

GCSE (9–1)

Prescribed Literary Sources

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

J199

For first teaching in 2017

War and Warfare (J199/23)

Version 1



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Homer, *Iliad* 5.84–469

Book 5: 84–165 Pandarus wounds Diomedes

Such was the furious combat. As for Diomedes, none could have said which army Greek or Trojan he fought for, since he stormed over the plain like a raging winter torrent that sweeps away the dykes in its swift flood. Close-built embankments and the walls of fertile vineyards fail to hold its onset driven by Zeus' storm and before it the proud works of men all tumble to ruin: so the dense ranks of the Trojans were routed by Tydeus' son, giving way to him despite their numbers.

Yet when glorious Pandarus, Lycaon's son, saw Diomedes rage across the plain, routing the army ahead, he swiftly bent his curved bow, and aimed at him, striking him firmly, as he ran, on the right shoulder-plate of his cuirass, so the sharp arrow pierced clean through, and the armour ran with blood. Pandarus cried aloud in triumph: 'On now, brave Trojans, you horse-prickers! The best of the Greeks is hurt, and that arrow means he's done for, if Lord Apollo, born of Zeus, truly blessed my journey here from Lycia.'

So he boasted, but the swift shaft failed to down Diomedes, who drew back to the shadow of his chariot, where he called to Sthenelus, Capaneus' son: 'Quick, my lad, down here, and pull this bitter dart from my flesh.'

Leaping from the chariot, as he spoke, Sthenelus touched ground beside him and pulled the sharp arrow from his shoulder, so the blood soaked through the woven tunic. Then, Diomedes of the loud war-cry prayed to Athena: 'Atrytone,

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hear me, aegis-bearing child of Zeus! If ever with kindly thought you stood by my father in the heat of battle, so now once more, Athena, show your love. Let me kill this man, bring him in range of my spear, who wounded me without warning, boasts of it, and shouts I am not long for the bright light of day.'

He prayed so that Pallas Athena heard, lightening his limbs, his feet and hands, and speaking her winged words in his ear: 'Courage, Diomedes, I have filled your arteries with your father's strength, that indomitable strength of Tydeus, shield-wielding horseman. I have driven the mist that veiled them from your eyes what's more, so you may know both men and gods. Now, if an immortal comes here to test you, among those deathless ones strike only at Aphrodite, Zeus' daughter, if it be she who risks the battle: since her you may wound with a thrust of your keen blade.'

Bright-eyed Athena departed with those words, and Diomedes once more took his place at the front. Eager though he had been to fight before, his courage now was tripled, like a lion wounded but not killed, as it leaps the fence, by a shepherd as he guards his sheep. He angers it, but now cannot aid them, and has to hide behind walls, while the helpless flock is scattered, downed in heaps together, till the furious creature leaps from the fold. In such a fury great Diomedes attacked the Trojans.

Astynous and General Hypeiron he killed, striking one above the nipple with a throw of his bronze-tipped spear, the other with his long sword on the collarbone, shearing the shoulder from the neck and spine. Leaving them lying there, he chased down Abas and Polyidus, sons of old Eurydamas, interpreter of dreams. They came not back again, whom great Diomedes slew, for their father to tell their dreams. Then he pursued Xanthus and Thoön, Phaenops' dear sons: an old man too weighed down with age to get himself fresh heirs. Diomedes killed both, leaving their sorrowing father to weep when they failed to return, and his surviving kin to inherit.

Two sons of Dardanian Priam, Echemmon and Chromius were next, as they rode

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the same chariot. As a lion launches itself on a herd grazing some wooded pasture, and breaks the neck of a heifer or two, so Diomedes dragged those men roughly from their chariot, stripping them of their armour, telling his comrades to drive their horses down to the ships.

Book 5: 166–238 Aeneas joins Pandarus in attacking Diomedes

Seeing Diomedes wreak carnage among the warriors, Prince Aeneas set out amid the conflict, through a hail of missiles, in search of noble Pandarus. He found that mighty peerless son of Lycaon, and reaching him spoke in his ear: 'Pandarus, where is your famous bow with its winged arrows? You are our finest archer, better than any in all Lycia, come, raise your arms in prayer to Zeus, and aim at that hero, whoever he may be, who is wreaking havoc on us Trojans, loosing the limbs of many a warrior. Take care only lest it is some god, angered with our rites and resentful towards us: for a god's wrath weighs heavy on us mortals.'

Lycaon's glorious son replied: 'Aeneas, wise counsellor to the bronze-clad Trojans: it is indeed the very likeness of brave Tydeus' son. I'd know him by his shield and helmet-crest, and by his team of horses, yet still it may be a god. And even if it is mortal Diomedes, a god supports him in his rage: one of the immortals, wrapped in mist, stands by him, turning aside my arrows as they reach him. Even now I left fly a shaft that pierced his right shoulder, clean through the armour plate, enough I thought to send him down to Hades, yet I failed. Surely some god is angry.

I am without chariot or horse to ride, yet in my father Lycaon's halls, I know there stand eleven fine chariots, newly made and fitted out, cloths spread on them and by each a pair of horses feeding on white barley and on rye. Indeed when I left, Lycaon, as a soldier, gave me strict instructions, advised me to lead my Trojans into the thick of combat with horse and chariot. But I, being I, paid scant attention, though it would have profited me to do so. I spared my glossy horses,

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thinking fodder would be scarce amongst such a multitude. So I left them there, and came on foot to Troy, trusting to my bow, though to no avail it seems. Twice I have aimed a shaft at their generals, at Menelaus and Diomedes, and hit them and drawn blood, yet it only spurred them on. It was an evil day when I took my curved bow from its stand, when I brought my Trojans to Ilium as a favour to noble Hector. If I have sight again of my native land and the roof of my great hall, and reach my home and wife once more, then may the next stranger take my head if I fail to shatter this bow with my own hands and feed it to the flames, given all the good it's done me.'

The Trojan general Aeneas replied: 'Say not so: the way to change this for the better is for us two to face him and test him with our weapons. Climb aboard my chariot, and see what the horses of Tros are made of, that cover the ground swiftly in pursuit or in flight. They will carry us back to the city in safety if Zeus gives Diomedes the edge once more. Take up the reins and whip, while I dismount to fight, or you stand your ground while I look to the horses.'

Noble Pandarus answered: 'Take the reins yourself Aeneas, handle your own horses. They'll work better for the master they know, if we're forced to run. For want of your voice to guide them they might startle, and jib at carrying us from the field, leaving fierce Diomedes to close in for the kill. He'd have them then, so drive the team and your own chariot now, while my sharp spear waits to receive him.'

Book 5: 239–296 The death of Pandarus

At this, they mounted the ornate chariot and drove the swift team eagerly towards Diomedes. Sthenelus saw them approach, the son of noble Capaneus, and quickly warned Tydeus' son: 'Diomedes, dear friend, here come two warriors, strong beyond measure, to fight you. One is the archer, Pandarus, who boasts he is son of Lycaon: the other, Aeneas, claims Anchises for a father, Aphrodite as his mother. Wheel the chariot and give ground, I beg you, lest you lose your life in the fury of attack.'

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Mighty Diomedes with an angry glance replied: 'Don't talk to me of flight, that won't deter me. It is not in my blood to cower away and shirk the fight: my strength's as great as ever. I'll not mount the chariot, but face them on foot, as I am. Pallas Athena allows no fear. As for those two the swiftest horses will not let them escape. Now, another thing, take careful note, if Athena in her wisdom grants me the power to kill both, leave our own fine horses here, tie the reins to the chariot rail, run to Aeneas' team and drive them from the Trojan lines to ours. They are of that breed, the best of all horses under the risen sun, from which Zeus chose a gift for Tros, for taking Ganymedes his son. Lord Anchises later stole the breed, putting his mares to them, unknown to Laomedon. Six mares foaled in the stables, four he kept for himself rearing them in his stalls, giving the other two to Aeneas, for warhorses. If we could capture those, we would win great glory.'

While they spoke the two arrived at the gallop, and Pandarus called out: 'Diomedes, the brave and bloody, though my swift bitter shaft failed to fell you, let me try once more with the spear.' With that he took his stance and hurled the long-shadowed javelin, and the bronze tip struck Diomedes on the shield, piercing it through and reaching his corselet. Pandarus shouted in triumph: 'A hit, right in the belly. That should finish you, but add to my glory.'

Mighty Diomedes, without a tremor, replied: 'You've failed, not succeeded, but before you two are done one of you must die, and sate with his blood Ares, god of the shield's tough hide. With that, Diomedes hurled his spear whose bronze blade Athena guided to the face beside the eye, shattering Pandarus' white teeth, shearing his tongue at the root, and exiting through the chin. He tumbled from the chariot with a clang of bright burnished armour, the swift horses swerved, and there his strength failed, his spirit was loosed.

Book 5: 297–351 Diomedes wounds Aphrodite

Aeneas, grasping his shield and long spear, leapt down after him, fearful the Achaeans might rob him of the corpse. He bestrode it like a lion confident in

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his strength, covering himself with his round shield, ready to slay with his spear any man who would seize the corpse, raising his mighty war-cry. But Diomedes hefted a rock, heavier than any two men of our time might carry, lifting it easily on his own. With it he struck Aeneas on the hip where the thigh turns in the hip-joint, the cup-bone men call it. It crushed the bone, sheared the sinews, and jaggedly ripped the skin away. Aeneas fell to his knees, and pressed the ground with one great hand, while darkness shrouded his sight.

Now Aeneas would have died, had not Aphrodite, Zeus' daughter, been quick to notice, the mother who bore him to Anchises while he tended the herd. She flung her white arms about her beloved son, and spread a fold of her shining robe to shelter him from weapons, lest a bronze spear hurled from a swift Danaan chariot might pierce his breast and end his life.

While she was bearing her son from the field, Sthenelus obeyed the command of Diomedes of the loud war-cry, and kept his team from the fight, tying their reins to the chariot rim, and running towards Aeneas' long-maned pair. He drove them out of the Trojan ranks towards the Greeks, and entrusted them to Deipylus, his close comrade, whom he honoured most among all the friends of his youth, because they were kindred spirits. He told him to lead them down to the hollow ships. Then he mounted his chariot, seized the gleaming reins, and urged his powerful horses in ready pursuit of Diomedes.

That son of Tydeus meanwhile, with pitiless spear, was chasing after Cyprian Aphrodite, knowing she was a gentle goddess, not one of those who control the flow of battle, no Athena, or Enyo, sacker of cities. So, when he reached her after his chase through the ranks, fierce Diomedes lunged at her with his sharp spear, piercing the divine robe the Graces had laboured to make for her, and wounding the flesh of her wrist near the palm. Out streamed the deathless goddess' blood, the ichor that flows in ambrosial veins, for the gods do not eat mortal bread or drink mortal wine, but lacking our blood are called immortals. With a piercing cry she let fall her son, whom Phoebus Apollo clasped in his

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arms, wrapped in a dark blue cloud, lest a bronze spear hurled from a swift Danaan chariot might pierce his breast and end his life.

Over her Diomedes of the loud war-cry raised a great shout of triumph: 'Daughter of Zeus, leave battle and strife to others. Isn't it enough that you snare feeble women? Rejoin the fight and you'll learn to shudder at the name of war!'

Book 5: 352–430 Aphrodite returns to Olympus

As he spoke, Iris, swift-footed as the wind, led Aphrodite from the conflict, her lovely flesh stained with blood, and she distraught with pain, and suffering grievously. They found fierce Ares, on the left flank, his two war-horses, with their golden harness, close by, his spear leaning on a cloud. Sinking to her knees, she begged the loan of her dear brother's steeds: 'Save me, brother dear, lend me your team, to reach Olympus, my home among the immortals. I am sorely hurt by this wound, dealt by a mortal, son of Tydeus, who would challenge Father Zeus himself.'

At this, Ares lent her his horses with the golden harness, and sick at heart she mounted the chariot with Iris beside her, who took up the reins, and whipped up the team, which eagerly galloped away. Swiftly they reached the heights of Olympus, home of the gods, and there swift-footed Iris reined in the horses, unyoked them, and threw them ambrosial fodder, while lovely Aphrodite ran to kneel at her mother Dione's feet. Taking her daughter in her arms, Dione soothed her, saying: Which of the heavenly ones has hurt you so spitefully, dear child, as if you deserved punishment?'

Laughter-loving Aphrodite said: 'Reckless Diomedes, Tydeus' son, it was who wounded me, as I rescued my dear son Aeneas, dearest of all to me, from the field. This fierce feud's no longer one between Greeks and Trojans: now the Danaans are at war with the gods themselves.'

The lovely goddess, Dione, replied: 'Courage my child, and bear your pain well. Many of us who dwell on Olympus have suffered at the hands of men,

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attempting to injure one another. So Ares, when Otus and the mighty Ephialtes, the sons of Aloeus, bound him cruelly, trapped for thirteen months in a bronze jar. That would have been the end of Ares the warmonger, if Eriboea the sons' lovely stepmother had not told Hermes, who spirited away the suffering Ares, almost at the end of his tether. Hera, too felt the agony, when the mighty Heracles, son of Amphitryon, pierced her right breast with his triple-barbed arrow. And even great Hades himself was stricken by a swift shaft, when that same hero, aegis-bearing Zeus' son, wounded him at the Gate of Hell, at Pylos, among the dead, leaving him in agony. Hades fled to the house of Zeus, to high Olympus, shaken to the core and in great pain, for the arrow had pierced his mighty shoulder, and his heart was labouring. There Paeon the Healer spread soothing herbs on the wound, and cured Hades, one not made as mortals are. A harsh and violent man Heracles, and careless of doing evil: who even troubled the Olympians with his bow. And now a goddess, bright-eyed Athena, sets this man Diomedes against you, a fool unconscious how brief life is for those who war with the gods. There'll be no homecoming for him, from the horrors of battle: no more will his children prattle at his knee. Let him take care, mighty horse-tamer that he is, lest he meets with a greater force than you and one day his noble wife Aegialeia, wise daughter of Adrastus, wakes her close servants from their sleep with her long lament, wailing for the best of the Achaeans.' So saying, with both hands she wiped the ichor from her daughter's arm. The wound was healed and the pain was eased.

Athena and Hera, who were watching, tried to provoke Zeus with mocking words. Bright-eyed Athena was the first to speak: 'Father Zeus, I hope you won't be angry at what I say. It seems your Cyprian daughter has been at work luring some Greek girl to chase after those Trojans she loves so deeply, and while fondling this girl and her golden brooch, scratched her own delicate hand.'

This only drew a smile from the Father of men and gods. Calling golden Aphrodite to his side, he said: 'War is not for you, my child, tend to the loving deeds of wedlock, and leave the fighting to Ares the swift and to Athena.'

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Book 5: 431–469 Apollo intervenes on the battlefield

As they spoke, Diomedes of the loud war-cry flung himself at Aeneas once more, whom he well knew Apollo protected, caring nothing for that great god, and eager to kill Aeneas and strip him of his shining armour. Three times he leapt at him threateningly three times Apollo beat away his gleaming shield. But when like a demon he rushed at him a fourth time, far-striking Apollo gave a terrible cry: 'Take thought, son of Tydeus, and give way! Don't think yourself equal to the gods: the immortals are of a different race than those who walk the earth.'

Diomedes, at this, gave ground a little, before far-striking Apollo's anger, while the god bore Aeneas far from the field to his temple on sacred Pergamus. There in the great sanctuary Leto, and Artemis the Huntress, healed him and made him more glorious still, while Apollo, Lord of the Silver Bow, formed a phantom in Aeneas' likeness, armed like him, round which the Trojans and noble Greeks hacked at the bull's hide shields protecting each other's breasts, the great round shields and lighter bucklers. Then Phoebus Apollo called to Ares: 'You, destroyer of men and bloody sacker of cities, Ares, enter the fray and drive this son of Tydeus off, who would fight Father Zeus himself. He wounded Aphrodite's wrist, then lunged at me like a demon!'

While Apollo took to the heights of Pergamus, lethal Ares joined the Trojan ranks, masked as Acamas the dashing Thracian leader. He called to the Zeus-blessed sons of Priam: 'How long will you watch our men fall to the Greeks? Are they free to storm our very gates? Aeneas has fallen, Anchises' son, whom we honour as much as Hector. Come, save our brave comrade from the din of battle.'

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Homer, *Iliad* 6.118–529

Book 6: 118–236 Glaucus meets Diomedes and tells his lineage

Now Diomedes and Glaucus, son of Hippolochus, met in the space between the armies, eager for the fight. When they had come within range, the son of Tydeus, he of the loud war-cry, called: 'What mighty man are you, among mortals? I have never seen you on the field of honour before today, yet facing my long-shadowed spear, you show greater daring than all the rest. Unhappy are those whose sons meet my fury. But if you be one of the gods from heaven, I will not fight with the immortals. Not even mighty Lycurgus, son of Dryas, survived his war with the gods for long. He chased the nymphs, who nursed frenzied Dionysus, through the sacred hills of Nysa, and struck by the murderous man's ox-goad their holy wands fell from their hands. But Dionysus fleeing, plunged beneath the waves, trembling and terrified by the man's loud cries, and Thetis took him to her breast. Then the gods who take their ease were angered by Lycurgus, and Zeus blinded him. So that, hated by the immortals, he soon died. No way then would I wish to oppose the blessed gods. But if you are mortal, and eat the food men grow, come on, and meet the toils of fate the sooner.'

'Brave Diomedes', Hippolochus' son replied, 'why ask my lineage? Like the generations of leaves are those of men. The wind blows and one year's leaves are scattered on the ground, but the trees bud and fresh leaves open when spring comes again. So a generation of men is born as another passes away. Still if you wish to know my lineage, listen well to what others know already. There's a town called Ephyre in a corner of Argos, the horse-pasture, and a man lived there called Sisyphus, the craftiest of men, a son of Aeolus. He had a son called Glaucus, and Glaucus was father of peerless Bellerophon, to whom the

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gods gave beauty and every manly grace. But Zeus made him subject to King Proetus, who was stronger and plotted against him, and drove him from Argive lands. Now Proetus' wife, the fair Anteia, longed madly for Bellerephon, and begged him to lie with her in secret, but wise Bellerephon was a righteous man and could not be persuaded. So she wove a web of deceit, and said to King Proetus: 'Kill this Bellerephon, who tried to take me by force, or die in the doing of it.' The king was angered by her words. He would not kill Bellerephon, as his heart shrank from murder, but he packed him off to Lycia, and scratching many deadly signs on a folded tablet, gave him that fatal token, and told him to hand it to the Lycian king, his father-in-law, so to engineer his death. Bellerephon went to Lycia escorted by peerless gods, and when he reached the streams of Xanthus the king of great Lycia welcomed him with honour, entertaining him for nine days, and sacrificing nine oxen. But when rosy-fingered Dawn lit the tenth day his host questioned him, and asked what token he brought him from his son-in-law Proetus.

On first deciphering the fatal message, he ordered Bellerephon to kill the monstrous Chimaera, spawned by gods and not men, that had a lion's head, goat's body and serpent's tail, and breathed out deadly blasts of scorching fire. But Bellerephon slew her, guided by the gods. Next he was sent against the notorious Solymi, and fought, he said, the mightiest battle he ever fought. Then thirdly he slaughtered the Amazons, women the equal of men. The king planned a deadly ruse for his return, staging an ambush by the pick of the Lycian warriors. But not one of them returned: the peerless Bellerephon killed them all. The king then realised he was a true son of the gods, and offered him his daughter and half of his kingdom, to stay. The Lycians moreover marked out for him an estate of the first rank, with tracts of orchards and plough-land for his delight.

The lady bore Bellerephon, that warlike man, three children, Isander, Hippolochus and Laodameia. Zeus the Counsellor slept with Laodameia and she bore godlike

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Sarpedon, now a bronze-clad warrior. But the time came when Bellerephon too was loathed by the gods, and wandered off alone over the Aleian plain, eating his heart away and shunning the ways of men. Ares, unwearied by war, killed his son Isander, battling with the glorious Solymi; and Laodameia was slain in anger by Artemis of the Golden Reins. Hippolochus remained and fathered me, and from him I claim descent. He sent me here to Troy and charged me earnestly to be the best and bravest, and not bring shame on my ancestors the best men in Ephyre and all broad Lycia. Such is my lineage, from that blood am I sprung.'

Diomedes, of the loud war-cry rejoiced at these words. Planting his spear in the fertile earth, he spoke to the Lycian general courteously: 'You are, then, a friend of long-standing to my father's house, since noble Oeneus once entertained peerless Bellerephon in his palace, and kept him there twenty days. Moreover they exchanged fine friendship gifts. Oeneus gave him a bright scarlet belt, and Bellerephon replied with a two-handled gold cup, which was there in the palace when I came away. But Tydeus my father I scarce remember, since I was a little child when he left, when the Achaean warriors died at Thebes. So I will be your good friend at home in Argos, and you will be mine in Lycia, should I come to visit. Let us avoid each other's spear in the battle, there are plenty more Trojans and their worthy allies for me to slay, if a god lets my feet overtake them, and many Greeks for you to kill, if you can. Let us exchange our armour then, that those around may know that our grandfather's friendship makes us two friends.'

At this, the two leapt down from their chariots, and clasped each other's hands as a pledge of their good faith. But Zeus, the son of Cronos, robbed Glaucus of his wits, for he gave Diomedes, son of Tydeus, golden armour for bronze, a hundred oxen's worth for that of nine.

Book 6: 237–311 Hecabe prays to Athena

Now when Hector reached the oak tree by the Scaean Gate, he was besieged by the Trojan wives and daughters asking after their sons and husbands, brothers and friends. He ordered them to pray to the gods, and sorrow hung about many.

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Then he came to Priam's lovely palace, fronted by marble colonnades, and enclosing fifty chambers of polished stone, adjoining one another, where Priam's sons slept beside their wives and opposite within the court twelve well-roofed closely-adjoining chambers of polished stone for his noble daughters and his sons-in-law. There his gracious mother met him, with Laodice fairest of her daughters. 'My son,' she cried, clasping his hand, 'why are you here and not in the midst of dreadful battle? Those vile Achaeans must be closing in on the city that you come to the Acropolis to pray to Zeus. Wait till I fetch you some sweet honeyed wine, first to pour a libation to Zeus and the other gods, and then for your relief if you will drink. Wine fortifies a man wearied by toil, as you must be wearied defending us.'

Mighty Hector of the gleaming helm replied: 'No honeyed wine for me, my lady mother, lest you weaken me and I lose strength and courage. Nor should I dare to pour Zeus a libation of bright wine with unwashed hands, nor pray to the son of Cronos, lord of the thunder clouds, spattered with blood and filth. You though must gather the older women, and take burnt offerings to the temple of Athena ever first to chase the spoils, and take her the best and largest robe in your palace, the one you love the most, and lay it on her knees. Vow to golden-haired Athena that you'll sacrifice at her shrine a dozen yearling heifers, unused to the goad, and beg her to have pity on holy Ilium, and on the Trojan women and children, and bar Diomedes from the city, that savage spearmen, and panic-maker. Go now, to the shrine of Athena the Warrior, while I find Paris and rouse him, if he will listen. Better the earth swallow him now. Zeus made him a great bane to the Trojans, to great Priam and his sons. If I saw him bound for Hades' palace, then would my heart, I say, be free of grief.'

At this, his mother went to the palace, calling for her maids, and they gathered the older women of the city. Meanwhile she went down to the vaulted treasure chamber where she kept her richly-worked robes, embroidered by Sidonian women, whom princely Paris had brought himself from Sidon, when he sailed

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the seas on that voyage that brought him high-born Helen. From these Hecabe chose the largest and most richly embroidered that had lain beneath the rest, and now gleamed like a star. Then she set out, with the throng of older women hurrying after.

At the shrine of Athena on the Acropolis, lovely Theano flung open the doors. She, whom Troy had appointed priestess of Athena, was daughter to Cisseus, and wife to Antenor, the horse-tamer. They lifted their hands to Athena, with ecstatic cries, while lovely Theano took the robe, laid it on golden-haired Athena's knees, then prayed to the daughter of Zeus. 'Lady Athena, fairest of goddesses, protectress of the city, shatter Diomedes' spear. Topple him headlong before the Scaean Gate, and we will sacrifice in your shrine twelve yearling heifers, unused to the goad. Take pity on the city, the Trojan women and their little ones.' So Theano prayed, but Pallas Athena denied the prayer.

Book 6: 312–368 Hector rouses Paris

While they prayed to Almighty Zeus' daughter, Hector went to Paris' fine home, built by the best workmen in the fertile land of Troy. They had fashioned court, hall and sleeping-chambers close to Priam's palace and Hector's own house on the citadel. There, Zeus-beloved Hector entered, his long spear in his hand, the spear-blade glittering before him, its socket made of gold.

He found Paris in his rooms busy with his splendid weapons, the shield and cuirass, and handling his curved bow. Argive Helen sat there too, among her ladies, superintending their fine handiwork. Catching sight of Paris, Hector rebuked him with scornful words: 'It is wrong to be so perverse, nursing anger in your heart, while your friends die at the gates of the city and high on the battlements, yet you are the reason the sounds of war echo through Troy. You yourself would reproach those you found shirking the field of battle, so rouse yourself, before flames consume the city!'

Paris replied: 'Hector, since you are right and just in your rebuke, I will explain. Listen and reflect. I don't take to my room through anger against the Trojans, or

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indignation, but rather in sorrow. Indeed but now my wife sought to change my mind with gentle words, urging me to fight: and I myself agree it might be best, since victory shifts from one man to another. So wait a moment while I don my gear, or you go on ahead and I'll follow, and overtake you.'

To this Hector of the gleaming helm made no answer, but Helen spoke to him in gentle tones: 'Brother, I am indeed that wicked she-dog whom all abhor. I wish that on the day of my birth, some vile blast of wind had blown me to the mountains, or into the waves of the echoing sea, where the waters would have drowned me, and none of this would have come about. But since the gods ordained this fate, I wish that I had a better man for husband, who felt the reproaches and contempt of his fellow men. But this man of mine is fickle, and ever will be so, and will reap the harvest of it hereafter. But enter, now and be seated, my brother, since you are the most troubled in mind of all, through my shamelessness and Paris' folly. Zeus has brought an evil fate upon us, and in days to come we shall be a song for those yet unborn.'

'No, I shall not sit here, Helen,' Hector of the gleaming helm replied: 'kind though you are, you'll not persuade me. Already my heart burns to aid our Trojans who miss me greatly when I'm gone. But urge your man to follow swiftly, so he overtakes me in the city. I go now to see my wife, my little boy, my people, not knowing if I shall see them again, or whether the gods have doomed me to die at Achaean hands.'

Book 6: 369–439 Hector speaks with Andromache

With this, Hector of the gleaming helm departed for his fine house, but failed to find white-armed Andromache at home. She had gone with her son and a fair companion, to the battlements, where she stood in tears and sorrow. Failing to find his peerless wife, Hector stood at the threshold and spoke to her servants: 'Tell me, you maids, where is white-armed Andromache? Is she visiting one of my sisters, or my noble brothers' fair wives, or has she gone to Athena's shrine, where the rest of Troy's noble women seek to influence the dread goddess?'

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'Hector,' a busy housemaid replied, 'if you wish to know the truth, she has done none of those things, but hearing our men were hard pressed, and the Greeks had won a great victory, she rushed to the battlements, in great distress, and the nurse followed carrying your son.'

At this, Hector sped from the house and retraced his path through the broad streets. When, after crossing the city, he reached the Scaean Gate by which he intended to leave, his wife came running to meet him. Richly-dowered, Andromache was the daughter of brave Eëtion, who lived in Thebe below wooded Placus, and ruled the Cilicians. Now she ran to her bronze-clad husband, and the nurse was with her, holding a little boy in her arms, a baby son, Hector's bright star. Hector called him Scamandrius, but the rest Astyanax, since, to them, Hector alone protected Ilium. Hector smiled, and gazed at his son in silence, but Andromache crept weeping to his side, and clasped his hand, saying: 'Husband, this courage of yours dooms you. You show no pity for your little son or your wretched wife, whom you'll soon make a widow. The Achaeans must soon join arms against you, and destroy you. If I lose you I were better dead, for should you meet your fate, there will be no more joy for me only sorrow. I have no royal father or mother. Achilles killed my noble father when he sacked Cilician Thebe, that many-peopled city with its high gates. But he shrank from despoiling Eëtion though he slew him, sending him to the pyre in his ornate armour, and heaping a mound above him, round which the mountain-nymphs, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, planted elm trees. And seven brothers of mine, swift-footed mighty Achilles sent to Hades, all on a day, killing them there among their shambling-gaited cattle and white fleecy sheep. My mother, queen below wooded Placus, he dragged here with the rest of his spoils, but freed her for a princely ransom, only for Artemis of the bow to slay her in her father's house. Hector you are parent, brother, husband to me. Take pity on me now, and stay here on the battlements, don't make your son an orphan your wife a widow. Station your men above the fig-tree there, where the wall's most easily scaled, and the city lies then wide open. Thrice their best men led

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by the two Aiantes, great Idomeneus, the Atreidae, and brave Diomedes, have tested the wall there. Someone skilled in divining has told them, or maybe their own experience urges them to try.'

Book 6: 440–493 Hector takes leave of his wife and son

'Lady,' said Hector of the gleaming helm, 'I too am concerned, but if I hid from the fighting like a coward, I would be shamed before all the Trojans and their wives in their trailing robes. Nor is it my instinct, since I have striven ever to excel always in the vanguard of the battle, seeking to win great glory for my father and myself. And deep in my heart I know the day is coming when sacred Ilium will fall, Priam, and his people of the ashen spear. But the thought of the sad fate to come, not even Hecabe's or Priam's, nor my many noble brothers' who will bite the dust at the hands of their foes, not even that sorrow moves me as does the thought of your grief when some bronze-clad Greek drags you away weeping, robbing you of your freedom. Perhaps in Argos you'll toil at the loom at some other woman's whim, or bear water all unwillingly from some spring, Messeïs or Hypereia, bowed down by the yoke of necessity. Seeing your tears, they will say: 'There goes the wife of Hector, foremost of all the horse-taming Trojans, when the battle raged at Troy.' And you will sorrow afresh at those words, lacking a man like me to save you from bondage. May I be dead, and the earth piled above me, before I hear your cries as they drag you away.'

With this, glorious Hector held out his arms to take his son, but the child, alarmed at sight of his father, shrank back with a cry on his fair nurse's breast, fearing the helmet's bronze and the horsehair crest nodding darkly at him. His father and mother smiled, and glorious Hector doffed the shining helmet at once and laid it on the ground. Then he kissed his beloved son, dandled him in his arms, and prayed aloud: 'Zeus, and all you gods, grant that this boy like me may be foremost among the Trojans, as mighty in strength, and a powerful leader of Ilium. And some day may they say of him, as he returns from war, "He's a better

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man than his father”, and may he bear home the blood-stained armour of those he has slain, so his mother’s heart may rejoice.’

With this he placed the child in his dear wife’s arms, and she took him to her fragrant breast, smiling through her tears. Her husband was touched with pity at this, and stroked her with his hand, saying: ‘Andromache, dear wife, don’t grieve for me too deeply yet. None will send me to Hades before my time: though no man, noble or humble, once born can escape his fate. Go home, and attend to your tasks, the loom and spindle, and see the maids work hard. War is a man’s concern, the business of every man in Ilium, and mine above all.’

Book 6: 494–529 Hector and Paris go to fight

So saying, glorious Hector took up his helmet with its horse-hair crest, while his wife returned home, weeping profusely with many a backward glance. She soon came to man-killing Hector’s fine palace, gathered her crowd of women, and roused them to lamentation. Thus they mourned for Hector while he still lived, believing he could not escape an Achaean attack in strength, and return alive from the battlefield.

Paris meanwhile did not linger long in his high house, but donned his fine armour with bronze trappings, and fleet of foot sped surely through the city. Like a stable-fed stallion, who has had his fill, and breaks the halter and gallops over the fields in triumph, to bathe in the lovely river as is his wont, tossing his head while his mane streams over his shoulders, glorying in his power as his strong legs carry him to the pastures, the haunts of mares; so Paris, son of Priam, strode swiftly down from Pergamus, glittering in his armour like the shining sun, and filled with joy.

He soon overtook his brother, noble Hector, about to leave the place where he’d talked with his wife. Godlike Paris was first to speak: ‘Brother, I fear my long delay has kept you waiting: I failed to arrive as you requested.’

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Hector of the gleaming helm answered him: 'Perverse man, no one with reason would decry your martial efforts, since you have courage; but you malingering when it suits, and shun the fight. It grieves me when I hear reproaches against you on Trojan lips, you who caused them all this trouble. Go on, we will be reconciled later, if Zeus grants that we drive the bronze-greaved Greeks from the soil of Troy, and we make a free libation in the palace, to the heavenly gods who live forever.'

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Homer, *Iliad* 22.21–409

Book 22: 21–89 Priam and Hecabe fail to dissuade Hector

So saying, Achilles ran eagerly towards the city, his legs pounding away like a winning thoroughbred coursing over the plain in the chariot traces.

Old Priam was first to see him, racing over the plain, his bronze breastplate gleaming like Sirius, the star of harvest, brightest of stars in the dark of night. Orion's Dog, men call it, glittering brightly yet boding ill, bringing fever to wretched mortals. The old man groaned aloud, and raising his arms, beat his head with his hands, shouting entreaties to his dear son, who stood before the Gate, ready to turn his fury on Achilles.

Stretching out his arms, he called to him piteously: 'Hector, dear child, I beg you, don't face that man alone. Seek help, lest you meet your doom at the hands of Achilles, a stronger and tougher warrior than you. If the gods loved him as little as I do, the dogs and vultures would soon feed on his corpse, and my heart would be eased of a burden of sorrow, for he has robbed me of many fine sons, killing them or selling them in some far off isle. This very day I miss my two sons, Lycaon and Polydorus, whom Laothoe, princess among women, bore me. I failed to see them among the troops taking refuge in the city. If they are living, and held captive, we'll ransom them with gold and bronze, from my great store. Altes, of glorious name, gave his daughter many gifts. But if they are dead, in Hades' Halls, that is one more sorrow for their mother and I, who engendered them. Yet the people's mourning will be briefer, if Achilles fails to kill you too. So take refuge behind the walls, my child, and be the saviour of the Trojans: stay alive, deny this son of Peleus glory. Have pity on me too while I live, I, poor wretch, for whom it seems Father Zeus reserves a dreadful fate, here after much sorrowful experience, on the threshold of old age, to see my sons slaughtered, my daughters dishonoured, their children hurled aside in anger, my son's wives

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dragged away, my treasures fallen into savage Achaean hands. In the end, I shall be slain by a thrust from some sharp spear, and the flesh-eating dogs before my door will tear my corpse apart, the very dogs I fed from my table, reared to guard these same doors, dogs that will lie there in the gateway when in their savagery they've lapped my blood. It is fine for a young man, killed in battle, to lie there with his wounds on display: dead though he is, it's an honourable sight. But an old man's naked corpse, his grey hairs soiled by the dogs, is a pitiful matter for us wretched mortals.'

With this, the old man tore and plucked the grey hairs from his head, but failed to move Hector's heart. Even though his mother in turn began to weep and wail, pushing aside the folds of her robe and baring her breast, imploring him as she wept: 'Hector, my child, this is the breast that fed you: respect and pity me. Think of us, and oppose the foe from inside the wall, don't stand and face that harsh warrior, for if he kills you I'll not have your corpse to lay on a bier and grieve over, dear child of my body, nor will the wife you richly dowered; but far from us, by the Argive ships, the running dogs will devour you.'

Book 22: 90–130 Hector considers his situation

So they entreated their dear son with tears. But all their earnest pleas could not change Hector's mind, and he waited on great Achilles' advance. Like a snake in the hills, full of venom due to the toxic herbs it eats, that glares balefully and writhes inside its hole, waiting as some man approaches, so Hector held his ground, filled with latent power, his bright shield resting on a jutting outwork. But his proud thoughts were troubled: 'Alas, if I retreat through the gate, to the safety of the wall, Polydamas will not be slow to reproach me, since he advised me to withdraw our forces to the city, on that fatal night when Achilles re-appeared. I refused, though it may have been better! Now, in my folly, having brought us to the brink of ruin, I'd be ashamed to hear some insignificant Trojan, or his long-robed wife, say: 'Hector has brought ruin on the army, trusting too much in his own right arm.' If that's what they'll say, then I'd be better by far

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to meet Achilles face to face and kill him before returning to the city, or die gloriously beneath its walls. Of course, I could ditch the bossed shield and heavy helmet, lean my spear on the wall, and go and promise peerless Achilles to return Helen and her treasure to the Atreidae, all that Paris brought in the hollow ships to Troy, to begin this strife. I could say too that we'll then divide all the remaining treasure in the city, and then induce the Elders to state on oath that they'll conceal no part of that treasure, but grant half of all the lovely city holds. But what's the point of such thoughts? I'll not approach him like a suppliant only to have him show neither mercy nor respect, but kill me out of hand, stripped of my armour and defenceless as a woman. This is no lover's tryst of lad and lass, by oak or rock! Lad and lass, indeed! Better to meet in bloody combat, now, and see to whom Zeus grants the glory!

Book 22: 131–187 Achilles chases Hector round the walls

While he stood there thinking, Achilles, peer of Ares, approached, the plumes of his helmet nodding, brandishing the mighty spear of Pelian ash in his right hand, high above his shoulder, his bronze armour blazing like fire or the rising sun. Now Hector was gripped by fear and, trembling at the sight of him, afraid to stand his ground by the gate, set off running. Achilles, confident in his own speed, pursued him. Like a hawk, swiftest of birds, swooping on a timorous dove in the mountains, darting towards her with fierce cries as she flees, eager to seize her, so Achilles ran and Hector fled as fast as he could in terror, below the Trojan wall. Passing the lookout point, and the wind-swept wild fig tree, along the cart-track they ran leaving the wall behind, and came to two lovely springs where the waters rise to feed the eddying Scamander. One flows warm, and steam rises above it as smoke from a fire, while even in summer the other is ice-water, cold as freezing snow or hail. Nearby are the fine wide troughs of stone where the wives and daughters of the Trojans once washed their gleaming clothes in peace-time, before the advent of the Greeks. By the troughs they ran, one fleeing, one pursuing, a fine runner in front but a better one chasing him down

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behind, and this was no race for the prize of a bull's hide or a sacrificial ox, a prize such as they give for running, they ran instead for the life of horse-taming Hector.

As thoroughbreds sweep round the turning-post, and compete for the prize of a fine tripod or a woman, to honour some dead warrior, so these two warriors ran swiftly three times round the city of Troy, while the gods looked on. And the Father of gods and men took it on himself to speak: 'Well, now, here's a sight! A man who is dear to me, chased round the walls, Hector whom my heart sorrows for, who has burned the thighs of countless oxen on many-ridged Ida's heights for me, or on the summit of the citadel. Now noble Achilles, that great runner, hunts him round Priam's city. Take counsel, immortals, decide! Shall we save him from death, or good man though he is, shall he die at the hands of Achilles, Peleus' son?'

It was bright-eyed Athena who replied: 'Father, Lord of the Lightning and the Storm, what is this? Would you save a mortal from sad death, to which he was doomed long ago? Do so, but don't expect the rest of us to agree.'

Zeus, the Cloud-Gatherer, answered: 'Easy, Tritogeneia, my dear child, I was not in earnest, and I shall indulge you. Do as you will, and delay no longer.' With this encouragement, the eager Athena darted down from the summit of Olympus.

Book 22: 188–246 Athena incites Hector to fight

Meanwhile Achilles chased Hector relentlessly, and he could no more escape than a fawn, that a hound starts from a mountain covert. Chased through glade and valley it may cower for a while in some thicket, but the dog tracks it down, running strongly till he gains his quarry. So Achilles chased Hector. Every time Hector made a break for the Dardanian Gate hoping to gain the shelter of the solid walls, where the defenders might protect him with their missiles, Achilles would head him off towards the plain, himself keeping the inner track by the walls. Yet, as in a dream where our pursuer cannot catch us nor we escape, Achilles could not overtake Hector, nor could Hector shake him off. Still, could

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Hector have eluded fate so long, had not Apollo, for the last and final time, come to strengthen him and speed him, and had not Achilles signalled to his men not to loose their deadly missiles at the man, lest he himself might be cheated of the glory? Yet when they reached The Springs for the fourth time, the Father raised his golden scales, and set the deaths of Achilles and horse-taming Hector in the balance, and lifted it on high. Down sank Hector's lot towards Hades, and Phoebus Apollo left his side, while bright-eyed Athena came to Achilles and standing close, spoke winged words: 'Glorious Achilles, beloved of Zeus, now you and I will kill Hector, and bring the Greeks great glory. Warlike he may be, but he'll not escape us, even if Apollo, the Far-Striker, grovels before aegis-bearing Father Zeus. Stop now and catch your breath. I will go and incite him to fight you face to face.'

He, delighted, at once obeyed her words, halted and stood there leaning on his bronze-tipped ash spear, while she appeared to noble Hector in the form of Deiphobus, that tireless speaker: 'Dear brother, swift Achilles pressed you hard there, chasing you round the city at a pace, but here let us make a stand together, and defend ourselves.'

Great Hector of the gleaming helm, replied: 'Deiphobus, of all my brothers born to Hecabe and Priam, you are by far the dearest, and now I'll honour you in my mind even more, since you, while the others stay within and watch, have come to find me outside the wall.'

'Dear brother,' said bright-eyed Athena, in disguise, 'our parents and friends in turn begged me not to come here, so terrified are they of Achilles, but I was tormented by anxiety. Let's attack him head on, not spare our spears, and find out if he'll kill us and carry our blood-stained armour to the hollow ships, or be conquered by our blades.'

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Book 22: 247–366 The death of Hector

Athena deceived Hector with her words and her disguise, and led him on till he and Achilles met. Hector of the gleaming helm spoke first: 'I will not run from you, as before, son of Peleus. My heart failed me as I waited for your attack, and three times round Priam's city we ran, but now my heart tells me to stand and face you, to kill or be killed. Come let us swear an oath before the gods, for they are the best witnesses of such things. If Zeus lets me kill you and survive, then when I've stripped you of your glorious armour I'll not mistreat your corpse, I'll return your body to your people, if you will do the same for me.'

Swift-footed Achilles glared at him in reply: 'Curse you, Hector, and don't talk of oaths to me. Lions and men make no compacts, nor are wolves and lambs in sympathy: they are opposed, to the end. You and I are beyond friendship: nor will there be peace between us till one or the other dies and sates Ares, lord of the ox-hide shield, with his blood. Summon up your reserves of courage, be a spearman now and a warrior brave. There is no escape from me, and soon Athena will bring you down with my spear. Now pay the price for all my grief, for all my friends you've slaughtered with your blade.'

So saying he raised his long-shadowed spear and hurled it. But glorious Hector kept an eye on it and, crouching, dodged so the shaft flew above him, and the point buried itself in the ground behind. Yet Pallas Athena snatched it up and returned it to Achilles, too swiftly for Prince Hector to see. And Hector spoke to Peleus' peerless son: 'It seems you missed, godlike Achilles, despite your certainty that Zeus has doomed me. It was mere glibness of speech, mere verbal cunning, trying to unnerve me with fright, to make me lose strength and courage. You'll get no chance to pierce my back as I flee, so, if the gods allow you, drive it through my chest as I attack, dodge my bronze spear if you can. I pray it lodges deep in your flesh! If you were dead, our greatest bane, war would be easy for us Trojans.'

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So saying, he raised and hurled his long-shadowed spear, striking Achilles' shield square on, though the spear simply rebounded. Hector was angered by his vain attempt with the swift shaft, and stood there in dismay, lacking a second missile. He called aloud to Deiphobus of the White Shield, calling for his long spear, but he was nowhere to be found, and Hector realised the deceit: 'Ah, so the gods have lured me to my death. I thought Deiphobus was by my side, but he is still in the city, Athena fooled me. An evil fate's upon me, Death is no longer far away, and him there is no escaping. Zeus, and his son, the Far-Striker, decided all this long ago, they who were once eager to defend me, and destiny now overtakes me. But let me not die without a fight, without true glory, without some deed that men unborn may hear.'

With this, he drew the sharp blade at his side, a powerful long-sword, and gathering his limbs together swooped like a high-soaring eagle that falls to earth from the dark clouds to seize a sick lamb or a cowering hare. So Hector swooped, brandishing his keen blade. Achilles ran to meet him heart filled with savage power, covering his chest with his great, skilfully worked shield, while above his gleaming helm with its four ridges waved the golden plumes Hephaestus placed thickly at its crest. Bright as the Evening Star that floats among the midnight constellations, set there the loveliest jewel in the sky, gleamed the tip of Achilles sharp spear brandished in his right hand, as he sought to work evil on noble Hector, searching for the likeliest place to land a blow on his fair flesh.

Now, the fine bronze armour he stripped from mighty Patroclus when he killed him covered all Hector's flesh except for one opening at the throat, where the collarbones knit neck and shoulders, and violent death may come most swiftly. There, as Hector charged at him, noble Achilles aimed his ash spear, and drove its heavy bronze blade clean through the tender neck, though without cutting the windpipe or robbing Hector of the power of speech. Hector fell in the dust and Achilles shouted out in triumph: 'While you were despoiling Patroclus, no

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doubt, in your folly, you thought yourself quite safe, Hector, and forgot all about me in my absence. Far from him, by the hollow ships, was a mightier man, who should have been his helper but stayed behind, and that was I, who now have brought you low. The dogs and carrion birds will tear apart your flesh, but him the Achaeans will bury.'

Then Hector of the gleaming helm replied, in a feeble voice: 'At your feet I beg, by your parents, by your own life, don't let the dogs devour my flesh by the hollow ships. Accept the ransom my royal father and mother will offer, stores of gold and bronze, and let them carry my body home, so the Trojans and their wives may grant me in death my portion of fire.'

But fleet-footed Achilles glared at him in answer: 'Don't speak of my parents, dog. I wish the fury and the pain in me could drive me to carve and eat you raw for what you did, as surely as this is true: no living man will keep the dogs from gnawing at your skull, not if men weighed out twenty, thirty times your worth in ransom, and promised even more, not though Dardanian Priam bid them give your weight in gold, not even then will your royal mother lay you on a bier to grieve for you, the son she bore, rather shall dogs, and carrion birds, devour you utterly.'

Then Hector of the gleaming helm spoke at the point of death: 'I know you truly now, and see your fate, nor was it mine to sway you. The heart in your breast is iron indeed. But think, lest the gods, remembering me, turn their wrath on you, that day by the Scaean Gate when, brave as you are, Paris kills you, with Apollo's help.'

Death enfolded him, as he uttered these words, and, wailing its lot, his spirit fled from the body down to Hades, leaving youth and manhood behind. A corpse it was that noble Achilles addressed: 'Lie there then in death, and I will face my own, whenever Zeus and the other deathless gods decide.'

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Book 22: 367–409 Achilles drags Hector's corpse in the dust

With this, Achilles drew his bronze-tipped spear from the corpse and laid it down, and as he began to strip the blood-stained armour from Hector's shoulders he was joined by others of the Greeks, who ran to gaze at Hector's size and wondrous form. Yet all who approached struck the body a blow, and turning to a comrade, one said: 'See, Hector's easier to deal with now than when he set the ships ablaze.' With that, he wounded the corpse.

When noble Achilles, the great runner, had stripped away the armour, he rose and made a speech to the Achaeans: 'Friends, leaders, princes of the Argives, now the gods have let us kill this man, who harmed us more than all the rest together, let us make an armed reconnaissance of the city, while we see what the Trojans have in mind, whether they'll abandon the city now their champion has fallen, or whether they'll fight on, though Hector is no more. But why think of that? There is another corpse, unwept, unburied lying by the ships, that of Patroclus, my dear friend, whom I shall not forget as long as I walk the earth among the living. And though in the House of Hades men may forget their dead, even there I shall remember him. So, you sons of Achaea, raise the song of triumph, and drag this corpse back to the ships. We have won great glory, and killed the noble Hector, whom the Trojans prayed to like a god, in Troy.'

So saying, he found a way to defile the fallen prince. He pierced the tendons of both feet behind from heel to ankle, and through them threaded ox-hide thongs, tying them to his chariot, leaving the corpse's head to trail along the ground. Then lifting the glorious armour aboard, he mounted and touched the horses with his whip, and they eagerly leapt forward. Dragged behind, Hector's corpse raised a cloud of dust, while his outspread hair flowed, black, on either side. That head, once so fine, trailed in the dirt, now Zeus allowed his enemies to mutilate his corpse on his own native soil.

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Seeing her son's hair fouled with dust, Hecabe, his mother gave a great cry, plucked the gleaming veil from her head, and tore her hair. His father Priam groaned in anguish, and a wave of grief spread round them through the city, no less than if all of lofty Ilium were on fire.

Homer, *Iliad* 24.468–620

Book 24: 468–551 Priam moves Achilles' heart

With that, Hermes left for high Olympus, while Priam climbed down from his chariot, leaving Idaeus to handle the horses and mules. The old king went straight to the hut frequented by Zeus-beloved Achilles. He found him there, with only the warrior Automedon and warlike Alcimus of all his friends. They were busy attending to his meal. The table stood at his side but he had finished eating and drinking. Great Priam slipped in unobserved, and reaching Achilles, clasped his knees, and kissed his hands, the fearful, man-killing hands that had slaughtered so many of his sons. Achilles was astonished at the sight of godlike Priam, as were his friends. They stared at each other, astounded, as men do in the hall of a wealthy nobleman, when a stranger, who has murdered a man in a moment of frenzy in his own country, seeking refuge abroad, bursts in on them.

But Priam was already entreating Achilles: 'Godlike Achilles, think of your own father, who is of my generation, and so is likewise on the sad threshold of old age. Perhaps his neighbours are troubling him, and there is no one to protect him from harm, or ward off ruin. But he at least can rejoice in the knowledge that you live, and each day brings the hope of seeing you return from Troy. While I, I am a victim of sad fate. Of the best of my sons, the best in all of Troy, not one is left. Fifty sons I had, when you Achaeans landed, nineteen by the one wife, and the rest by other ladies of my court. Most of them have fallen in furious battle, and the defender of the city and its people, my prime recourse, Hector, you have killed, as he fought for his country. I come now to the ships to

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beg his corpse from you, bringing a princely ransom. Respect the gods, Achilles, and show mercy towards me, remembering your own father, for I am more to be pitied than he, since I have brought myself to do what no other man on earth would do, I have lifted to my lips the hand of the man who killed my sons.'

His words had moved Achilles to tears at the thought of his own father, and taking the old man's hands he set him gently from him, while both were lost in memory. Priam remembered man-killing Hector, and wept aloud, at Achilles' feet, while Achilles wept for his father Peleus and for Patroclus once more, and the sound of their lament filled the hut.

But when Achilles was sated with weeping, and the force of grief was spent, he rose instantly from his chair, and raising the old king by his arm, he took pity on his grey beard and hair, and spoke eloquently to him: 'You are indeed unfortunate, and your heart has endured much sorrow. Surely, though, there is iron in your spirit, daring to come alone to our ships, and face the man who slew so many of your noble sons? Come, sit here, and we will shut away our sorrows, despite our grief, since there is but cold comfort in lament. The gods have spun the thread of fate for wretched mortals: we live in sorrow, while they are free from care. Two urns stand in Zeus' palace containing the experiences he grants mortals, one holds blessings, the other ills. Those who receive a mixture of the two meet with good and ill, but those whom the Thunderer only serves from the jar of ills becomes an outcast, driven over the face of the earth by despair, a wanderer honoured neither by gods nor men. See how the gods showered glorious gifts on my father Peleus, from the moment of his birth, wealth and possessions beyond other men, kingship of the Myrmidons, and though but a mortal man, a goddess for a wife. Yet some god brought evil even to him, no crowd of princes, but an only son doomed to an untimely end. He receives no care from me, since I sit here in the land of Troy, far from my own country, bringing harm to you and your children. And you, my aged lord, they say you once were happy, renowned for your wealth and your sons, in all the lands, from

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the isle of Lesbos, where Macar reigned, through upper Phrygia to the boundless Hellespont. But from the moment that the heavenly gods brought this wretched war upon you, all has turned to battle and slaughter. Endure, let your heart not grieve forever, Sorrowing for your son will achieve nothing, you'll not bring him back to life, though life will bring you other sorrows.'

Book 24: 552–620 Achilles releases Hector's corpse to Priam

'Do not ask me to sit down, beloved of Zeus,' replied the aged king, 'while Hector's corpse lies neglected by the huts, but give him back to me swiftly so my eyes can gaze on him, and accept the ransom, the princely ransom, I bring. May you have joy of it, and return to your native land, since you have shown me mercy from the first.'

Fleet-footed Achilles, frowning answered him; 'I need no urging, old man. I have decided to return Hector's body to you. My own mother, the daughter of the Old Man of the Sea, brought me a message from Zeus. And I know in my heart, such things don't escape me, that some god led you to our swift ships. No mortal man, not even a strong young warrior, would dare to venture into this camp, nor having done so elude the guards, nor shift the bar across the gate. So don't try to move my heart further, lest I defy Zeus' command and choose, suppliant though you are, not to spare even you.'

The old king, gripped by fear, was silent. Then the son of Peleus ran from the hut, followed by his two companions, Automedon and Alcimus, the dearest of his friends after dead Patroclus. They un-harnessed the mules and horses, brought in the old king's herald, his crier, and offered him a chair. Then from the well-made cart they lifted down the princely ransom for Hector's body. They left there two white cloaks and a fine tunic, so that the corpse could be wrapped in them, before he gave it back to Priam to take home. Achilles then summoned two servant-girls and ordered them to wash and anoint the body, first carrying it to a place where Priam could not see his son, lest his grief at the sight provoke

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his anger and Achilles be angered in reply, and kill him in defiance of Zeus' command. When the servant-girls had done washing the body and anointing it with oil, and had dressed it in the fine tunic and wrapped it in a cloak, Achilles himself placed it on a bier, and he and his comrades lifted it into the wooden cart. Then he sighed and called his dead friend by name: 'Patroclus, do not be angered, if even in the House of Hades you learn that I have returned noble Hector to his dear father, who has given a princely ransom. Even of that you shall have your rightful share.'

With this, noble Achilles returned to the hut and sat down again on his richly inlaid chair opposite Priam, saying: 'Venerable lord, your son's body has been placed on a bier and I shall release it to you as you wished. At dawn you may look on him, and carry him back, but now let us eat. Even long-haired Niobe eventually thought to eat, though her twelve children had been slain, six daughters, six sons in their prime. Apollo angry that Niobe had boasted of bearing so many children compared with Leto who had borne but two, killed the sons with arrows from his silver bow, while his sister Artemis killed the daughters. The pair slew them all, and left them lying in their blood, for nine days, since Zeus had turned the people to stone and there was no one to bury the corpses. On the tenth day the heavenly gods gave them burial, and only then did Niobe, exhausted by her grief, take sustenance. Now, turned to stone herself, she stands among the crags on the desolate slopes of Sipylus, where men say the Nymphs that dance on the banks of Achelous take their rest, and broods on the sorrows the gods sent her. Come let us too take sustenance, venerable lord: in Ilium you can lament your son once more, and grieve for him with a flood of tears.'

Notes

Virtue, which opens the heavens for those undeserving of death, takes a road denied to others, and scorns the vulgar crowd and the damp earth, on ascending wings.

And there's a sure reward for loyal silence: 25
I'll forbid the man who divulges the secret rites of Ceres, to be under the same roof as me, or to untie with me

the fragile boat: neglected Jupiter often 30
includes the innocent with the guilty,
but slow-footed Punishment rarely gives up on the wicked man, despite his head start.

Notes

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Tyrtaeus' 'fallen warrior' poem (CURFRAG.tlg-0266.6)

To die is noble when a good man falls among fighters at the front while he defends his fatherland. To leave behind his city and its fertile fields and go begging is the most wretched thing of all, wandering with his dear mother, his elderly father, his tiny children and wedded wife; for he will be hated by the people around him wherever he goes, overcome by need and grim poverty. He brings shame on his lineage and disgraces his splendid looks, he is dogged by every kind of dishonour and misery. If this is how a wandering man gets no consideration or respect, nor his descendants after him, let us fight for this land with spirit and die for our children, no longer being sparing with our lives.

You, young men, stand beside one another when you fight and do not start a shameful flight or panic, but make the spirit in your hearts mighty and steadfast, and do not cling to life when you fight with men. Do not run away abandoning your elders, aged men, whose limbs are no longer nimble. For it is of course shameful for an older man fallen among fighters at the front to lie ahead of the young men, his head already white and beard grey, gasping his stalwart spirit out into the dust, clutching his bloody genitals in his own hands – a shameful thing in one's eyes, a sight to cause outrage – his naked skin exposed. But for the young, it is all befitting, so long as one has the glorious bloom of lovely youth, impressive for men to see and desirable to women while he is alive, and beautiful when he falls among fighters at the front. But let each man make a stand, legs well apart, both feet firmly planted on the ground, biting his lip with his teeth.

Notes

The following passages from Virgil's *Aeneid* have been translated by A. S. Kline, and taken from the Poetry in Translation website:

<http://www.poetryintranslation.com/Admin/Copyright.htm>

Virgil, *Aeneid* Book 2.268–804

Book 2: 268–297 The Greeks Take the City

It was the hour when first sleep begins for weary mortals,
and steals over them as the sweetest gift of the gods.

See, in dream, before my eyes, Hector seemed to stand there,
saddest of all and pouring out great tears,
torn by the chariot, as once he was, black with bloody dust,
and his swollen feet pierced by the thongs.

Ah, how he looked! How changed he was
from that Hector who returned wearing Achilles' armour,
or who set Trojan flames to the Greek ships! His beard was ragged,
his hair matted with blood, bearing those many wounds he received
dragged around the walls of his city.

And I seemed to weep myself, calling out to him,
and speaking to him in words of sorrow:

"Oh light of the Troad, surest hope of the Trojans,
what has so delayed you? What shore do you come from
Hector, the long-awaited? Weary from the many troubles
of our people and our city I see you, oh, after the death
of so many of your kin! What shameful events have marred
that clear face? And why do I see these wounds?"

He does not reply, nor does he wait on my idle questions,
but dragging heavy sighs from the depths of his heart, he says:

Notes

“Ah! Son of the goddess, fly, tear yourself from the flames.
 The enemy has taken the walls: Troy falls from her high place.
 Enough has been given to Priam and your country: if Pergama
 could be saved by any hand, it would have been saved by this.
 Troy entrusts her sacred relics and household gods to you:
 take them as friends of your fate, seek mighty walls for them,
 those you will find at last when you have wandered the seas.”
 So he speaks, and brings the sacred headbands in his hands
 from the innermost shrine, potent Vesta, and the undying flame.

Book 2: 298–354 Aeneas Gathers his Comrades

Meanwhile the city is confused with grief, on every side,
 and though my father Anchises' house is remote, secluded
 and hidden by trees, the sounds grow clearer and clearer,
 and the terror of war sweeps upon it.
 I shake off sleep, and climb to the highest roof-top,
 and stand there with ears strained:
 as when fire attacks a wheat-field when the south-wind rages,
 or the rushing torrent from a mountain stream covers the fields,
 drowns the ripe crops, the labour of oxen,
 and brings down the trees headlong, and the dazed shepherd,
 unaware, hears the echo from a high rocky peak.
 Now the truth is obvious, and the Greek plot revealed.
 Now the vast hall of Deiphobus is given to ruin
 the fire over it: now Ucalegon's nearby blazes:
 the wide Sigeon straits throw back the glare.
 Then the clamour of men and the blare of trumpets rises.
 Frantically I seize weapons: not because there is much use
 for weapons, but my spirit burns to gather men for battle
 and race to the citadel with my friends: madness and anger

Notes

hurl my mind headlong, and I think it beautiful to die fighting.
 Now, see, Panthus escaping the Greek spears,
 Panthus, son of Othrys, Apollo's priest on the citadel,
 dragging along with his own hands the sacred relics,
 the conquered gods, his little grandchild, running frantically
 to my door: "Where's the best advantage, Panthus, what position
 should we take?" I'd barely spoken, when he answered
 with a groan: "The last day comes, Troy's inescapable hour.
 Troy is past, Ilium is past, and the great glory of the Trojans:
 Jupiter carries all to Argos: the Greeks are lords of the burning city.
 The horse, standing high on the ramparts, pours out warriors,
 and Sinon the conqueror exultantly stirs the flames.
 Others are at the wide-open gates, as many thousands
 as ever came from great Mycenae: more have blocked
 the narrow streets with hostile weapons:
 a line of standing steel with naked flickering blades
 is ready for the slaughter: barely the first few guards
 at the gates attempt to fight, and they resist in blind conflict."
 By these words from Othrys' son, and divine will, I'm thrust
 amongst the weapons and the flames, where the dismal Fury
 sounds, and the roar, and the clamour rising to the sky.
 Friends joined me, visible in the moonlight, Ripheus,
 and Epytus, mighty in battle, Hypanis and Dymas,
 gathered to my side, and young Coroebus, Mygdon's son:
 by chance he'd arrived in Troy at that time,
 burning with mad love for Cassandra, and brought help,
 as a potential son-in-law, to Priam, and the Trojans,
 unlucky man, who didn't listen to the prophecy
 of his frenzied bride! When I saw them crowded there
 eager for battle, I began as follows: "Warriors, bravest

Notes

of frustrated spirits, if your ardent desire is fixed
 on following me to the end, you can see our cause's fate.
 All the gods by whom this empire was supported
 have departed, leaving behind their temples and their altars:
 you aid a burning city: let us die and rush into battle.
 The beaten have one refuge, to have no hope of refuge."

Book 2: 355–401 Aeneas and his Friends Resist

So their young spirits were roused to fury. Then, like ravaging
 wolves in a dark mist, driven blindly by the cruel rage
 of their bellies, leaving their young waiting with thirsty jaws,
 we pass through our enemies, to certain death, and make our way
 to the heart of the city: dark night envelops us in deep shadow.
 Who could tell of that destruction in words, or equal our pain
 with tears? The ancient city falls, she who ruled for so many years:
 crowds of dead bodies lie here and there in the streets,
 among the houses, and on the sacred thresholds of the gods.
 Nor is it Trojans alone who pay the penalty with their blood:
 courage returns at times to the hearts of the defeated
 and the Greek conquerors die. Cruel mourning is everywhere,
 everywhere there is panic, and many a form of death.
 First, Androgeos, meets us, with a great crowd of Greeks
 around him, unknowingly thinking us allied troops,
 and calls to us in friendly speech as well:
 "Hurry, men! What sluggishness makes you delay so?
 The others are raping and plundering burning Troy:
 are you only now arriving from the tall ships?"
 He spoke, and straight away (since no reply given was
 credible enough) he knew he'd fallen into the enemy fold.
 He was stunned, drew back, and stifled his voice.

Notes

Like a man who unexpectedly treads on a snake in rough briars,
 as he strides over the ground, and shrinks back in sudden fear
 as it rears in anger and swells its dark-green neck,
 so Androgeos, shuddering at the sight of us, drew back.
 We charge forward and surround them closely with weapons,
 and ignorant of the place, seized by terror, as they are, we slaughter
 them wholesale. Fortune favours our first efforts.
 And at this Coroebus, exultant with courage and success, cries:
 "Oh my friends, where fortune first points out the path to safety,
 and shows herself a friend, let us follow. Let's change our shields
 adopt Greek emblems. Courage or deceit: who'll question it in war?
 They'll arm us themselves." With these words, he takes up Androgeos'
 plumed helmet, his shield with its noble markings,
 and straps the Greek's sword to his side. Ripheus does likewise,
 Dymas too, and all the warriors delight in it. Each man
 arms himself with the fresh spoils. We pass on
 mingling with the Greeks, with gods that are not our known,
 and clash, in many an armed encounter, in the blind night,
 and we send many a Greek down to Orcus.
 Some scatter to the ships, and run for safer shores,
 some, in humiliated terror, climb the vast horse again
 and hide in the womb they know.

Book 2: 402–437 Cassandra is Taken

"Ah, put no faith in anything the will of the gods opposes!
 See, Priam's virgin daughter dragged, with streaming hair,
 from the sanctuary and temple of Minerva,
 lifting her burning eyes to heaven in vain:
 her eyes, since cords restrained her gentle hands.
 Coroebus could not stand the sight, maddened in mind,

Notes

and hurled himself among the ranks, seeking death.
 We follow him, and, weapons locked, charge together.
 Here, at first, we were overwhelmed by Trojan spears,
 hurled from the high summit of the temple,
 and wretched slaughter was caused by the look of our armour,
 and the confusion arising from our Greek crests.
 Then the Danaans, gathering from all sides, groaning with anger
 at the girl being pulled away from them, rush us,
 Ajax the fiercest, the two Atrides, all the Greek host:
 just as, at the onset of a tempest, conflicting winds clash, the west,
 the south, and the east that joys in the horses of dawn:
 the forest roars, brine-wet Nereus rages with his trident,
 and stirs the waters from their lowest depths.
 Even those we have scattered by a ruse, in the dark of night,
 and driven right through the city, re-appear: for the first time
 they recognise our shields and deceitful weapons,
 and realise our speech differs in sound to theirs.
 In a moment we're overwhelmed by weight of numbers:
 first Coroebus falls, by the armed goddess' altar, at the hands
 of Peneleus: and Ripheus, who was the most just of all the Trojans,
 and keenest for what was right (the gods' vision was otherwise):
 Hypanis and Dymas die at the hands of allies:
 and your great piety, Panthus, and Apollo's sacred headband
 can not defend you in your downfall.
 Ashes of Ilium, death flames of my people, be witness
 that, at your ruin, I did not evade the Danaan weapons,
 nor the risks, and, if it had been my fate to die,
 I earned it with my sword. Then we are separated,
 Iphitus and Pelias with me, Iphitus weighed down by the years,
 and Pelias, slow-footed, wounded by Ulysses:
 immediately we're summoned to Priam's palace by the clamour.

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Book 2: 438–485 The Battle for the Palace

Here's a great battle indeed, as if the rest of the war were nothing, as if others were not dying throughout the whole city, so we see wild War and the Greeks rushing to the palace, and the entrance filled with a press of shields.

Ladders cling to the walls: men climb the stairs under the very doorposts, with their left hands holding defensive shields against the spears, grasping the sloping stone with their right.

In turn, the Trojans pull down the turrets and roof-tiles of the halls, prepared to defend themselves even in death, seeing the end near them, with these as weapons:

and send the gilded roof-beams down, the glory of their ancient fathers. Others with naked swords block the inner doors: these they defend in massed ranks.

Our spirits were re-inspired, to bring help to the king's palace, to relieve our warriors with our aid, and add power to the beaten.

There was an entrance with hidden doors, and a passage in use between Priam's halls, and a secluded gateway beyond, which the unfortunate Andromache, while the kingdom stood, often used to traverse, going, unattended, to her husband's parents, taking the little Astyanax to his grandfather.

I reached the topmost heights of the pediment from which the wretched Trojans were hurling their missiles in vain.

A turret standing on the sloping edge, and rising from the roof to the sky, was one from which all Troy could be seen, the Danaan ships, and the Greek camp: and attacking its edges with our swords, where the upper levels offered weaker mortar, we wrenched it from its high place, and sent it flying: falling suddenly it dragged all to ruin with a roar, and shattered far and wide over the Greek ranks.

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But more arrived, and meanwhile neither the stones nor any of the various missiles ceased to fly. In front of the courtyard itself, in the very doorway of the palace, Pyrrhus exults, glittering with the sheen of bronze: like a snake, fed on poisonous herbs, in the light, that cold winter has held, swollen, under the ground, and now, gleaming with youth, its skin sloughed, ripples its slimy back, lifts its front high towards the sun, and darts its triple-forked tongue from its jaws. Huge Periphas, and Automedon the armour-bearer, driver of Achilles' team, and all the Scyrian youths, advance on the palace together and hurl firebrands onto the roof. Pyrrhus himself among the front ranks, clutching a double-axe, breaks through the stubborn gate, and pulls the bronze doors from their hinges: and now, hewing out the timber, he breaches the solid oak and opens a huge window with a gaping mouth. The palace within appears, and the long halls are revealed: the inner sanctums of Priam, and the ancient kings, appear, and armed men are seen standing on the very threshold.

Book 2: 486–558 Priam's Fate

But, inside the palace, groans mingle with sad confusion, and, deep within, the hollow halls howl with women's cries: the clamour strikes the golden stars. Trembling mothers wander the vast building, clasping the doorposts, and placing kisses on them. Pyrrhus drives forward, with his father Achilles' strength, no barricades nor the guards themselves can stop him: the door collapses under the ram's blows, and the posts collapse, wrenched from their sockets. Strength makes a road: the Greeks, pour through, force a passage,

Notes

slaughter the front ranks, and fill the wide space with their men.
 A foaming river is not so furious, when it floods,
 bursting its banks, overwhelms the barriers against it,
 and rages in a mass through the fields, sweeping cattle and stables
 across the whole plain. I saw Pyrrhus myself, on the threshold,
 mad with slaughter, and the two sons of Atreus:
 I saw Hecuba, her hundred women, and Priam at the altars,
 polluting with blood the flames that he himself had sanctified.
 Those fifty chambers, the promise of so many offspring,
 the doorposts, rich with spoils of barbarian gold,
 crash down: the Greeks possess what the fire spares.
 And maybe you ask, what was Priam's fate.
 When he saw the end of the captive city, the palace doors
 wrenched away, and the enemy among the inner rooms,
 the aged man clasped his long-neglected armour
 on his old, trembling shoulders, and fastened on his useless sword,
 and hurried into the thick of the enemy seeking death.
 In the centre of the halls, and under the sky's naked arch,
 was a large altar, with an ancient laurel nearby, that leant
 on the altar, and clothed the household gods with shade.
 Here Hecuba, and her daughters, like doves driven
 by a dark storm, crouched uselessly by the shrines,
 huddled together, clutching at the statues of the gods.
 And when she saw Priam himself dressed in youthful armour
 she cried: "What mad thought, poor husband, urges you
 to fasten on these weapons? Where do you run?
 The hour demands no such help, nor defences such as these,
 not if my own Hector were here himself. Here, I beg you,
 this altar will protect us all or we'll die together."
 So she spoke and drew the old man towards her,

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and set him down on the sacred steps.

See, Polites, one of Priam's sons, escaping Pyrrhus' slaughter, runs down the long hallways, through enemies and spears, and, wounded, crosses the empty courts.

Pyrrhus chases after him, eager to strike him, and grasps at him now, and now, with his hand, at spear-point.

When finally he reached the eyes and gaze of his parents, he fell, and poured out his life in a river of blood.

Priam, though even now in death's clutches, did not spare his voice at this, or hold back his anger:

"If there is any justice in heaven, that cares about such things, may the gods repay you with fit thanks, and due reward for your wickedness, for such acts, you who have made me see my own son's death in front of my face, and defiled a father's sight with murder.

Yet Achilles, whose son you falsely claim to be, was no such enemy to Priam: he respected the suppliant's rights, and honour, and returned Hector's bloodless corpse to its sepulchre, and sent me home to my kingdom."

So the old man spoke, and threw his ineffectual spear without strength, which immediately spun from the clanging bronze and hung uselessly from the centre of the shield's boss.

Pyrrhus spoke to him: "Then you can be messenger, carry the news to my father, to Peleus' son: remember to tell him of degenerate Pyrrhus, and of my sad actions:

now die." Saying this he dragged him, trembling, and slithering in the pool of his son's blood, to the very altar, and twined his left hand in his hair, raised the glittering sword in his right, and buried it to the hilt in his side.

This was the end of Priam's life: this was the death that fell to him

Notes

by lot, seeing Troy ablaze and its citadel toppled, he who was once the magnificent ruler of so many Asian lands and peoples. A once mighty body lies on the shore, the head shorn from its shoulders, a corpse without a name.

Book 2: 559–587 Aeneas Sees Helen

Then for the first time a wild terror gripped me.
 I stood amazed: my dear father's image rose before me
 as I saw a king, of like age, with a cruel wound,
 breathing his life away: and my Creusa, forlorn,
 and the ransacked house, and the fate of little Iulus.
 I looked back, and considered the troops that were round me.
 They had all left me, wearied, and hurled their bodies to earth,
 or sick with misery dropped into the flames.
 So I was alone now, when I saw the daughter of Tyndareus,
 Helen, close to Vesta's portal, hiding silently
 in the secret shrine: the bright flames gave me light,
 as I wandered, gazing everywhere, randomly.
 Afraid of Trojans angered at the fall of Troy,
 Greek vengeance, and the fury of a husband she deserted,
 she, the mutual curse of Troy and her own country,
 had concealed herself and crouched, a hated thing, by the altars.
 Fire blazed in my spirit: anger rose to avenge my fallen land,
 and to exact the punishment for her wickedness.
 "Shall she, unharmed, see Sparta again and her native Mycenae,
 and see her house and husband, parents and children,
 and go in the triumphant role of a queen,
 attended by a crowd of Trojan women and Phrygian servants?
 When Priam has been put to the sword? Troy consumed with fire?
 The Dardanian shore soaked again and again with blood?"

Notes

No. Though there's no great glory in a woman's punishment, and such a conquest wins no praise, still I will be praised for extinguishing wickedness and exacting well-earned punishment, and I'll delight in having filled my soul with the flame of revenge, and appeased my people's ashes."

Book 2: 588–623 Aeneas is Visited by his Mother Venus

I blurted out these words, and was rushing on with raging mind, when my dear mother came to my vision, never before so bright to my eyes, shining with pure light in the night, goddess for sure, such as she may be seen by the gods, and taking me by the right hand, stopped me, and, then, imparted these words to me from her rose-tinted lips:
 "My son, what pain stirs such uncontrollable anger? Why this rage? Where has your care for what is ours vanished? First will you not see whether Creusa, your wife, and your child Ascanius still live, and where you have left your father Anchises worn-out with age? The Greek ranks surround them on all sides, and if my love did not protect them, the flames would have caught them before now, and the enemy swords drunk of their blood. You do not hate the face of the Spartan daughter of Tyndareus, nor is Paris to blame: the ruthlessness of the gods, of the gods, brought down this power, and toppled Troy from its heights. See (for I'll tear away all the mist that now, shrouding your sight, dims your mortal vision, and darkens everything with moisture: don't be afraid of what your mother commands, or refuse to obey her wisdom): here, where you see shattered heaps of stone torn from stone, and smoke billowing mixed with dust, Neptune is shaking the walls, and the foundations, stirred by his mighty trident, and tearing the whole city up by its roots.

Notes

There, Juno, the fiercest, is first to take the Scaean Gate, and, sword at her side, calls on her troops from the ships, in rage. Now, see, Tritonian Pallas, standing on the highest towers, sending lightning from the storm-cloud, and her grim Gorgon breastplate. Father Jupiter himself supplies the Greeks with courage, and fortunate strength, himself excites the gods against the Trojan army. Hurry your departure, son, and put an end to your efforts. I will not leave you, and I will place you safe at your father's door." She spoke, and hid herself in the dense shadows of night. Dreadful shapes appeared, and the vast powers of gods opposed to Troy.

Book 2: 624–670 Aeneas Finds his Family

Then in truth all Ilium seemed to me to sink in flames,
and Neptune's Troy was toppled from her base:
just as when foresters on the mountain heights
compete to uproot an ancient ash tree, struck
time and again by axe and blade, it threatens continually
to fall, with trembling foliage and shivering crown,
till gradually vanquished by the blows it groans at last,
and torn from the ridge, crashes down in ruin.
I descend, and, led by a goddess, am freed from flames
and enemies: the spears give way, and the flames recede.
And now, when I reached the threshold of my father's house,
and my former home, my father, whom it was my first desire
to carry into the high mountains, and whom I first sought out,
refused to extend his life or endure exile, since Troy had fallen.
"Oh, you," he cried, "whose blood has the vigour of youth,
and whose power is unimpaired in its force, it's for you
to take flight. As for me, if the gods had wished to lengthen

Notes

the thread of my life, they'd have spared my house. It is more than enough that I saw one destruction, and survived one taking of the city. Depart, saying farewell to my body lying here so, yes so. I shall find death with my own hand: the enemy will pity me, and look for plunder. The loss of my burial is nothing. Clinging to old age for so long, I am useless, and hated by the gods, ever since the father of the gods and ruler of men breathed the winds of his lightning-bolt onto me, and touched me with fire." So he persisted in saying, and remained adamant. We, on our side, Creusa, my wife, and Ascanius, all our household, weeping bitterly, determined that he should not destroy everything along with himself, and crush us by urging our doom. He refused and clung to his place and his purpose. I hurried to my weapons again, and, miserably, longed for death, since what tactic or opportunity was open to us now? "Did you think I could leave you, father, and depart? Did such sinful words fall from your lips? If it pleases the gods to leave nothing of our great city standing, if this is set in your mind, if it delights you to add yourself and all that's yours to the ruins of Troy, the door is open to that death: soon Pyrrhus comes, drenched in Priam's blood, he who butchers the son in front of the father, the father at the altar. Kind mother, did you rescue me from fire and sword for this, to see the enemy in the depths of my house, and Ascanius, and my father, and Creusa, slaughtered, thrown together in a heap, in one another's blood? Weapons men, bring weapons: the last day calls to the defeated. Lead me to the Greeks again: let me revisit the battle anew. This day we shall not all perish unavenged."

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Book 2: 671–704 The Omen

So, again, I fasten on my sword, slip my left arm
into the shield's strap, adjust it, and rush from the house.

But see, my wife clings to the threshold, clasps my foot,
and holds little Iulus up towards his father:

"If you go to die, take us with you too, at all costs: but if
as you've proved you trust in the weapons you wear,
defend this house first. To whom do you abandon little Iulus,
and your father, and me, I who was once spoken of as your wife?"

Crying out like this she filled the whole house with her groans,
when suddenly a wonder, marvellous to speak of, occurred.

See, between the hands and faces of his grieving parents,
a gentle light seemed to shine from the crown
of Iulus' head, and a soft flame, harmless in its touch,
licked at his hair, and grazed his forehead.

Trembling with fear, we hurry to flick away the blazing strands,
and extinguish the sacred fires with water.

But Anchises, my father, lifts his eyes to the heavens, in delight,
and raises his hands and voice to the sky:

"All-powerful Jupiter, if you're moved by any prayers,
see us, and, grant but this: if we are worthy through our virtue,
show us a sign of it, Father, and confirm your omen."

The old man had barely spoken when, with a sudden crash,
it thundered on the left, and a star, through the darkness,
slid from the sky, and flew, trailing fire, in a burst of light.

We watched it glide over the highest rooftops,
and bury its brightness, and the sign of its passage,
in the forests of Mount Ida: then the furrow of its long track
gave out a glow, and, all around, the place smoked with sulphur.

At this my father, truly overcome, raised himself towards the sky,

Notes

and spoke to the gods, and proclaimed the sacred star.
 “Now no delay: I follow, and where you lead, there am I.
 Gods of my fathers, save my line, save my grandson.
 This omen is yours, and Troy is in your divine power.
 I accept, my son, and I will not refuse to go with you.”

Book 2: 705–729 Aeneas and his Family Leave Troy

He speaks, and now the fire is more audible,
 through the city, and the blaze rolls its tide nearer.
 “Come then, dear father, clasp my neck: I will
 carry you on my shoulders: that task won’t weigh on me.
 Whatever may happen, it will be for us both, the same shared risk,
 and the same salvation. Let little Iulus come with me,
 and let my wife follow our footsteps at a distance.
 You servants, give your attention to what I’m saying.
 At the entrance to the city there’s a mound, an ancient temple
 of forsaken Ceres, and a venerable cypress nearby,
 protected through the years by the reverence of our fathers:
 let’s head to that one place by diverse paths.
 You, father, take the sacred objects, and our country’s gods,
 in your hands: until I’ve washed in running water,
 it would be a sin for me, coming from such fighting
 and recent slaughter, to touch them.” So saying, bowing my neck,
 I spread a cloak made of a tawny lion’s hide over my broad
 shoulders, and bend to the task: little Iulus clasps his hand
 in mine, and follows his father’s longer strides.
 My wife walks behind. We walk on through the shadows
 of places, and I whom till then no shower of spears,
 nor crowd of Greeks in hostile array, could move,
 now I’m terrified by every breeze, and startled by every noise,
 anxious, and fearful equally for my companion and my burden.

Notes

Book 2: 730–795 The Loss of Creusa

And now I was near the gates, and thought I had completed my journey, when suddenly the sound of approaching feet filled my hearing, and, peering through the darkness, my father cried: "My son, run my son, they are near us: I see their glittering shields and gleaming bronze." Some hostile power, at this, scattered my muddled wits. For while I was following alleyways, and straying from the region of streets we knew, did my wife Creusa halt, snatched away from me by wretched fate? Or did she wander from the path or collapse with weariness? Who knows? She was never restored to our sight, nor did I look back for my lost one, or cast a thought behind me, until we came to the mound, and ancient Ceres' sacred place. Here when all were gathered together at last, one was missing, and had escaped the notice of friends, child and husband. What man or god did I not accuse in my madness: what did I know of in the city's fall crueller than this? I place Ascanius, and my father Anchises, and the gods of Troy, in my companions' care, and conceal them in a winding valley: I myself seek the city once more, and take up my shining armour. I'm determined to incur every risk again, and retrace all Troy, and once more expose my life to danger. First I look for the wall, and the dark threshold of the gate from which my path led, and I retrace the landmarks of my course in the night, scanning them with my eye. Everywhere the terror in my heart, and the silence itself, dismay me. Then I take myself homewards, in case by chance, by some chance, she has made her way there. The Greeks have invaded, and occupied, the whole house.

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Suddenly eager fire, rolls over the rooftop, in the wind:
 the flames take hold, the blaze rages to the heavens.
 I pass by and see again Priam's palace and the citadel.
 Now Phoenix, and fatal Ulysses, the chosen guards, watch over
 the spoils, in the empty courts of Juno's sanctuary.
 Here the Trojan treasures are gathered from every part,
 ripped from the blazing shrines, tables of the gods,
 solid gold bowls, and plundered robes.
 Mothers and trembling sons stand round in long ranks.
 I even dared to hurl my shouts through the shadows,
 filling the streets with my clamour, and in my misery,
 redoubling my useless cries, again and again.
 Searching, and raging endlessly among the city roofs,
 the unhappy ghost and true shadow of Creusa
 appeared before my eyes, in a form greater than I'd known.
 I was dumbfounded, my hair stood on end, and my voice
 stuck in my throat. Then she spoke and with these words
 mitigated my distress: "Oh sweet husband, what use is it
 to indulge in such mad grief? This has not happened
 without the divine will: neither its laws nor the ruler
 of great Olympus let you take Creusa with you,
 away from here. Yours is long exile, you must plough
 a vast reach of sea: and you will come to Hesperia's land,
 where Lydian Tiber flows in gentle course among the farmers'
 rich fields. There, happiness, kingship and a royal wife
 will be yours. Banish these tears for your beloved Creusa.
 I, a Trojan woman, and daughter-in-law to divine Venus,
 shall never see the noble halls of the Dolopians,
 or Myrmidons, or go as slave to some Greek wife:
 instead the great mother of the gods keeps me on this shore.

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Now farewell, and preserve your love for the son we share.”

When she had spoken these words, leaving me weeping
and wanting to say so many things, she faded into thin air.

Three times I tried to throw my arms about her neck:
three times her form fled my hands, clasped in vain,
like the light breeze, most of all like a winged dream.
So at last when night was done, I returned to my friends.

Book 2: 796–804 Aeneas Leaves Troy

And here, amazed, I found that a great number of new
companions had streamed in, women and men,
a crowd gathering for exile, a wretched throng.
They had come from all sides, ready, with courage and wealth,
for whatever land I wished to lead them to, across the seas.
And now Lucifer was rising above the heights of Ida,
bringing the dawn, and the Greeks held the barricaded
entrances to the gates, nor was there any hope of rescue.
I desisted, and, carrying my father, took to the hills.

Notes



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