell and the fire began to die. The winds then went home beyond the Thracian sea, which roared and boiled as they swept over it. The son of Peleus now turned away from the pyre and lay down, overcome with toil, till he fell into a sweet slumber. Presently they who were about the son of Atreus drew near in a body, and roused him with the noise and tramp of their coming. He sat upright and said, “Son of Atreus, and all other princes of the Achaeans, first pour red wine everywhere upon the fire and quench it; let us then
gather the bones of Patroclus son of Menoetius, singling them out with care; they are easily found, for they lie in the middle of the pyre, while all else, both men and horses, has been thrown in a heap and burned at the outer edge. We will lay the bones in a golden urn, in two layers of fat, against the time when I shall myself go down into the house of Hades. As for the barrow, labour not to raise a great one now, but such as is reasonable. Afterwards, let those Achaeans who may be left at the ships when I am gone, build it both broad and high.”

[249] Thus he spoke and they obeyed the word of the son of Peleus. First they poured red wine upon the thick layer of ashes and quenched the fire. With many tears they singled out the whitened bones of their loved comrade and laid them within a golden urn in two layers of fat: they then covered the urn with a linen cloth and took it inside the tent. They marked off the circle where the barrow should be, made a foundation for it about the pyre, and forthwith heaped up the earth. When they had thus raised a mound they were going away, but Achilles stayed the people and made them sit in assembly. He brought prizes from the ships-cauldrons, tripods, horses and mules, noble oxen, women with fair girdles, and swart iron.

[262] The first prize he offered was for the chariot races - a woman skilled in all useful arts, and a three-legged cauldron that had ears for handles, and would hold twenty-two measures. This was for the man who came in first. For the second there was a six-year old mare, unbroken, and in foal to a donkey; the third was to have a goodly cauldron that had never yet been on the fire; it was still bright as when it left the maker, and would hold four measures. The fourth prize was two talents of gold, and the fifth a two-handled urn as yet unsoiled by smoke. Then he stood up and spoke among the Argives saying:

[272] “Son of Atreus, and all other Achaeans, these are the prizes that lie waiting the winners of the chariot races. At any other time I should carry off the first prize and take it to my own tent; you know how far my steeds excel all others - for they are immortal; Poseidon gave them to my father Peleus, who in his turn gave them to me; but I shall hold aloof, I and my steeds that have lost their brave and kind driver, who many a time has washed them in clear water and anointed their manes with oil. See how they stand weeping here, with their manes trailing on the ground in the extremity of their sorrow. But do you others set yourselves in order throughout the host, whosoever has confidence in his horses and in the strength of his chariot.”

[287] Thus spoke the son of Peleus and the drivers of chariots bestirred themselves. First among them all uprose Eumelus, king of men, son of Admetus, a man excellent in horsemanship.
Next to him rose mighty Diomedes son of Tydeus; he yoked the Trojan horses which he had taken from Aeneas, when Apollo bore him out of the fight. Next to him, yellow-haired Menelaus son of Atreus rose and yoked his fleet horses, Agamemnon's mare Aethe, and his own horse Podargus. The mare had been given to Agamemnon by Echepolus son of Anchises, that he might not have to follow him to Ilium, but might stay at home and take his ease; for Zeus had endowed him with great wealth and he lived in spacious Sicyon. This mare, all eager for the race, did Menelaus put under the yoke.

[301] Fourth in order Antilochus, son to noble Nestor son of Neleus, made ready his horses. These were bred in Pylos, and his father came up to him to give him good advice of which, however, he stood in but little need. “Antilochus,” said Nestor, “you are young, but Zeus and Neptune have loved you well, and have made you an excellent horseman. I need not therefore say much by way of instruction. You are skilful at wheeling your horses round the post, but the horses themselves are very slow, and it is this that will, I fear, mar your chances. The other drivers know less than you do, but their horses are fleeter; therefore, my dear son, see if you cannot hit upon some artifice whereby you may insure that the prize shall not slip through your fingers. The woodman does more by skill than by brute force; by skill the pilot guides his storm-tossed barque over the sea, and so by skill one driver can beat another. If a man go wide in rounding this way and that, whereas a man who knows what he is doing may have worse horses, but he will keep them well in hand when he sees the doubling-post; he knows the precise moment at which to pull the rein, and keeps his eye well on the man in front of him. I will give you this certain token which cannot escape your notice. There is a stump of a dead tree-oak or pine as it may be - some six feet above the ground, and not yet rotted away by rain; it stands at the fork of the road; it has two white stones set one on each side, and there is a clear course all round it. It may have been a monument to some one long since dead, or it may have been used as a doubling-post in days gone by; now, however, it has been fixed on by Achilles as the mark round which the chariots shall turn; hug it as close as you can, but as you stand in your chariot lean over a little to the left; urge on your right-hand horse with voice and lash, and give him a loose rein, but let the left-hand horse keep so close in, that the nave of your wheel shall almost graze the post; but mind the stone, or you will wound your horses and break your chariot in pieces, which would be sport for others but confusion for yourself. Therefore, my dear son, mind well what you are about, for if you can be first to round the post there is no chance of any one
catching you later, not even if he had Adrestus's horse Arion behind your horse which is of divine race - or those of Laomedon, which are the noblest in this country.”

[349] When Nestor had made an end of counselling his son he sat down in his place, and fifth in order Meriones got ready his horses. They then all mounted their chariots and cast lots. Achilles shook the helmet, and the lot of Antilochus son of Nestor fell out first; next came that of King Eumelus, and after his, those of Menelaus son of Atreus and of Meriones. The last place fell to the lot of Diomedes son of Tydeus, who was the best man of them all. They took their places in line; Achilles showed them the doubling-post round which they were to turn, some way off upon the plain; here he stationed his father's follower Phoenix as umpire, to note the running, and report truly.

[362] At the same instant they all of them lashed their horses, struck them with the reins, and shouted at them with all their might. They flew full speed over the plain away from the ships, the dust rose from under them as it were a cloud or whirlwind, and their manes were all flying in the wind. At one moment the chariots seemed to touch the ground, and then again they bounded into the air; the drivers stood erect, and their hearts beat fast and furious in their lust of victory. Each kept calling on his horses, and the horses scoured the plain amid the clouds of dust that they raised.

[373] It was when they were doing the last part of the course on their way back towards the sea that their pace was strained to the utmost and it was seen what each could do. The horses of the descendant of Pheres now took the lead, and close behind them came the Trojan stallions of Diomedes. They seemed as if about to mount Eumelus's chariot, and he could feel their warm breath on his back and on his broad shoulders, for their heads were close to him as they flew over the course. Diomedes would have now passed him, or there would have been a dead heat, but Phoebus Apollo to spite him made him drop his whip. Tears of anger fell from his eyes as he saw the mares going on faster than ever, while his own horses lost ground through his having no whip.

[388] Athena saw the trick which Apollo had played on the son of Tydeus, so she brought him his whip and put spirit into his horses; moreover she went after the son of Admetus in a rage and broke his yoke for him; the mares went one to one side of the course, and the other to the other, and the pole was broken against the ground. Eumelus was thrown from his chariot close to the wheel; his elbows, mouth, and nostrils were all torn, and his forehead was bruised above his
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eyebrows; his eyes filled with tears and he could find no utterance. But the son of Tydeus turned
his horses aside and shot far ahead, for Athena put fresh strength into them and covered
Diomedes himself with glory.

[401] Menelaus son of Atreus came next behind him, but Antilochus called to his father's
horses. “On with you both,” he cried, “and do your very utmost. I do not bid you try to beat the
steeds of the son of Tydeus, for Athena has put running into them, and has covered Diomedes
with glory; but you must overtake the horses of the son of Atreus and not be left behind, or Aethe
who is so fleet will taunt you. Why, my good fellows, are you lagging? I tell you, and it shall
surely be- Nestor will keep neither of you, but will put both of you to the sword, if we win any
the worse a prize through your carelessness, fly after them at your utmost speed; I will hit on a
plan for passing them in a narrow part of the way, and it shall not fail me.”

[417] They feared the rebuke of their master, and for a short space went quicker. Presently
Antilochus saw a narrow place where the road had sunk. The ground was broken, for the winter's
rain had gathered and had worn the road so that the whole place was deepened. Menelaus was
making towards it so as to get there first, for fear of a foul, but Antilochus turned his horses out
of the way, and followed him a little on one side. The son of Atreus was afraid and shouted out,
“Antilochus, you are driving recklessly; rein in your horses; the road is too narrow here, it will
be wider soon, and you can pass me then; if you foul my chariot you may bring both of us to a
mischief.”

[429] So he said, But Antilochus plied his whip, and drove faster, as though he had not heard
him. They went side by side for about as far as a young man can hurl a disc from his shoulder
when he is trying his strength, and then Menelaus's mares drew behind, for he left off driving for
fear the horses should foul one another and upset the chariots; thus, while pressing on in quest of
victory, they might both come headlong to the ground. Menelaus then upbraided Antilochus and
said, “There is no greater trickster living than you are; go, and bad luck go with you; the
Achaeans say not well that you have understanding, and come what may you shall not bear away
the prize without sworn protest on my part.”

[442] Then he called on his horses and said to them, “Keep your pace, and slacken not; the
limbs of the other horses will weary sooner than yours, for they are neither of them young.”

[446] The horses feared the rebuke of their master, and went faster, so that they were soon
nearly up with the others.
Meanwhile the Argives from their seats were watching how the horses went, as they scoured the plain amid clouds of their own dust. Idomeneus captain of the Cretans was first to make out the running, for he was not in the thick of the crowd, but stood on the most commanding part of the ground. The driver was a long way off, but Idomeneus could hear him shouting, and could see the foremost horse quite plainly - a chestnut with a round white star, like the moon, on its forehead. He stood up and said among the Argives, “My friends, princes and counsellors of the Argives, can you see the running as well as I can? There seems to be another pair in front now, and another driver; those that led off at the start must have been disabled out on the plain. I saw them at first making their way round the doubling-post, but now, though I search the plain of Troy, I cannot find them. Perhaps the reins fell from the driver's hand so that he lost command of his horses at the doubling-post, and could not turn it. I suppose he must have been thrown out there, and broken his chariot, while his mares have left the course and gone off wildly in a panic. Come up and see for yourselves, I cannot make out for certain, but the driver seems an Aetolian by descent, ruler over the Argives, brave Diomedes the son of Tydeus.”

Ajax the son of Oileus took him up rudely and said, “Idomeneus, why should you be in such a hurry to tell us all about it, when the mares are still so far out upon the plain? You are none of the youngest, nor your eyes none of the sharpest, but you are always laying down the law. You have no right to do so, for there are better men here than you are. Eumelus's horses are in front now, as they always have been, and he is on the chariot holding the reins.”

The captain of the Cretans was angry, and answered, “Ajax you are an excellent railer, but you have no judgement, and are wanting in much else as well, for you have a vile temper. I will wager you a tripod or cauldron, and Agamemnon son of Atreus shall decide whose horses are first. You will then know to your cost.”

Ajax son of Oileus was for making him an angry answer, and there would have been yet further brawling between them, had not Achilles risen in his place and said, “Cease your railing Ajax and Idomeneus; it is not you would be scandalised if you saw any one else do the like: sit down and keep your eyes on the horses; they are speeding towards the winning-post and will be bere directly. You will then both of you know whose horses are first, and whose come after.”

As he was speaking, the son of Tydeus came driving in, plying his whip lustily from his shoulder, and his horses stepping high as they flew over the course. The sand and grit rained thick on the driver, and the chariot inlaid with gold and tin ran close behind his fleet horses.
There was little trace of wheel-marks in the fine dust, and the horses came flying in at their utmost speed. Diomedes stayed them in the middle of the crowd, and the sweat from their manes and chests fell in streams on to the ground. Forthwith he sprang from his goodly chariot, and leaned his whip against his horses' yoke; brave Sthenelus now lost no time, but at once brought on the prize, and gave the woman and the ear-handled cauldron to his comrades to take away. Then he unyoked the horses.

[514] Next after him came in Antilochus of the family of Neleus, who had passed Menelaus by a trick and not by the fleetness of his horses; but even so Menelaus came in as close behind him as the wheel is to the horse that draws both the chariot and its master. The end hairs of a horse's tail touch the tyre of the wheel, and there is never much space between wheel and horse when the chariot is going; Menelaus was no further than this behind Antilochus, though at first he had been a full disc's throw behind him. He had soon caught him up again, for Agamemnon's mare Aethe kept pulling stronger and stronger, so that if the course had been longer he would have passed him, and there would not even have been a dead heat. Idomeneus's brave squire Meriones was about a spear's cast behind Menelaus. His horses were slowest of all, and he was the worst driver. Last of them all came the son of Admetus, dragging his chariot and driving his horses on in front. When Achilles saw him he was sorry, and stood up among the Argives saying, “The best man is coming in last. Let us give him a prize for it is reasonable. He shall have the second, but the first must go to the son of Tydeus.”

[539] Thus did he speak and the others all of them applauded his saying, and were for doing as he had said, but Nestor's son Antilochus stood up and claimed his rights from the son of Peleus. “Achilles,” said he, “I shall take it much amiss if you do this thing; you would rob me of my prize, because you think Eumelus's chariot and horses were thrown out, and himself too, good man that he is. He should have prayed duly to the immortals; he would not have come in fast if he had done so. If you are sorry for him and so choose, you have much gold in your tents, with bronze, sheep, cattle and horses. Take something from this store if you would have the Achaeans speak well of you, and give him a better prize even than that which you have now offered; but I will not give up the mare, and he that will fight me for her, let him come on.”

[555] Achilles smiled as he heard this, and was pleased with Antilochus, who was one of his dearest comrades. So he said: “Antilochus, if you would have me find Eumelus another prize, I
will give him the bronze breastplate with a rim of tin running all round it which I took from Asteropaeus. It will be worth much money to him.”

[563] He bade his comrade Automedon bring the breastplate from his tent, and he did so. Achilles then gave it over to Eumelus, who received it gladly.

[566] But Menelaus got up in a rage, furiously angry with Antilochus. An attendant placed his staff in his hands and bade the Argives keep silence: the hero then addressed them. “Antilochus,” said he, “what is this from you who have been so far blameless? You have made me cut a poor figure and baulked my horses by flinging your own in front of them, though yours are much worse than mine are; therefore, O princes and counsellors of the Argives, judge between us and show no favour, lest one of the Achaeans say, 'Menelaus has got the mare through lying and corruption; his horses were far inferior to Antilochus's, but he has greater weight and influence.' Nay, I will determine the matter myself, and no man will blame me, for I shall do what is just. Come here, Antilochus, and stand, as our custom is, whip in hand before your chariot and horses; lay your hand on your steeds, and swear by the Earthshaker that you did not purposely and guilefully get in the way of my horses.”

[586] And Antilochus answered, “Forgive me; I am much younger, King Menelaus, than you are; you stand higher than I do and are the better man of the two; you know how easily young men are betrayed into indiscretion; their tempers are more hasty and they have less judgement; make due allowances therefore, and bear with me; I will of my own accord give up the mare that I have won, and if you claim any further chattel from my own possessions, I would rather yield it to you, at once, than fall from your good graces henceforth, and do wrong in the sight of heaven.”

[596] The son of Nestor then took the mare and gave her over to Menelaus, whose anger was thus appeased; as when dew falls upon a field of ripening corn, and the lands are bristling with the harvest - even so, O Menelaus, was your heart made glad within you. He turned to Antilochus and said, “Now, Antilochus, angry though I have been, I can give way to you of my own free will; you have never been headstrong nor ill-disposed hitherto, but this time your youth has got the better of your judgement; be careful how you outwit your betters in future; no one else could have brought me round so easily, but your good father, your brother, and yourself have all of you had infinite trouble on my behalf; I therefore yield to your entreaty, and will give
up the mare to you, mine though it indeed be; the people will thus see that I am neither harsh nor vindictive.”

[612] With this he gave the mare over to Antilochus's comrade Noemon, and then took the cauldron. Meriones, who had come in fourth, carried off the two talents of gold, and the fifth prize, the two-handed urn, being unawarded, Achilles gave it to Nestor, going up to him among the assembled Argives and saying, “Take this, my good old friend, as an heirloom and memorial of the funeral of Patroclus - for you shall see him no more among the Argives. I give you this prize though you cannot win one; you can now neither wrestle nor fight, and cannot enter for the javelin-match nor foot-races, for the hand of age has been laid heavily upon you.”

**Summary of Book Twenty Three: 624 – 897**

The Funeral games continue with boxing, wrestling, a foot-race and combat in full armour. The prize for the combat went to the man who could first draw blood from his opponent, and the prize was the armour of Sarpedon. Next came the discus, archery and javelin.
Book Twenty Four

The Anger of the Gods: 1 – 140

The assembly now broke up and the people went their ways each to his own ship. There they made ready their supper, and then bethought them of the blessed boon of sleep; but Achilles still wept for thinking of his dear comrade, and sleep, before whom all things bow, could take no hold upon him. This way and that did he turn as he yearned after the might and manfulness of Patroclus; he thought of all they had done together, and all they had gone through both on the field of battle and on the waves of the weary sea. As he dwelt on these things he wept bitterly and lay now on his side, now on his back, and now face downwards, till at last he rose and went out as one distraught to wander upon the seashore. Then, when he saw dawn breaking over beach and sea, he yoked his horses to his chariot, and bound the body of Hector behind it that he might drag it about. Thrice did he drag it round the tomb of the son of Menoetius, and then went back into his tent, leaving the body on the ground full length and with its face downwards. But Apollo would not suffer it to be disfigured, for he pitied the man, dead though he now was; therefore he shielded him with his golden aegis continually, that he might take no hurt while Achilles was dragging him.

[22] Thus shamefully did Achilles in his fury dishonour Hector; but the blessed gods looked down in pity from heaven, and urged Hermes, slayer of Argus, to steal the body. All were of this mind save only Hera, Poseidon, and Zeus's bright-eyed daughter, who persisted in the hate which they had ever borne towards Ilium with Priam and his people; for they forgave not the wrong done them by Alexander in disdaining the goddesses who came to him when he was in his sheepyards, and preferring her who indulged his ruinous lust1.

[31] When, therefore, the morning of the twelfth day2 had now come, Phoebus Apollo spoke among the immortals saying, “You gods ought to be ashamed of yourselves; you are cruel and hard-hearted. Did not Hector burn you thigh-bones of heifers and of unblemished goats? And

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1 Perhaps something of Butler's bias is betrayed here. His translation has: "…and preferring her who had offered him a wanton to his ruin." Helen is, of course, the "wanton woman" in Butler's view. The Greek, however, is clear; the word machlosynē refers to Paris, not to Helen.

2 The time-frame here is obscure. Leaf (Commentary, 1900) suggests counting from Hector's death: Three days for the funeral and nine more for the arguments of the gods. It makes little sense, however, that nine days passed in which neither Greeks nor Trojans take any other action. Another solution is to count twelve days from the time Chryseis was returned, and nine (see below, 107) from the day on which the gods began to intervene directly in the war: Bk 5. 699.
now dare you not rescue even his dead body, for his wife to look upon, with his mother and child, his father Priam, and his people, who would forthwith commit him to the flames, and give him his due funeral rites? So, then, you would all be on the side of mad Achilles, who knows neither right nor truth? He is like some savage lion that in the pride of his great strength and daring springs upon men's flocks and gorges on them. Even so has Achilles flung aside all pity, and all that decency which at once so greatly banes yet greatly boons him that will heed it. A man may lose one far dearer than Achilles has lost - a son, it may be, or a brother born from his own mother's womb - yet when he has mourned him and wept over him he will let him bide, for it takes much sorrow to kill a man; whereas Achilles, now that he has slain noble Hector, drags him behind his chariot round the tomb of his comrade. It were better of him, and for him, that he should not do so, for brave though he be, gods may take it ill that he should vent his fury upon dead clay.”

[55] Hera spoke up in a rage. “This were well,” she cried, “O lord of the silver bow, if you would give like honour to Hector and to Achilles; but Hector was mortal and suckled at a woman's breast, whereas Achilles is the offspring of a goddess whom I myself reared and brought up. I married her to Peleus, who is above measure dear to the immortals; you gods came all of you to her wedding; you feasted along with them yourself and brought your lyre - false, and fond of low company, that you have ever been.”

[64] Then said Zeus, “Hera, be not so bitter. Their honour shall not be equal, but of all that dwell in Ilium, Hector was dearest to the gods, as also to myself, for his offerings never failed me. Never was my altar stinted of its dues, nor of the drink-offerings and savour of sacrifice which we claim of right. I shall therefore permit the body of mighty Hector to be stolen; and yet this may hardly be without Achilles coming to know it, for his mother keeps night and day beside him. Let some one of you, therefore, send Thetis to me, and I will impart my counsel to her, namely that Achilles is to accept a ransom from Priam, and give up the body.”

[77] On this Iris fleet as the wind went forth to carry his message. Down she plunged into the dark sea midway between Samos and rocky Imbrus; the waters hissed as they closed over her, and she sank into the bottom as the lead at the end of an ox-horn, that is sped to carry death to fishes. She found Thetis sitting in a great cave with the other sea-goddesses gathered round her; there she sat in the midst of them weeping for her noble son who was to fall far from his own land, on the rich plains of Troy. Iris went up to her and said, “Rise Thetis; Zeus, whose counsels
fail not, bids you come to him.” And Thetis answered, “Why does the mighty god so bid me? I am in great grief, and shrink from going in and out among the immortals. Still, I will go, and the word that he may speak shall not be spoken in vain.”

[93] The goddess took her dark veil, than which there can be no robe more sombre, and went forth with fleet Iris leading the way before her. The waves of the sea opened them a path, and when they reached the shore they flew up into the heavens, where they found the all-seeing son of Cronus with the blessed gods that live for ever assembled near him. Athena gave up her seat to her, and she sat down by the side of father Zeus. Hera then placed a fair golden cup in her hand, and spoke to her in words of comfort, whereon Thetis drank and gave her back the cup; and the sire of gods and men was the first to speak.

[104] “So, goddess,” said he, “for all your sorrow, and the grief that I well know reigns ever in your heart, you have come hither to Olympus, and I will tell you why I have sent for you. This nine days past the immortals have been quarrelling about Achilles waster of cities and the body of Hector. The gods would have Hermes slayer of Argus steal the body, but in furtherance of our peace and amity henceforward, I will concede such honour to your son as I will now tell you. Go, then, to the host and lay these commands upon him; say that the gods are angry with him, and that I am myself more angry than them all, in that he keeps Hector at the ships and will not give him up. He may thus fear me and let the body go. At the same time I will send Iris to great Priam to bid him go to the ships of the Achaeans, and ransom his son, taking with him such gifts for Achilles as may give him satisfaction.

[120] Silver-footed Thetis did as the god had told her, and forthwith down she darted from the topmost summits of Olympus. She went to her son's tents where she found him grieving bitterly, while his trusty comrades round him were busy preparing their morning meal, for which they had killed a great woolly sheep. His mother sat down beside him and caressed him with her hand saying, “My son, how long will you keep on thus grieving and making moan? You are gnawing at your own heart, and think neither of food nor of woman's embraces; and yet these too were well, for you have no long time to live, and death with the strong hand of fate are already close beside you. Now, therefore, heed what I say, for I come as a messenger from Zeus; he says that the gods are angry with you, and himself more angry than them all, in that you keep Hector at the ships and will not give him up. Therefore let him go, and accept a ransom for his body.”
[138] And Achilles answered, “So be it. If Olympian Zeus of his own motion thus commands me, let him that brings the ransom bear the body away.”

**Priam Sets Out: 141 - 328**

[141] Thus did mother and son talk together at the ships in long discourse with one another. Meanwhile the son of Cronus sent Iris to the strong city of Ilium. “Go,” said he, “fleet Iris, from the mansions of Olympus, and tell King Priam in Ilium, that he is to go to the ships of the Achaeans and free the body of his dear son. He is to take such gifts with him as shall give satisfaction to Achilles, and he is to go alone, with no other Trojan, save only some honoured servant who may drive his mules and waggon, and bring back the body of him whom noble Achilles has slain. Let him have no thought nor fear of death in his heart, for we will send the slayer of Argus to escort him, and bring him within the tent of Achilles. Achilles will not kill him nor let another do so, for he will take heed to his ways and sin not, and he will entreat a suppliant with all honourable courtesy.”

[159] On this Iris, fleet as the wind, sped forth to deliver her message. She went to Priam's house, and found weeping and lamentation therein. His sons were seated round their father in the outer courtyard, and their raiment was wet with tears: the old man sat in the midst of them with his mantle wrapped close about his body, and his head and neck all covered with the filth which he had clutched as he lay grovelling in the mire. His daughters and his sons' wives went wailing about the house, as they thought of the many and brave men who lay dead, slain by the Argives.

[169] The messenger of Zeus stood by Priam and spoke softly to him, but fear fell upon him as she did so. “Take heart,” she said, “Priam descendant of Dardanus, take heart and fear not. I bring no evil tidings, but am minded well towards you. I come as a messenger from Zeus, who though he be not near, takes thought for you and pities you. The lord of Olympus bids you go and ransom noble Hector, and take with you such gifts as shall give satisfaction to Achilles. You are to go alone, with no Trojan, save only some honoured servant who may drive your mules and waggon, and bring back to the city the body of him whom noble Achilles has slain. You are to have no thought, nor fear of death, for Zeus will send the slayer of Argus to escort you. When he has brought you within Achilles' tent, Achilles will not kill you nor let another do so, for he will take heed to his ways and sin not, and he will entreat a suppliant with all honourable courtesy.”

[187] Iris went her way when she had thus spoken, and Priam told his sons to get a mule-waggon ready, and to make the body of the waggon fast upon the top of its bed. Then he went
down into his fragrant store-room, high-vaulted, and made of cedar-wood, where his many treasures were kept, and he called Hecuba his wife. “Wife,” said he, “a messenger has come to me from Olympus, and has told me to go to the ships of the Achaeans to ransom my dear son, taking with me such gifts as shall give satisfaction to Achilles. What think you of this matter? For my own part I am greatly moved to pass through the army of the Achaeans and go to their ships.”

[200] His wife cried aloud as she heard him, and said, “Alas, what has become of that judgement for which you have been ever famous both among strangers and your own people? How can you venture alone to the ships of the Achaeans, and look into the face of him who has slain so many of your brave sons? You must have iron courage, for if the cruel savage sees you and lays hold on you, he will know neither respect nor pity. Let us then weep Hector from afar here in our own house, for when I gave him birth the threads of overruling fate were spun for him that dogs should eat his flesh far from his parents, in the house of that terrible man on whose liver I would fain fasten and devour it. Thus would I avenge my son, who showed no cowardice when Achilles slew him, and thought neither of flight nor of avoiding battle as he stood in defence of Trojan men and Trojan women.”

[217] Then Priam said, “I would go, do not therefore stay me nor be as a bird of ill omen in my house, for you will not move me. Had it been some mortal man who had sent me some prophet or priest who divines from sacrifice I should have deemed him false and have given him no heed; but now I have heard the goddess and seen her face to face, therefore I will go and her saying shall not be in vain. If it be my fate to die at the ships of the Achaeans even so would I have it; let Achilles slay me, if I may but first have taken my son in my arms and mourned him to my heart's comforting.”

[228] So saying he lifted the lids of his chests, and took out twelve goodly vestments. He took also twelve cloaks of single fold, twelve rugs, twelve fair mantles, and an equal number of shirts. He weighed out ten talents of gold, and brought moreover two burnished tripods, four cauldrons, and a very beautiful cup which the Thracians had given him when he had gone to them on an embassy; it was very precious, but he grudged not even this, so eager was he to ransom the body of his son. Then he chased all the Trojans from the court and rebuked them with words of anger. “Out,” he cried, “shame and disgrace to me that you are. Have you no grief in your own homes that you are come to plague me here? Is it a small thing, think you, that the son of Cronus has
sent this sorrow upon me, to lose the bravest of my sons? Nay, you shall prove it in person, for now he is gone the Achaeans will have easier work in killing you. As for me, let me go down within the house of Hades, ere mine eyes behold the sacking and wasting of the city.”

[247] He drove the men away with his staff, and they went forth as the old man sped them. Then he called to his sons, upbraiding Helenus, Paris, noble Agathon, Pammon, Antiphonus, Polites of the loud battle-cry, Deiphobus, Hippothous, and Dius. These nine did the old man call near him. “Come to me at once,” he cried, “worthless sons who do me shame; would that you had all been killed at the ships rather than Hector. Miserable man that I am, I have had the bravest sons in all Troy - noble Mestor, Troilus the dauntless charioteer, and Hector who was a god among men, so that one would have thought he was son to an immortal - yet there is not one of them left. Ares has slain them and those of whom I am ashamed are alone left me. Liars, and light of foot, heroes of the dance, robbers of lambs and kids from your own people, why do you not get a waggon ready for me at once, and put all these things upon it that I may set out on my way?”

[265] Thus did he speak, and they feared the rebuke of their father. They brought out a strong mule-waggon, newly made, and set the body of the waggon fast on its bed. They took the mule-yoke from the peg on which it hung, a yoke of boxwood with a knob on the top of it and rings for the reins to go through. Then they brought a yoke-band eleven cubits long, to bind the yoke to the pole; they bound it on at the far end of the pole, and put the ring over the upright pin making it fast with three turns of the band on either side the knob, and bending the thong of the yoke beneath it. This done, they brought from the store-chamber the rich ransom that was to purchase the body of Hector, and they set it all orderly on the waggon; then they yoked the strong harness-mules which the Mysians had on a time given as a goodly present to Priam; but for Priam himself they yoked horses which the old king had bred, and kept for own use.

[281] Thus heedfully did Priam and his servant see to the yoking of their cars at the palace. Then Hecuba came to them all sorrowful, with a golden goblet of wine in her right hand, that they might make a drink-offering before they set out. She stood in front of the horses and said,

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1 Otherwise unattested. Apollodorus (iii.12.5) lists Mestor amongst the sons "by other women."

2 Troilus was a son of Hecuba, and the title character of Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida. According to Apollodorus (Epitome 3.31), Toilus was the first person Achilles killed when the latter landed on the shores of Troy, but he is not otherwise mentioned by Homer. The story of Troilus and Cressida, while very popular with Medieval and Renaissance European writers, does not appear in any extant Greek source. Despite the errors of various commentators, Cressida is Chryseis, or, at the very least, a daughter of Chryses.
“Take this, make a drink-offering to father Zeus, and since you are minded to go to the ships in spite of me, pray that you may come safely back from the hands of your enemies. Pray to the son of Cronus lord of the whirlwind, who sits on Ida and looks down over all Troy, pray him to send his swift messenger on your right hand, the bird of omen which is strongest and most dear to him of all birds, that you may see it with your own eyes and trust it as you go forth to the ships of the Danaans. If all-seeing Zeus will not send you this messenger, however set upon it you may be, I would not have you go to the ships of the Argives.”

[299] And Priam answered, “Wife, I will do as you desire me; it is well to lift hands in prayer to Zeus, if so be he may have mercy upon me.”

[302] With this the old man bade the serving-woman pour pure water over his hands, and the woman came, bearing the water in a bowl. He washed his hands and took the cup from his wife; then he made the drink-offering and prayed, standing in the middle of the courtyard and turning his eyes to heaven. “Father Zeus,” he said, “who rules from Ida, most glorious and most great, grant that I may be received kindly and compassionately in the tents of Achilles; and send your swift messenger upon my right hand, the bird of omen which is strongest and most dear to you of all birds, that I may see it with my own eyes and trust it as I go forth to the ships of the Danaans.”

[314] So did he pray, and Zeus the lord of counsel heard his prayer. Forthwith he sent an eagle, the most unerring portent of all birds that fly, the dusky hunter that men also call the Black Eagle. His wings were spread abroad on either side as wide as the well-made and well-bolted door of a rich man's chamber. He came to them flying over the city upon their right hands, and when they saw him they were glad and their hearts took comfort within them. The old man made haste to mount his chariot, and drove out through the inner gateway and under the echoing gatehouse of the outer court. Before him went the mules drawing the four-wheeled waggon, and driven by wise Idaeus; behind these were the horses, which the old man lashed with his whip and drove swiftly through the city, while his friends followed after, wailing and lamenting for him as though he were on his road to death.

Hermes and Priam: 329 - 467

[329] As soon as they had come down from the city and had reached the plain, his sons and sons-in-law who had followed him went back to Ilium. But Priam and Idaeus as they showed out upon the plain did not escape the ken of all-seeing Zeus, who looked down upon the
old man and pitied him; then he spoke to his son Hermes and said, “Hermes, for it is you who are the most disposed to escort men on their way, and to hear those whom you will hear, go, and so conduct Priam to the ships of the Achaeans that no other of the Danaans shall see him nor take note of him until he reach the son of Peleus.”

[339] Thus he spoke and Hermes, guide and guardian, slayer of Argus, did as he was told. Forthwith he bound on his glittering golden sandals with which he could fly like the wind over land and sea; he took the wand with which he seals men's eyes in sleep, or wakes them just as he pleases, and flew holding it in his hand till he came to Troy and to the Hellespont.¹ To look at, he was like a young man of noble birth in the hey-day of his youth and beauty with the down just coming upon his face.

[349] Now when Priam and Idaeus had driven past the great tomb of Ilium, they stayed their mules and horses that they might drink in the river, for the shades of night were falling, when, therefore, Idaeus saw Hermes standing near them he said to Priam, “Take heed, descendant of Dardanus; here is matter which demands consideration. I see a man who I think will presently fall upon us; let us fly with our horses, or at least embrace his knees and implore him to take compassion upon us?

[358] When he heard this the old man's heart failed him, and he was in great fear; he stayed where he was as one dazed, and the hair stood on end over his whole body; but the bringer of good luck came up to him and took him by the hand, saying, “Whither, father, are you thus driving your mules and horses in the dead of night when other men are asleep? Are you not afraid of the fierce Achaeans who are hard by you, so cruel and relentless? Should some one of them see you bearing so much treasure through the darkness of the flying night, what would not your state then be? You are no longer young, and he who is with you is too old to protect you from those who would attack you. For myself, I will do you no harm, and I will defend you from any one else, for you remind me of my own father.”

[372] And Priam answered, “It is indeed as you say, my dear son; nevertheless some god has held his hand over me, in that he has sent such a wayfarer as yourself to meet me so opportunely;

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¹ The origin of Hermes' magic wand are obscure, but in Greek art he is almost always depicted with it. The wand may originally have been a shepherd's staff, which Apollo gave to Hermes as a token of friendship, and which morphed into a wand.
you are so comely in mien and figure, and your judgement is so excellent that you must come of blessed parents.”

[378] Then said the slayer of Argus, guide and guardian, “Sir, all that you have said is right; but tell me and tell me true, are you taking this rich treasure to send it to a foreign people where it may be safe, or are you all leaving strong Ilium in dismay now that your son has fallen who was the bravest man among you and was never lacking in battle with the Achaeans?”

[386] And Priam said, “Who are you, my friend, and who are your parents, that you speak so truly about the fate of my unhappy son?”

[389] The slayer of Argus, guide and guardian, answered him, “Sir, you would prove me, that you question me about noble Hector. Many a time have I set eyes upon him in battle when he was driving the Argives to their ships and putting them to the sword. We stood still and marvelled, for Achilles in his anger with the son of Atreus suffered us not to fight. I am his squire, and came with him in the same ship. I am a Myrmidon, and my father's name is Polyctor: he is a rich man and about as old as you are; he has six sons besides myself, and I am the seventh. We cast lots, and it fell upon me to sail here with Achilles. I am now come from the ships on to the plain, for with daybreak the Achaeans will set battle in array about the city. They chafe at doing nothing, and are so eager that their princes cannot hold them back.”

[405] Then answered Priam, “If you are indeed the squire of Achilles son of Peleus, tell me now the whole truth. Is my son still at the ships, or has Achilles hewn him limb from limb, and given him to his hounds?”

[410] “Sir,” replied the slayer of Argus, guide and guardian, “neither hounds nor vultures have yet devoured him; he is still just lying at the tents by the ship of Achilles, and though it is now twelve days that he has lain there, his flesh is not wasted nor have the worms eaten him although they feed on warriors. At daybreak Achilles drags him cruelly round the sepulchre of his dear comrade, but it does him no hurt. You should come yourself and see how he lies fresh as dew, with the blood all washed away, and his wounds every one of them closed though many pierced him with their spears. Such care have the blessed gods taken of your brave son, for he was dear to them beyond all measure.”

[424] The old man was comforted as he heard him and said, “My son, see what a good thing it is to have made due offerings to the immortals; for as sure as that he was born my son never forgot the gods that hold Olympus, and now they requite it to him even in death. Accept
therefore at my hands this goodly chalice; guard me and with heaven's help guide me till I come to the tent of the son of Peleus.”

[432] Then answered the slayer of Argus, guide and guardian, “Sir, you are tempting me and playing upon my youth, but you shall not move me, for you are offering me presents without the knowledge of Achilles whom I fear to defraud, lest some evil presently befall me; but as your guide I would go with you even to Argos itself, and would guard you so carefully whether by sea or land, that no one should attack you through making light of him who was with you.”

[440] The bringer of good luck then sprang on to the chariot, and seizing the whip and reins he breathed fresh spirit into the mules and horses. When they reached the trench and the wall that was before the ships, those who were on guard had just been getting their suppers, and the slayer of Argus threw them all into a deep sleep. Then he drew back the bolts to open the gates, and took Priam inside with the treasure he had upon his waggon. Ere long they came to the lofty dwelling of the son of Peleus for which the Myrmidons had cut pine and which they had built for their king; when they had built it they thatched it with coarse tussock-grass which they had mown out on the plain, and all round it they made a large courtyard, which was fenced with stakes set close together. The gate was barred with a single bolt of pine which it took three men to force into its place, and three to draw back so as to open the gate, but Achilles could draw it by himself. Hermes opened the gate for the old man, and brought in the treasure that he was taking with him for the son of Peleus. Then he sprang from the chariot on to the ground and said, “Sir, it is I, immortal Hermes, that am come with you, for my father sent me to escort you. I will now leave you, and will not enter into the presence of Achilles, for it might anger him that a god should befriend mortal men thus openly. Go you within, and embrace the knees of the son of Peleus: beseech him by his father, his lovely mother, and his son; thus you may move him.”

Priam and Achilles: 468 - 676

[468] With these words Hermes went back to high Olympus. Priam sprang from his chariot to the ground, leaving Idaeus where he was, in charge of the mules and horses. The old man went straight into the house where Achilles, loved of the gods, was sitting. There he found him with his men seated at a distance from him: only two, the hero Automedon, and Alcimus, descendant of Ares, were busy in attendance about his person, for he had but just done eating and drinking, and the table was still there. King Priam entered without their seeing him, and going right up to
Achilles he clasped his knees and kissed the dread murderous hands that had slain so many of his sons.

[480] As when some cruel spite has befallen a man that he should have killed some one in his own country, and must fly to a great man's protection in a land of strangers, and all marvel who see him, even so did Achilles marvel as he beheld Priam. The others looked one to another and marvelled also, but Priam besought Achilles saying, “Think of your father, O Achilles like unto the gods, who is such even as I am, on the sad threshold of old age. It may be that those who dwell near him harass him, and there is none to keep war and ruin from him. Yet when he hears of you being still alive, he is glad, and his days are full of hope that he shall see his dear son come home to him from Troy; but I, wretched man that I am, had the bravest in all Troy for my sons, and there is not one of them left. I had fifty sons when the Achaeans came here; nineteen of them were from a single womb, and the others were borne to me by the women of my household. The greater part of them has fierce Ares laid low, and Hector, him who was alone left, him who was the guardian of the city and ourselves, him have you lately slain; therefore I am now come to the ships of the Achaeans to ransom his body from you with a great ransom. Fear, O Achilles, the wrath of heaven; think on your own father and have compassion upon me, who am the more pitiable, for I have steeled myself as no man yet has ever steeled himself before me, and have raised to my lips the hand of him who slew my son.”

[507] Thus spoke Priam, and the heart of Achilles yearned as he bethought him of his father. He took the old man's hand and moved him gently away. The two wept bitterly - Priam, as he lay at Achilles' feet, weeping for Hector, and Achilles now for his father and now for Patroclus, till the house was filled with their lamentation. But when Achilles was now sated with grief and had unburthened the bitterness of his sorrow, he left his seat and raised the old man by the hand, in pity for his white hair and beard; then he said, “Unhappy man, you have indeed been greatly daring; how could you venture to come alone to the ships of the Achaeans, and enter the presence of him who has slain so many of your brave sons? You must have iron courage: sit now upon this seat, and for all our grief we will hide our sorrows in our hearts, for weeping will not avail us.

[525] “The immortals know no care, yet the lot they spin for man is full of sorrow; on the floor of Zeus's palace there stand two urns, the one filled with evil gifts, and the other with good ones. He for whom Zeus the lord of thunder mixes the gifts he sends, will meet now with good
and now with evil fortune; but he to whom Zeus sends none but evil gifts will be pointed at by
the finger of scorn, the hand of famine will pursue him to the ends of the world, and he will go
up and down the face of the earth, respected neither by gods nor men.

[534] “Even so did it befall Peleus; the gods endowed him with all good things from his birth
upwards, for he reigned over the Myrmidons excelling all men in prosperity and wealth, and
mortal though he was they gave him a goddess for his bride. But even on him too did heaven
send misfortune, for there is no race of royal children born to him in his house, save one son who
is doomed to die all untimely; nor may I take care of him now that he is growing old, for I must
stay here at Troy to be the bane of you and your children. And you too, O Priam, I have heard
that you were aforetime happy. They say that in wealth and plenitude of offspring you surpassed
all that is in Lesbos, the realm of Makar to the northward, Phrygia that is more inland, and those
that dwell upon the great Hellespont; but from the day when the dwellers in heaven sent this evil
upon you, war and slaughter have been about your city continually. Bear up against it, and let
there be some intervals in your sorrow. Mourn as you may for your brave son, you will take
nothing by it. You cannot raise him from the dead, ere you do so yet another sorrow shall befall
you.”

[552] And Priam answered, “O king, bid me not be seated, while Hector is still lying uncared
for in your tents, but accept the great ransom which I have brought you, and give him to me at
once that I may look upon him. May you prosper with the ransom and reach your own land in
safety, seeing that you have suffered me to live and to look upon the light of the sun.”

[559] Achilles looked at him sternly and said, “Anger me, sir, no longer; I am of myself
minded to give up the body of Hector. My mother, daughter of the old man of the sea, came to
me from Zeus to bid me deliver it to you. Moreover I know well, O Priam, and you cannot hide
it, that some god has brought you to the ships of the Achaeans, for else, no man however strong
and in his prime would dare to come to our host; he could neither pass our guard unseen, nor
draw the bolt of my gates thus easily; therefore, anger me no further, lest I sin against the word
of Zeus, and suffer you not, suppliant though you are, within my tents.”

[571] The old man feared him and obeyed. Then the son of Peleus sprang like a lion through
the door of his house, not alone, but with him went his two squires Automedon and Alcimus who
were closer to him than any others of his comrades now that Patroclus was no more. These
unyoked the horses and mules, and bade Priam's herald and attendant be seated within the house.
They lifted the ransom for Hector's body from the waggon, but they left two mantles and a goodly shirt, that Achilles might wrap the body in them when he gave it to be taken home. Then he called to his servants and ordered them to wash the body and anoint it, but he first took it to a place where Priam should not see it, lest if he did so, he should break out in the bitterness of his grief, and enrage Achilles, who might then kill him and sin against the word of Zeus.

[587] When the servants had washed the body and anointed it, and had wrapped it in a fair shirt and mantle, Achilles himself lifted it on to a bier, and he and his men then laid it on the waggon. He cried aloud as he did so and called on the name of his dear comrade, “Be not angry with me, Patroclus,” he said, “if you hear even in the house of Hades that I have given Hector to his father for a ransom. It has been no unworthy one, and I will share it equitably with you.”

[596] Achilles then went back into the tent and took his place on the richly inlaid seat from which he had risen, by the wall that was at right angles to the one against which Priam was sitting. “Sir,” he said, “your son is now laid upon his bier and is ransomed according to desire; you shall look upon him when you him away at daybreak; for the present let us prepare our supper. Even lovely Niobe had to think about eating, though her twelve children - six daughters and six lusty sons - had been all slain in her house. Apollo killed the sons with arrows from his silver bow, to punish Niobe, and Artemis slew the daughters, because Niobe had vaunted herself against Leto; she said Leto had borne two children only, whereas she had herself borne many - whereon the two killed the many. Nine days did they lie weltering, and there was none to bury them, for the son of Cronus turned the people into stone; but on the tenth day the gods in heaven themselves buried them, and Niobe then took food, being worn out with weeping. They say that somewhere among the rocks on the mountain pastures of Sipylus, where the nymphs live that haunt the river Achelous, there, they say, she lives in stone and still nurses the sorrows sent upon her by the hand of heaven. Therefore, noble sir, let us two now take food; you can weep for your dear son hereafter as you are bearing him back to Ilium - and many a tear will he cost you.”

[621] With this Achilles sprang from his seat and killed a sheep of silvery whiteness, which his followers skinned and made ready all in due order. They cut the meat carefully up into smaller pieces, spitted them, and drew them off again when they were well roasted. Automedon brought bread in fair baskets and served it round the table, while Achilles dealt out the meat, and they laid their hands on the good things that were before them.
[628] As soon as they had had enough to eat and drink, Priam, descendant of Dardanus, marveled at the strength and beauty of Achilles for he was as a god to see, and Achilles marveled at Priam as he listened to him and looked upon his noble presence. When they had gazed their fill Priam spoke first. “And now, O king,” he said, “take me to my couch that we may lie down and enjoy the blessed boon of sleep. Never once have my eyes been closed from the day your hands took the life of my son; I have groveled without ceasing in the mire of my stable-yard, making moan and brooding over my countless sorrows. Now, moreover, I have eaten bread and drunk wine; hitherto I have tasted nothing.”

[643] As he spoke Achilles told his men and the women-servants to set beds in the room that was in the gatehouse, and make them with good red rugs, and spread coverlets on the top of them with woollen cloaks for Priam and Idaeus to wear. So the maids went out carrying a torch and got the two beds ready in all haste. Then Achilles said laughingly to Priam, “Dear sir, you shall lie outside, lest some counsellor of those who in due course keep coming to advise with me should see you here in the darkness of the flying night, and tell it to Agamemnon. This might cause delay in the delivery of the body. And now tell me and tell me true, for how many days would you celebrate the funeral rites of noble Hector? Tell me, that I may hold aloof from war and restrain the host.”

[659] And Priam answered, “Since, then, you suffer me to bury my noble son with all due rites, do thus, Achilles, and I shall be grateful. You know how we are pent up within our city; it is far for us to fetch wood from the mountain, and the people live in fear. Nine days, therefore, will we mourn Hector in my house; on the tenth day we will bury him and there shall be a public feast in his honour; on the eleventh we will build a mound over his ashes, and on the twelfth, if there be need, we will fight.”

[668] And Achilles answered, “All, King Priam, shall be as you have said. I will stay our fighting for as long a time as you have named.”

[671] As he spoke he laid his hand on the old man's right wrist, in token that he should have no fear; thus then did Priam and his attendant sleep there in the forecourt, full of thought, while Achilles lay in an inner room of the house, with fair Briseis by his side.

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[677] And now both gods and mortals were fast asleep through the livelong night, but upon Hermes alone, the bringer of good luck, sleep could take no hold for he was thinking all the time
how to get King Priam away from the ships without his being seen by the strong force of sentinels. He hovered therefore over Priam's head and said, “Sir, now that Achilles has spared your life, you seem to have no fear about sleeping in the thick of your foes. You have paid a great ransom, and have received the body of your son; were you still alive and a prisoner the sons whom you have left at home would have to give three times as much to free you; and so it would be if Agamemnon and the other Achaeans were to know of your being here.”

[689] When he heard this the old man was afraid and roused his servant. Hermes then yoked their horses and mules, and drove them quickly through the host so that no man perceived them. When they came to the ford of eddying Xanthus, begotten of immortal Zeus, Hermes went back to high Olympus, and dawn in robe of saffron began to break over all the land. Priam and Idaeus then drove on toward the city lamenting and making moan, and the mules drew the body of Hector. No one neither man nor woman saw them, till Cassandra, fair as golden Aphrodite standing on Pergamus, caught sight of her dear father in his chariot, and his servant that was the city's herald with him. Then she saw him that was lying upon the bier, drawn by the mules, and with a loud cry she went about the city saying, “Come hither Trojans, men and women, and look on Hector; if ever you rejoiced to see him coming from battle when he was alive, look now on him that was the glory of our city and all our people.”

[707] At this there was not man nor woman left in the city, so great a sorrow had possessed them. Hard by the gates they met Priam as he was bringing in the body. Hector's wife and his mother were the first to mourn him: they flew towards the waggon and laid their hands upon his head, while the crowd stood weeping round them. They would have stayed before the gates, weeping and lamenting the livelong day to the going down of the sun, had not Priam spoken to them from the chariot and said, “Make way for the mules to pass you. Afterwards when I have taken the body home you shall have your fill of weeping.”

[718] On this the people stood asunder, and made a way for the waggon. When they had borne the body within the house they laid it upon a bed and seated minstrels round it to lead the dirge, whereon the women joined in the sad music of their lament. Foremost among them all Andromache led their wailing as she clasped the head of mighty Hector in her embrace. “Husband,” she cried, “you have died young, and leave me in your house a widow; he of whom we are the ill-starred parents is still a mere child, and I fear he may not reach manhood. Ere he can do so our city will be razed and overthrown, for you who watched over it are no more - you
who were its saviour, the guardian of our wives and children. Our women will be carried away captives to the ships, and I among them; while you, my child, who will be with me will be put to some unseemly tasks, working for a cruel master. Or, may be, some Achaeans will hurl you (O miserable death) from our walls, to avenge some brother, son, or father whom Hector slew; many of them have indeed bitten the dust at his hands, for your father's hand in battle was no light one. Therefore do the people mourn him. You have left, O Hector, sorrow unutterable to your parents, and my own grief is greatest of all, for you did not stretch forth your arms and embrace me as you lay dying, nor say to me any words that might have lived with me in my tears night and day for evermore.”

[746] Bitterly did she weep the while, and the women joined in her lament. Hecuba in her turn took up the strains of woe. “Hector,” she cried, “dearest to me of all my children. So long as you were alive the gods loved you well, and even in death they have not been utterly unmindful of you; for when Achilles took any other of my sons, he would sell him beyond the seas, to Samos Imbrus or rugged Lemnos; and when he had slain you too with his sword, many a time did he drag you round the sepulchre of his comrade- though this could not give him life- yet here you lie all fresh as dew, and comely as one whom Apollo has slain with his painless shafts.”

[760] Thus did she too speak through her tears with bitter moan, and then Helen for a third time took up the strain of lamentation. “Hector,” said she, “dearest of all my brothers-in-law-for I am wife to Alexander who brought me hither to Troy - would that I had died ere he did so - twenty years are come and gone since I left my home and came from over the sea, but I have never heard one word of insult or unkindness from you. When another would chide with me, as it might be one of your brothers or sisters or of your brothers' wives, or my mother-in-law- for Priam was as kind to me as though he were my own father - you would rebuke and check them with words of gentleness and goodwill. Therefore my tears flow both for you and for my unhappy self, for there is no one else in Troy who is kind to me, but all shrink and shudder as they go by me.”

[776] She wept as she spoke and the vast crowd that was gathered round her joined in her lament. Then King Priam spoke to them saying, “Bring wood, O Trojans, to the city, and fear no cunning ambush of the Argives, for Achilles when he dismissed me from the ships gave me his word that they should not attack us until the morning of the twelfth day.”
Forthwith they yoked their oxen and mules and gathered together before the city. Nine days long did they bring in great heaps wood, and on the morning of the tenth day with many tears they took brave Hector forth, laid his dead body upon the summit of the pile, and set the fire thereto.

Then when the child of morning rosy-fingered dawn appeared on the eleventh day, the people again assembled, round the pyre of mighty Hector. When they were got together, they first quenched the fire with wine wherever it was burning, and then his brothers and comrades with many a bitter tear gathered his white bones, wrapped them in soft robes of purple, and laid them in a golden urn, which they placed in a grave and covered over with large stones set close together. Then they built a barrow hurriedly over it keeping guard on every side lest the Achaeans should attack them before they had finished. When they had heaped up the barrow they went back again into the city, and being well assembled they held high feast in the house of Priam their king.

Thus, then, did they celebrate the funeral of Hector tamer of horses.