Homer
Iliad

Translated by Ian Johnston
Vancouver Island University
Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada

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Translator's Note

This text uses the traditional Latinate spellings and common English equivalents for the Greek names, e.g., Achilles, Clytaemnestra, Achaeans, Menelaus, Hecuba, rather than modern renditions which strive to stay more closely to the Greek: Akhilleus, Klytaimnestra, Akhaians, Menelaos, Hekabe, and so on, with the exception of a very few names of gods—Cronos, Ouranos—and a few others (e.g., Idaios). And where there is a common English rendition of the name (e.g., Ajax, Troy, Teucer), I have used that. A dieresis over a vowel indicates that it is pronounced by itself (e.g., Coön rhymes with "go on" not with "goon," Deïphobus is pronounced "Day-ee-phobus" not "Day-phobus" or "Dee-phobus").

In this English text, the possessive of names ending in *-s* is usually indicated in the customary way by adding *'s* (e.g., Zeus, Zeus's; Atreus, Atreus's, and so on). This convention has the effect of adding an extra syllable to the word (the sound *-iz*). It also sometimes produces a rather odd-sounding result. Thus, for metrical and euphonic reasons, the possessive of a name is also in many places indicated by a simple apostrophe, without the *s* (an alternative fairly common in written English): e.g., *Achilles' anger* instead of *Achilles's anger*. This latter procedure does not add an extra syllable to the word. In the above phrase, for example, *Achilles*' has three syllables, unlike *Achilles's*, which has four.

The line numbers without brackets refer to the translated (English) text; those in square brackets refer to the Greek text. In the English text indented lines are included with the shorter line immediately above them in the tally.

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BOOK ONE
THE QUARREL BY THE SHIPS

[The invocation to the Muse; Agamemnon insults Apollo; Apollo sends the plague onto the army; the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon; Calchas indicates what must be done to appease Apollo; Agamemnon takes Briseis from Achilles; Achilles prays to Thetis for revenge; Achilles meets Thetis; Chryseis is returned to her father; Thetis visits Zeus; the gods converse about the matter on Olympus; the banquet of the gods]

Sing, Goddess, sing of the rage of Achilles, son of Peleus—
that murderous anger which condemned Achaeans
to countless agonies and threw many warrior souls
deep into Hades, leaving their dead bodies
carrion food for dogs and birds—
all in fulfillment of the will of Zeus.

Start at the point where Agamemnon, son of Atreus,
that king of men, quarrelled with noble Achilles.
Which of the gods incited these two men to fight?

That god was Apollo, son of Zeus and Leto.
Angry with Agamemnon, he cast plague down
onto the troops—deadly infectious evil.
For Agamemnon had dishonoured the god's priest,
Chryses, who'd come to the ships to find his daughter,
Chryseis, bringing with him a huge ransom.
In his hand he held up on a golden staff
the symbols sacred to archer god Apollo.
He begged Achaeans, above all the army's leaders,

> "Menelaus, Agamemnon, sons of Atreus,
> all you well-armed Achaeans, may the gods
> on Olympus grant you wipe out Priam's city,
> and then return home safe and sound.
> Release my dear child to me. Take this ransom.
> Honour Apollo, far-shooting son of Zeus."

All the Achaeans roared out their support:

> "Respect the priest. Take the generous ransom."

Displeased, Agamemnon dismissed Chryses roughly:

"Old man,
don't let me catch you by our hollow ships,
sneaking back here today or later on.
Who cares about Apollo's staff and ribbons?
I'll not release the girl to you, no, not before
she's grown old with me in Argos, far from home,
working the loom, sharing my bed. Go away.
If you want to get home safely, don't anger me."

The old man, afraid, obeyed his words, walked off in silence
along the shore by the tumbling, crashing surf.
Some distance off, he prayed to lord Apollo,
Leto's fair-haired child:

"God with the silver bow,
protector of Chryse, sacred Cilla,
mighty lord of Tenedos, Sminthean Apollo,
hear my prayer: If I've ever pleased you
with a holy shrine, or burned bones for you—
bulls and goats well wrapped in fat—
grant me my prayer. Force the Danaans
to pay full price for my tears with your arrows."[1]

So Chryses prayed. Phoebus Apollo heard him.
He came down from Olympus top enraged,
carrying on his shoulders bow and covered quiver,
his arrows rattling in anger against his arm.
So the god swooped down, descending like the night.
He sat some distance from the ships, shot off an arrow—
the silver bow reverberating ominously.

First, the god massacred mules and swift-running dogs,
then loosed sharp arrows in among the troops themselves.
Thick fires burned the corpses ceaselessly.

For nine days Apollo rained death down upon the troops.
On the tenth, Achilles summoned an assembly.
White-armed Hera put that thought into his mind,
concerned for the Danaans, seeing them die.
The men gathered. The meeting came to order.
Swift-footed Achilles rose to speak:

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[1] *Smithean* is a special epithet given to Apollo. It seems to mean something like "killer of field mice." *Chryse* is a small coastal town near Troy, where *Chryses*, the father of *Chryseis*, is a priest of Apollo.

"Son of Atreus,
I fear we are being beaten back, forced home,
if we aren't all going to be destroyed right here,
with war and plague killing off Achaeans.
Come now, let's ask some prophet, priest,
interpreter of dreams—for dreams, too, come from Zeus—
a man who might say why Apollo is so angry,
whether he faults our prayers and offerings,
whether somehow he'll welcome sacrificial smoke
from perfect lambs and goats, then rouse himself
and release us from this plague."

Achilles spoke and took his seat.
Then Calchas, Thestor's son, stood up before them all,
the most astute interpreter of birds, who understood
present, future, past. His skill in prophecy,
Apollo's gift, had led Achaean ships to Troy.
He addressed the troops, thinking of their common good:

"Achilles, friend of Zeus, you ask me to explain
Apollo's anger, the god who shoots from far.
And I will speak. But first you listen to me.
Swear an oath that you will freely help me
in word and deed. I think I may provoke
someone who wields great power over Argives,
a man who is obeyed by everyone.
An angry king overpowers lesser men.
Even if that day his anger is suppressed,
resentment lingers in his chest, until one day
he acts on it. So speak. Will you protect me?"

In response to Calchas, swift-footed Achilles said:

"Take courage. State what your powers tell you.
By Apollo, whom Zeus loves, to whom you, Calchas,
pray in prophesy to the Danaans, I swear this—
while I live to look upon the light of day,
no Achaean will raise violent hands against you,
no, not even if you name Agamemnon,
who claims he's by far the best Achaean."

Encouraged, the wise prophet then declared:

"Apollo does not fault us for prayers or offerings,
but for his priest, disgraced by Agamemnon,
who did not free his daughter and take ransom.
That's why the archer god has brought disaster,
and will bring still more. He will not remove
this wretched plague from the Danaans,
until we hand back bright-eyed Chryseis,
give her to her beloved father, freely,
without ransom, and offer holy sacrifice
at Chryse. If we will carry out all that,
we may change Apollo's mind, appease him."

So he spoke and sat back down. Then, Atreus's son,
wide-ruling, mighty Agamemnon, stood up before them,
incensed, spirit filled with immense black rage.
Eyes blazing fire, he rounded first on Calchas:

"Prophet of evil, when have you ever said
good things to me? You love to predict the worst,
always the worst! You never show good news.
Now, in prophecy to the Danaans,
you say archer Apollo brings us pain
because I was unwilling to accept
fine ransom for Chryses' daughter, Chryseis.
But I have a great desire to take her home.
In fact, I want her more than Clytaemnestra,
the wife I married. Chryseis is just as good
in her shape, physique, intelligence, or work.
Still, I'm prepared to give her back, if that's best.
I want the people safe, not all killed off.
But then you will owe me another prize.
I won't be the only Argive left without a gift.
That would be entirely unfair to me.
You all can see my spoils are going elsewhere."

At that point, swift-footed Achilles answered the king:

"Noble son of Atreus, most acquisitive of men,
how can brave Achaeans give you a prize now?
There are none left for us to pass around.
We've divided up what we allotted,
loot from captured towns we devastated.
For men to make a common pile again
would be most unfair. Send the girl back now,

as the god demands. Should Zeus ever grant
we pillage Troy, a city rich in goods,
we'll give you three or four times her value."

Mighty Agamemnon then said in reply:

"Achilles, you're a fine man, like a god.
But don't conceal what's hidden in your heart.
You'll not trick me or win me with your words.
You intend to keep your prizes for yourself,
while the army takes my trophy from me.
That's why you tell me to give Chryseis back.
Let Achaeans give me another prize,
equal in value, something I'll enjoy.
If not, then I'll take a prize myself by force,
something from you or Ajax or Odysseus.
The man I visit is going to be enraged.
But let's postpone discussion of all this.
Let's drag a black ship to the sacred sea,
select a crew, load oxen on for sacrifice,
and Chryseis, that fair-complexioned girl.
Let's have as leader some wise counsellor—
Idomeneus, Ajax, godlike Odysseus,
or you, Peleus's son, most eminent of all,
so with a sacrifice we may appease
the god who shoots from far away."

Scowling grimly, swift-footed Achilles interposed:

"You insatiable creature, quite shameless.
How can any Achaean obey you willingly—
join a raiding party or keep fighting
with full force against an enemy?
I did not come to battle over here
because of Trojans. I have no fight with them.
They never stole my bulls or horses
or destroyed my crops in fertile Phthia,
where heroes grow. Many shady mountains
and the roaring sea stand there between us.
But you, great shameless man, we came with you,
to please you, to win honour from the Trojans—
for you, dog face, and for Menelaus.
You don't consider this, don't think at all.
You threaten now to confiscate the prize

I worked so hard for, gift from Achaea's sons.
When we Achaeans loot some well-built Trojan town,
my prizes never match the ones you get.
The major share of war's fury rests on me.
But when we hand around the battle spoils,
you get much larger trophies. Worn out in war,
I reach my ships with something fine but small.
So I'll return home now to Phthia.
It's far better to sail back in my curved ships.
I don't fancy staying here unvalued,
to pile up riches, treasures just for you."

To that, Agamemnon, king of men, shot back:

"Fly off home then, if that's your heart's desire.
I'll not beg you to stay on my account.
I have others around to honour me,
especially all-wise Zeus himself.
Of all the kings Zeus cherishes, it's you
I hate the most. You love constant strife—
war and combat. So what if you're strong?
Some god gave you that. So scurry off home.
Take ships and friends. Go rule your Myrmidons.
I don't like you or care about your rage.
But I'll make this threat: I'll take your prize,
fair-cheeked Briseis. I'll fetch her in person.
You'll see just how much I'm the better man.
And others will hate to speak to me as peers,
in public claiming full equality with me."

As Agamemnon spoke, Peleus's son, Achilles,
was overwhelmed with anguish, heart torn two ways,
debating in his shaggy chest what he should do:
Should he draw out the sharp sword on his thigh,
incite the crowd, kill Atreus's son, or suppress his rage,
control his fury? As he argued in his mind and heart,
he slid his huge sword part way from its sheath.
At that moment, Athena came down from heaven.
White-armed Hera sent her. She cherished both men,
cared for them equally. Athena stood behind Achilles,
grabbed him by his golden hair, invisible to all
except Achilles. In astonishment he turned.
At once he recognized Pallas Athena,

the dreadful glitter in her eyes. Achilles spoke— [200]
his words had wings.

"Child of aegis-bearing Zeus,
why have you come now? Do you wish to see
how overbearing Agamemnon is?[1]
I'll tell you where all this is going to lead—
that arrogance will soon cost him his life."

Glittery-eyed Athena then spoke in reply:

"I came down from heaven to curb your passion,
if you obey. White-armed Hera sent me.
She loves you both alike, cares equally.
Give up this quarrel. Do not draw your sword. [210]
Fight him with words, so he becomes disgraced.
For I say to you, and this will happen,
because of Agamemnon's arrogance
some day gifts three times greater than this girl
will be set down before you. Control yourself.
Obey."

Swift-footed Achilles answered Athena:

"Goddess, men should follow your instructions,
though angry in their hearts. It's better so.
The person who's obedient to the gods,
the gods attend to all the more."

Obeying Athena's words,
Achilles relaxed his huge fist on the silver hilt
and pushed the massive sword back in its scabbard. [220]
Athena then returned to heaven, home of Zeus,
who bears the aegis, and the other gods.

Achilles turned again on Agamemnon, Atreus's son,
with harsh abuse, his anger still unabated:

"You drunken sot, dog-eyed, deer-timid coward,
you're never strong enough within yourself
to arm for war alongside other comrades,

[1]The *aegis* is a special divine shield, the sight of which has the power to terrify men and make them run away. Later in the poem Apollo uses it to terrify the Achaean soldiers.

or venture with Achaea's bravest on a raid.
To you that smells too much like death.
No. You'd much prefer to stroll around
throughout the wide Achaean army,
to grab gifts from a man who speaks against you.
A king who gorges on his own people!
You lord it over worthless men. If not,
son of Atreus, this would be your last offence.
I'll tell you, swear a great oath on this point,
by this sceptre, which will never sprout
leaves and shoots again, since first ripped away
from its mountain stump, nor bloom any more,
now that bronze has sliced off leaf and bark.
This sceptre Achaea's sons take in hand
whenever they do justice in Zeus's name.
An oath on this has power. On this I swear—
the time will come when Achaea's sons
all miss Achilles, a time when, in distress,
you'll lack my help, a time when Hector,
that man killer, destroys many warriors.
Then grief will tear your hearts apart,
because you shamed Achaea's finest man."

So the son of Peleus spoke, throwing to the ground
the sceptre with the golden studs. Then he sat down,
directly facing furious Agamemnon.

Then Nestor stood up, clear, sweet orator from Pylos.
Sweeter than honey the words flowed from his tongue.
In his own lifetime two generations of mortal men
had come and passed away, all those born and raised
with him so long ago in sacred Pylos.
Now he ruled a third generation of his people.
Concerned about their common good, he said:

"Alas, this is great sorrow for Achaeans.
Priam and Priam's children will be glad,
the hearts of other Trojans swell with joy,
should they find out about such quarrelling,
a fight between you two, among Danaans
the very best for counsel or for combat.
But listen. You are both younger men than I.
And I've been colleague of better men than you,
men who never showed me any disrespect,

men whose like I have not seen again,
and never will—like Peirithous, Dryas,
a shepherd to his people, Caeneus,
Exadios, god-like Polyphemus,
Theseus, son of Aegeus, all god-like men—
the mightiest earthborn men, the strongest.
And the enemies they fought against were strong,
the most powerful of mountain centaurs.
But they destroyed those creatures totally.
Associate of theirs, I came from Pylos,
a long way from that land, summoned personally. [270]
I fought on my own behalf, by myself.
No man alive on earth could now fight them.
Yet they heard me and followed my advice.
So listen, both of you. That's what's best now.
Agamemnon, you're an excellent man,
but do not take Briseis from Achilles.
Let that pass. Achaea's sons gave her to him first.
And you, Peleus's son, don't seek to fight the king,
not as your enemy. The sceptre-bearing king,
whose powerful authority comes from Zeus,
never shares honours equally. Achilles,
you may be stronger, since your mother was divine, [280]
but he's more powerful, for he rules more men.
But you, son of Atreus, check your anger.
Set aside, I urge you, your rage against Achilles,
who provides, in the middle of war's evils,
a powerful defence for all Achaeans."

Mighty Agamemnon then replied to Nestor:

"Old man, everything you say is true enough.
But this man wants to put the rest to shame,
rule all of us, lord it over everyone.
But some, I think, will not obey him.
So what if the gods, who live forever, [290]
made him a spearman? Is that some reason
we should let him say such shameful things?"

Achilles, interrupting Agamemnon, shouted:

"I'd be called a coward, a nobody,
if I held back from any action
because of something you might say.

Order other men about. Don't tell me
what I should do. I'll not obey you anymore.
But I will tell you this—remember it well—
I'll not raise my hand to fight about that girl,
no, not against you or any other man.
You Achaeans gave her to me, and now,
you seize her back again. But you'll not take
another thing from my swift black ship—
you'll get nothing else with my consent.
If you'd like to see what happens, just try.
My spear will quickly drip with your dark blood."

Thus the pair of them continued arguing.
Then they stood up, dissolving the assembly by the ships.
Peleus's son went back to his well-balanced ships and huts,
along with Patroclus, Menoetius' son, and friends.

Agamemnon dragged a swift ship down the shore,
chose twenty sailors, loaded on the oxen,
offerings for the god, and led on fair-cheeked Chryseis.
Shrewd Odysseus shipped on as leader. All aboard,
they set off, carving a pathway through the sea.

Atreus's son ordered troops to cleanse themselves.
The men bathed in the sea, washed off impurities.
They then made sacrificial offerings to Apollo—
hundreds of perfect bulls and goats—beside the restless sea.
Savoury smells curled up amid the smoke high into heaven.

The men thus occupied, Agamemnon did not forget
the challenge he made earlier to Achilles.
He called his heralds, Talthybius and Eurybates:

"Go to Achilles' tent, Peleus's son,
take fair-complexioned Briseis by the hand.
Bring her to me. If he won't surrender her,
I'll come myself in force and take her.
For him that will be a worse disaster."

With these firm orders, he dismissed the men, who moved off,
with heavy hearts, along the shore of the restless sea.
They reached the huts and ships of the Myrmidons.
There they found Achilles seated by his hut
and his black ship. As he saw them approach,

Achilles felt no joy. The two heralds, afraid,
just stood in silence, out of deference to the king.
In his heart Achilles sensed their purpose. He called them:

"Cheer up, heralds, messengers for gods and men.
Come here. I don't blame you, but Agamemnon.
He sends you both here for the girl Briseis.
Come, Patroclus, born from Zeus, fetch the girl.
Give her to these two heralds to take away.
Let them both witness, before blessed gods,
mortal men, and that unfeeling king,
if ever there's a need for me again
to defend others from a shameful death.
That man's wits are foolish, disastrously so—
he's not thinking about past or future,
how Achaeans may fight safely by their ships."

Patroclus did as his dear comrade had requested.
He led out fair-cheeked Briseis from the hut
and gave her up to be led off. The heralds went back,
returning to Achaean ships, Briseis with them,
but against her will.

Achilles then, in tears,
withdrew from his companions, sat by the shore,
staring at the wide grey seas. Stretching out his hands,
he cried aloud, praying repeatedly to Thetis,
his beloved mother.[1]

"Mother, since you gave me life—
if only for a while—Olympian Zeus,
high thunderer, should give me due honour.
But he does not grant me even slight respect.
For wide-ruling Agamemnon, Atreus's son,
has shamed me, has taken away my prize,
appropriated it for his own use."

As he said this, he wept.
His noble mother heard him from deep within the sea,
where she sat by her old father. Quickly she rose up,
moving above grey waters, like an ocean mist,

[1]Achilles' mother, *Thetis*, is a minor sea goddess who married the mortal Peleus.

and settled down before him, as he wept. She stroked him, 400 [360]
then said:

"My child, why these tears? What sorrows
weigh down your heart? Tell me, so we'll both know.
Don't hide from me what's on your mind."

With a deep groan, swift-footed Achilles then replied.

"You know. Why should I tell you what you know?
We came to Thebe, Eëtion's sacred city,
sacked it, taking everything the city had.
Achaea's sons apportioned it all fairly
amongst themselves. Agamemnon's share
was fair-skinned Chryseis. Then Chryses arrived 410 [370]
at the swift ships of bronze-armed Achaeans.
Archer god Apollo's priest sought out his daughter.
He brought with him an enormous ransom,
carried in his hands the sacred golden staff
with the symbols of archer god Apollo.
He begged Achaeans, above all Atreus' two sons,
the people's leaders. All Achaeans called on them
to respect the priest, accept the splendid ransom.
But that didn't please Agamemnon in his heart.
He sent him roughly off with harsh abusive orders 420
The old man went away again, enraged. [380]
He prayed to Apollo, who loved him well.
The god heard him and sent his deadly arrows
against the Argives. The troops kept dying,
one by one, as the god rained arrows down
throughout the wide Achaean army.
The prophet Calchas, understanding all,
told us Apollo's will. At once I was the first
to recommend we all appease the god.
But anger got control of Agamemnon. 430
He stood up on the spot and made that threat
which he's just carried out. So quick-eyed Achaeans
are sending Chryseis in fast ships back to Chryse, [390]
transporting gifts for lord Apollo, and heralds came
to take away Briseis from my huts,
the girl who is my gift from Achaea's sons.
So now, if you can, protect your son.
Go to Mount Olympus, implore Zeus,
if ever you in word or deed have pleased him.

For often I have heard you boast in father's house
that you alone of all the deathless gods
saved Zeus of the dark clouds from disgraceful ruin,
when other Olympians came to tie him up,
Hera, Pallas Athena, and Poseidon.
But you, goddess, came and set him free,
by quickly calling up to high Olympus
that hundred-handed monster gods call Briareos,
and men all name Aigaion, a creature
whose strength was greater than his father's.[1]
He sat down beside the son of Cronos,
exulting in his glory. The sacred gods, afraid,
stopped tying up Zeus. So sit down right by Zeus,
clasp his knee, remind him of all that,
so he'll want to help the Trojans somehow,
corner Achaeans by the sea, by their ships' prows,
have them destroyed, so they all enjoy their king,
so the son of Atreus, wide-ruling Agamemnon,
himself may see his foolishness, dishonouring
Achilles, the best of the Achaeans."

Thetis, shedding tears, answered her son, Achilles:

"O my child, why did I nurture you,
since I brought you up to so much pain?
Would you were safely by your ships dry-eyed.
Your life is fated to be short—you'll not live long.
Now, faced with a quick doom, you're in distress,
more so than any other man. At home,
I gave you life marked by an evil fate.
But I'll tell these things to thunder-loving Zeus.
I'll go myself to snow-topped Mount Olympus,
to see if he will undertake all this.
Meanwhile, you should sit by your swift ships,
angry at Achaeans. Take no part in war.
For yesterday Zeus went to Oceanus,
to banquet with the worthy Ethiopians.
The gods all journeyed with him. In twelve days,
when he returns and comes home to Olympus,
I'll go to Zeus's bronze-floored house, clasp his knee.
I think I'll get him to consent."

[1]The reference here is to an attempt by the Olympian gods to topple Zeus. Thetis brought the powerful monster Briareos, one of the children of Gaia and Ouranos, to Zeus's aid.

Thetis spoke.
Then she went away, leaving Achilles there,
angry at heart for lovely girdled Briseis,
taken from him by force against his will.

Odysseus sailed to Chryse, bringing with him
the sacrificial animals as sacred offerings.
When they had sailed into deep anchorage,
they took in the sails and stowed them in the ship.
With forestays they soon set the mast down in its notch,
then rowed the ship in to its mooring place.
They threw out anchor stones, lashed stern cables,
and clambered out into the ocean surf.
They brought off the offerings to archer god Apollo.
Then Chryseis disembarked from the ocean ship.
Resourceful Odysseus led her to the altar, [440]
placed her in her beloved father's hands, then said:

"Chryses, I have been sent by Agamemnon,
ruler of men, to bring your daughter to you,
and then, on behalf of the Danaans,
to make an offering to lord Apollo—
all these sacrificial beasts—to placate the god,
who now inflicts such dismal evil on us."

After saying this, he handed the girl over.
Chryses gave his daughter a joyful welcome back.
And then around the well-built altar, they arranged
the splendid sacrifice. They washed their hands,
and picked up the barley grain for sprinkling.
Raising his arms, Chryses prayed out loud on their behalf: [450]

"Hear me, god of the silver bow, protector
of Chryse, mighty lord of holy Cilla,
sacred Tenedos. You heard me earlier,
when I prayed to you. Just as you honoured me,
striking hard against Achaeans then, so now,
grant me what I pray for—remove disaster,
this wretched evil, from the Danaans."

So Chryses spoke. Phoebus Apollo heard him.
Once they had prayed and scattered barley grain,
they pulled back the heads of sacrificial beasts,

slit their throats, flayed them, sliced the thigh bones out,
and hid them in twin layers of fat, with raw meat on top.
Old Chryses burned them on split wood, poured wine on them.
Young men beside him held out five-pronged forks.
Once the thighs were well burned, they sampled entrails,
then sliced up all the rest, skewered the meat on spits,
roasted it carefully, and drew off every piece.
That work complete, they then prepared a meal and ate.
No heart was left unsatisfied. All feasted equally.
And when the men had had their fill of food and drink,
young boys filled the mixing bowl with wine up to the brim,
and served it, pouring libations into every cup.
Then all day long young Achaean lads played music,
singing to the god a lovely hymn of praise,
honouring in dance and song the god who shoots from far.
Hearing them, Apollo felt joy fill his heart. At sunset,
as dusk came on, by the ship's stern they went to sleep.
But when early born, rose-fingered Dawn appeared,
they set off, once more back to the wide Achaean camp.
Far-shooting Apollo sent them favourable winds.
They raised the mast and then the sails. The wind blew,
filling out the body of the sail—on both sides of the prow
the purple waves hissed loudly as the ship sped on its way,
its motion carving a path through the ocean swell.
When they reached the broad Achaean army,
they hauled the black ship high up on the sand,
pushed long props tight beneath it, then dispersed,
each man returning to his own huts and ships.

Meanwhile, Achilles, divinely born son of Peleus,
sat down in anger alongside his swift ships. Not once
did he attend assembly where men win glory
or go out to fight. But he pined away at heart,
remaining idle by his ships, yearning
for the hue and cry and clash of battle.

Twelve days later, the company of gods came back
together to Olympus, with Zeus in the lead.
Thetis did not forget the promise to her son.
She rose up through the ocean waves at daybreak,
then moved high up to great Olympus. She found Zeus,
wide-seeing son of Cronos, some distance from the rest,
seated on the highest peak of many-ridged Olympus.
She sat down right in front of him. With her left hand,

she clutched his knees, with her right she cupped his chin,
in supplication to lord Zeus, son of Cronos:[1]

"Father Zeus, if, among the deathless gods,
I've ever served you well in word or deed,
then grant my prayer will be fulfilled.
Bring honour to my son, who, of all men
will be fate's quickest victim. For just now,
Agamemnon, king of men, has shamed him.
He seized his prize, robbing him in person,
and kept it for himself. But honour him,
Zeus, all-wise Olympian. Give the Trojans
the upper hand, until Achaeans respect my son,
until they multiply his honours." [510]

Thetis finished. Cloud gatherer Zeus did not respond.
He sat a long time silent. Thetis held his knees,
clinging close, repeating her request once more:

"Promise me truly, nod your head, or deny me—
since there's nothing here for you to fear—
so I'll clearly see how among the gods
I enjoy the least respect of all."

Cloud gatherer Zeus, greatly troubled, said:

"A nasty business.
What you say will set Hera against me.
She provokes me so with her abuse. Even now,
in the assembly of immortal gods,
she's always insulting me, accusing me [520]
of favouring the Trojans in the war.
But go away for now, in case Hera catches on.
I'll take care of this, make sure it comes to pass.
Come, to convince you, I'll nod my head.
Among gods that's the strongest pledge I make.
Once I nod my assent, nothing I say
can be revoked, denied, or unfulfilled."

Zeus, son of Cronos, nodded his dark brows.
The divine hair on the king of gods fell forward,
down over his immortal head, shaking Olympus [530]

[1]Holding someone's knee (or knees) was a common ritual gesture when one was asking a great favour.

to its very base. The conference over, the two parted.
Thetis plunged from bright Olympus back into the sea.

Zeus went inside his house. Their father present,
all the gods at once stood up from their seats.
No one dared stay put as he came in—all rose together.
Zeus seated himself upon his throne. Looking at him,
Hera sensed he had made some deal with Thetis,
silver-footed daughter of the Old Man of the Sea.
At once she spoke up accusingly:

"Which god
has been scheming with you, you crafty one?
You always love to work on things in secret,
without involving me. You never want
to tell me openly what you intend."

The father of gods and men replied:

"Hera,
don't hope to understand my every plan.
Even for my own wife that's dangerous.
What's appropriate for you to hear about,
no one, god or man, will know before you.
But when I wish to hide my thoughts from gods,
don't you go digging after them,
or pestering me for every detail."

Ox-eyed queen Hera then replied to Zeus:

"Most dread son of Cronos, what are you saying?
I have not been overzealous before now,
in questioning you or seeking answers.
Surely you're quite at liberty to plan
anything you wish. But now, in my mind,
I've got this dreadful fear that Thetis,
silver-footed daughter of the Old Man of the Sea,
has won you over, for this morning early,
she sat down beside you, held your knees.
I think you surely nodded your agreement
to honour Achilles, killing many soldiers,
slaughtering them by the Achaean ships."

Zeus, the cloud gatherer, spoke out in reply:

"My dear lady, you're always fancying things.
Your attention picks up every detail.
But you can't do anything about it,
except push yourself still further from my heart,
making matters so much worse for you.
If things are as they are, then that's the way
I want them. So sit down quietly.
Do as I say. If not, then all the gods
here on Olympus won't be any help,
when I reach out to set my hands on you,
for they're invincible."

Zeus finished speaking.
Ox-eyed queen Hera was afraid—so she sat down,
silently suppressing what her heart desired.
In Zeus's home the Olympian gods began to quarrel. [570]
Then that famous artisan, Hephaestus, concerned
about his mother, white-armed Hera, spoke to them:

"A troublesome matter this will prove—
unendurable—if you two start fighting
over mortal men like this, inciting gods to quarrel.
If we start bickering, we can't enjoy the meal,
our excellent banquet. So I'm urging mother,
though she's more than willing, to humour Zeus,
our dear father, so he won't get angry once again,
disturb the feast for us. For if Zeus,
the Olympian lord of lightning, was of a mind [580]
to hurl us from our seats, his strength's too great.
But if you talk to him with soothing words,
at once Olympian Zeus will treat us well."

Hephaestus spoke, then stood up, passed a double goblet
across to his dear mother, saying to her:

"Stay calm, mother, even though you are upset.
If not, then, as beloved as you are,
I may see you beaten up before my eyes,
with me incapable of helping out,
though the sight would make me most unhappy.
It's hard to take a stand opposing Zeus.
Once, when I was eager to assist you, [590]
Zeus seized me by the feet and threw me out,

down from heaven's heights. The entire day
I fell and then, right at sunset, dropped
on Lemnos, almost dead. After that fall,
men of Sintes helped me to recover."

As he spoke, the white-armed goddess Hera smiled.
She reached for her son's goblet. He poured the drink,
going from right to left, for all the other gods,
drawing off sweet nectar from the mixing bowl.
Then their laughter broke out irrepressibly,
as the sacred gods saw Hephaestus bustling around,
concerned about the feast. All that day they dined,
until sunset. No one's heart went unsatisfied.
All feasted equally. They heard exquisite music,
from Apollo's lyre and the Muses' beautiful song
and counter-song. When the sun's bright light had set,
the gods all went to their own homes. Hephaestus,
the famous lame god, with his resourceful skill,
had made each god a place to live. Olympian Zeus,
god of lightning, went home to his own bed,
where he usually reclined whenever sweet sleep
came over him. He went inside and lay down there,
with Hera of the golden throne stretched out beside him.

BOOK TWO
AGAMEMNON'S DREAM AND THE CATALOGUE OF SHIPS

[Zeus sends a false dream to Agamemnon; Agamemnon reports the dream to his advisors and outlines a test of the army; Agamemnon urges his troops to go home; Odysseus restores order; Thersites insults Agamemnon; Odysseus deals with Thersites, reminds the men of Calchas's original prophecy; Nestor suggests a display of the troops; the Catalogue of Ships (list of the Achaean, Trojan, and allied forces)]

Gods and warriors slept through the entire night.
But sweet Sleep did not visit Zeus, tossing and turning
over in his mind some way to honour Achilles,
by slaughtering many soldiers by the Achaean ships.[1]
In Zeus's heart the best idea seemed to be
to send out a wicked Dream to Agamemnon.
Calling the Dream, Zeus said these winged words to him:

"Evil Dream, fly quickly to Achaea's men,
by their swift ships. Go to Agamemnon's hut, 10 [10]
Atreus's son. Report my words precisely.
Bid him quickly arm long-haired Achaean troops,
for now they'll capture Troy, city of wide streets.
Immortal gods who dwell on Mount Olympus
no longer disagree about all this.
Hera's entreaties have persuaded them.
Trojans can expect more sorrows, more disasters."

Zeus spoke. With these instructions, Dream set off,
quickly reaching Achaea's fast ships and Atreus' son.
He found Agamemnon resting in his hut,
wrapped up in the sweet divinity of Sleep. 20
Dream stood above his head, looking just like Nestor, [20]
son of Neleus, of all the more senior men
the one Agamemnon held in special honour.
In that shape, divine Dream spoke to Agamemnon:

"You are sleeping, son of fiery Atreus,
tamer of horses. But a prudent man,
one to whom people have given their trust,
who has so many things to think about,
should not sleep all night. So pay attention.

[1] In this translation the word sleep is capitalized when it refers to the god of sleep and not capitalized when it refers to the state of being asleep.

Hear what I have to say. I come to you
as Zeus's messenger, with his orders.
He's far off, but pities and cares for you.
He bids you quickly arm long-haired Achaeans,
for now you can take Troy, city of wide streets.
The immortal gods who dwell on Mount Olympus
no longer disagree about all this.
Hera's entreaties have persuaded them.
Trojans can expect from Zeus more sorrows,
more disasters. Remember what I've said.
Don't let forgetfulness seize your mind,
when honey Sleep has loosed his sweet grip on you."

This said, Dream went off, leaving the king imagining things
which would not come to pass. He thought he'd take Troy,
Priam's city, that very day. Fool! He had no clue
of what Zeus really meant, his plan to load on them,
Trojans and Danaans both, still more suffering,
more cries of sorrow, through war's brutality.

Agamemnon roused himself from sleep, the divine voice
all round him still. He sat up, pulled on a supple tunic,
new and finely made. On top he threw a large cloak.
He laced up lovely sandals over his sleek feet
and slung a silver-studded sword around both shoulders.
He took with him the royal staff of his ancestors,
eternal and imperishable. Gripping this,
he approached the ships of the bronze-armed Achaeans.

When goddess Dawn rose high up on Olympus,
bringing light to Zeus and the immortals,
Agamemnon bid the loud-voiced heralds summon
all the long-haired Achaeans to assembly.
Such a call went out. Men answered on the run.
But first, Agamemnon convened a meeting
of all his great-hearted senior counsellors.
They met by Nestor's ships, king born on Pylos.
To the assembled group Agamemnon then sketched out
a plan he had conceived—a devious one.

"My friends, listen.
A divine Dream has just come to me,
through the sacred night, as I lay asleep,

in form, size, and voice just like worthy Nestor.
He stood above my head and spoke these words:

'You are sleeping, son of fiery Atreus, [60]
tamer of horses. But a prudent man,
one to whom people have given their trust,
who has so many things to think about,
should not sleep all night. So pay attention.
Hear what I have to say. I come to you
as Zeus's messenger, with his orders.
He's far off, but pities and cares for you.
He bids you quickly arm long-haired Achaeans,
for now you can take Troy, city of wide streets.
Immortal gods who dwell on Mount Olympus
no longer disagree about all this.
Hera's entreaties have persuaded them.
The Trojans can expect from Zeus more sorrows, [70]
more disasters. Remember what I've said.'

With that, Dream flew off, sweet Sleep released me.
Come, then, let's get long-haired Achaeans
somehow armed for battle. But before that,
it's only right I test the men, ordering them
to go home in their ships with many oars.
You hold them back with your commands,
each one working from his own position."

Agamemnon finished speaking and sat back down.
Nestor stood up before them, king of sandy Pylos.
With a wise sense of their common cause, he addressed them:

"My friends, chiefs and leaders of the Argives,
if any other Achaean had told us such a dream, [80]
we would declare it quite false, dismiss it.
But now the man who has a claim to be
the greatest of Achaeans has witnessed it.
So come, let's find a way to arm Achaea's sons."

So Nestor spoke. Then he began to make his way back,
leaving the council meeting. The others stood up,
all sceptre-bearing kings, following Nestor's lead,
his people's shepherd. Troops came streaming out to them.
Just as dense clouds of bees pour out in endless swarms
from hollow rocks, in clusters flying to spring flowers,

charging off in all directions, so from ships and huts
the many clans rushed out to meet, group after group.
Among the troops Rumour blazed, Zeus's messenger,
igniting them. The assembly was in uproar.
Beneath the men, as they sat amid the din, earth groaned.
Nine heralds shouted out instructions, attempting
to control the noise, so men could hear their leaders,
god's chosen ones. Gradually men settled down,
kept quiet in their places. The noise subsided.
King Agamemnon stood up, hands gripping his staff,
one fashioned by Hephaestus' careful craftsmanship.
That god had given it to lord Zeus, son of Cronos.
Later Zeus had presented it to Hermes,
the guide, killer of Argus.[1] Hermes, in his turn,
gave it to king Pelops, the chariot racer,
who passed the staff to Atreus, the people's leader.
This man, as he lay dying, left it for Thyestes,
who owned many flocks. Thyestes, in his turn,
passed it onto Agamemnon, who held it
as ruler of all Argos and many islands.
With this staff as his support, Agamemnon spoke:

"You Danaan warriors, comrades,
companions of Ares, god of war,
Zeus, son of Cronos, has entangled me
in some truly serious foolishness.
Perverse Zeus! He promised me, he agreed—
I'd have devastated well-built Troy
before going home. Now he plans a cruel trick,
tells me to return to Argos dishonoured,
after I've lost so many warriors.
This is apparently what high Zeus desires,
he who has smashed so many city heights,
and will destroy still more, such is his power,
the greatest power of all. This is a great disgrace,
which people will learn about in years to come—
how an Achaean force of such quality and size
vainly sailed off to fight a lesser force,
and failed to get what they set out to take.
For if we Achaeans and the Trojans wished,

[1]Hermes, a divine son of Zeus, is often called "the killer of Argus." Argus was a monster with many eyes. Hera instructed Argus to keep watch on the nymph Io, so that Zeus would not get into sexual mischief with her. Zeus instructed Hermes to kill Argus, and he did so.

in good faith, to draw up a treaty,
to tally up the numbers on both sides,
with Trojans counting each inhabitant of Troy,
and if we Achaeans set ourselves in groups of ten,
then chose, for every group, a Trojan man
to pour our wine, then of our groups of ten
many would lack a man to act as steward.
That, I tell you, indicates just how much
Achaea's sons outnumber Trojans,
those who live in Troy. But all their allies,
warrior spearmen from many cities,
are a huge problem for me. They thwart my wish
to smash down those sturdy walls of Troy.
Nine of great Zeus's years have rolled on past.
Ships' planks have rotted, their ropes have frayed.
Back home our wives and children wait for us.
The work for which we came remains undone.
So come, let's all agree to what I say.
Let's go back to our own dear country in our ships.
For we'll not capture Troy with its broad streets."

So Agamemnon spoke. Among the soldiers,
all those with no idea of what he'd planned,
men's feelings quickened. The assembly was aroused.
Just like huge ocean waves on the Icarian Sea,
when East Wind and South Wind rush down together
from Father Zeus's clouds to whip up the sea,
the whole assembly rippled, like a large grain field,
undulating under the fury of the storm,
as West Wind roars in with force, all ears of corn
ducking down under the power of the gusts—
that's how the shouting men stampeded to their ships.
From underneath their feet a dust cloud rose.
They yelled orders to each other to grab the ships,
drag them to the sacred sea, clear out channels
for launching boats, knock out props from underneath,
frantic to get home. Heaven echoed with the din.
At that point, the Argives might well have gone back—
contravening what Fate had proposed for them—
if Hera had not spoken to Athena:

"Alas, unconquerable child of Zeus,
who bears the aegis, the Argives will flee,
go back home to their dear native land,

cross the wide sea, abandoning Helen,
an Argive woman, leaving in triumph
Priam and his Trojans. On her account, 190 [160]
many Achaeans have perished here in Troy,
far from the homes they love. So now, come on,
go down to the bronze-clad Achaean troops,
use your persuasive power to stop the men
hauling their curved ships down into the sea."

So Hera spoke. Bright-eyed goddess Athena obeyed.
She sped off, raced down from Mount Olympus's crest,
quickly reached Achaea's swift ships, rushing to the spot
Odysseus, a man as wise as Zeus, was standing.
He'd laid no hand on his fast, black, well-decked ship. 200 [170]
His stout heart was filled with pain. Standing close to him,
bright-eyed Athena spoke to him:

"Odysseus,
divinely bred, Laertes' resourceful son,
so you are going to fly back home,
sail off to your own dear country.
You'll leap into your ships with many oars,
and leave in triumph Priam and the Trojans,
abandoning Argive Helen, for whose sake
so many Achaeans have died here in Troy,
far from the homes they love. But come now, 210
move around among Achaean soldiers.
Don't hesitate. Persuade each man to stop [180]
dragging the curved ships down into the sea."

So Athena spoke. Odysseus knew her from her voice,
as she talked. Then he ran, shrugging off his cloak—
Eurybates, the herald, later picked it up,
a man from Ithaca, aide to Odysseus.
Odysseus went straight to Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
took from him his imperishable ancestral staff.
Grasping this, he ran to the bronze-clad Achaeans' ships. 220
When he came across some king or prominent leader,
he'd confront him, telling him to hold his ground:

"Friend, it's not suitable for you to panic, [190]
as if you're worthless. Take your seat instead.
Get other soldiers to remain in place.
You've no clear sense of Agamemnon's plan.

Right now he's testing all the army.
Soon enough he'll punish Achaea's sons.
Didn't we all hear what he said in council?
In his rage he may harm Achaean troops—
passions run high in kings whom Zeus supports.
Their honour comes from Zeus the Counsellor,
who loves them."

By contrast, when Odysseus
came across some common soldier yelling out,
he beat him with the staff, admonishing him:

"My friend, take your place in silence. Stay put.
Listen to what others say, your betters,
you puny coward, useless in war or council.
Achaeans can't all rule here as kings.
No good comes from having many leaders.
Let there be one in charge, one ruler,
who gets from crooked-minded Cronos' son
sceptre and laws, so he may rule his people."

Odysseus moved throughout the army, calming things.
From ships and huts, soldiers rushed to reassemble,
echoing like waves of the roaring sea crashing on shore,
as Ocean thunders on. Men sat calmly in their places.
But a single man kept on yelling out abuse—
scurrilous Thersites, expert in various insults,
vulgar terms for inappropriate attacks on kings,
whatever he thought would make the Argives laugh.
Of all the men who came to Troy, he was the ugliest—
bow legged, one crippled foot, rounded shoulders
curving in toward his chest. On top, his pointed head
sprouted thin, scraggly tufts of hair. Achilles hated him,
as did Odysseus, too, both subject to his taunts.
But now Agamemnon was the target of his gibes.
The Achaeans, despising Thersites in their hearts,
were furious at him. But he kept shouting out,
aiming noisy insults right at Agamemnon:

"Son of Atreus, what's your problem now?
What do you lack? Your huts are stuffed with bronze,
plenty of choice women, too—all presents
we Achaeans give you as our leader,
whenever we have seized some Trojan town.

Or are you in need of still more gold,
a ransom fetched by some horse-taming Trojan
for his son tied up and delivered here
by me or by some other Argive soldier?
Or do you want a young girl to stash away,
so you're the only one who gets to screw her?
It's just not fair that you, our leader,
have botched things up so badly for us,
Achaea's sons. But you men, you soldiers,
cowardly comrades, disgraceful people,
you're Achaean women, not warriors.
Let's sail home in our ships, leave this man,
our king, in Troy here to enjoy his loot.
That way he might come to recognize
whether or not we're of some use to him.
Now Agamemnon has even shamed Achilles,
a much finer warrior than himself,
stealing a prize, keeping it for his own use.
Then there's Achilles, no heart's anger there,
who lets it all just happen. If he didn't,
this bullying of yours, son of Atreus,
would be your last."

Thersites yelled out these insults
right at Agamemnon, the people's shepherd,
abusing him. Noble Odysseus stood up quickly
to face Thersites. Scowling, he lashed out sternly:

"Shut up, chatterbox. You're a champion talker.
But don't try to have it out with kings,
all by yourself. Let me tell you something—
of all those who came to Troy with Atreus' sons,
you're the most disgraceful. So shut your mouth.
No more words from you abusing our kings,
seeking to sneak back home. How this war will end,
we've no idea—whether Achaea's sons
will go back home successful or will fail.
You sit here, railing at Agamemnon,
Atreus' son, leader of his people,
because Danaan heroes have given him
so many gifts—but that's a cheap insult.
So I'll tell you how things are going to be.
If I find you being so foolish any more,
then let Odysseus' head no longer stay

upon his shoulders, let him no longer
be called the father of Telemachus,
if I don't grab you, rip off all your clothes,
cloak and tunic, down to your cock and balls,
and beat you back to the fast ships in tears,
whipping you in shame from our assembly."

Saying this, Odysseus lashed out with the sceptre,
hitting Thersites hard across his back and shoulders.
He doubled up in pain, shedding many tears.
In the middle of Thersites' back sprang up
bloody welts beneath the golden sceptre.
He sat down, afraid and hurt, peering around,
like an idiot, and rubbing away his tears.
The soldiers, though discontent, laughed uproariously,
saying to one another:

"Comrades,
before now Odysseus has done good things
thinking up fine plans and leading us in war.
But that's the best thing he's done by far
to help the Argives, beating that chatterer.
Thersites' bold spirit won't urge him on
to trash our kings again with his abuse."

That is how the soldiers talked together. Then Odysseus,
destroyer of cities, rose up, grasping the sceptre.
At his side, bright-eyed Athena, looking like a herald,
silenced troops, so Achaeans close by and far away
could hear him and follow his advice. Odysseus,
bearing in mind their common good, spoke out:

"Son of Atreus,
now the Achaeans wish to disgrace you,
their king, shame you before all mortal men.
They're refusing now to keep their promise,
the one they all swore to while sailing here,
still on their way from horse-breeding Argos,
that oath that they'd return after we'd destroyed
Troy's strong walls. Like widows or small children,
they're whining to each other to go home.
But going back demoralized is bad.
A man who spends one month aboard his ship,
away from his wife, becomes downhearted

when winter gusts and stormy seas confine him.
This is now the ninth revolving year
we've been waiting here, on this very spot.
So I don't think that badly of Achaeans
in their frustration here by their curved ships.
Still, it's shameful to go home with nothing.
My friends, be patient, give us all more time,
until Calchas' prophecy comes true or not. [300]
We all have kept in mind what he foretold.
You all are witnesses, the ones whom Fate
has not yet visited to carry off in death.
Not long ago, when our Achaean ships
gathered at Aulis, bringing disaster
for Priam and his Trojans, we sacrificed
on holy altars placed around a spring
hundreds of perfect creatures to the gods,
the immortals—underneath that tree,
a lovely plane tree, where bright water flowed.
And then a great omen appeared, a snake,
blood-red along its back, a dreadful sight,
a thing sent out by Zeus into the daylight.[1]
Out from under the altar that snake slithered, [310]
darting for the plane tree, where there lay
tiny, new-born sparrows, eight fledglings,
huddled under foliage at the very top.
The ninth one was the mother of the batch.
The serpent ate the infants, who screamed with fear.
The mother fluttered around here and there,
lamenting her dear chicks. The coiled serpent
snatched the crying mother by the wing.
Once the beast had gobbled up the sparrow
and her chicks, the god who'd made the snake appear
did something to it there for all to see.
Crooked Cronos' son changed that snake to stone!
We stood there astounded at what we'd seen— [320]
a horror desecrating the gods' sacrifice.
Calchas at once spoke out in prophecy:

'Long-haired Achaeans, why stand there so mute?
Counsellor Zeus has made manifest to us
a tremendous omen. It has come late,
and will take many years to be fulfilled,

[1]Aulis was the place where the Achaean forces assembled before setting out against Troy ten years before.

but its fame will never die. Just as that snake
swallowed the sparrow's brood, eight in all,
with the mother who bore them the ninth one killed,
so that's how long we'll fight them over there.
In the tenth year we'll take Troy, wide streets and all.'

That's what Calchas said. Now it's coming true. [330]
So come on, all you well-armed Achaeans,
let's stay, until we seize Priam's great city."

At this speech Argives gave out an enormous cheer.
The ships on all sides resounded ominously,
as Achaeans roared out their endorsement of his words.
Then Nestor, the Geranian horseman, cried out:

"Alas! In our assembly you're all infants,
silly children, with no sense of war's events.
What will happen to our agreements,
the oaths we made? Let fire consume [340]
our strategies, men's plans, our treaties,
ratified with wine and handshakes, those things
we used to trust. For now we fight ourselves,
arguing like this. We can't find any remedy,
though we've been sitting here for years.
Son of Atreus, you must maintain with force
your previous plan to lead the Argive troops
directly to the harsh demands of war.
And let those one or two be damned,
the men who don't think like Achaeans,
the few of them who yearn to go back home—
something they'll find impossible to do—
before we learn the truth or falsehood
of what was promised by aegis-bearing Zeus.
For I assure you mighty Zeus nodded assent [350]
on that very day the Argives put to sea,
bearing Troy's destructive fate in their swift ships.
On our right hand, Zeus hurled down lightning bolts,
signs manifesting his good will to us.
So let no man run off to get back home—
not before he's had sex with some Trojan's wife,
payment for Helen's miseries, her cries of pain.
If any man is really keen to get back home,
let him just set hand to his well-benched ship,
he'll come face to face, in plain view of all,

with death, his fate. You, my lord, think carefully—
think about what someone else suggests.
Don't simply throw out what I say to you.
Agamemnon, set men in groups by tribes and clans,
so clans encourage clans, tribes bolster tribes.
If you do that, if Achaeans all obey,
you'll then recognize who's good and bad
among your leaders and your men. Ranged like that,
the two groups will stand against each other.
You'll then know whether failure to take Troy
stems from the gods' will or craven soldiers
or ineptitude in managing the war."

Mighty Agamemnon then answered Nestor:

"Old man, in our assembly once again
you win out over all Achaea's sons.
O Father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo—
if I only had ten such counsellors
among Achaeans, king Priam's city
would soon fall, be taken, sacked at our hands.
But aegis-bearing Zeus, son of Cronos,
keeps showering me with grievous troubles.
He throws me into pointless bitter fights.
So Achilles and I fought for that girl,
yelling at each other. The first fault was mine.
But if we two agreed, were of one mind,
then Troy's fate would be sealed without delay,
without a moment's pause. But let's go off to eat,
so we can resume the fight. Every one of you,
get your spears and shields prepared for action.
Feed your swift-footed horses properly.
Inspect the chariots with a careful eye,
so we can stand all day and battle Ares,
hateful god of war. We'll get no respite,
not even for a moment, except at dusk,
when nightfall separates the frenzied soldiers.
Chest straps on our protective body shields
will be soaked through with sweat. Around our spears
hands will grow numb. Horses, too, will sweat,
under the strain of hauling polished chariots.
But if I see a man coming out to fight
reluctantly, hanging back by our curved ships,
he'll not escape being food for dogs and birds."

Argives answered Agamemnon with a mighty roar,
like waves by a steep cliff crashing on the rock face,
lashed by South Wind's blasts, always foaming on the rock,
whipped on by every wind gusting here and there.
The men leapt up, moved off, scattering to ships,
set fires by their huts, and each man ate his dinner.
Every man then sacrificed to the immortal gods,
praying to escape death and war's killing zone.
Agamemnon, king of men, sacrificed an ox,
a fat one, five years old, to Zeus, exalted son of Cronos.
He summoned the best senior men of all Achaeans—
first, Nestor and Idomeneus, then both Ajaxes,
then Diomedes, Tydeus's son. Seventh came Odysseus.
Warrior Menelaus arrived without a summons,
knowing in his heart all Agamemnon's worries.
They stood by the ox, with barley grains for sprinkling.
Then Agamemnon prayed on their behalf:

"Most powerful Zeus,
exalted lord of thunder clouds, Zeus,
who dwells in heaven, grant my prayer—
May the sun not go down, nor darkness come,
before I have cast down Priam's palace,
covered it with dust, destroyed its doors
in all-consuming fire, and with my bronze sword
sliced to shreds the tunic on Hector's chest.
May many of his comrades lie beside him,
face down on the ground, teeth grinding dirt."

So he prayed. But Cronos' son did not grant his wish.
Zeus took the offering but increased their suffering.
Once the men had prayed, scattering barley grain,
they pulled back the beast's head, slit its throat, flayed it,
sliced thigh bones out and hid them in twin layers of fat,
with raw meat on top. They cooked these on split wood,
then placed the innards on spits in Hephaestus' fire.
When the wrapped-up thigh bones were completely cooked,
and they had tasted samples of the inner organs,
they chopped up the rest, arranged the meat on spits,
cooked it carefully, then drew it from the fire.
This work finished, the men prepared a meal and ate.
Each soldier's appetite was fully satisfied—
all dined equally. When every man had eaten

as much food and drink as anyone could wish,
Geranian horseman Nestor was the first to speak.

"Lord Agamemnon, son of Atreus,
king of men, let's end our discussions now
and not postpone work given by the gods.
Come, let heralds of bronze-clad Achaeans
summon all the soldiers to assembly.
Let's move together across the wide front,
rouse Achaea's men with blood-lust for war."

Agamemnon, king of men, agreed with Nestor.
He ordered clear-voiced heralds immediately
to sound the battle call to long-haired Achaeans.
The call went out. Troops assembled on the run.
Around Agamemnon, kings nurtured by the gods
rushed to establish order. With them strode Athena,
her eyes glittering, holding up the aegis
her priceless, ageless, eternal aegis,
its hundred golden tassels quivering,
each finely woven, valued at a hundred oxen.
With this, she sped on through Achaean ranks,
like lightning, firing soldiers' hearts for war.
As she passed, she roused in men that hot desire
to fight, to kill. At once she made each man feel war
far sweeter than returning home, finer than sailing
in the hollow ships back to his dear native land.
Just as an all-consuming fire burns through huge forests
on a mountain top, and men far off can see its light,
so, as soldiers marched out, their glittering bronze
blazed through the sky to heaven, an amazing sight.
As many birds in flight—geese, cranes, and long-necked swans—
in an Asian meadow by the flowing river Caystrios,
fly here and there, proud of their strong wings, and call,
as they settle, the meadow resounding with the noise,
so the many groups of soldiers moved out then
from ships and huts onto Scamander's plain.
Under men's and horses' feet the earth rang ominously.
Then they stood there, in that flowered meadow,
by the Scamander, an immense array,
as numerous as leaves and flowers in springtime.
Like flies swarming around shepherds' pens in spring,
when pails fill up with milk, so the Achaeans,
a huge long-haired host, marched out onto that plain

against the Trojans, eager to destroy them.
Just as goatherds sort out with ease the wandering beasts,
all mixed up in the pasture, so through all the army,
the leaders organized the troops for battle.
Among them powerful Agamemnon roamed,
eyes and head like Zeus, who loves the thunder,
waist like Ares, god of war, chest like Poseidon.
Just as in cattle herds the bull stands out above the rest,
by far the most conspicuous amid the cows,
so on that day Zeus made Agamemnon stand
pre-eminent among the troops, first of heroes.

Now, you Muses living on Olympus, tell me—
for you are goddesses and know everything,
while we hear only stories, knowing nothing certain—
tell me the leaders of Danaans, the rulers.
It would be impossible for me to tell
the story of or name those in the common mass,
not even with ten tongues, ten mouths, an untiring voice,
a heart of bronze, unless the Olympian Muses,
daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, could sing of the men,
all those who came to Troy. But I shall list the leaders,
commanders of the ships, and all the ships in full.

Peneleus, Leitus, and Arcesilaus
led the Boeotians, with Clonius and Prothoenor.
Their men came from Hyria, rocky Aulis,
Schoenus, Scolus, mountainous Eteonus,
Thespeia, Graia, spacious Mycalassus,
men holding Harma, Eilesium, Erythrae;
men holding Eleon, Hyle, Peteon,
Ocalea, the well-built fortress Medeon,
Copae, Eutresis, Thisbe, city full of doves;
men from Coronea, grassy Haliartus;
men from Plataea, Glisas, those who held
fortified Lower Thebe and sacred Onchestus,
with Poseidon's splendid grove; men from Arne,
land rich in grapes, Midea, sacred Nisa,
and distant Anthedon. Fifty ships came with these men,
each with one hundred and twenty young Boeotians.

Men from Aspledon and Minyan Orchomenus
were led by Ascalaphus and Ialmenus,
sons of Ares. Astyoche bore them in Actor's house,

Azeus' son, to mighty Ares. She, a modest virgin,
went upstairs, where the god lay with her in secret.
These men brought with them a fleet of thirty ships.

Schedius and Epistrophus, sons of Iphitus,
the son of great-hearted Naubolus,
commanded Phoceans—men from Cyparissus,
rocky Pytho, holy Crisa, Daulis, and Panopeus;
men from Anemorea and Hyampolis;
from around the sacred river Cephisus,
from Lilaea, beside Cephissus's springs.
Forty black ships these two leaders brought with them.
Moving around, as soldiers armed themselves,
they set Phocean ranks by the Boeotians, on their left.

The Locrians were led by swift Ajax, son of Oïleus,
the lesser Ajax, not the greater Ajax,
son of Telamon, but a much smaller man.
Though he was short and wore cloth armour,
among all Hellenes and Achaeans he excelled
in fighting with his spear. Locrians came from Cynus,
Opous, Calliarus, Bessa, Scarphe,
lovely Aegeiae, Tarphe, Thronion,
and from around the river Boagrius.
Ajax brought forty black ships of Locrians
living across from sacred Euboea.

Elephenor, offspring of Ares, son of Chalcodon,
great-hearted leader, commanded the Abantes,
who live to breathe war's fury, soldiers from Euboea,
Chalcis, Eretria, wine-rich Histiaea, Cerinthus by the sea,
men from the steep fortress Dium, Carystus, and Styra.
These swift Abantes came with Elephenor,
their hair grown long behind, warrior spearmen,
filled with fierce desire to tear apart their enemies,
to pierce armed bodies with their long ash spears.
Forty black ships came with Elephenor.

Soldiers came from that well-built fortress Athens,
land of proud Erechtheus, whom Athena raised,
after he was born out of the harvest land.
She placed him in Athens, at her own rich shrine.
To him Athenian youth make sacrificial offerings,
with bulls and rams as each year comes around.

Menestheus, son of Peteos, led these men.
In tactics no one alive on earth could match him
for deploying chariots or shield-bearing men.
Nestor, from a previous age, was his only rival.
Menestheus brought with him fifty black ships.

From Salamis Ajax commanded twelve ships.
He organized his men in their positions,
so they stood adjacent to Athenian ranks.

Warriors from Argos, fortified Tiryns, Hermione,
Asine, both with deep bays, Troezene, Eionae, [560]
vine-rich Epidaurus, Achaean youth from Aegina, Mases—
all these were led by mighty fighter Diomedes,
skilled in war cries, and by Sthenelus, dear son
of famous Capaneus. There was a third leader,
god-like Euryalus, Mecisteus's son, son of lord Talaus.
But warlike Diomedes was the main commander.
These men brought with them eighty black ships.

Troops from the strong fortress Mycenae, rich Corinth,
well-built Cleonae, Orneae, lovely Araethyrea, [570]
Sicyon, whose first king was Adrestus,
with men from Hyperesia, lofty Gonoessa,
Pellene, from Aegium, men from coastal regions
and wide Helice—of these men Agamemnon,
son of Atreus, led one hundred ships.
The most troops came with him, the finest men by far.
In their midst, Agamemnon put on a proud display,
dressed in gleaming armour, prominent among all heroes.
He was the best of all, because he had most men. [580]

Men from Lacedaemon, land of ravines, Pharis,
Sparta, Messe, where doves congregate,
men living in Bryseae, beautiful Augeiae,
Amyclae, coastal Helos, men from Laäs,
from around Oetylus—all these in sixty ships
were led by powerful, warlike Menelaus,
Agamemnon's brother. Among these warriors,
as they armed themselves some distance off,
Menelaus strode—confident, courageous—
rousing his troops for war, his heart passionate
to avenge Helen's struggles, her cries of pain. [590]

Men came from Pylos, lovely Arene, Thryum,
by Alpheus ford, well-built Aipy, Cyparisseis,
Amphigenea, Pteleum, Helos, Dorium,
where the Muses met the Thracian Thamyris,
and stopped his singing. He was coming back
from Oechalia, from the court of Eurytus the king.
He had boasted his singing would surpass the Muses,
daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, should they compete.
In their anger the Muses mutilated Thamyris,
taking away his godlike power of song,
and making him forget his skill in playing the lyre. [600]
Geranian horseman Nestor led these men
in a flotilla of ninety hollow ships.

Men from Arcadia, from below steep mount Cyllene,
near Aepytus' tomb, where men excel in combat
hand to hand, troops from Pheneus, Orchomenus,
rich in flocks, Rhipe, Stratie, windy Enispe,
Tegea, lovely Mantinea, Stymphelus,
Parrhasia—mighty Agapenor led these men,
Ancaeus's son, in sixty ships. Many Arcadians
came in every ship, skilled fighters. Agamemnon, [610]
king of men, had himself provided well-decked ships
for them to sail across the wine-dark ocean,
for these men lacked expertise in matters of the sea.

Soldiers from Bouprasium, fair Elis, those parts
bounded by Hyrmine, coastal Myrsinus,
the rock of Olene, and Alesium—these troops
had four commanders, each with ten swift ships.
The many Epeians on board were commanded
by Amphimachus, son of Cteatus, and Thalpius, [620]
son of Eurytus, descended both from Actor.
Third leader was Diores, son of Amarynces.
Fourth was Polyxeinus, son of Agasthenes, Augeas's son.

Men from Doulichium, sacred Echinean islands,
living across the sea from Elis, were commanded
by warlike Meges, son of Phyleus, the horseman,
loved of Zeus. Phyleus, angry with his father,
moved to Doulichium. Meges brought with him
forty black ships in his flotilla.

Odysseus led on
the Cephallenians, soldiers from Ithaca,
well wooded Neritum, Crocylea,
rugged Aegilips, from Zacynthus, Samos,
both those inhabiting the mainland
and those from cities on the facing shore.
Odysseus, as wise as Zeus, led these troops,
who came with him in twelve black ships.

Thoas, son of Andraemon, led the Aetolians,
men from Pleuron, Olenus, Pylene,
coastal Chalchis, and rocky Calydon.
Proud king Oeneus had no living sons,
and he himself was dead, as was fair-haired Meleager.
Thus, Thoas ruled alone. He brought forty black ships.

Famous spearman Idomeneus led the Cretans
from Cnossus, fortified Gortyn, Lyctus, Miletus,
chalky Lycastus, Phaestus, Rhytium,
both populous towns, with other warriors
from Crete's one hundred cities. Idomeneus,
famous for fighting with a spear, led these troops,
along with Meriones, as skilled at killing men
as Ares, god of war. They brought eighty black ships.

Tlepolemus, son of Hercules, a huge brave man,
led nine ships of courageous troops, men from Rhodes,
split into three divisions—from Lindus, Ialysus,
and chalky Cameirus—all led by Tlepolemus,
famous spearman, born to Astyocheia
and mighty Hercules, who'd taken her from Ephyra,
by the river Selleis, after razing many towns
full of vital warriors. Once he'd grown up
in their well-furnished home, Tlepolemus killed
his father's uncle, Licymnius, a well-loved old man,
a great fighter, too. At once Tlepolemus built a fleet,
assembled many men, and fled away. Other sons
and grandsons of great Hercules had threatened him.
He suffered badly, until he came to Rhodes,
whose people live in three groups split by tribes.
Zeus, who governs gods and men, loved them,
and so the son of Cronos blessed them with great wealth.

Nireus brought three well-balanced ships from Syme.
The son of Aglaea and lord Charopus,
the handsomest of all Danaans who sailed to Troy,
after Achilles, who had no equal. But he was weak,
because he had few troops.

Men from Nisyrus,
Crapathus, Casus, Cos, Eurypylus's city,
the Calydnian islands had Pheidippus and Antiphus,
sons of lord Thessalus, Hercules's son, as leaders.
With them came thirty hollow ships.

All the troops from Pelasgian Argos, Alos,
men living in Alope, Trachis, from Phthia,
and Hellas, where lovely women live, men called
Myrmidons, Hellenes, Achaeans—these troops
Achilles led in fifty ships. But their minds were not set
on the grim clash of war. They had no one to lead them.
Godlike Achilles, swift of foot, sat by his ships,
still angry over fair-complexioned Briseis, seized
from Lyrnessus after heavy fighting.
Achilles had laid waste Lyrnessus and Thebe's walls,
overthrown the spearmen Mynes and Epistrophus,
sons of lord Euenus, son of king Selepius.
Because of her, Achilles sat still grieving.
But soon enough he would rouse himself again.

Troops from Phylace, flowering Pyrasus,
shrine of Demeter, Iton, where flocks breed,
Antrum by the sea, and grassy Pteleum—
brave Protesilaus had led these men, while still alive.
Now the black earth held him. In Phylace,
he left behind a wife to tear her cheeks in grief,
home half complete. Some Dardanian killed him,
as he jumped on Trojan soil, the first on shore,
far ahead of all Achaeans. His soldiers lamented
the loss of their chief, but did not lack a leader.
Warlike Podarces, son of Iphicles, led them—
the man owned many flocks and was a young blood brother
to Protesilaus. But that great-hearted warlike soldier
was an older, better man. So these troops had a leader,
though they missed the noble one they lost.
Podarces brought forty black ships along with him.

Troops from Pherae by Lake Boebea, from Boebeïs,
Glaphyrae, well-built Iolcus—these came
in eleven ships, commanded by Eumelus,
Admetus's well-loved son, born to him by Alcestis,
loveliest of Pelias's daughters.

Troops from Methone, Thaumacia, Meliboea,
and rugged Olizon, were led by Philoctetes,
the skilled archer, in seven ships, each with fifty men,
expert archers. But Philoctetes stayed behind on Lemnos, [720]
the sacred island, in horrific pain, abandoned.
Achaea's sons had left him there in agony,
wounded by a snake bite. He lay there in torment.
But soon the Argives by their ships would have reason
to remember him.[1] These soldiers missed their chief,
but were now led by Medon, Oïleus's bastard son,
whom Rhene bore to Oïleus, destroyer of cities.
So Medon was the one who set their ranks in order.

Men from Tricca, rocky Ithome, Oechalia,
city of Eurytus, the Oechalian, [730]
were commanded by two sons of Asclepius,
skilled healers, Podaleirus and Machaon.
They brought thirty hollow ships with them.
Troops from Ormenius, from the fount of Hyperea,
from Asterius, from Titanus with its white hilltops—
these men were commanded by Eurypylus,
fine son of Euaemon, in forty black ships.
Men from Argissa, Gyrtone, Orthe, Elone,
the white city Oloösson—these troops were led
by Polypoetes, a steadfast soldier, [740]
son of Perithous, himself son to immortal Zeus.
That famous lady Hippodameia bore
Polypoetes to Perithous on that very day
he took revenge out on those hairy monsters,
and beat them from mount Pelion towards the Aithices.
But Polypoetes was not the sole commander.
With him was Leonteus, a warlike man,
son of proud-hearted Coronus, Caeneus's son.
With them they brought forty black ships.

[1]The Achaean forces abandoned Philoctetes on Lemnos, because they could not stand his cries of agony or the smell of his wound. However, later in the narrative of the war (although not in the *Iliad*) Philoctetes's bow becomes an essential weapon in the capture of Troy.

Gouneus brought twenty-two ships from Cyphus.
With him sailed the Enienes and Peraebians,
reliable fighting men from cold Dodona,
who work by the lovely river Titaressus,
which empties its beautiful, flowing waters
into the Peneus. These do not intermingle
with the silver stream of the Peneus,
but flow along on top of them, like oil.
For the Titaressus is a branch of the river Styx,
dread waters by which the most solemn oaths are sealed.

Prothous, son of Tenthredon, led the Magnetes,
from the region round Peneus and mount Pelion,
where leaves are always trembling in the wind.
With him swift Prothous brought forty black ships.

These men were leaders, rulers of the Danaans.
Muse, tell me this—Which of them were the very best
of those who came over with the sons of Atreus?

The best horses were those of Admetus, son of Pheres.
Eumelus drove them. As fast as birds, they matched
each other in colour, age, and height along the back.
Bred by Apollo of the silver bow in Perea,
both mares, they carried terror with them.
Of the men, by far the best was Ajax, son of Telamon,
but only while Achilles did not join in battle.
For Achilles was the better man by far.
The horses carrying Peleus's son, man without equal,
were much better, too. But he stayed behind,
by his curved seaworthy ships, still enraged
at Agamemnon, Atreus' son, the people's shepherd.
His soldiers amused themselves beside the breaking sea
by throwing spears and discus or with archery.
Their horses stood near their chariots, browsing on lotus
and parsley from the marsh. Their masters' chariots,
fully covered, remained stationed in the huts.
Missing their warlike leader, these troops strolled
here and there throughout the camp and did not fight.

The soldiers, like a fire consuming all the land,
moved on out. Earth groaned under them, just as it does
when Zeus, who loves thunder, in his anger lashes

the land around Typhoeus, among the Arimi,
where people say Typhoeus has his lair.
That's how the earth groaned loudly under marching feet.[1]

Then wind-swift Iris came to Troy as messenger
from aegis-bearing Zeus carrying grim news.
Trojans had summoned an assembly by Priam's palace gates.
There all had gathered, young and old. Standing by Priam,
swift-footed Iris spoke, sounding like Polites, Priam's son. [790]
He'd been stationed as a scout—fully confident
of his skill at running—at old Aesyetes' tomb,
right at the top, waiting for the moment
Achaeans moved out from their ships.
Looking just like Polites, swift-footed Iris said:

"Priam, old man, you always love to talk
about irrelevant things, as you did earlier
in peacetime. But now this war continues
relentlessly. I've gone to battle many times.
I've never seen an army like this one, so many men,
as numerous as leaves or grains of sand, [800]
coming across the plain to assault our city.
Hector, I call on you, on you above all, to follow
my instructions—the numerous allies here
in Priam's great city all speak different languages
from far-scattered regions. So let each man
issue orders to the ones he leads,
let him now organize his countrymen,
then lead them out to battle."

Iris spoke. Hector understood her words.
Immediately he ended the assembly.
Men rushed to arm themselves. They opened up the gates.
Troops streamed out, infantry and horses. A huge din arose. [810]
In the plain, some distance off, a high hill stood by itself,
right before the city. People call it Batieia,
but the gods know it as the tomb of agile Myrine.
Here the Trojans and their allies marshalled forces.

Hector of the flashing helmet, Priam's son,
led out the Trojans. With him marched in arms

[1]Typhoeus was a primordial monster who attempted to overthrow the Olympian gods. Zeus buried him alive under Mount Etna in Sicily.

the largest contingent, the finest men by far,
eager to get working with their spears.
Aeneas, Anchises's worthy son, led the Dardanians.
Goddess Aphrodite had borne him to Anchises.
She had lain with him on the slopes of Ida.
But Aeneas was not their sole commander.
With him were both Antenor's sons, Archelochus
and Acamas, extremely skilled in every form of war.

Men from Zeleia, on mount Ida's lowest slope,
wealthy Trojans, men who drink dark waters
of the river Aesepus were led by Pandarus,
Lycaon's worthy son, whom Apollo had taught archery.
Soldiers from Adresteia, Apaesus, Pityeia,
steep Mount Tereia were commanded by Adrestus
and Amphius in cloth armour, Merops's sons from Percote,
who knew more of prophecy than anyone.
He gave his children orders to stay away from war,
which eats men up. They did not obey him.
Deadly black fates had called them on to battle.

Troops from Percote, Practius, Sestos, Abydos,
holy Arisbe—these troops were led by Asius,
son of Hyrtacus, an important ruler.
Arius's huge, tawny horses brought him
from Arisbe, from the river Selleïs.
Hippothous led tribes of spearmen from Pelasgia,
fertile Larisa, along with Pylaeus, offshoots of Ares,
sons of Pelasgian Lethus, Teutamus' son.

Acamas and warlike Peirous led the Thracians,
those men bounded by the Hellespont's strong flow.

Euphemus, son of god-nurtured Troezenus,
son of Ceos, led Ciconian spearmen.
Pyraechmes led archers from Paeonia,
from far off Amydon, by the Axius,
a broad flowing river, whose moving waters
are the loveliest on earth.

Pylaemenes,
a brave soldier, commanded Paphlagonians
from Enetae, where herds of mules run wild,
men from Cytorus, from around Sesamus,

those with fine homes by the stream Parthenius,
from Cromna, Aegialus, high Erithini
Odius and Epistrophus led the Halizoni
from distant Alybe, where men mine silver.
Chromis and prophet Ennomus led the Mysians.
But Ennomus's great skill in prophecy
did not allow him to evade his deadly fate.
Swift Achilles, descendant of Aeacus, killed him
in the river where he slaughtered other Trojans.
Phorcys and noble Ascanius led up Phrygians
from far-off Ascania, men keen for war.

Mesthles and Antiphus commanded the Maeonians.
Sons of Talaemenes, born to Gygaea,
a water nymph, they led Maeonians
from around the foot of Mount Tmolus.
Nastes led the Carians, men with a strange language,
from Miletus, Phthires, with its wooded mountain,
Maeander's waters and high peaks of Mount Mycale.
Nastes and Amphimachus, noble sons of Nomion
were their leaders. Nastes went to war carrying gold,
like a girl. What a fool! His gold did not spare him
a wretched death. He died in the river,
at the hand of swift Achilles, descended from Aeacus.
Fiery Achilles carried off his gold.

Sarpedon and noble Glaucus commanded Lycians,
from distant Lycia, by the swirling river Xanthus.

BOOK THREE
PARIS, MENELAUS, AND HELEN

[The armies move together; Paris volunteers to fight Menelaus in single combat; both sides prepare to make a truce; Iris visits Helen; Helen goes to the Scaean Gate, looks at the Achaean troops with Priam; Priam leaves Troy to visit the armies and administer the treaty oath; Agamemnon utters the prayer for the treaty; Paris and Menelaus fight in single combat; Aphrodite rescues Paris; Paris and Helen meet in Troy; Agamemnon demands compensation from the Trojans.]

Once troops had formed in ranks under their own leaders,
Trojans marched out, clamouring like birds, like cranes
screeching overhead, when winter's harsh storms drive them off,
screaming as they move over the flowing Ocean,
bearing death and destruction to the Pygmies,
launching their savage attack on them at dawn.[1]
Achaeans came on in silence, breathing ferocity,
determined to stand by each other in the fight.
Just as South Wind spreads mist around the mountain peak, [10]
something shepherds hate, but thieves prefer to night, 10
for one can see only a stone's throw up ahead,
so, as men marched, dense dust clouds rose from underfoot.
They advanced at full speed out across the plain.
The two armies moved in close towards each other.
Then godlike Paris stepped out, as Trojan champion,
on his shoulders a leopard skin. He had bow and sword.
Brandishing two bronze-tipped spears, he challenged
the best men in the whole Achaean force to fight—
a single combat, to the death. War-loving Menelaus [20]
noticed Alexander striding there, his troops 20
bunched up in ranks behind him, and he rejoiced,
like a famished lion finding a large carcass—
antlered stag or wild goat—and devouring it at once,
though fierce young hunters and swift dogs attack.[2]
So Menelaus was pleased to see Paris there,
right before his eyes. Menelaus had in mind

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[1]The Pygmies in Greek mythology were a race of small people who were constantly at war with the cranes who migrated to their territory (they should not be confused with the actual African pygmies about whom the Greeks had no sure knowledge).

[2]Alexander was another name for Paris.

taking revenge on the man who had dishonoured him.[1]
At once Menelaus jumped from his chariot,
down to the ground, clutching his weapons in his fists.
When godlike Alexander saw Menelaus there,
among the fighters at the front, his heart sank.
He moved back into the ranks, among his comrades,
avoiding death. Just as a man stumbles on a snake
in some mountainous ravine and gives way, jumping back,
his limbs trembling, his cheeks pale, so godlike Paris,
afraid of Atreus' son, slid back into proud Trojan ranks.
Seeing this, Hector went at Alexander, insulting him:

"Despicable Paris, handsomest of men,
but woman-mad seducer. How I wish
you never had been born or died unmarried.
That's what I'd prefer, so much better
than to live in shame, hated by others.
Now long-haired Achaeans are mocking us,
saying we've put forward as a champion
one who looks good, but lacks a strong brave mind.
Was this what you were like back on that day
you gathered up your faithful comrades,
sailed sea-worthy ships across the ocean,
went out among a foreign people,
and carried back from that far-off land
a lovely woman linked by marriage
to warrior spearmen, thus bringing on
great suffering for your father and your city,
all your people—joy to your enemies
and to yourself disgrace? And can you now
not face Menelaus? If so, you'd learn
the kind of man he is whose wife you took.
You'd get no help then from your lyre, long hair,
good looks—Aphrodite's gifts—once face down,
lying in the dirt. Trojans must be timid men.
If not, for all the evil things you've done
by now you'd wear a garment made of stones."

To Hector godlike Alexander then replied:

[1]Paris (Alexander) had visited Sparta and run off back to Troy with Helen, Menelaus's wife, and a considerable amount of treasure. Despite a number of requests from the Achaeans for the return of Helen and her property, the Trojans refused to comply. That was the immediate cause of the Trojan War.

"Hector, you're right in what you say against me.
Those complaints of yours are not unjustified.
Your heart is tireless, like a wood-chopping axe
wielded by a craftsman cutting timber for a ship.
The axe makes his power stronger. Your mind's like that—
the spirit in your chest is fearless. But don't blame me
for golden Aphrodite's lovely gifts.
Men can't reject fine presents from the gods,
those gifts they personally bestow on us,
though no man would take them of his own free will.
You want me now to march into battle.
Then get the Trojans and Achaeans to sit down.
Put me and war-loving Menelaus
in their midst to fight it out for Helen [70]
and all her property. The one who wins
comes off victorious, the better man,
let him take all the goods and lead her home,
as his wife. Let others swear a solemn oath,
as friends, either to live on in fertile Troy
or to return to horse-breeding Argos,
land of the lovely women of Achaea."

Paris spoke. Hearing those words, Hector felt great joy.
He went to the middle ground, between the armies,
halted Trojan troops, grasping the centre of his spear shaft.
The men sat. But long-haired Achaeans kept on shooting,
attempting to hit Hector with rocks and arrows. [80]
Then Agamemnon, king of men, roared out at them:

"Argives, Achaean lads, stop hurling things.
Hector of the flashing helmet wants to talk to us."

Once Agamemnon spoke, the men stopped fighting
quickly falling silent. Hector then addressed both sides:

"You Trojans, you well-armed Achaeans,
listen now to what Paris has to say,
the man whose actions brought about our fight.
He bids the other Trojans, all Achaeans,
set their weapons on the fertile ground.
He and war-loving Menelaus here [90]
will fight it out alone between the armies
for Helen and for all her property.
Whichever one comes out victorious,

the stronger man, let him seize all the goods,
and take the woman as his wife back home.
Let others swear a solemn oath as friends."

So Hector spoke. The soldiers all grew silent.
Then Menelaus, loud in war, answered Hector:

"Listen now to me. More than anyone,
my heart has suffered pain. So now I think
Argives and Trojans should part company,
since you have suffered many hardships,
thanks to the fight between myself and Paris,
a fight that he began. Whichever one of us
death takes, our fate, let that man perish.
You others quickly go your separate ways.
So bring two lambs here—white male, black female—
for earth and sun. We'll bring one more for Zeus.
Lead out great Priam to administer the oath
in person, for his sons are over-proud,
untrustworthy. No man should transgress
by violence oaths sworn in Zeus's name.
Young men's minds are fickle. An older man
who joins them thinks of past and future,
so with both groups things happen for the best."

Achaeans and Trojans were elated, full of hope
that wretched war would end. They pulled the chariots back
into the ranks, climbed out, disarmed, and placed their weapons
next to each other on the ground, with little room
between both groups. Hector sent two heralds to the city,
to fetch the lambs with speed and summon Priam.
Agamemnon sent Talthybius to the hollow ships,
instructing him to bring a sacrificial lamb.
Talthybius obeyed god-like Agamemnon's orders.

Then Iris came as messenger to white-armed Helen
taking on the image of her sister-in-law,
wife of Antenor's son, fine Helicaon.
Her name was Laodice, of all Priam's daughters
the most beautiful. She found Helen in her room,
weaving a large cloth, a double purple cloak,
creating pictures of the many battle scenes
between horse-taming Trojans and bronze-clad Achaeans,

wars they suffered for her sake at the hands of Ares.
Standing near by, swift-footed Iris said:

"Come here, dear girl,
Look at the amazing things going on.
Horse-taming Trojans and bronze-clad Achaeans,
men who earlier were fighting one another
in wretched war out there on the plain,
both keen for war's destruction, are sitting still.
Alexander and war-loving Menelaus
are going to fight for you with their long spears.
The man who triumphs will call you his dear wife."

With these words the goddess set in Helen's heart
sweet longing for her former husband, city, parents.
Covering herself with a white shawl, she left the house,
shedding tears. She did not go alone, but took with her
two attendants, Aethrae, daughter of Pittheus,
and ox-eyed Clymene. They soon reached the Scaean Gates.
Oucalegaon and Antenor, both prudent men,
elder statesmen, sat beside the Scaean Gates,
with Priam and his entourage—Panthous, Thymoetes,
Lampus, Clytius, and brave Hicataeon. Old men now,
their fighting days were finished, but they all spoke well.
They sat there, on the tower, these Trojan elders,
like cicadas perched up on a forest branch, chirping
soft, delicate sounds. Seeing Helen approach the tower,
they spoke softly to each other—their words had wings:

"There's nothing shameful about the fact
that Trojans and well-armed Achaeans
have endured great suffering a long time
over such a woman—just like a goddess,
immortal, awe-inspiring. She's beautiful.
But nonetheless let her go back with the ships
Let her not stay here, a blight on us, our children."

So they talked. Priam then called out to Helen.

"Come here, dear child. Sit down in front of me,
so you can see your first husband, your friends,
your relatives. As far as I'm concerned,
it's not your fault. For I blame the gods.
They drove me to wage this wretched war

against Achaeans. Tell me, who's that large man,
over there, that impressive, strong Achaean?
Others may be taller by a head than him,
but I've never seen with my own eyes,
such a striking man, so noble, so like a king."

Then Helen, goddess among women, said to Priam:

"My dear father-in-law, whom I respect and honour,
how I wish I'd chosen an evil death
when I came here with your son, leaving behind
my married home, companions, darling child,
and friends my age. But things didn't work that way.
So I weep all the time. But to answer you,
that man is wide-ruling Agamemnon,
son of Atreus, a good king, fine fighter,
and once he was my brother-in-law,
if that life was ever real. I'm such a whore."

Priam gazed in wonder at Agamemnon, saying:

"Son of Atreus, blessed by the gods, fortune's child,
divinely favoured, many long-haired Achaeans
serve under you. Once I went to Phrygia,
that vine-rich land, where I saw Phrygian troops
with all their horses, thousands of them,
soldiers of Otreus, godlike Mygdon,
camped by the banks of the Sangarius river.
I was their ally, part of their army,
the day the Amazons, men's peers in war,
came on against them. But those forces then
were fewer than these bright-eyed Achaeans."[1]

The old man then spied Odysseus and asked:

"Dear child, come tell me who this man is,
shorter by a head than Agamemnon,
son of Atreus. But he looks broader
in his chest and shoulders. His armour's stacked
there on the fertile earth, but he strides on,

[1]The Amazons were a race of female warriors, living in a territory north of the Black Sea (modern day Ukraine). According to traditions, a queen of the Amazons, Penthesilea, fought in the Trojan War and was killed by Achilles.

marching through men's ranks just like a ram
moving through large white multitudes of sheep.
Yes, a woolly ram, that's what he seems to me."

Helen, child of Zeus, then answered Priam:

"That is Laertes' son, crafty Odysseus, [200]
raised in rocky Ithaca. He's well versed
in all sorts of tricks, deceptive strategies."

At that point, wise Antenor said to Helen:

"Lady, what you say is true. Once lord Odysseus
came here with war-loving Menelaus,
as an ambassador in your affairs.
I received them both in my residence
and entertained them. I got to know them—
from their appearance and their wise advice.
When they mingled with us Trojans
in our meeting and Menelaus rose, [210]
his broad shoulders were higher than the other's.
But once they sat, Odysseus seemed more regal.
When the time came for them to speak to us,
setting out their thoughts quite formally,
Menelaus spoke with fluency—few words,
but very clear—no chatter, no digressions—
although he was the younger of the two.
But when wise Odysseus got up to speak,
he just stood, eyes downcast, staring at the ground.
He didn't move the sceptre to and fro,
but gripped it tightly, like some ignoramus—
a bumpkin or someone idiotic.
But when that great voice issued from his chest, [220]
with words like winter snowflakes, no man alive
could match Odysseus. We were no longer
disconcerted at witnessing his style."

Priam, the old man, saw a third figure, Ajax, and asked:

"Who is that other man? He's over there—
that huge, burly Achaean—his head and shoulders
tower over other warriors."

Then Helen
long-robed goddess among women, answered:

"That's massive Ajax, Achaea's bulwark.
Across from him stands Idomeneus,
surrounded by his Cretans, like a god.
Around him there stand the Cretan leaders.
Often war-loving Menelaus welcomed him
in our house, whenever he arrived from Crete.
Now I see all the bright-eyed Achaeans
whom I know well, whose names I could recite.
But I can't see two of the men's leaders,
Castor, tamer of horses, and Pollux,
the fine boxer—they are both my brothers,
whom my mother bore along with me.
Either they did not come with the contingent
from lovely Lacedaemon, or they sailed here
in their seaworthy ships, but have no wish
to join men's battles, fearing the disgrace,
the many slurs, which are justly mine."

Helen spoke. But the life-nourishing earth
already held her brothers in Lacedaemon,
in their own dear native land.[1]

Through Troy,
heralds brought offerings to seal the binding oaths,
two lambs and in a goatskin sack some sparkling wine,
fruit of the earth. Idaios, the herald, brought in
the gleaming mixing bowl and golden cups.
Standing close by Priam, he encouraged him.

"Son of Laomedon, the leading officers
among horse-taming Trojans and bronze-clad Achaeans
are calling you to come down to the plain,
to administer their binding promises.
Paris and war-loving Menelaus
are going to fight it out with their long spears
over the woman. The man who wins,

[1]Leda, wife of Tyndareus, king of Sparta, gave birth to four children in the same delivery: Helen, Clytaemnestra (wife of Agamemnon), Castor, and Pollux (or Polydeuces). Zeus was the father of Helen and Pollux, and Tyndareus the father of Clytaemnestra and Castor. When Castor died, Pollux asked Zeus if he could share his immortality with his brother, and Zeus then permitted them to spend alternating days on earth and in the underworld. The two brothers also became the constellation Gemini ("Twins").

who comes off the victor, gets the woman
and her property. The others will all swear
an oath of friendship, a binding one—
we will live in fertile Troy, they in Argos,
where horses breed, and in Achaea,
land of lovely women."

Idaios finished.
The old man trembled, then ordered his attendants
to prepare his chariot. They obeyed at once. [260]
Priam climbed in and pulled back on the reins.
Antenor climbed in the fine chariot beside him.
The two men led swift horses through the Scaean Gate,
out to the plain. Once they reached the Trojans and Achaeans,
they climbed out of the chariot onto fertile ground,
in the space between the Trojan and Achaean troops.
At once, Agamemnon and crafty Odysseus
stood up to greet them. Noble heralds fetched the offerings,
to ratify their solemn oaths pledged to the gods.
They prepared wine in the mixing bowl, then poured water
over the kings' hands. Atreus' son drew out the dagger [270]
which always hung beside his sword's huge scabbard,
then sliced hairs off lambs' heads. Attendants passed these hairs
among the leaders of the Trojans and Achaeans.
Raising his hands, Agamemnon then intoned
a mighty prayer on their behalf:

"Father Zeus,
ruling from Mount Ida, most glorious,
most powerful, and you, too, god of the sun,
who sees everything, hears everything,
you rivers, earth, you gods below the earth,
who punish the dead when men swear false oaths,
you gods are witnesses. Keep this oath firm. [280]
If Alexander slays Menelaus,
let him keep Helen, all her property.
Let us return in our sea-worthy ships.
But if fair-haired Menelaus kills Alexander,
then let the Trojans hand back Helen,
with all her property, and compensate
Achaeans with something suitable,
which future ages will remember.
If Alexander's killed and Priam
and Priam's children are unwilling

to reimburse me, then I'll remain here,
fight on until I'm fully satisfied,
until I end this war appropriately."

So Agamemnon prayed. With his bronze dagger,
he slit the lambs' throats, placed them on the ground,
gasping in their death throes as their life ebbed out,
their spirit sliced away by Agamemnon's knife.
Next from the mixing bowl, they drew off wine in cups,
poured out libations to the deathless gods.
Then Trojans and Achaeans all spoke out this prayer:

"Most powerful, mighty Zeus, and you others,
you immortal gods, may you make sure
the men who first violate these oaths
will have their brains spill out onto the ground,
just like this wine, they and their children.
May their wives be carried off by other men."

So they prayed. But the son of Cronos did not grant their wish.
Then Priam, descendant of Dardanus, addressed them all:

"Hear me, you Trojans, you well-armed Achaeans.
I am returning now to windy Troy.
I have no wish to see with my own eyes
my dear son fight war-loving Menelaus.
Zeus and other immortal gods know well
which of them is fated to end up dead."

So Priam spoke. He placed the lambs in his chariot.
The god-like man climbed in, held back the reins.
Antenor climbed in the fine chariot by Priam.
Then both men set off, moving back toward Troy.

Then Hector, Priam's son, and lord Odysseus
first measured out the ground, took lots, and shook them up
in a bronze helmet, to see who'd throw his bronze spear first.
Then every Trojan and Achaean held up his hands,
and uttered a prayer to the immortal gods:

"Father Zeus, ruling from Mount Ida,
mighty, all-powerful, of these two men,
let the one who brought this war to both sides

be killed and then go down to Hades' house.
And grant our oath of friendship will hold firm."[1]

So they prayed. Hector of the flashing helmet
turned his eyes to one side and shook out the lots.
Alexander's token fell out immediately.
The troops sat down in their respective places,
by their high-stepping horses and their inlaid armour.
Paris, husband to Helen with the lovely hair,
hoisted his fine armour on his shoulders. On his shins,
he clipped leg armour fitted with silver ankle clasps.
Then he put around his chest the body armour
belonging to his brother Lycaon. It fit him well.
On his shoulder he looped his bronze, silver-studded sword,
his huge strong shield. On his handsome head he put
a fine helmet with nodding horse-hair plumes on top,
full of menace. Then he picked out a brave spear
which fit his grip. Menelaus prepared himself as well.
When the two men, standing on each side with their troops,
had armed themselves, they strode out to the open space
between the Trojans and Achaeans, staring ferociously.
As horse-taming Trojans and well-armed Achaeans
gazed at the two men, they were overcome with wonder.
The two men approached each other over measured ground,
brandishing their spears in mutual fury.
Alexander was the first to hurl his spear.
It struck Menelaus' shield, a perfect circle,
but the bronze did not break through, the point deflected
by the sturdy shield. Then Menelaus, Atreus' son,
threw in his turn. First he made this prayer to Zeus:

"Lord Zeus, grant I may be revenged on this man,
who first committed crimes against me,
lord Alexander. Let him die at my hands,
so generations of men yet to come
will dread doing wrong to anyone
who welcomes them into his home as friends."

Menelaus then drew back his long-shadowed spear,
and hurled it. It hit the son of Priam's shield,
a perfect circle. The heavy spear pierced through it,

[1]Mount Ida is a mountain near Troy. Hades, a brother of Zeus, is god of the underworld and the dead. The name also refers to the underworld ruled by Hades.

went straight through the fine body armour, through the shirt
which covered Alexander's naked flesh.
But Paris twisted to the side, evading a black fate.
Pulling out his silver-studded sword, the son of Atreus
raised it and struck the crest of Paris's helmet.
But the sword shattered into three or four pieces,
falling from his hand. The son of Atreus, in vexation,
looked up into wide heaven, crying out:

"Father Zeus,
what god brings us more trouble than you do?
I thought I was paying Alexander
for his wickedness, but now my sword
has shattered in my fist, while from my hand
my spear has flown in vain. I haven't hit him."

As Menelaus said these words, he sprang forward,
grabbing the horse hair crest on Paris's helmet,
twisting him around. He began dragging Paris off,
back in the direction of well-armed Achaeans.
The fine leather strap stretched round Paris's soft neck,
right below his chin, was strangling him to death.
At that point Menelaus would have hauled back Paris
and won unending fame, if Aphrodite, Zeus's daughter,
had not had sharp eyes. Her force broke the ox-hide strap,
leaving Menelaus clutching in his massive hands
an empty helmet. Whipping it around, Menelaus
hurled the helmet in among well-armed Achaeans.
His loyal companions retrieved it. He charged back,
with his bronze spear, intent on killing Alexander.
But Aphrodite had snatched Paris up—for a god
an easy feat—concealed him in a heavy mist,
and placed him in his own sweetly scented bedroom.

Then Aphrodite went to summon Helen.
She found her on the high tower, in a crowd
among the Trojan women. She clutched Helen
by her perfumed dress, twitched it, then addressed her,
in the form of an old woman, a wool carder,
someone who used to live in Lacedaemon,
producing fine wool, a woman who was Helen's friend.[1]
In this shape, divine Aphrodite spoke to Helen:

[1]A wool carder brushes the wool fibres to create a continuous thread.

"Alexander is asking you to come back home.
He's in the bedroom, on the carved-out bed,
his beauty and his garments glistening.
You wouldn't think he's just come from some fight.
He looks as if he's going to a dance,
or if he's sitting down right after dancing."

Aphrodite spoke, stirring emotion in Helen's heart.
Noticing the goddess's lovely neck, enticing breasts,
her glittering eyes, Helen was astonished.

"Goddess, why do you wish to deceive me so?
Are you going to take me still further off,
to some well-populated city somewhere
in Phrygia or beautiful Maeonia,
because you're in love with some mortal man
and Menelaus has just beaten Paris
and wants to take me, a despised woman,
back home with him? Is that why you're here,
you and that devious trickery of yours?
Why don't you go with Paris by yourself?
Stop walking around here like a goddess,
stop guiding your feet toward Olympus,
and lead a miserable life with him,
caring for him, until he makes you his wife
or slave. I won't go to him in there—
that would be shameful, serving him in bed.
Every Trojan woman would revile me afterwards.
Besides, my heart is hurt enough already."

Divine Aphrodite, angry at Helen, answered her:

"Don't provoke me, you obstinate girl.
I might lose my temper, abandon you,
and hate you just as much as I have loved you.
I could make Trojans and Danaans hate you, too.
Then you'd suffer death in misery."

Aphrodite spoke. Helen, born from Zeus, was too afraid.
She covered herself in her soft white linen shawl,
went off in silence, unnoticed by all the Trojan women.
With goddess Aphrodite in the lead,
they came to Alexander's lovely house.

There the attendants quickly set about their work.
Helen, goddess among women, went to her room upstairs,
where laughter-loving goddess Aphrodite
picked up a chair and carried it for Helen.
She placed it facing Paris. Helen, child of Zeus,
who bears the aegis, sat down. With eyes averted,
she began to criticize her husband:

"You've come back from the fight. How I wish
you'd died there, killed by that strong warrior
who was my husband once. You used to boast
you were stronger than warlike Menelaus,
more strength in your hands, more power in your spear.
So go now, challenge war-loving Menelaus
to fight again in single combat.
I'd suggest you stay away. Don't fight it out
man to man with fair-haired Menelaus,
without further thought. You might well die,
come to a quick end on his spear."

Replying to Helen, Paris said:

"Wife,
don't mock my courage with your insults.
Yes, Menelaus has just defeated me,
but with Athena's help. Next time I'll beat him.
For we have gods on our side, too. But come,
let's enjoy our love together on the bed.
Never has desire so filled my mind as now,
not even when I first took you away
from lovely Lacedaemon, sailing off
in our sea-worthy ships, or when I lay with you
in our lover's bed on the isle of Cranae.
That's how sweet passion has seized hold of me,
how much I want you now."

Paris finished speaking.
He led the way to bed. His wife went, too.
The two lay down together on the bed.

Atreus's son paced through the crowd, like a wild beast,
searching for some glimpse of godlike Alexander.
But no Trojan nor any of their famous allies
could reveal Alexander to warlike Menelaus.

If they'd seen him, they had no desire to hide him.
For they all hated Paris, as they hated gloomy death.
Agamemnon, king of men, addressed them:

"Listen to me, Trojans, Dardanians, allies—
victory clearly falls to war-loving Menelaus.[1]
So give back Argive Helen and her property,
compensate us with a suitable amount,
something future ages will all talk about."

As he finished speaking, the other Achaeans cheered.

[1]The Dardanians ("descendants of Dardanus") are a people closely related to the Trojans. The word is often used to refer to all the Trojans.

BOOK FOUR
THE ARMIES CLASH

[The Council of the Gods on Olympus; Zeus sends Athena to break the truce; Athena persuades Pandarus to fire an arrow at Menelaus; Menelaus is wounded; Machaon tends to Menelaus; Agamemnon tours the battlefield rallying his troops; the battle starts again.]

The gods all sat assembled in the golden courtyard,
with Zeus there, too. Gracious Hebe went among them,
pouring nectar.[1] They toasted each other in golden cups,
as they looked out on Troy. Then Zeus, son of Cronos,
wishing to irk Hera with a sarcastic speech,
addressed them in deviously provoking words:

"Menelaus has two goddesses
assisting him, Hera of Argos
and Athena of Alalcomene.
But they sit far away, looking on,
enjoying themselves, while Aphrodite,
who loves laughter, helps Paris all the time,
protecting him from death. Now, for instance,
she's just rescued him from certain death.
For war-loving Menelaus was the victor,
no doubt of that. But why don't we discuss
how this warfare is going to finish up—
whether we should re-ignite harsh combat,
this horrific strife, or make both sides friends.
If this second option pleases all of us,
if we find it sweet, then king Priam's city
remains inhabited, and Menelaus
takes Argive Helen home with him."

Athena and Hera sat together muttering,
plotting trouble for the Trojans. Angry at Zeus,
her father, Athena sat there silently,
so enraged she didn't say a word. But Hera,
unable to contain her anger, burst out:

"Most fearful son of Cronos, what are you saying?
How can you wish to undermine my efforts,
prevent them from achieving anything?
What about the sweat which dripped from me,

[1] Hebe, a daughter of Zeus and Hera, is the goddess of youth.

as I worked so hard, wearing my horses out,
gathering men to wipe out Priam and his children.
Go ahead then. But all we other gods
do not approve of what you're doing."

Then cloud-gatherer Zeus, irritated, said to her: [30]

"Dear wife, what sort of crimes have Priam
or Priam's children committed against you,
that you should be so vehemently keen 40
to destroy that well-built city Ilion?
If you went through its gates or its huge walls,
you'd gorge on Priam and his children,
other Trojans, too, swallow their flesh raw.
That's what you'd do to slake your anger.
Do as you wish. We should not make this matter
something you and I later squabble over,
a source of major disagreements.
But I will tell you this—keep it in mind.
Whenever I get the urge to wipe out 50 [40]
some city whose inhabitants you love,
don't try to thwart me. Let me have my way.
I'll give in to you freely, though unwillingly.
For of all towns inhabited by earth's peoples,
under the sun, beneath the heavenly stars,
sacred Ilion, with Priam and his people,
expert spearmen, stands dearest in my heart.
My altar there has always shared their feasts,
with libations and sacrificial smoke,
offerings we get as honours due to us." 60

Ox-eyed Hera then said in reply to Zeus: [50]

"The three cities I love the best by far
are Argos, Sparta, and Mycenae,
city of wide streets. Destroy them utterly,
if you ever hate them in your heart.
I won't deny you or get in your way.
If I tried disagreeing with such destruction,
my hostile stance would be quite useless.
For you are far more powerful than me.
But my own work must not be wasted, 70
worth nothing. I'm a god, the same race as you—
I'm crooked-minded Cronos' eldest daughter.

Another thing—in addition to my birth—
I'm called your wife, and you rule all immortals.
In this matter, then, let's both support
each other's wishes—you mine, I yours.
Other gods will follow our example.
Instruct Athena to go immediately
where Trojans and Achaeans carry on
their bitter conflict. There she should try
to get the Trojans to break their oaths first,
by harming the glorious Achaeans."

Hera spoke. The father of gods and men agreed.
He spoke up to Athena—his words had wings.

"Go quickly to the Trojan and Achaean troops.
Try to get the Trojans to break their oaths first,
by injuring the glorious Achaeans."

Zeus's words stirred up Athena's earlier desires.
She darted from Olympus summit, sped off,
like a comet sent by crooked-minded Cronos' son,
a beacon for sailors and the wide race of men,
showering sparks behind her as she flew—
that's how Pallas Athena shot to earth, then dropped
right down into the middle of the soldiers.
Horse-taming Trojans looked on in amazement,
well-armed Achaeans, too. As they saw her,
each man said to the person next to him:

"There's going to be more war, more wretched combat,
or else great Zeus, who serves up war to men,
will make the troops on both sides friends."

That's what troops muttered, both Trojan and Achaean.
Athena went down into the Trojan crowd,
looking like Laodocus, Antenor's son,
a strong spearman, seeking godlike Pandarus.
She met Pandarus, Lycaon's powerful son,
a fine man, standing there with his sturdy soldiers,
shield-bearing troops who'd come from the river Aesopus.
Standing near him, Athena spoke. Her words had wings:

"Fiery hearted son of Lycaon,
why not do as I suggest? Prepare yourself

to shoot a swift arrow at Menelaus.
You'd earn thanks and glory from all Trojans,
most of all from prince Alexander.
He'd be the very first to bring fine gifts,
if he could see warlike Menelaus,
son of Atreus, mounted on his bier,
his bitter funeral pyre, killed by your arrow.
So come, then, shoot an arrow at him—
at splendid Menelaus. Promise Apollo, [100]
illustrious archer born in Lycia,
you'll make fine sacrifice, some new-born lambs,
once you get back to your city, holy Zeleia."

Athena spoke and thus swayed his foolish wits.
Pandarus took up his bow of polished horn,
made from a nimble wild goat he himself once shot
under the chest, as it leapt down from a rock.
He'd waited in an ambush and hit it in the front.
The goat fell down onto the rocks, landing on its back.
Horns on its head were sixteen palm widths long.
A man skilled in shaping horn had worked on them, [110]
to fit the horns together to create a bow.
He had polished it all over, adding gold caps
snugly fitted on the tips. Pandarus stooped down,
strung the bow, then set it on the ground.
His brave companions held their shields before him,
just in case Achaea's warlike sons attacked them,
before he could shoot Menelaus, Atreus' warrior son.
Then, removing the cover from his quiver,
Pandarus took out an arrow, a fresh-winged courier
bearing dark agony. Next he quickly set
the keen arrow on the string, swearing an oath
to the archer god, Lycian-born Apollo,
that he would make splendid sacrifice, first-born lambs, [120]
when he got back to his city, holy Zaleia.
Gripping the arrow notch, the ox-gut bowstring,
he pulled back, drawing the string right to his nipple,
iron arrow head against the bow. Once he'd bent
that great bow into a circle, the bow twanged,
the string sang out, the sharp-pointed arrow flew away,
eager to bury itself in the crowds of men.

But, Menelaus, the immortal sacred gods
did not forget you.[1] Athena, Zeus's daughter,
goddess of war's spoils, was first to stand before you,
to ward off the piercing arrow—she brushed it from your skin,
just as a mother brushes a fly off her child
while he lies sweetly sleeping. Athena led the arrow
to the spot where the gold buckles on the belt
rest on the joint in the double body armour.
The keen arrow dug into the leather strap,
passed right through the finely decorated belt,
through the richly embossed armour, the body mail,
his most powerful guard, worn to protect his flesh,
by blocking spears and arrows. The arrow pierced it,
going through that mail, and grazed the skin of Menelaus.
Dark blood at once came flowing from the wound.
Just as when some woman of Meonia or Caria
stains white ivory with purple dye, making a cheek piece
for a horse, and leaves it in her room—an object
many riders covet for themselves, a king's treasure
with double value—horse's ornament and rider's glory—
that's how, Menelaus, your strong thighs, shins and ankles
were stained with your own blood below the wound.

When Agamemnon saw dark blood flowing from the wound,
that king of men shuddered. And Menelaus,
who loved war, shuddered, too. But when he saw
barbs of the arrow head, its binding, still outside,
not underneath the skin, his spirits rose, and courage
flowed back into his chest. Mighty Agamemnon,
taking Menelaus by the hand, with a bitter groan,
spoke to his companions, all grieving with him:

> "Dear brother, that oath I swore to was your death—
> letting you step forward to fight Trojans,
> as Achaea's champion. For now the Trojans
> have shot you, walking roughshod on their oaths,
> that treaty they swore to in good faith. But still,
> the oath, lambs' blood, unmixed libations,
> handshakes, things in which we placed our trust—
> all these will not go in vain. For if Zeus,
> the Olympian, does not fulfil them now,

[1]At this point the narrator unexpectedly addresses one of the characters in the story with the word "you." While this feature of the style is not particularly common, it does occur from time to time.

later on he will. Trojans will pay much—
with their heads, their wives, their children.
I know in my mind and heart that day will come
when holy Troy, Priam, and his people,
fine spearmen, will be annihilated,
when high-ruling Zeus, son of Cronos,
who dwells in the sky, angry at their lies,
will shake his dark aegis against them all.
These things will be fulfilled. But, Menelaus,
I'll be in dreadful pain on your account,
if you die, if Fate now ends your life, [170]
if I return to arid Argos totally disgraced.
For Achaeans immediately will think of home,
leaving Priam and his Trojans here in triumph,
abandoning Helen, an Argive woman.
Your bones will lie rotting here in Trojan soil,
recalling the work we failed to finish.
Then some arrogant Trojan, leaping up
onto the tomb of famous Menelaus,
will shout:

'May Agamemnon's anger
always end like this. His Achaean army
he brought here in vain. He returned home,
back to his native land in empty ships, [180]
abandoning courageous Menelaus.'

That's what he'll say. Before that day
I hope the broad earth will lie over me!"

Then Menelaus, to cheer up Agamemnon, said:

"Take courage. Don't upset Achaeans.
This sharp arrow is not a fatal hit.
My gleaming belt protected me on top,
as did my body chain mail underneath,
forged in bronze."

Mighty Agamemnon answered:

"My dear Menelaus, I hope that's true.
But a healer must inspect your wound, [190]
apply his medicine to relieve black pain."

Agamemnon ordered Talthybius, his godlike herald:

"Talthybius, as quickly as you can,
get Machaon here, son of Asclepius,
healer without equal, to look over
warlike Menelaus, son of Atreus,
shot by someone's arrow, a skilled archer,
Trojan or Lycian—to his glory and our grief."

Once he heard the order, Talthybius obeyed.
He set off among bronze-clad Achaeans,
seeking heroic Machaon. He saw him there,
standing among the ranks of his strong warriors,
shield-bearing men who'd come with him from Tricca,
land where horses breed. Standing close to him,
Talthybius spoke. His words had wings.

"Son of Asclepius, rouse yourself.
For mighty Agamemnon calls for you
to look at warrior Menelaus, Achaea's leader,
shot by someone's arrow, a skilled archer,
Trojan or Lycian—to his glory and our grief."

At Talthybius's words Machaon's spirits
were stirred up in his chest. They set off together,
through the wide Achaean army's crowded ranks.
They came where wounded fair-haired Menelaus lay.
Around him all the noblest men had gathered in a circle.
Machaon, godlike man, strode into the middle,
drew the arrow from the belt without delay,
twisting back the sharp barbs as he pulled the arrow out.
He undid the finely decorated belt and armour,
then, under that, the chain mail forged in bronze.
Next, he inspected the wound the keen arrow made,
sucked out the blood, then skilfully applied his potions,
soothing medicines which Cheiron gave his father.[1]

While the Achaeans were looking after Menelaus,
lord of the loud war shout, Trojan ranks advanced,
shields ready, once more armed with all their weapons,
fully charged with passionate desire for battle.

[1]Cheiron (or Chiron) in Greek mythology was a centaur (a creature with the torso, arms, and head of human being and the body and legs of a horse). He was famous for his intelligence and knowledge of medicine.

Then you would not have seen lord Agamemnon sleeping,
hiding, or not keen to fight. Quite the reverse,
he was moving out to combat, to man-ennobling war.
He left his horses and ornate bronze chariot
with his aide Eurymedon, son of Ptolemaeus,
son of Peiraeus, who held the panting horses at a distance.
For Agamemnon had ordered him repeatedly
to keep the horses ready for the time his limbs [230]
grew tired from moving through so many soldiers.
He went around on foot, inspecting warrior ranks. 270
When he saw Danaans coming up with horses,
he approached them, shouting words of encouragement:

"Argives, don't lose your warlike spirit.
Father Zeus will never help those liars.
By attacking us, these Trojans were the first
to violate their oaths. Vultures will gnaw away
their tender flesh, while we lead off their wives
and their dear delicate children to our ships,
when we've destroyed their city."

But when Agamemnon saw soldiers holding back 280 [240]
from hateful war, he lashed out at them in anger:

"You cowards, worthless Argives, aren't you ashamed?
What are you doing just standing here,
like dazed fawns exhausted after running
over a large plain, now motionless,
hearts drained of spirit—that's how you stand,
in a trance, not marching up to battle.
Are you waiting for Trojans to come closer,
up to the fine sterns of our ships beached here,
on the grey sea shore, so you can see 290
if the hand of Cronos' son will shield you?"

In this way, Agamemnon moved around the army, [250]
exerting his authority throughout the ranks.
Going past crowds of men, he met the troops from Crete,
as they armed themselves around Idomeneus,
their fiery-hearted leader at the front,
fierce as a wild boar. In the rear, Meriones
roused the ranks for action. Looking at these two,
Agamemnon, king of men, rejoiced. He spoke out,
talking straight to Idomeneus in a friendly tone: 300

"Idomeneus, above all Danaans,
with their swift horses, I value you in war,
in all other things, and at banquets,
when Achaea's finest prepare gleaming wine,
the kind reserved for kings, in mixing bowls.
Other long-haired Achaeans drink their portion,
the amount allotted to them, but your cup
always stands full of wine, as does mine,
so you can drink any time your heart desires.
Set off to battle, then—show you're a man,
the fine man you claimed to be before."

Idomeneus, Cretan leader, answered Agamemnon:

"Son of Atreus, indeed I'll prove myself
a loyal comrade to you, as I promised
that first time long ago. But you should rouse
other long-haired Achaean men to action,
so we may fight at once, without delay.
Since Trojans have broken their sworn promises,
death and sorrow will come to them at last,
for they attacked us first, breaking their oaths."

At these words, the son of Atreus felt joy fill his heart.
Then he moved off. As he continued on his way,
he met both men called Ajax, arming themselves
among the hordes of troops, with crowds of men on foot.[1]
Just as a goatherd high on a lookout sees a cloud
coming down across the sea, driven by West Wind's force—
something which at a distance seems pitch black
as it moves across the sea, driving a huge storm,
and, shuddering at the sight, he takes his flocks
into a cave—that's how the dense ranks of young men,
gods' favourites, marched around both Ajaxes,
ready for war, all dressed in black, with shields and spears.
Seeing them, powerful Agamemnon felt great joy—
he shouted out to them in words with wings:

"You two Ajaxes,
leaders of the Argives armed in bronze,

[1]These two warrior leaders are Ajax, son of Telamon, from Salamis, and Ajax, son of Oïleus, from Locris, the "Greater" and "Lesser" Ajax respectively.

for you I have no orders. It's not right
for me to urge you forward—both of you
are rousing men to fight with all their force.
By Father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo,
I wish such spirit would fill each man's chest.
Then king Priam's city would soon fall, [290]
we'd capture it, destroy it utterly."

With these words, he left them there, going on to others.
He met Nestor, clear-voiced orator from Pylos,
setting his troops in order, urging them to fight
under huge Pelagon, Alastor, Chromius,
Haemon, and mighty Bias, his people's shepherd.
Nestor set horses, chariots, and charioteers in front.
In the rear, he placed his many brave foot soldiers,
a battle wall. In the middle he placed his poorer troops,
to force them to keep fighting on against their will. [300]
First, he told the charioteers to control their horses,
to avoid confusing the entire battle line:

"In your eagerness to engage the Trojans,
don't any of you charge ahead of others,
trusting in your strength and horsemanship.
And don't lag behind. That will hurt our charge.
Any man whose chariot confronts an enemy's
should thrust with his spear at him from there.
That's the most effective tactic, the way
men wiped out city strongholds long ago—
their chests full of that style and spirit."

Thus that old man, skilled in war's traditions, roused his men. [310]
Seeing him, mighty Agamemnon was elated.
He spoke to Nestor. His words had wings.

"Old man,
how I wish the power in those knees of yours
could match the spirit in your chest, your strength
remain unbowed. But old age, our common enemy,
has worn you down. If only that had happened
to some other man and left you in place,
among the ranks of younger warriors."

To these words Geranian horseman Nestor said:

"Son of Atreus, yes, indeed, I wish
I were the man I used to be back then,
when I cut down lord Ereuthalion.
But gods don't give men everything at once.
Then I was young. Now old age follows me.
But I'll be with my horsemen, advising them,
giving them their orders, an old man's right.
Fighting with spears is for the younger men
born after me, men who rely on strength."

Nestor spoke. Filled with joy, Atreus's son moved on.
Next, he came upon Menestheus, Peteos' son,
a charioteer, standing still among Athenians,
famous for their battle cries. Close by them,
resourceful Odysseus stood among his troops,
Cephallenian soldiers, powerful fighting men.
These men had not yet heard the call to battle.
For the armies of horse-taming Trojans
and Achaeans had only just begun to march
against each other. So Odysseus' soldiers
stood waiting for the rest of the Achaeans
to charge against the Trojans and begin the fight.
Seeing this, Agamemnon, king of men, spoke out,
rebuking them. His words had wings.

"Son of Peteos, god-given king, and you,
Odysseus, skilled in sly deception,
crafty minded, why are you holding back,
standing apart? Are you waiting for the rest?
By rights you two should be with those in front,
sharing the heat of battle. At banquets,
when we Achaeans feast our senior men,
you hear me call your name out first.
Then you like to have roast meat and cups of wine,
honey sweet, to your heart's content.
But now you'd be quite happy looking on
if ten Achaean groups were fighting here
with ruthless bronze before your very eyes."

Resourceful Odysseus, scowling grimly, then replied:

"Son of Atreus, how can you say such things?
How can you claim I'm hanging back from battle
each time we Achaeans rouse ourselves for war

against horse-taming Trojans? If you want,
if it's of interest to you, then you'll see
Telemachus's dear father battling
horse-taming Trojans at the very front.
What you've been saying is clearly nonsense."

Mighty Agamemnon saw the anger in Odysseus.
He smiled at him and took back what he'd just said:

"Odysseus, you resourceful man,
divinely born son of Laertes,
I'm not finding serious fault with you.
I'm issuing no orders to you.
I know that spirit in your loyal chest
is well disposed. We both are of one mind.
If I've said something bad we'll make it good.
May the gods bring all of this to nothing."

With these words, Agamemnon left Odysseus there,
moving on to other men. He met Diomedes,
Tydeus' high-spirited son, standing by his horses
and his well-made chariot. Beside him stood Sthenelus,
son of Capaneus. Seeing them, Agamemnon
spoke out in rebuke. His words had wings.

"Alas, Diomedes,
son of fiery-hearted, horse-taming Tydeus,
why are you hiding, just watching battle lanes?
Tydeus was not a man to shirk like this.
He fought his enemies in front of his companions.
That's what they say, those who saw him work.
I never saw him for myself. People claim
he ranked above the rest. Once he came to Mycenae
as a peaceful guest with godlike Polyneices,
mustering men to assault the sacred walls of Thebes.
They begged us to give them worthy comrades.
Mycenaeans, willing to comply, agreed.
But then Zeus later changed their minds,
revealing an unlucky omen to them.
So Tydeus and Polyneices left.
On their way, they reached the river Asopus,
its lush grassy meadows full of reeds.
Sent by Achaeans as envoy to Thebes,
Tydeus went there. He found Cadmeans

feasting in large numbers in the palace,
home of great Eteocles.[1] Though a stranger,
all by himself in that Cadmean crowd,
chariot fighter Tydeus was not afraid.
He challenged them in various contests.
Athena helped him, so he won them all with ease. [390]
Horse-breaking Cadmeans were upset with him.
They organized a strong ambush against him
as he returned—fifty young men, with two leaders,
that godlike hero Maeon, Haemon's son,
and warlike Polyphontes, son of Autophonus.
But these men came to fatal shameful ends.
For Tydeus killed them, all but one.
He let Maeon go home, sent him away,
in obedience to an omen from the gods.
That's the man Aetolian Tydeus was.
But his son is a lesser man than he,
though better when it comes to talking." [400]

Mighty Diomedes did not reply to Agamemnon's words,
shamed at the rebuke from a king whom he respected.
But Sthenelus, son of famous Capaneus, answered:

"Son of Atreus, don't spread lies. You know the truth.
We claim we're far better than our fathers.
We captured Thebes, city of seven gates,
leading smaller forces over stronger walls,
trusting signs sent by the gods and Zeus's aid.
The others died through their own foolishness.
So don't give our fathers honours high as mine."

Powerful Diomedes, frowning, spoke to Sthenelus: [410]

"My friend. Stay quiet. Follow my advice.
For I'm not hurt that Agamemnon,
the army's shepherd, urges armed Achaeans
on to battle. For he will get the glory,
if Achaeans annihilate the Trojans
and capture sacred Ilion. And he'll get
great sorrow, if Achaeans are wiped out.
But come, let's get our two minds working
to rouse our spirits for this coming fight."

[1]The Cadmeans are the citizens of Thebes, taking their name from Cadmus, the founder of the city.

Diomedes spoke. Then with his weapons he jumped
from his chariot down to the ground. Around his chest
the bronze rang fearfully, as he moved into action,
a sound to make even brave warriors afraid.

Just as thundering ocean surf crashes on the sand,
wave after wave, driven by the West Wind's power,
one wave rising at sea, then booming down on shore,
arching in crests and crashing down among the rocks,
spewing salt foam, so then Danaan ranks,
row after row, moved out, spirits firmly set on war.
Each leader issued his own orders to his men.
The rest marched on in silence. You would never think
such a huge army could move out with its voice
buried in those chests, in silent fear of their commanders.
As they marched, the polished armour on them glittered.

As for the Trojans, they were like thousands of ewes
standing in a rich man's farm, bleating constantly,
waiting for someone to come and collect white milk,
as they hear lambs call. Just like that, the din rose up
throughout the widespread Trojan force. They shared no words—
they had no common language, but mixtures of tongues,
with men from many lands. Ares urged the Trojans on,
while bright-eyed Athena kept rousing the Achaeans.
With them came Terror, Fear, and tireless Strife,
sister and companion of man-destroying Ares—
at first small in stature, she later grows enormous,
head reaching heaven, as she strides across the earth.
Strife went through crowds of soldiers, casting hatred
on both sides equally, multiplying human miseries.

When the two armies came to one common ground,
they smashed into each other—shields, spears, fierce angry men
encased in bronze. Studded shields bashed one another.
A huge din arose—human cries of grief and triumph,
those killing and those killed. Earth flowed with blood.
Just as streams swollen with melting snows pour out,
flow downhill into a pool, and meet some torrent
from a great spring in a hollow gully there,
and the shepherd in the distant hills hears the roar—
so the shouts and turmoil resounded then from warriors,
as they collided.

Antilochus was the first to kill a man—
a well-armed Trojan warrior, Echepolus,
son of Thalysius, a courageous man,
who fought in the front ranks. He hit his helmet crest,
topped with horsehair plumes, spearing his forehead.
The bronze point smashed straight through the frontal bone.
Darkness hid his eyes and he collapsed, like a tower,
falling down into that frenzied battle. As he fell,
powerful Elephenor, son of Chalcodon,
courageous leader of the Abantes, seized his feet,
and started pulling him beyond the range of weapons,
eager to strip him of his armour quickly.
But Elephenor's attempt did not go on for long.
Great-hearted Agenor saw him drag the dead man.
He stabbed Elephenor with his bronze spear,
right in his exposed side, where his shield left him
vulnerable as he bent down. His limbs gave way,
as his spirit left him. Over his dead body,
Trojans and Achaeans kept fighting grimly on,
attacking like wolves, man whirling against man.

Then Ajax, son of Telamon, hit Simoeisius,
Anthemion's son, a fine young warrior.
He was born on the banks of the river Simoeis,
while his mother was coming down Mount Ida,
accompanying her parents to watch their flocks.
That's why the people called him Simoeisius.
But he did not repay his fond parents for raising him.
His life was cut short on great Ajax's deadly spear.
As he was moving forward with the men in front,
Ajax struck him in the chest, by the right nipple.
The bronze spear went clean through his shoulder.
He collapsed in the dust, like a poplar tree,
one growing in a large well-watered meadow,
from whose smooth trunk the branches grow up to the top,
until a chariot builder's bright axe topples it,
bends the wood, to make wheel rims for a splendid chariot,
letting the wood season by the riverbank—
that's how godlike Ajax chopped down Simoeisius,
Anthemion's son.

Then Antiphus, son of Priam,
with his shining helmet, hurled his sharp spear at Ajax

through a crowd of men. He missed Ajax, but hit Leucus,
a brave companion of Odysseus, in the groin,
as he was dragging Simoeisius away.
His hands let go. He fell down on the corpse.
Enraged at Leucus' slaughter, Odysseus strode up,
through the front ranks, armed in gleaming bronze. Going in close,
he took his stand. Looking round, he hurled his glittering spear.
As he threw, Trojans moved back, but the spear found a mark.
It hit Democoön, Priam's bastard son, who had come
from Abydos, where he bred horses for their speed.
Angry for his friend, Odysseus speared him in the temple.
The sharp bronze pressed on through the other side,
coming out his forehead. Darkness fell on his eyes,
and he collapsed with a crash. The armour on him echoed.

Trojans in the front ranks, among them noble Hector,
backed away. Raising a huge shout, the Argives
hauled off the corpses and charged ahead much further.

Looking down from Pergamus, Apollo grew annoyed.
He called out to the Trojans, shouting:

> "Charge ahead, you horse-taming Trojans.
> Don't make Argives happy. Their skin's not made
> of stone or iron. Once you strike at them
> it can't stop flesh-ripping bronze. And Achilles,
> son of lovely Thetis, isn't in this fight.
> He's sitting by his ships, nursing his anger."

So the fearsome god spoke out from the city.
Athena Tritogeneia, mighty Zeus's daughter,
rushed among Achaeans, urging companies on,
if she saw men holding back, hesitant to fight.[1]

Death then came to Diores, son of Amarynceus.
He was hit by a jagged rock on his right shin,
beside the ankle. It was thrown by Peirous,
son of Imbrasus, captain of the Thracians,
who'd come from Aenus. The cruel rock crushed both tendons
and the bone. He fell onto his back down in the dust.
There he reached out with both hands for his companions.
His spirit left his body with each gasp he took.

[1]Tritogeneia is a common epithet for Athena. Its precise meaning is unclear ("Trito born"?).

Peirous, who'd thrown the rock, ran up and speared his gut.
His bowels spilled out onto the ground. Darkness hid his eyes.

As Peirous moved off, Thoas, an Aetolian, hit him,
his spear striking him above the nipple. The bronze spear point
bit into his lungs. Thoas moved in to close quarters,
pulled the heavy spear out from his chest, drew his sharp sword, [530]
then drove it straight into the middle of his belly,
destroying Peirous's life. But Thoas could not strip
the armour off. For Peirous's companions,
Thracian men whose hair is piled atop their heads,
rallied round, holding out long spears, forcing Thoas
away from them. Thoas was big, strong, and brave,
but he fell back, shaken. And so those two warriors
lay stretched out in the dirt beside each other—
one Thracian chief, one captain of bronze-clad Epeians.
And many other men lay dead around them.

At that point, no man who joined in the battle there
could take it lightly, not even one who strolled unhurt [540]
through the middle of the fight, untouched by that sharp bronze,
with Pallas Athena escorting him by hand,
shielding him from flying weapons. For on that day,
many Trojans and Achaeans lay there side by side,
stretched out together, face down in the dust.

Book Five
Diomedes Goes to Battle

[Athena inspires Diomedes with special powers; Athena takes Ares from the battle; Achaean leaders kill many Trojans; Diomedes's special glory on the field; Pandarus hits Diomedes with an arrow; Athena restores Diomedes, who continues his battle frenzy; Aeneas and Pandarus move out against Diomedes; Diomedes kills Pandarus, wounds Aeneas; Aphrodite saves Aeneas; Sthenelus captures Aeneas's horses; Diomedes attacks and wounds Aphrodite, who returns to Olympus; Diomedes threatens Apollo; Apollo heals Aeneas; Sarpedon complains to Hector; the battle continues; Sarpedon kills Tlepolemus, but is wounded; Athena and Hera go down to the battlefield; Athena and Diomedes attack and wound Ares; Ares returns to Olympus.]

Then Pallas Athena gave Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
strength and courage, so among all Argives,
he'd stand out and win heroic glory.
She made his helmet blaze with tireless flames,
his shield as well—like a late star in summer
which shines especially bright, newly risen from its bath
in Ocean's streams. Around his head and shoulders
the goddess put a fiery glow, then drove him forward,
right into the middle of the strife, the killing zone,
where most warriors fight.

Among the Trojans
was a rich and honourable man called Dares,
priest of Hephaestus. He had two sons—Phegeus
and Idaios—both very skilled in all aspects of war.
Moving forward in their chariot to the front,
these two charged Diomedes, who was on foot,
staying on the ground. When they were at close range,
Phegeus was the first to hurl his long-shadowed spear.
The spear point flew by Diomedes' left shoulder—
it missed him. Tydeus's son then threw his spear.
The weapon did not leave his hand and miss the target.
It hit Phegeus right between the nipples
and knocked him from his splendid chariot.
Idaios jumped out and ran off from his horses.
He did not dare protect his slaughtered brother's corpse.
Even so, he would not have escaped black doom,
but Hephaestus saved him with a dark cloud cover,
so his aged father would not waste away with grief.
Tydeus' son, great Diomedes, drove the horses off,
then gave them to his comrades to take back to the ships.

When great-hearted Trojans saw those two sons of Dares—
one shunning battle, one dead beside his chariot—
all their hearts were stirred.

Then Athena, eyes glittering,
took her brother, headstrong Ares, by the hand,
and said to him:

"Ares, Ares, insatiable man-killer,
destroyer of cities, why don't we leave
Trojans and Achaeans to fight it out?
Father Zeus will make one group victorious.
Let's withdraw, avoiding Zeus's anger."

With these words, she led headstrong Ares from the battle,
then sat him down by Scamander river bank.

Danaans then began to push the Trojans back.
Each leader killed his enemy. First, Agamemnon,
king of men, threw huge Odius, chief of the Halizoni,
from his chariot. His spear first struck him in the back,
between the shoulder blades, as he turned to flee.
It drove clean through his chest. Odius pitched forward
with a thud, his armour rattling round him as he fell.
Idomeneus slaughtered Phaestus, son of Borus,
a Meonian, who'd come from fertile Tarne.
With his long spear, skilful Idomeneus struck him
in his right shoulder, as he climbed in his chariot.
Dreadful darkness came and gathered Phaestus in.
Those attending Idomeneus stripped the armour.
Then with his sharp spear Menelaus, son of Atreus,
killed Scamandrius, son of Strophius, a huntsman.
Artemis herself had taught him how to shoot
every animal raised in the mountain forests.
But archer Artemis was no help to him then,
no more than was his expertise in archery,
at which he'd been pre-eminent in former times.
For fine spearman Menelaus, son of Atreus,
caught him as he ran away in front of him,
hitting him in the back between his shoulder blades,
forcing the spear right through Scamandrius's chest.
He fell head first. His armour rattled round him.

Meriones then killed Phereclus, son of Tecton,
Harmon's son, whose hands could make fine objects of all sorts.
Pallas Athena had a special love for him.
He was the one who made well-balanced ships
for Paris at the start of all the trouble,
bringing disaster on the Trojans and on Paris, too,
for he was ignorant of what gods decreed.
Meriones went after Phereclus as he ran off,
hurled his spear straight into his right buttock.
The spear point pushed on through, below the bone,
piercing his bladder. He fell down on his knees,
screaming. Then death carried him into its shadows.

Then Meges killed Pedaeus, Antenor's bastard son.
Theano had raised him with all care, loving him
as one of her own children, to please her husband.
That famous spearman Meges, son of Phyleus,
coming up close, drove a sharp spear in his neck,
into the nape behind his head. The bronze point,
slicing under his tongue, smashed through his teeth.
He fell into the dust, jaws locked on the cold bronze.

Eurypylus, Euaemon's son, killed lord Hypsenor,
son of proud Dolopion, Scamander's priest,
a man honoured by his people as a god.
Eurypylus, Euaemon's splendid son, caught him
as he ran off in front. Going quickly after him,
Eurypylus struck at Hypsenor's shoulder—
his sharp sword sliced off Hypsenor's brawny arm.
The bloody limb fell on the ground. Then death's black night,
all-powerful fate, moved in and stole away his sight.

Thus these men kept toiling in the battle frenzy.
As for Diomedes, you could not tell where he belonged,
whether among the Trojans or Achaeans.
For he rushed across the plain like a swollen river,
like a swift winter torrent bursting dikes—
no dam put in its way can hold it back,
no barrier of fruitful vineyards check its current,
as all at once it floods when storms from Zeus roar down.
It knocks aside all fine things built by farmers,
hard-working men—that's how the son of Tydeus
drove the dense ranks of Trojans into mass confusion.
For all their numbers they could not contain him.

Lycaon's fine son saw Diomedes moving fast
along the plain, pushing Trojan ranks in front of him,
in complete disorder. He quickly bent his bow,
taking aim at Diomedes. He shot an arrow
and hit him on his sculpted body armour,
in the right shoulder. The sharp arrow went in there,
kept going, and splattered blood down on the curving metal.
At this Lycaon's noble son gave out a noisy shout:

"Come on, you brave horse-lashing Trojans.
For the finest of Achaeans has been hurt.
I don't think he'll long survive my arrow's force,
if Apollo, son of Zeus, really was the one
who put it in my heart to leave Lycia."

That's what Lycaon's son cried out, boasting aloud.
But his sharp arrow had not killed Diomedes,
who moved back to stand beside his chariot and horses.
He called to Sthenelus, son of Capaneus.

"My friend, son of Capaneus, come on,
get down from the chariot, so you can pull
this sharp arrow from my shoulder for me."

Diomedes spoke. Sthenelus jumped down on the ground.
Standing beside him, he pulled out the sharp arrow
stuck in his shoulder. Blood seeped through the woven shirt.
Diomedes, expert in war cries, then spoke this prayer:

"Hear me, Athena, unwearied daughter
of aegis-bearing Zeus. If you've ever
loved my father, stood by his side
in murderous combat, be my friend now.
Grant that I kill this man, that I come
a spear's throw from the one who hit me
unexpectedly and now boasts about it,
saying I won't see daylight for much longer."

As Diomedes prayed, Pallas Athena heard.
She put fresh strength into his legs and upper arms.
Standing close by, she spoke. Her words had wings.

"Take courage, Diomedes, in this fight with Trojans.
I've put your father's strength into your chest,

that shield-bearing horseman's fearless power.
And I've removed the filter from your eyes
which covered them before, so now,
you'll easily distinguish gods from men.
If a god comes here and stands against you,
don't offer to fight any deathless one, [130]
except for Aphrodite, Zeus's daughter.
If she fights, cut her with your sharp bronze."

Bright-eyed Athena left. Diomedes charged off,
joining at once those soldiers fighting in the front,
his spirit on fire to battle Trojans, seized by frenzy
three times greater than before. He was like a lion
slightly hurt by a shepherd guarding his sheep flock
out in the wilds, when it jumps the wall into the pen.
But he's not killed it. The wound rouses the beast's strength.
The shepherd can't keep the charging lion from his sheep,
who, left unguarded, panic. Huddled in a mass, [140]
they crowd in on one another. So the lion,
in his hot rage, leaps over the wide sheep-fold wall.
That's how strong Diomedes went to fight the Trojans
in his angry fury.

First he killed Astynous,
and then Hypeiron, a shepherd of his people.
His bronze spear hit one right above the nipple.
His huge sword struck the other on the collar,
by the shoulder, slicing through the shoulder bone,
severing it from Hypeiron's neck and back.
He left them there, to chase Abas and Polyidus,
sons of old Eurydamas, interpreter of dreams. [150]
The old man did not visit them to explain their dreams,
for mighty Diomedes slaughtered both of them.
Then Diomedes went after Xanthus and Thoön,
two sons of Phaenops, both of whom he loved.
Worn down by sad old age, he'd have no other child,
no person to inherit all his property.
Diomedes killed them, took the life they loved,
leaving bitter grief and anguish for their father,
who would not welcome them back home from war alive.
His next of kin thus divided up his assets.
Diomedes then challenged two sons of Priam,
son of Dardanus, both in a single chariot— [160]
Echemmon and Chromius. Just as a lion

leaps onto cattle and snaps necks on the cows,
some heifer grazing in the bushes, so Tydeus's son
knocked them out of their chariot viciously,
against their will. Then he stripped their armour.
His companions took the horses to the ships.

Aeneas saw Diomedes cutting his way
through ranks of soldiers. He charged on through the fight,
the clash of spears, looking for Pandarus.
He met Lycaon's son, a fine and powerful man.
Standing close by, Aeneas said to him:

"Pandarus,
where's your bow, your feathered arrows,
your reputation as a splendid archer?
No man can match your expertise in that.
No one in Lycia can claim to be your better.
Come, raise your hands in prayer to Zeus,
then shoot an arrow at that man, whose force
now dominates the field, hurting Trojans badly,
hacking limbs from many fine young men,
unless, of course, it is some angry god,
displeased with Trojans' sacrificial gifts.
It's hard to stand against a raging god."

To Aeneas Lycaon's fine son then replied:

"Aeneas, counsellor to bronze-armed Trojans,
from all I see, I think that man must be
the warlike son of Tydeus. I know him
by his shield, the visor on his helmet,
and by looking at his horses. I'm not sure
he's not a god. But if he's the man
I think he is, the fierce son of Tydeus,
he could not be charging at us in this way
without help from some god beside him,
an immortal with a covering cloud
around his shoulders, the god who pushed aside
that sharp arrow which struck Diomedes.
For I've already shot an arrow at him,
hit his shoulder through that moulded armour.
I thought I'd shipped him straight to Hades.
But I didn't kill him. The man must be
some angry god. But we've no horses here,

no chariot for me to chase him in.
In storage in Lycaon's house somewhere
there are eleven chariots, new ones, too.
They're beautiful and made just recently,
but covered up with drapes. Beside each one
stand pairs of horses, munching wheat and barley.
When I was coming here, old soldier Lycaon,
in his well-built home, gave me much advice.
He told me to take chariots and horses
when I lead Trojans into the hot heart of war.
But I didn't follow his advice. If I had,
things would have been much better for me.
But I worried about the horses—they'd lack forage
with so many men all crammed together,
and they were used to eating very well.
I left them and came to Troy to fight on foot,
relying on my expertise in archery.
But that skill is apparently of little use.
For already I've hit two of their best men,
Tydeus' son and the son of Atreus.
I've drawn blood from both of them, it's true,
but that just made them much more dangerous.
It was an evil time, that day I took
my curved bow off its peg to lead my Lycians
to lovely Troy, a favour for prince Hector.
If I get home and see with my own eyes
my native land, my wife, my large and lofty home,
let someone chop my head off on the spot,
if I don't smash this bow with my own hands
and throw the pieces in the blazing fire.
For me it's been completely useless."

Aeneas, leader of the Trojans, then replied:

"Don't talk like that. Things won't change at all
until the two of us go out to challenge
Diomedes with a chariot and horses,
until we confront him with our weapons.
Come, get in my chariot. Then you'll see
how good these horses are from Tros's stock,
skilled in rapid movement on the plain,
in all directions, in pursuit or in retreat.
This pair will take us safely to the city,
should Zeus give victory to Diomedes.

Let's go. Take the whip and glistening reins.
I'll leave you the horses, so I can fight.
Or if you fight him, I'll control the horses."

Lycaon's fine son then said in reply:

"Aeneas, you should take the reins yourself, [230]
guide your own horses—for they will pull
your curving chariot that much better
with a driver they're accustomed to,
if we must flee Tydeus' son this time.
If they miss your voice, they may shy or panic,
or refuse to charge straight into battle.
Then the son of great-hearted Tydeus
in his attack may kill us both and lead
these swift horses off. You drive the chariot,
guide your horses. I'll do battle with him—
my spear will give him a sharp welcome."

They finished talking, climbed up together, and set off,
riding out in a fine chariot, both keen to kill,
driving the swift horses against Tydeus's son. [240]
Seeing them coming, Sthenelus, Capaneus's brave son,
at once spoke up to Diomedes—his words had wings.

"Diomedes, son of Tydeus, my heart's
true friend, I see two men approaching,
eager to attack you, two powerful men,
an outstanding team. One is Pandarus,
the skilful archer, who boasts he's Lycaon's son.
The other is Aeneas, proud Anchises' son,
that's his claim. His mother's Aphrodite.
So come, let us retire with the horses,
in case our quick charge through the killing zone
ends up costing you your precious life." [250]

Strong Diomedes, with a scowl, answered Sthenelus:

"Don't talk of moving back. For I know well
you won't persuade me. By birth it's not in me
to shirk war or seek refuge. My spirit's strong.
Nor am I keen to climb up in the chariot.
I'll go to fight them as I am, on foot.
Pallas Athena does not allow me

to withdraw in fear. Their horses may be fast,
but they'll not carry them both back again,
away from us, even if one escapes.
But I will tell you this—keep it in mind—
if Athena, that clever schemer, gives me [260]
great glory and I do kill them both,
then you must hold our swift horses here, 310
tying these reins up to the chariot rail.
Remember to run down Aeneas's team,
then drive those horses from the Trojans
to well-armed Achaeans. For those horses
come from the stock that wide-seeing Zeus
gave Tros, payment for his son Ganymede.[1]
They are the finest horses under the sun,
beneath the light of day. Anchises,
king of men, got some of that line by stealth,
putting his mares into Laomedon's herd 320
without his knowledge. Six of those horses [270]
became the breeding stock on his estate.
He kept four of them in his own stable
and gave Aeneas two, horses so fierce,
they scatter men before them. If we can,
we'll catch these two, win ourselves great glory."[2]

As they talked to each other of their strategy,
the fast horses quickly brought the two men closer.
Lycaon's worthy son spoke first, shouting out:

"Great spirited, warlike son of Tydeus, 330
that noble man, I see that my sharp arrow,
a bitter shaft, did not destroy you.
So now I'll try to hit you with my spear."

He spoke, balanced his long-shadowed spear, and threw it. [280]
The spear hit the son of Tydeus on his shield.
The bronze point pierced it, but stopped at the body armour.
Seeing that, Lycaon's fine son let out a mighty cheer:

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[1]Ganymede, a young prince of Troy, was so beautiful that Zeus fell in love with him and abducted him to be his cupbearer and erotic companion on Olympus.

[2]Hercules killed a sea monster threatening Troy after Laomedon, the king of Troy and father of Priam, agreed to give him the horses Zeus had presented to Laomedon in exchange for Ganymede if he was successful. However, Laomedon reneged on their agreement. Hercules returned some time later with an army, captured Troy, and killed Laomedon and all his sons except Priam.

"You're hit, right in the ribs. You won't last long.
I think you've given me a glorious triumph."

Unperturbed, powerful Diomedes said to him:

"You're wrong. You haven't hit me. In my view,
this matter won't end for the two of you,
until one of you falls dead, and his blood
satisfies in full hard warlike Ares."

That said, he threw his spear. Athena guided it
straight to Pandarus' nose, directly by the eyes.
It smashed through his white teeth. The tireless bronze
sliced through his tongue at its root, coming out his chin,
right at the tip. Pandarus fell from the chariot,
his brightly shining armour rattling round him.
The swiftly running horses swerved aside.
Then and there his life-force, his spirit, left him.
Aeneas then leapt down with his long spear and shield,
fearing Achaeans would somehow haul away the corpse.
He made a stand by Pandarus, like a lion,
confident of its strength. He held his spear in front,
his round shield, too, with fearful shouts, fiercely eager
to kill anyone who came up to confront him.
The son of Tydeus picked up a stone, a massive rock
which no two men now alive could lift. He threw it
all by himself with ease. It hit Aeneas's leg,
where thigh meets pelvis, what people call the hip joint.
The boulder smashed the socket and both tendons round it.
The rough edges on the rock scraped off his skin.
Falling to his knees, warlike Aeneas stayed down,
supporting himself with his strong hand on the ground.
Black night came down and covered both his eyes.
Aeneas, king of men, would have perished there,
if Aphrodite, Zeus's daughter, had not seen him right away.
She was his mother—she'd conceived him with Anchises,
while he was tending cattle. Wrapping her white arms
around the son she loved, she hid him in the folds
of her bright gown, to ward off any spears,
should some Danaan driving with swift horses
hurl a spear into his chest and take his life.
She then began to carry her dear son from the fight.

Meanwhile, Sthenelus, son of Capaneus,
did not forget what Diomedes, skilled in war cries, [320]
told him. He pulled his sure-footed horses to one side,
beyond the fight, tying the reins onto the rail,
and then went after those fine-maned horses of Aeneas.
He drove the animals away from Trojan lines
towards well-armed Achaeans. There he gave them
to his dear companion Deïpylus, whom he esteemed
above all others the same age as himself,
since they both thought alike. He instructed him
to take them to the hollow ships. Then brave Sthenelus
climbed back into his chariot, grabbed the shining reins,
and raced the strong horses back, keen to rejoin Diomedes.

But Diomedes with his ruthless bronze had gone
to run down Aphrodite—knowing she was not a god [330]
who could do much in battle, not one of those
who control men's wars. She was no Athena,
no goddess Strife, who destroys whole cities.
He chased her through the crowded battle zone.
When he met her, great-hearted Tydeus's son
charged, lunging with his sharp spear at Aphrodite.
His weapon wounded her slim wrist, piercing the skin
above her hand, right through her godlike robe,
a garment the Graces had made for her themselves.[1]
Immortal divine fluid then flowed out, ichor,
which circulates only in the blessed gods, [340]
who do not eat food or drink down gleaming wine.
Hence, they lack blood, and men call them immortal.
Aphrodite screamed wildly and let go of her son.
But Phoebus Apollo caught him in his hands,
then shielded him with a dark cloud, just in case
some fast-riding Danaan hurled a spear into his chest
and took away his life. Then Diomedes,
expert in war cries, shouted loudly:

"Daughter of Zeus,
leave war and fights alone. Isn't it enough
for you to fool around with feeble women?
If you start loitering on the battlefield, [350]

[1]The Graces in Greek mythology were three goddesses of charm and beauty. In some accounts they are daughters of Zeus.

I think the war will make you shake with terror,
even though you learn about it from a distance."

Diomedes spoke. Aphrodite left in agony,
distressed and fearful. Wind-swift Iris came to her,
led her off, out of the crowd, moaning in pain,
her fair skin stained and wounded. She came across
fierce Ares, seated on the left flank of the fight,
his spear and his fast horses resting on a cloud.
Falling on her knees, she implored her dear brother,
pleading hard for his golden-bridled horses:

"Dear brother, save me. Give me your horses,
so I may go back up to Mount Olympus,
the immortals' home. My wound pains me a lot.
A mortal man inflicted this wound on me,
Tydeus' son, who'd now fight Father Zeus himself."

At this, Ares gave her his golden-bridled horses.
She climbed up in the chariot, her fond heart suffering.
Getting in beside her, Iris picked up the reins,
then lashed the horses forward. They flew on willingly.
At once they reached the gods' home, steep Olympus.
There wind-swift Iris stopped the horses, untied them
from the chariot, and gave them heavenly fodder.
Aphrodite threw herself into her mother's lap,
divine Dione, who took her daughter in her arms,
caressed her with her hand, then said:[1]

"My dear child,
which of the heavenly gods has done this,
acted so brazenly against you, as if
you'd done something evil in broad daylight?"

Laughter-loving Aphrodite answered her:

"Proud Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
wounded me, for I was carrying off
Aeneas, my dear son, away from battle.
Of all men, he's the one I love the most.

[1]Dione is a Titan, not an Olympian goddess, daughter of Oceanus and Tethys. In some accounts, her father is Zeus.

Now grim war is not just Trojans and Achaeans,
for Danaans fight against immortals, too."

Dione, queen among the goddesses, replied:

"Be brave, my child, hold on, though you're in pain.
Many of us living on Olympus
have been hurt by men in our attempts
to bring harsh troubles on each other.
Ares suffered, too, when mighty Otus
and Ephialtes, children of Aloëus,
tied him up in powerful manacles,
then kept him prisoner in a brass jar
for thirteen months. Ares would've died there,
with all his war-lust, if their step-mother,
fair Eëriboea, had not told Hermes.
He stole Ares secretly. Ares was exhausted.
That harsh imprisonment was breaking him.
Hera suffered, as well, when Hercules,
the powerful son of Amphitryon,
hit her right breast with a three-barbed arrow.
She was wracked by pain beyond all cure.
With them huge Hades also suffered
from a sharp arrow, when this same man,
this Hercules, a son of aegis-bearing Zeus,
shot him in Pylos, among the corpses there,
inflicting pain. Hades went straight to Zeus
at home on Olympus—his heart enraged,
in agony, the arrow buried deep
in his strong shoulder. He was incensed.
Paeëon healed him with pain-killing herbs
smeared on the wound, for Hades was immortal.
What a wretch he was, that Hercules,
a trouble maker. He did not hesitate
to commit bad acts with that bow of his
against the gods who dwell on Mount Olympus.
But Athena, the bright-eyed goddess,
prompted Tydeus' son to go at you.
Still, he's a fool for not remembering
the man who fights wars against immortals
does not live long. His children have no chance
to prattle to their father at his knee,
once he gets home from war's grim butchery.
Diomedes is surely powerful—

but he should take care. A greater power than you
may come against him. Then Aegialeia,
wise daughter of Adrestus and brave wife
of horse-taming Diomedes, with cries of sorrow
will rouse all her dear household from their sleep,
lamenting the husband whom she married,
the best of the Achaeans."

As she said this,
with her hand Dione cleaned away the ichor
on Aphrodite's wrist, healing the hand,
curing Aphrodite of her pain. Looking on,
Athena and Hera teased Zeus, son of Cronos:

"Father Zeus, you won't get angry with me
for what I say, will you? Aphrodite,
trying to coax some new Achaean woman
into running off with one of those Trojans
she loves so much, must have been caressing
some well-dressed Achaean lady and scratched
her delicate hand on a golden brooch."

When they spoke, the father of gods and men smiled,
called for golden Aphrodite, and then said to her:

"My child, this warfare is not your business.
You should concern yourself with your own work—
love, especially erotic love in marriage.
Swift Ares and Athena will take care of this."

As the gods talked the matter over with each other,
Diomedes, expert at war cries, sought out Aeneas.
Though he knew Apollo himself was shielding him,
he had no fear at all of that great god, pushing on
to kill Aeneas, then strip his fine armour from him.
Three times he charged forward, in a frenzy for the kill.
Three times Apollo pushed back his shining shield.
But when for the fourth time he came on like a god,
Apollo, the far shooter, in a terrifying voice, cried out:

"Take care, son of Tydeus. Go back.
Don't think you're equal to the gods.
The race of men who walk upon the ground
can never match the race of deathless gods."

At these words, the son of Tydeus drew back somewhat,
avoiding the anger of Apollo, the far shooter.

Apollo put Aeneas some distance from the fight,
on sacred Pergamus, where his temple stood.
There, in the large shrine, Leto and Artemis,
the archer goddess, healed Aeneas, restoring him
to his former power and magnificence.
Apollo of the silver bow then made an image,
a copy of Aeneas, with matching armour,
around which Trojans and brave Achaeans fought,
hacking away at ox-hide covering their chests,
at the round shields or smaller shields with fringes.
Phoebus Apollo then called to foolhardy Ares:

"Ares, Ares, you bloodstained man-killer,
can you not return to Diomedes
and remove him from the battle? Right now,
he'd stand and fight with Father Zeus himself.
First, he wounded Aphrodite on the wrist,
fighting at close quarters. Then he flung himself,
like some god, at me."

After saying this,
Apollo took a seat high up on Pergamus.[1]
Murderous Ares went in among the Trojan ranks,
inspiring the troops. In the shape of Acamas,
Thracian leader, he yelled at Priam's royal sons:

"You sons of Priam, that god-nurtured king,
why are you still allowing the Achaeans
to keep slaughtering your troops? Are you waiting
until they fight by the well-built city gates?
There lies great-hearted Anchises' son,
Aeneas, whom we honour as we do prince Hector.
Come, let's save our brave comrade from the battle roar."

Ares's words gave each man courage and blood-zest for war.
Then Sarpedon spoke to Hector, bitterly complaining:

"Hector, where's that courage you used to have?
You kept claiming you could guard the city

[1]Pergamus was the name of the citadel in Troy.

on your own, without your people or your allies,
using your own family and relatives.
Looking round now, I can't see them here,
any of them. They've all taken refuge,
like dogs around a lion. Those of us
who've come as allies, we do all the fighting.
I marched here as an ally, travelling far,
for Lycia is a long, long way from here,
by the swirling river Xanthus, where I left
my dear wife, my infant son, much property, [480]
something poor men covet. But for all that,
I urge my Lycian troops to action,
I stand and fight all comers on my own,
when I've nothing for the enemy to take.
But you stand around, without urging men
to fight back or defend their wives. Watch out.
You may become a prize yourself—a trophy
for your enemies. You'll be like a fish
snared in the meshes of a fatal net.
They'll quickly smash your well-built city.
You should be thinking of this day and night, [490]
imploring leaders of your famous allies
to hold on staunchly, thus preventing them
from mounting any serious complaints."

Sarpedon's speech stung Hector's heart. Fully armed,
he quickly jumped down from his chariot to the ground.
Waving two sharp spears, he roamed through all the army,
rousing men to fight, steeling hearts for dreadful war.
Troops rallied once more and turned to face Achaeans.
Argives, too, stood firm. The men did not withdraw.
As on the sacred threshing floor wind blows the chaff,
while men stand winnowing the crop, when Demeter, [500]
with her golden hair, separates the grain from chaff
in the rushing breeze, and piles of chaff grow whiter,
so then Achaean troops grew white, covered with dust
stirred up by horses' hooves. It coloured the sky bronze.

So the chariots came on to battle once again,
wheeled round by drivers' strong ferocious hands.
Headstrong Ares assisted Trojans in the battle,
concealing them in darkness, roaming everywhere,
carrying out his orders from Phoebus Apollo,
god with the golden sword, who'd told him to arouse

the Trojans' spirits when he saw Pallas Athena
leave the fighting, for she was helping the Danaans.

Apollo then sent Aeneas from his costly shrine,
putting fighting strength into this warrior's heart,
his people's shepherd. Aeneas rejoined his friends,
who were overjoyed to see him safe and sound—alive—
approaching with brave spirits. They did not question him.
They had too much other work at hand to do.
For Apollo, god with the silver bow, and Ares,
the man killer, along with insatiable Strife,
had stirred things up there on the battlefield.

Then the two Ajaxes, Odysseus, and Diomedes
roused Danaans, urging them to battle.
They did not fear the Trojans' powerful attack
and stood their ground like clouds set in place by Zeus,
son of Cronos, above a range of mountain peaks
on a windless day, quite motionless, while the force
of North Wind and other raging blasts is sound asleep.
When these storm winds blow, they scatter shadowy clouds.
That's the way Danaans held their positions then,
without flinching, without fear. The son of Atreus
moved through the troops and gave out many orders.

> "My friends, be men. Let courage fill your hearts.
> In the heat of battle remember honour,
> each man's reputation. When men recall
> their honour, more troops are saved than slaughtered.
> Those who run away lose life and fame."

Agamemnon spoke, then quickly hurled his spear.
He hit a good fighting man, comrade to Aeneas,
great-hearted Deïcoön, son of Pergasus,
whom Trojans honoured as they did king Priam's sons,
for he was quick to take his place among the best,
the men who do their fighting at the very front.
Mighty Agamemnon's spear struck against his shield,
but the shield could not hold out—the bronze went through,
piercing Deïcoön's belt and sinking in his gut.
He fell with a thud, his armour rattling round him.

Then Aeneas killed two of the best Danaans,
Crethon and Orsilochus, whose father lived

in well-built Phere, a man of property,
descended from the river Alpheus, whose broad streams
flow through Pylian land. The river bore Orsilochus,
king of many men, and Orsilochus fathered
great-hearted Diocles, to whom were born twin sons,
Crethon and Orsilochus, experts in all aspects of war.
These two, once grown, came with Argives in black ships [550]
to Troy, city rich in horses, to win honour
for Agamemnon and Menelaus, sons of Atreus.
Death's final moment took them in. As two lions,
cared for by their mother in a deep thick forest
on a mountain peak, steal stout sheep and cattle
and plunder people's farmsteads, until they perish,
killed by sharp bronze in the hands of men, so these two died,
cut down by Aeneas. They fell like lofty pines. [560]

War-loving Menelaus felt pity for these two,
seeing them die. He made his way through the men's front ranks,
armed in glittering bronze, brandishing his spear.
Ares stirred his battle spirit, planning his death
at Aeneas's hand. But then Antilochus,
son of great-hearted Nestor, saw Menelaus.
He hurried through the foremost ranks, in his concern
for this shepherd of the people, that if he came to grief,
all their efforts would be completely futile.
Menelaus and Aeneas, now faced each other,
with eager hands and spears, ready to begin the fight.
But when Antilochus stood by Menelaus, [570]
Aeneas, though a swift fighter, started to withdraw,
seeing these two men standing their ground together.
So Menelaus and Antilochus dragged the corpses
of Crethon and Orsilochus to Achaean troops,
placed the two dead heroes in the hands of friends,
then turned back to fight with those in the front ranks.

Antilochus and Menelaus then killed Pylaemenes,
a man like Ares, leader of the Paphlagonians,
great-hearted, shield-bearing men. The son of Atreus,
famous spearman Menelaus, struck him,
as he stood up in his chariot, hitting him
right on his collar bone. Antilochus hit Mydon, [580]
Atymnius' noble son, the attendant driver,
as he was wheeling his sure-footed horses round.
He struck him with a rock square on the elbow.

The reins, decorated with rich ivory,
fell from his hands down on the dusty ground.
Antilochus sprang out and with his sword struck Mydon
on the temple. Gasping with pain, Mydon pitched over,
and tumbled from the well-made chariot headfirst,
his head and shoulders disappearing in the dirt.
For some time he stayed stuck, buried in deep sand,
until his horses kicked him flat, level with the dust,
stamping him into the ground, as Antilochus
whipped them on, leading them back to Achaean troops.

Hector saw this from the lines. He ran against them,
shouting wildly, with strong Trojan soldiers in support.
Leading these men came Ares along with fearful Strife,
bringing war's pitiless and murderous confusion.
Ares worked with a huge spear in his hands, moving round,
sometimes behind Hector, sometimes in front of him.

When Diomedes, skilled in war cries, noticed Ares,
he shuddered—just a man crossing a large plain
stops at a raging river rushing to the sea,
looks helplessly at swirling foam, and moves away—
so Tydeus's son backed off then, saying to his men:

> "My friends, we're so amazed prince Hector
> is such a spearman, so courageous, warlike.
> But he's always got some god beside him,
> to ward off destruction. Right now, it's Ares
> he's has with him, looking like a mortal man.
> Stay turned towards the Trojans, but fall back.
> Don't try to fight it out with gods."

Diomedes spoke. Trojans then approached much closer.
Hector killed two men, keen warriors—Menesthes
and Anchialus—both riding in a single chariot.
Seeing them fall, great Telamonian Ajax felt pity.
He approached, stood firm, then threw his shining spear.
The spear struck Amphius, son of Selagus,
who owned much property in Paesus, with many crops.
Fate led him to become allied with Priam and his sons.
Ajax, son of Telamon, hit Amphius in the belt.
The long-shadowed spear struck hard, low in his gut.
He collapsed with a crash. Noble Ajax ran up
to strip the armour off, but Trojans showered him

with bright, sharp spears. His shield took many hits.
Pushing his heel into the corpse he pulled out his bronze spear,
but the hail of weapons stopped him stripping off
Amphius's splendid armour from his shoulders.
He feared the fierce brave Trojans standing by the corpse,
for many spearmen crowded him and forced him back.
And Ajax, for all his massive size and strength,
for all his courage, had to withdraw, shaken.

As these men toiled in frantic battle, powerful fate
drove strong, brave Tlepolemus, son of Hercules,
against godlike Sarpedon. These two men approached,
facing each other at close quarters, son and grandson
of cloud-gathering Zeus. Tlepolemus called out first:

"Sarpedon, counsellor to the Lycians,
what forces you to cower down right here,
quite ignorant in battle? Those who say
you're aegis-bearing Zeus's son are liars.
You're far inferior to those men born of Zeus
in times long past. Consider mighty Hercules,
my father. He was quite different, they say—
steadfast, brave, his spirit like a lion.
He came here once for Laomedon's horses.
With fewer men and only six ships, he sacked
the Trojan city and emptied all its streets.
But you've a paltry spirit, your troops
are withering away. And it's impossible
you'll help the Trojans by coming here
from Lycia, even if you're powerful.
I'll kill you, and you'll pass through Hades gate."

Sarpedon, Lycian leader, then said in reply:

"Yes, Tlepolemus, Hercules did destroy
sacred Ilion, but through the foolishness
of the city's king, high-born Laomedon,
who tricked the man who'd worked so well for him.
He didn't offer Hercules the horses
he'd come so far to get. As for you,
I'll now see to your death, that fatal blackness.
You'll give me great glory, and your life
you'll give to famous horseman Hades."

Sarpedon spoke. Tlepolemus raised his ash spear high.
Then two long spears flew from their hands together.
Sarpedon's spear hit Tlepolemus right in the neck.
The cruel point kept going. Dark night covered up his eyes.
Tlepolemus' long spear struck Sarpedon in his left thigh.
Its bloodthirsty point pierced him, aiming for the bone.
On this occasion, father Zeus held off his fate.
His brave companions carried off godlike Sarpedon,
pulled down by the long spear's weight, as it dragged behind.
No one thought to pull the ash spear from his leg,
so he could walk. They were in such a rush to shift him.

On the opposing side, well-armed Achaeans
carried Tlepolemus away from battle.
Godlike Odysseus noticed them, his spirit steady,
but his fond heart was burning, as he turned over
in his mind, whether to chase after that son of Zeus,
loud thunderer, or stay to kill more Lycians.
But Fate did not decree that brave Odysseus
should kill Zeus's mighty son with his sharp bronze.
Athena turned his heart against that Lycian crowd.
So he killed Coeranus, Alastor, Chromius,
Alcandrus, Halius, Noëmon, and Prytanis.
Lord Odysseus would have killed still more Lycians,
if Hector of the flashing helmet had not seen him,
then gone through the ranks in front, armed in shining bronze,
terrifying Danaans. Sarpedon, son of Zeus,
was glad to see him coming. He implored Hector:

> "Son of Priam, don't let me lie here,
> a trophy for Danaans. Rescue me.
> Let me remain forever in your city,
> since it seems I'll not be going home
> to cheer up my dear wife and infant son."

Hector of the flashing helmet made no reply.
He charged on, eager to force the Argives quickly back,
to massacre large numbers of their soldiers.
God-like Sarpedon's noble comrades placed him
by a fine oak tree, sacred to aegis-bearing Zeus.
Pelagon, his strong, well-loved attendant, then pushed
the ash spear straight out through his thigh. Sarpedon fainted.
A mist fell, clouding his eyes, but soon he breathed again.

North Wind's breeze revived him, blowing air into his heart,
as his spirit panted, gasping his life away.

Argives weren't driven back to their black ships by Ares
or by bronze-armed Hector. Nor did they wheel about
to battle Trojans face to face. They kept moving back,
once they realized Ares was with the Trojans.

Among the Argives, who were the first and last men killed
by Hector, son of Priam, and brazen Ares?
They were godlike Teuthras, Orestes the charioteer,
Trechus, an Aetolian spearman, Oenomaus,
Helenus, son of Oenops, and Oresbius,
with his glittering belt, a man who lived in Hyle
and kept himself preoccupied with wealth
along the shores of lake Cephisia. Beside him
lived even more Boeotians, owners of rich lands.

White-armed goddess Hera saw Argives being slaughtered
in the thick of battle. She spoke out to Athena.

> "Alas, Athena, child of aegis-bearing Zeus,
> tireless one, we've made an empty promise
> to Menelaus, that he'd wipe out Troy,
> that well-built city, before going home,
> if we let murderous Ares rage on like this.
> Come, let's both recall our fighting power."

Athena, the bright-eyed goddess, agreed with Hera's words.
So that revered goddess Hera, daughter of great Cronos,
went to prepare her horses with their golden bridles.
Then Hebe quickly checked the chariot's curved wheels,
bronze with eight spokes each, on axles made of iron,
wheel rims made out of imperishable gold,
edged with tires of close-fitted bronze, an amazing sight.
Silver axle boxes revolve on either side.
The body of the chariot has gold and silver strips.
Two rails run round it. The pole is made of silver.
On its end Hebe tied the cross-piece, lovely gold,
then fixed the golden collar straps. Hera, keen for war,
led her swift-footed horses out into their yoke.
Then Athena, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus,
threw on her father's porch the embroidered gown
which she had made herself with her own hands.

She then put on the robe of cloud-gatherer Zeus
and armed herself with weapons for that wretched war.
She slung across her shoulders the fearsome tasseled aegis,
its borders woven with Fear, Strife, Force, terrorizing Panic,
with the chilling, horrifying and monstrous Gorgon's head—
the horrifying emblem of aegis-bearing Zeus.
On her head she placed a double-ridged gold helmet,
men from a hundred cities etched upon its four-part crest.
She set foot in her blazing chariot, grasping
her huge, strong, heavy spear, with which she slaughters men,
heroes who annoy her, goddess with a mighty father.
Hera quickly lashed the horses with her whip.
The gates of heaven scraped open on their own.
The Seasons supervise them, for they're in charge
of great heavenly Olympus, opening up
the dense packed clouds or closing them again.
Through these gates the goddesses led out their horses,
Hera lashing them ahead. They met the son of Cronos,
sitting some distance from the other gods,
on the highest crest of many-ridged Olympus.
Hera, white-armed goddess, reined in the horses,
then spoke to Zeus, most high son of Cronos:

"Father Zeus, aren't you angry with Ares
for killing off those warriors? He's wiped out
so many Achaean men, good ones, too,
and so rashly. It's not right. It pains me.
Meanwhile, Aphrodite and Apollo,
with his silver bow, are enjoying themselves,
happy about this madman they've unleashed,
who has no sense of what's appropriate.
Father Zeus, would I annoy you very much
if I hurt Ares and chased him from this fight?"

Cloud gatherer Zeus smiled and then said in reply:

"All right, then, do that. But set Athena,
goddess of the battle spoils, against him.
For she's the one who's most accustomed
to inflicting nasty pains on Ares."

White-armed goddess Hera agreed with what Zeus said.
She whipped the horses on. They flew off willingly,
mid-way between the starry heaven and earth.

As far as a man on a height can see in the distant haze
as he looks out across the wine-dark sea, that's how far
gods' snorting horses vault in just one stride.
When they came to Troy's two flowing rivers,
where the Simoeis and the Scamander meet,
white-armed goddess Hera stopped the horses,
loosed them from the chariot and hid them in thick cloud.
Simoeis produced ambrosia for them to eat.
The goddesses moved stealthily, like wild pigeons,
eager to assist the Argive troops. They reached that place
where most of the bravest men were fighting, in a crowd
by mighty Diomedes, tamer of horses,
like lions who eat raw meat or wild boars whose strength
is not easily exhausted. In that place Hera,
white-armed goddess, stood up, looking just like Stentor,
a great-hearted, loud-throated man, whose voice could shout
with the strength of fifty men. Hera cried out:

"Shame on you, you Argive warriors.
You're a disgrace, good only for display.
When lord Achilles used to go to battle,
the Trojans didn't dare to venture out
beyond the Dardanian gates. They feared
his mighty spear. But now they're fighting
well outside the city, by our hollow ships."

With these words, she roused each man's heart and spirit.
Bright-eyed Athena quickly moved to Diomedes.
She found that king beside his chariot and horses,
recovering from the wound from Pandarus's arrow.
The sweat under the wide strap of his round shield
was bothering him. The chafing made his arms grow tired.
He was lifting up the strap, wiping off dark blood.
Setting her hand on the chariot yoke, the goddess said:

"Tydeus had a son not much like his father.
He may have been short, but he was a fighter.
When I would not allow him into battle
or to display himself, that time he came
to Thebes alone, far from his Achaeans,
in the middle of all those Cadmeans,
I told him to be quiet at the palace feast.
But he possessed a powerful spirit
always active in him. So he challenged

Cadmean young men and beat them easily.
That's how much I helped him. Now I stand here,
beside you, taking care of you, your friend.
And I'm telling you to fight the Trojans.
But you're either weary after so much action,
your limbs worn out, or fear has made you timid.
If so, then you're no son of Tydeus,
the son of warlike Oeneus."

In answer to Athena, mighty Diomedes said:

"I recognize you, goddess daughter
of aegis-bearing Zeus. I'll speak to you
quite openly, concealing nothing. It's not
that fear has made me hesitant or anxious.
But I'm remembering your own instructions,
what you laid down. You told me not to fight
face to face with any immortal god,
unless Zeus's daughter Aphrodite
should come to battle. With my sharp bronze,
I was to wound her. I've pulled myself back,
and told the other Argives to stay here
since I see Ares dominates the fight."

Bright-eyed goddess Athena answered him:

"Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
you fill my heart with joy. Don't fear Ares
or any other immortal deity.
For I'll give you all the help you need.
But come, first let your sure-footed horses
charge at Ares. Hit him up close. Have no fear
of headstrong Ares, that madman, born evil,
that fickle god. Just now he gave his word
to me and Hera too that he would fight
the Trojans and assist the Argives. But now,
he's forgotten that and helps the Trojans."

Saying this, Athena grabbed Sthenelus's hand
and hauled him from the chariot to the ground.
He jumped up at once. The goddess climbed up eagerly
beside lord Diomedes in the chariot.
The oaken axle groaned aloud, weighed down,
bearing the fearful goddess and the finest man.

Pallas Athena took up the reins and whip.
First, she led the sure-footed horses against Ares.
He was removing armour from huge Periphas,
Ochesius' fine son, by far the best of the Aetolians.
Blood-stained Ares was stripping him of all his weapons.
Then Athena put Hades' helmet on her head,
so she was invisible to mighty Ares.
But man-killing Ares did see Diomedes.
He let the body of huge Periphas lie there,
where he'd first killed him and ripped out his spirit.
He strode straight up to horse-taming Diomedes.
When the two came to close quarters and faced each other,
Ares thrust his bronze spear first, over the yoke
and horses' reins, eager to take Diomedes' life.
Athena, bright-eyed goddess, hands gripping the reins,
shoved the spear aside, so its thrust was harmless,
above the chariot. Diomedes, skilled in war cries,
then made the second thrust with his bronze spear.
Pallas Athena guided the weapon right to Ares' gut,
the lower part where his waist band went around him.
Diomedes wounded Ares, piercing his fair skin,
then pulled back on his spear. Brazen Ares roared
as loud as the screams of nine or ten thousand men
when they clash in war. Fear seized Achaeans—Trojans, too.
They shuddered. That's how strong that cry resounded
as it came from Ares, insatiable for war.
Just as a dark mist moves upward from the clouds,
when in hot weather a strong wind arises,
so brazen Ares looked to Tydeus's son, Diomedes,
as the god at once soared up into the clouds,
ascending to wide heaven. Ares, in a rush,
went to the gods' home, steep Olympus, sat by Zeus,
distressed at heart. He showed Zeus where he was wounded,
dripping with immortal blood, then made his complaint.
His words had wings.

"Father Zeus,
aren't you incensed at this barbarity?
We gods are always suffering dreadfully
at each other's hands, when we bring men help.
We all lay the blame for this on you.
For you gave birth to that insane young girl,
your destructive daughter, always busy
with some nastiness. All the other gods,

all those on Mount Olympus, do what you say.
And each of us is subject to your will.
But you never punish her in word or deed.
You do nothing, because you gave birth to her
yourself, to Athena, your vicious daughter.[1]
Just now she urged proud Diomedes,
son of Tydeus, to charge insanely
against deathless gods. First he attacked
Aphrodite and struck her on the wrist.
Then he charged me, even me, like a god.
But my quick feet took me away. If not,
I'd be in lasting pain with the fearful dead,
or have barely lived, wounded by bronze spears."

Scowling at him, cloud-gatherer Zeus replied:

"You hypocrite, don't sit there whining at me.
Among the gods who live on Mount Olympus,
you're the one I hate the most. For you love war,
constant strife and battle. Your mother, Hera,
has an implacable, unyielding spirit.
It's hard for me to control how she reacts
to what I say. You're suffering because of her,
through her conniving, that's what I think.
But I'll leave you in pain no longer.
You're my child—your mother and I made you.
But if you'd been born from any other god,
by now you'd be lower than the sons
of Ouranos—you're so destructive."[2]

Zeus spoke. He instructed Paeëon to heal Ares.
Paeëon cured him by spreading pain-killing herbs,
for Ares was not born to die. Just as fig juice
added quickly to white milk clots it at once,
as it's stirred, that's how fast headstrong Ares healed.
Hebe washed him and clothed him in fine garments.
He sat beside Zeus, son of Cronos, enjoying his splendour.

[1]Athena was reported to have sprung full grown from the head of Zeus; hence, the idea here that Zeus gave birth to her.

[2]Ouranos was a primordial god. His children were Titans, a group of divine beings before Zeus; they rebelled against Zeus's authority, and Zeus keeps them imprisoned them deep in the underworld.

Athena of Alalcomenae and Argive Hera
returned once more to mighty Zeus's house,
now they'd stopped man-killing Ares's slaughter.

BOOK SIX
HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE

[The battle continues; Menelaus captures Adrestus; Agamemnon refuses ransom; Helenus gives advice to Hector; Glaucus and Diomedes prepare to fight; Glaucus tells the story of Bellerophon; Glaucus and Diomedes exchange armour in friendship; Hector goes to Troy, talks with his mother; Hector talks to Paris and Helen; Hector goes home, talks to his housekeeper; Hector meets Andromache and Astyanax; Hector prays for his son's future; Paris rejoins Hector at the gates.]

Now the grim war between Trojans and Achaeans
was left to run its course. The battle raged,
this way and that, across the entire plain,
as warriors hurled bronze-tipped spears at one another,
between the Simoeis and Xanthus rivers.

Ajax, son of Telamon, Achaea's tower of strength,
was the first to break through ranks of Trojans,
punching out some breathing room for his companions.
He hit Acamas, son of Eussorus, a strong brave soldier,
best of the Thracians. Ajax's spear struck him first
on the peak of his horse-plumed helmet. The sharp bronze
drove right into his forehead—dead in the centre— [10]
straight through bone into the brain. Darkness fell on his eyes.

Diomedes, expert in war cries, killed Axylus,
son of Teuthras, a rich man, from well-built Arisbe.
People really loved him, for he lived beside a road
and welcomed all passers-by into his home.
But not one of those men he'd entertained now stood
in front of him, protecting him from wretched death.
Diomedes took the lives of two men—Axylus
and his attendant charioteer, Calesius.
So both men went down into the underworld.

Euryalus killed Dresus and Opheltius, [20]
then charged after Aesepus and Pedasus,
whom the naiad nymph Abarbarea bore
to noble Boucolion, son of high-born Laomedon,
his eldest son. His mother bore Pedasus in secret.
Bucolion had had sex with the nymph
while tending to his flock. She became pregnant,
then gave birth to two twin sons. Euryalus,
son of Mecisteus, slaughtered both of them,

destroying their strength and splendid bodies.
Then he stripped the armour from their shoulders.

Next, fierce warrior Polypoetes killed Astyalus.
With his bronze spear Odysseus killed Pidytes from Percote.
Teucer slaughtered lord Aretaon, and Antilochus,
Nestor's son, with his glittering spear killed Ableros.
Agamemnon, king of men, killed Elatus,
who lived in lofty Pedasus, beside the banks
of the fair-flowing river Satnioeis.
Heroic Leitus knocked down Phylacus, as he was fleeing.
And Eurypylus then killed Melanthius.

Menelaus, skilled in war cries, took Adrestus still alive.
His horses had panicked and bolted off across the plain.
They charged into a tamarisk bush and snapped the pole
on the curved chariot, right at the very end.
The horses then ran off towards the city, where others,
panic stricken, were headed, too. Adrestus
rolled out of the chariot beside the wheel,
face down in the dirt. Menelaus, son of Atreus,
stood there over him, holding his long-shadowed spear.
Adrestus clutched Menelaus by the knees and begged:

> "Take me alive, son of Atreus—you'll get
> good ransom. My father is a wealthy man,
> owns lots of things—bronze, silver, well-worked iron.
> So he'll give you a splendid ransom,
> if he learns I'm by Achaean ships, alive."

Adrestus pleaded. Menelaus's heart in his chest was moved.
He was about to hand Adrestus to his attendant,
to take back captive to the fast Achaean ships.
But then Agamemnon came running up to him,
sharply criticizing Menelaus:

> "Menelaus, you soft-hearted man,
> why are you sparing men's lives like this?
> In your own home, Trojans treated you
> exceptionally well, did they not?
> So don't let any one of them evade
> a terrible destruction at our hands—
> not even the young child still carried
> in his mother's belly. Let no one escape.

Let everyone in Troy be slaughtered,
without pity, without leaving any trace."

With these words, by this appeal to justice,
he changed his brother's mind. So Menelaus
shoved heroic Adrestus away from him.
Mighty Agamemnon then speared him in the side.
Adrestus fell onto his back. The son of Atreus
stepped on his chest and pulled the ash spear out.

Then Nestor addressed the Argives, shouting:

"My friends,
Danaan heroes, comrades of Ares,
let no one lag behind to pick up loot,
seeking to reach our ships with all you can.
Let's kill the enemy instead. Later,
with the corpses on the plain, you'll have time
to strip off bodies of the slaughtered men."

With this Nestor stirred each man's strength and spirit.
Then Achaeans, filled with love of war, would once more
have beaten Trojans, broken by cowardice,
back in flight to Troy, if Helenus, a son of Priam,
by far the best at reading omens, had not spoken out.
Standing by Hector and Aeneas, Helenus said:

"Aeneas, Hector, among Trojans and Lycians,
the main weight falls particularly on you,
for you are, in all attacks, the best at fighting,
at strategy. Make a stand right here.
Rally the men before the city gates.
Move around through the entire army,
before men run and fall into their women's arms.
How that would make our enemies rejoice!
Then, once you've restored the spirits
in all our ranks, we'll stand right here
and fight Danaans, no matter how hard pressed.
For then we'll have no other option.
And you, Hector, go into the city.
Speak to our mother, yours and mine.
Tell her to assemble the old women
at the temple of bright-eyed Athena,
on the city heights. She should take the key,

open the doors of the sacred building,
then place in the lap of the goddess there, [90]
fair-haired Athena, the garment she thinks
loveliest, the greatest in the palace,
the one she likes far above the others.
Tell her to promise Athena she'll give
twelve heifers in a temple sacrifice,
yearlings, as yet untouched by any goad,
if she will pity Troy, pity the wives
and Trojan children, if she will keep
Tydeus' son away from sacred Ilion,
that fierce spearman, that mighty warrior,
who makes men afraid—in my opinion,
the most powerful of all Achaeans.
We didn't fear Achilles, chief of men,
like this, although they say a goddess [100]
was his mother. But this man's fighting rage
has no equal. We can't match his power."

Helenus spoke. Hector was convinced by his advice.
At once he jumped down from his chariot to the ground,
clutching his weapons. Brandishing two sharp spears,
he moved through all the army, urging men to fight,
rousing their spirits for the harsh brutality of war.
So men wheeled around and faced Achaean soldiers.
Argives then drew back and stopped the slaughter,
thinking that one of the immortal gods had come,
descending from star-lit heaven to help the Trojans,
enabling them to turn themselves around and fight.
Hector issued orders to the Trojans, shouting: [110]

"You proud Trojans, wide-renowned allies,
friends, be men, summon up your fighting strength,
while I go to Troy in person, to instruct
the old men of the council and our wives
to pray to the gods and promise sacrifice."

With these words, Hector of the shining helmet moved away.
As he went, black leather running round the outer edge
on his studded shield struck his neck and ankles.

Then Glaucus, son of Hippolochus, and Diomedes
moved out together between the armies, keen to fight. [120]

When they'd come to close quarters, facing one another,
Diomedes, expert in war cries, was the first to speak:

"Who are you, my dear man, among mortal men?
For I've never clapped eyes on you before
in those fights where men win glory.
But now you've stepped out well beyond the ranks,
showing more courage here than anyone,
standing up to my long-shadowed spear.
Men who face me end up with grieving parents.
If you're one of the immortal gods
come down from heaven, I won't fight you.
Even mighty Lycurgus, son of Dryas, [130]
did not live long, once he started battling
heavenly gods. He was the one who chased
attendants of the frenzied Dionysus,
forcing them to run by sacred Nysa.
They all threw their holy wands onto the ground,
as murderous Lycurgus with his ox whip
kept beating them. Even Dionysus,
terrified, jumped in the ocean waves.
Thetis embraced him, as he shook with fear,
intimidated by Lycurgus' threats.
He angered the gods, who live without a care,
so the son of Cronos blinded him.
He didn't live much longer, not once he'd made
all the deathless gods displeased with him. [140]
So I don't want to battle sacred gods.
But if you're a mortal man, someone
who eats earth's fruit, come closer to me,
so you can meet your death more quickly."

Glaucus, fine son of Hippolochus, replied:

"Son of Tydeus, great-hearted Diomedes,
why question me about my ancestry?
Generations of men are like the leaves.
In winter, winds blow them down to earth,
but then, when spring season comes again,
the budding wood grows more. And so with men—
one generation grows, another dies away.
But if you wish to learn about my family, [150]
so you're familiar with my lineage,
well, many people know the details.

There is a city in a part of Argos,
land where horses breed—it's called Ephyra.
There Sisyphus lived, craftiest man ever born,
Sisyphus, Aeolus' son. He had a son,
Glaucus, father of handsome Bellerophon.
The gods made Bellerophon so beautiful
and gave him the best qualities of men.
But Proetus, in his heart, plotted against him,
driving him from Argos, being much stronger,
for Zeus had given royal power to Proetus.
Now, Proetus' wife, lady Anteia, [160]
desperate to have sex with Bellerophon,
wanted him to lie with her in secret.
But fiery Bellerophon refused,
for he possessed an honourable heart.
So Anteia made up lies, telling Proetus,
the king,

> 'You'll be murdered, Proetus,
> unless you assassinate Bellerophon,
> who wants to have sex with me against my will.'

Proetus was overcome with anger
at what he'd heard, but was reluctant
to kill Bellerophon—in his heart
he shrank from such an evil act.
He sent Bellerophon to Lycia,
with a lethal message, coded symbols
written on a folded tablet. These told
many lies about Bellerophon.[1]
Proetus told him to give the message
to his father-in-law, so he'd be killed. [170]
Bellerophon went off to Lycia,
under safe conduct from the gods.
In Lycia he reached the river Xanthus,
and was honoured fully by the Lycian king,
with nine days of welcome entertainment,
nine sacrificial oxen. The tenth day,
when rose-fingered early Dawn appeared,
the Lycian king questioned Bellerophon,
asking to see the message he had brought

[1]This passage has been much discussed because it is the only reference in the entire poem to something that sounds very much like writing.

from his son-in-law Proetus.
Once he'd received the evil message
from his son-in-law, he told Bellerophon,
first of all, to kill the Chimera,
an invincible inhuman monster, [180]
but divine in origin. Its front part was a lion,
its rear a snake's tail, and in between a goat.
She breathed deadly rage in searing fire.
But Bellerophon killed the Chimera,
putting his trust in omens from the gods.
Next, he battled the Solymi, the worst fight,
they say, he ever had with mortal beings.
Then, third, he massacred the Amazons,
women who rival men. The king planned
one more devious evil trick against him,
as he was returning from the Amazons.
He set Lycia's best men in ambush.
But not a single one of them came back—
worthy Bellerophon had killed them all. [190]
Then the king knew he must be divinely born.
So he kept him with him there in Lycia,
gave him his daughter's hand in marriage,
and half the honours in his entire realm.
The Lycians then gave him an estate
far better than the rest, rich in vineyards,
wheat-growing farmland, for him to keep.
The king's daughter bore him three children—
Isander, Hippolochus, and Laodamia.
Counsellor Zeus then had sex with the girl.
She bore great Sarpedon, bronze-armed warrior.
But then Bellerophon angered all the gods. [200]
He wandered out alone on the Aleian plain—
depressed in spirit, roaming there and shunning all.
Ares, insatiable in war, killed his son Isander,
while he was fighting the famous Solymi.
Artemis, goddess with the golden reins,
in anger killed the daughter of Bellerophon.
My father was Hippolochus. I claim
my descent from him. He sent me to Troy,
telling me repeatedly to strive always
to be the best, to outdo other warriors,
for I must not shame my father's family,
the finest men by far in Ephyra,

in spacious Lycia. That's my lineage, [210]
the ancestry of blood I claim as mine."

Glaucus spoke. Diomedes, skilled at war cries, rejoiced.
He jabbed his spear into the life-giving earth,
and then spoke to that shepherd of his people as a friend:

"In that case, you're an old friend of my father.
For Oeneus once entertained Bellerophon,
that worthy man, for twenty days at home.
The two of them exchanged fine presents.
Oeneus gave a shining purple belt,
Bellerophon a gold two-handled cup, [220]
which I left in my house when I came here.
I have no memory of Tydeus,
for he died while far away from me,
killed at Thebes with the Achaean army.
Now I'll be your kind host in middle Argos,
you'll be mine in Lycia, when I visit you.
Let's make sure we avoid each other's spears,
even in the thick of all the fighting.
For there are many famous Trojans and allies
for me to kill, any warrior the gods provide,
whom I can run after and catch on foot.
For you there are many Argives to destroy,
all you can manage. So let's trade armour. [230]
Then those warriors here will all recognize
that we acknowledge our father's bonds as friends."

With these words, the two men jumped from their chariots,
clasped hands and pledged their mutual friendship.
Then Zeus, son of Cronos, stole Glaucus's wits,
for he gave Tydeus's son his golden armour,
worth one hundred oxen, exchanging that
for armour made of bronze, worth only nine.

Meanwhile, Hector reached the Scaean Gates and oak tree.
The Trojans' wives and daughters ran up round him,
asking after children, brothers, relatives, and husbands.
Addressing each in turn, he commanded them [240]
to pray to all the gods. For many were to face great grief.
He came to Priam's splendid palace, with porticoes
of well-ground stone. It had fifty private bed rooms,
all of polished rock, built close to one another,

where Priam's sons slept with the wives they married.
On the opposite side, within the courtyard,
were twelve roofed rooms, all made of polished stone,
for Priam's daughters, built near one another,
where Priam's sons-in-law slept with their married wives. [250]
It was here Hector's gracious mother, Hecuba,
met him, as she was going to the palace,
with Laodice, loveliest of all her daughters.
Taking his hand, she spoke to Hector:

"My child,
why have you left hard battle to come here?
The sons of Achaea—may gods curse them!—
press us hard, eager to fight around our city.
Your spirit has led you here to lift your hands
in prayers to Zeus from our city heights.
But wait. I can fetch some sweet wine for you,
so you can start by pouring a libation
to Father Zeus and other deathless gods.
Then you may enjoy some, too, if you'll drink. [260]
Wine restores strength well in a weary man,
and you've grown tired guarding your own family."

Great Hector of the shining helmet then replied:

"My dear mother, don't bring me some sweet wine,
for you'll weaken me. I'll lose my battle strength.
And I'm ashamed to offer up to Zeus
libations of bright wine with unwashed hands.
It's not at all appropriate for a man
spattered with blood and dirt to offer prayers
to the son of Cronos, lord of the black clouds.
But you must go to Athena's temple,
goddess of battle spoils, with burnt offerings.
First assemble the old women all together, [270]
then place in Athena's lap, that fair-haired goddess,
the garment which you think is loveliest,
the very finest you keep here at home,
the one you like far better than the rest.
You must promise you will give Athena
twelve heifers in a temple sacrifice,
yearlings, as yet untouched by any goad,
if she will pity Troy, pity the wives
and Trojan children, if she will keep

Tydeus' son away from sacred Ilion,
that fierce spearman, that mighty warrior,
who makes men so afraid. You must leave now—
go straight to the temple of Athena,
goddess of battle spoils. I'll find Paris
and call him back, if he will to listen to me.
If only the earth would open under him,
swallow him up! Olympian Zeus raised him
as trouble for the Trojans, for brave Priam,
for his children. If I could see Paris die,
heading down to Hades, then I could say
my heart's sorrows were over and forgotten."

Hector spoke. His mother went into the house,
calling her attendants, who brought together
the matrons from the city. Then she went down
into the sweet-smelling room which stored their gowns,
fine embroidered work of women from Sidonia,
which godlike Paris brought with him from Sidon,
when he sailed across the broad sea, on that voyage
where he carried high-born Helen off. Hecuba took out
one of the gowns, the finest embroidery, the largest.
It lay at the bottom of the chest, glittering like a star.
Taking that as Athena's gift, she walked away.
The old ladies followed her. At Athena's temple
fair-cheeked Theano, daughter of Cisseus,
wife of horse-taming Antenor, let them in.
Trojans had appointed her Athena's priestess.
All the women raised their hands, praying to Athena,
while Theano took that lovely robe and placed it
in Athena's lap, the goddess with the lovely hair,
then spoke out this prayer to great Zeus's daughter:

"Blessed Athena, sacred goddess,
defender of our city, break the spear
of Diomedes. Let him fall face down
before the Scaean Gates. If so, right now
we'll sacrifice twelve heifers in your temple,
beasts untouched by any goad, if you'll pity
our city, Trojans' wives and children."

The women prayed. But Pallas Athena refused their prayer.

As they made their plea to great Zeus's daughter,
Hector went to the fine house of Alexander.
He'd built it himself with fertile Troy's best craftsmen.
They'd made a bedroom, living quarters, and a yard
close to Priam and to Hector, on the city height.
Hector, loved by Zeus, went in the house, holding his spear,
sixteen feet long, bronze point glittering in front of him,
a gold band running round it. He met Alexander,
busy in his room with his fine weapons—shield
and body armour—polishing his curving bow.
Argive Helen sat there, too, with her attendant ladies,
directing servants in their famous handicrafts.
Seeing Paris, Hector spoke some sharp words to him:

"Paris, you're a worthless man.
It's quite wrong of you to nurse that anger
in your heart, while men are being destroyed,
fighting right by the city, its steep walls.
It's because of you the sounds of warfare
catch fire round our city. You would fight
any man you saw avoiding battle,
fleeing war's brutality. So up with you,
or soon our city will go up in smoke,
with fire consuming everything."

Godlike Alexander then replied:

"Hector, your rebuke is not unfair—
it's reasonable. So I'll speak plainly.
Listen and remember what I'm saying.
I'm not sitting in my bedroom here
out of spite or anger with the Trojans.
I want to grieve. Just now my wife urged me,
using gentle words, to rouse myself to fight.
And personally I think that would be best.
Winning shifts from one man to another.
Now, wait here, while I put on my armour.
Or go, and I'll come later, catch up with you."

Hector of the shining helmet did not answer.
So Helen spoke to Hector with these soothing words:

"O Hector, you're my brother, and me,
I'm a horrible, conniving bitch.

I wish that on that day my mother bore me
some evil wind had come, carried me away,
and swept me off, up into the mountains,
or to the waves of the tumbling, crashing sea.
Then I would have died before this happened.
But since gods have ordained these evil things,
I wish I'd been wife to a better man,
someone sensitive to others' insults,
with feeling for his many shameful acts.
This husband of mine has no sense now
and won't acquire any in the future.
I expect he'll get from that what he deserves.
But come in, sit on this chair, my brother,
since this trouble really weighs upon your mind—
all because I was a bitch—because of that
and Paris's folly, Zeus gives us an evil fate,
so we may be subjects for men's songs
in human generations yet to come."

Great Hector of the shining helmet answered Helen:

"Don't ask me to sit down, Helen. You're kind,
but you won't persuade me. For my heart's on fire
to help Trojans, who really miss me when I'm gone.
But you must rouse Paris, and he should hurry,
so he can catch me here in the city.
I'm going home, to visit my dear wife
and infant son, for I have no idea
if I'll be coming back to them again,
or if the gods will kill me at Achaean hands."

Saying this, Hector of the shining helmet went away.
Soon afterwards he reached his well-built house.
He didn't find white-armed Andromache at home,
for she'd left with the infant child, going to the walls
with a finely dressed attendant, in tears, lamenting.
When Hector didn't meet his fair wife in the house,
he went and, standing in the doorway, asked his servant:

"Woman, tell me the truth. Where's Andromache?
At one of my sisters? With a well-dressed wife
of one of my brothers? Or is she at Athena's temple,
where the other fine-haired Trojan women
are praying to that fearful goddess?"

His busy housekeeper then answered him:

"Hector, you asked me to tell you the truth.
She didn't go to one of your sisters,
or one of your brothers' well-dressed wives,
nor did she go to Athena's temple,
where other fine-haired Trojan women
are praying to that fearful goddess.
No. She went to Ilion's great tower,
for she'd heard the Trojans were hard pressed,
the power of Achaeans was so great.
So she's hurrying off up to the walls,
like someone in a fit. A nurse went, too,
carrying the child."

Once the housekeeper spoke, [390]
Hector left the house by the same route he'd come,
through the well-built streets, across the mighty city,
and reached the Scaean Gates, beyond which he'd go
out onto the plain. There his wife ran up to meet him,
Andromache, daughter of great-hearted Eëtion,
who had included a large dowry with her.
Eëtion had lived below forested Mount Placus,
in Thebe, king of the Cilician people. She'd become
married wife to Hector of the shining helmet.
Now she met him there. With her came the nurse,
holding at her breast their happy infant child, [400]
well-loved son of Hector, like a beautiful star.
Hector had named him Scamandrius, but others
called him Astyanax, lord of the city,
because Hector was Troy's only guardian.
Hector looked at his son in silence, with a smile.
Andromache stood close to him, weeping.
Taking Hector by the hand, she spoke to him.

"My dear husband, your warlike spirit
will be your death. You've no compassion
for your infant child, for me, your sad wife,
who before long will be your widow.
For soon the Achaeans will attack you,
all together, and cut you down. As for me, [410]
it would be better, if I'm to lose you,
to be buried in the ground. For then I'll have
no other comfort, once you meet your death,

except my sorrow. I have no father,
no dear mother. For lord Achilles killed
my father, when he wiped out Thebe,
city with high gates, slaying Eëtion.
But he didn't strip his corpse—his heart
felt too much shame for that. So he burned him
in his finely decorated armour
and raised a burial mound above the ashes.
Mountain nymphs, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus,
planted elm trees all around his body.
I had seven brothers in my home.
All went down to Hades in a single day,
for swift-footed lord Achilles killed them all,
while they were guarding their shambling oxen
and their white shining sheep. As for my mother,
who ruled wooded Thebe-under-Placus,
he brought her here with all his other spoils.
Then he released her for a massive ransom.
But archer goddess Artemis then killed her
in her father's house. So, Hector, you are now
my father, noble mother, brother,
and my protecting husband. So pity me.
Stay here in this tower. Don't orphan your child
and make me a widow. Place men by the fig tree,
for there the city is most vulnerable,
the wall most easily scaled. Three times
their best men have come there to attack,
led by the two Ajaxes, the sons of Atreus,
famous Idomeneus, and Diomedes,
Tydeus's courageous son, incited to it
by someone well versed in prophecy
or by their own hearts' inclination."

Great Hector of the shining helmet answered her:

"Wife,
all this concerns me, too. But I'd be disgraced,
dreadfully shamed among Trojan men
and Trojan women in their trailing gowns,
if I should, like a coward, slink away from war.
My heart will never prompt me to do that,
for I have learned always to be brave,
to fight alongside Trojans at the front,
striving to win fame for father and myself.

My heart and mind know well the day is coming
when sacred Ilion will be destroyed,
along with Priam of the fine ash spear
and Priam's people. But what pains me most
about these future sorrows is not so much
the Trojans, Hecuba, or king Priam,
or even my many noble brothers,
who'll fall down in the dust, slaughtered
by their enemies. My pain focuses on you,
when one of those bronze-clad Achaeans
leads you off in tears, ends your days of freedom.
If then you come to Argos as a slave,
working the loom for some other woman,
fetching water from Hypereia or Messeis,
against your will, forced by powerful Fate,
then someone seeing you as you weep
may well say:

'That woman is Hectors wife.
He was the finest warrior in battle
of all horse-taming Trojans in that war
when they fought for Troy.'

Someone will say that,
and it will bring still more grief to you,
to be without a man like that to save you
from days of servitude. May I lie dead,
hidden deep under a burial mound,
before I hear about your screaming,
as you are dragged away."

With these words,
glorious Hector stretched his hands out for his son.
The boy immediately shrank back against the breast
of the finely girdled nurse, crying out in terror
to see his own dear father, scared at the sight of bronze,
the horse-hair plume nodding fearfully from his helmet top.
The child's loving father laughed, his noble mother, too.
Glorious Hector pulled the glittering helmet off
and set it on the ground. Then he kissed his dear son
and held him in his arms. He prayed aloud to Zeus
and the rest of the immortals.

"Zeus, all you other gods,
grant that this child, my son, may become,
like me, pre-eminent among the Trojans,
as strong and brave as me. Grant that he may rule
Troy with strength. May people someday say,
as he returns from war, 'This man is far better
than his father.' May he carry back
bloody spoils from his slaughtered enemy, [480]
making his mother's heart rejoice."

He placed his son in the hands of his dear wife.
She embraced the child on her sweet breast, smiling
through her tears. Observing her, Hector felt compassion.
He took her hand, then spoke to her.

"My dearest wife,
don't let your heart be sad on my account.
No man will throw me down to Hades
before my destined time. I tell you this—
no one escapes his fate, not the coward,
nor the brave man, from the moment of his birth.
So you should go into the house, keep busy [490]
with your proper work, with your loom and wool,
telling your servants to set about their tasks.
War will be every man's concern, especially mine,
of all those who live in Troy."

Having said these words,
glorious Hector took his plumed helmet in his hands.
His beloved wife went home, often looking back,
as she went, crying bitterly. She quickly reached
the spacious home of Hector, killer of men.
Inside she met her many servants and bid them all lament.
So they mourned for Hector in his own house, [500]
though he was still alive—they thought he'd not come back,
he'd not escape the battle fury of Achaean hands.

Paris did not wait for long in his high-roofed home.
Once he'd pulled on his famous armour, ornate bronze,
he hurried off on foot quickly through the city.
Just as some stalled stallion, well fed in the barn,
breaks his restraints, then gallops at top speed
across the plain, off to bathe in a fair-flowing river,
something he does habitually, proud of his strength,

holding his head high, mane streaming on his shoulders,
legs carrying him swiftly to the grazing mares—
that's how Paris, son of Priam, hurried then,
rushing down from the heights of Pergamus,
gleaming like a ray of sunshine in his armour,
laughing with joy as his feet carried him so fast.
He soon met his brother Hector, turning away
from where he'd had his conversation with his wife.
Godlike Paris was the first to speak:

"My dear brother, you're in a hurry.
I'm holding you back with my delay,
not coming as quickly as you asked."

Hector of the shining helmet answered Paris:

"Brother, no one could justly criticize
your work in battle, for you fight bravely.
But you deliberately hold yourself back
and do not wish to fight. It pains my heart,
when I hear shameful things about you
from Trojans, who are suffering much distress
because of you. But let's be on our way.
We'll sort all this out later, if Zeus ever grants
we arrange in place inside our homes
bowls of wine to celebrate our freedom,
in thanks to the eternal, heavenly gods,
once we have driven away from Troy
all these well-armed Achaeans."

Book Seven
Hector and Ajax

[Hector and Paris leave Troy, rejoin the fighting; Athena and Apollo plan to halt the battle; Helenus suggests Hector issue a challenge for single combat; Hector issues his challenge; no one responds; Nestor shames the Achaeans; Achaeans draw lots to see who will fight Hector; Ajax's lot falls out; Ajax's shield is described; Ajax and Hector fight; heralds intervene to stop them; Nestor suggests collecting the dead and building a defensive wall and ditch; in Troy Antenor suggests the return of Helen; Paris refuses but offers to return all the goods he took away; Idaios goes to the Argives to suggest a truce to bury the dead, repeats Paris's offer; the Achaeans refuse the offer; the armies collect and cremate the dead; the Achaeans build the wall; Poseidon objects to Zeus; both sides feast after the funeral rites]

After glorious Hector had talked with Paris,
he and his brother hurried through the gates,
both of them with hearts on fire to fight in battle.
Just as some god sends a breeze to sailors in distress,
when they work themselves too hard rowing out at sea,
bodies broken with fatigue at their polished oars—
that's how these two looked to the long-suffering Trojans.

Paris then killed Menesthius, king Areithous' son.
He lived in Arne, born from Areithous,
a mace fighter, and ox-eyed Phylomedusa. [10]
Hector hit Eioneus with his sharp spear
in the neck, just under his bronze helmet rim.
His legs collapsed. Glaucus, son of Hippolochus,
leader of Lycians, amid the battle din,
struck Iphinous, son of Dexius, in the shoulder,
just as he was jumping in behind fast horses.
He fell out of his chariot down on the ground.
Then his limbs went limp and lifeless.

When goddess Athena with her glittering eyes
saw Argives being slaughtered in the battle frenzy, [20]
she rushed down from Olympus heights to sacred Ilion.
Apollo, keeping watch from Pergamus,
came to confront her. He wanted victory
for Trojans. The two met one another by the oak tree.
Lord Apollo, son of Zeus, addressed Athena first:

"Daughter of great-hearted Zeus, why has your spirit
pushed you so eagerly down from Olympus?
You want to change the tide of battle,

giving victory to the Danaans.
You don't pity Trojans as they're butchered.
But it would be much better if you'd follow
what I say—let's put an end to battle
and the killing for today. They'll fight again,
later on, until they reach their goal in Troy,
since the demolition of that city
is what you goddesses desire in your hearts."

Bright-eyed Athena then said to Apollo:

"God who works from far away, I agree—
that's what I myself intended, coming
from Olympus down to mingle here
with Trojans and Achaeans. How will you get
these troops to end this present battle?"

Lord Apollo, son of Zeus, answered Athena:

"Let's rouse the powerful fighting spirit
of horse-taming Hector, so he challenges
one of the Danaans to fight him alone,
in a grim single combat, one on one.
Bronze-armed Achaeans, in admiration,
may incite someone to fight lord Hector."

Apollo spoke, and bright-eyed Athena then agreed.
Helenus, Priam's much-loved son, in his heart
well understood the scheme the gods had planned.
So he went to Hector, stood by him, and said:

"Hector, son of Priam, wise as Zeus,
why not be persuaded by what I suggest,
since I'm your brother? Let other Trojans
and Achaeans sit. You should challenge
the best of the Achaeans to fight you,
a personal single combat, a grim fight.
I've heard the voices of eternal gods—
now is not your fated time to die."

Helenus spoke. Hector was elated with the plan.
He went into the middle of the Trojan ranks
gripping the centre of his spear and pushed men back.
The men sat down. Agamemnon, on his side,

got well-armed Achaeans to stop fighting, too.
Athena, with Apollo of the silver bow,
perched in the lofty oak tree sacred to Zeus,
who bears the aegis, looking like two vultures, [60]
set to enjoy the unfolding human action.
Ranks of men were closely packed, bristling with shields,
with spears and helmets. As West Wind, when it starts to blow,
ruffles the sea, and waters under it grow black—
that's what ranks of Trojans and Achaeans looked like
out there on the plain. Hector then addressed both armies:

"Listen to me, you Trojans, you well-armed Achaeans,
so I may speak what my heart prompts.
High-ruling son of Cronos has quashed our pact,
intending to bring both of us bad things,
until you capture well-built Troy or else [70]
are conquered beside your seaworthy ships.
Achaea's finest men are here among you.
Let the one whose heart now drives him
to fight with me step out as champion,
your representative against lord Hector.
That's what I propose—let Zeus be my witness.
If your man kills me with his sharpened bronze,
let him strip my armour, take it away,
off to your hollow ships, but give my body
back to my house, so Trojans and their wives
may give me ritual burning once I'm dead. [80]
If I kill your champion, if Apollo
grants me that triumph, I'll strip his armour,
take it to sacred Ilion and hang it
in the temple of Apollo, the far shooter.
I'll give up the body to be taken back
to well-decked ships, so long-haired Achaeans
can bury him and build his funeral mound
on the shores of the broad Hellespont.
Then people born in years to come who sail
their ships with many oars on the wine-dark sea
will say,

'This is the funeral mound of some man
who died long ago, the best of warriors,
killed by glorious Hector.'

That's what they'll say.
And then my glory will never fade away."

Hector finished. The Achaeans all grew silent,
ashamed to duck the challenge, afraid to answer it.
At last Menelaus, sick at heart, stood up to speak,
reproaching them with bitter words of shame:

"Alas, you boasters, you're Achaean women,
not men. This shame will mean total disgrace,
unless some Danaan now stands up to Hector.
All of you sitting here, without heart,
disgraced like this, may all of you dissolve,
disintegrate into earth and water.
I'll personally take up arms myself.
I'll fight Hector. The rope that's tied
to victory comes from heaven above,
from the hands of the immortal gods."

This said, Menelaus pulled his fine armour on.
And then, Menelaus, they would have seen you die
at Hector's hands—he was by far the stronger man—
if wide-ruling Agamemnon, son of Atreus,
king of the Achaeans, had not hurried up,
grabbed you by your right hand, and said these words:

"Lord Menelaus, have you lost your mind?
There's no need for you to act so foolishly.
Be patient, even though you're disappointed.
Don't volunteer from mere love of battle
to fight someone better than yourself,
for Hector, son of Priam, is a man
whom other men avoid. Even Achilles,
a far better man than you, was hesitant
to meet Hector in fights where men win fame.
So go now, sit down with your companions.
Achaeans will send out another man
as champion against Hector. Though he's fearless,
with boundless appetite for battle,
I think he'll be content to take a rest,
if he survives this combat, this grim fight."

Agamemnon's prudent speech changed his brother's mind.
Menelaus was convinced, and his attendants

gladly pulled the armour from his shoulders.
Then Nestor, standing up before the Argives, said:

"Alas, what great sorrow for Achaea!
Old horseman Peleus would cry with grief,
noble counsellor of the Myrmidons.
When I was in his house, he loved to talk with me,
asking questions about men's families,
the ancestry of all Achaeans. If he knew
these warriors were all afraid of Hector,
he'd keep lifting up his dear hands in prayer [130]
to the immortal gods that his spirit
leave his body and go down to Hades' home.
By father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo,
would I were as young as when the Pylian
and Arcadian spearmen gathered to fight
by the walls of Pheia, beside the banks
of the fast-flowing river Celadon.
Ereuthalion then stepped forward
as their champion, a godlike soldier,
wearing on his shoulders the armour
of king Areithous—that noble Areithous,
whom men and well-dressed women gave
the name of Mace-man, because he fought,
not with long spear or bow, but with an iron mace. [140]
With that he smashed down ranks of warriors.
Lycurgus killed him, not in a fair fight,
but by a trick, in a narrow place,
where the iron mace could not protect him
from destruction. Lycurgus anticipated
Areithous's blow and struck him first,
a spear thrust in the belly. He fell down,
dropping to the ground upon his back.
Lycurgus then stripped off the armour
which brazen Ares had given Areithous.
Lycurgus himself wore it in later fights.
And then, when he'd grown old in his own home,
he gave the armour to Ereuthalion,
his loyal attendant, who wore it as his own. [150]
That's the armour he had on at that time,
when he challenged all our finest men.
They held back, afraid, not daring to accept.
But my spirit, full of fighting confidence,
incited me to take him on in battle.

By birth I was the youngest of them all.
I fought him, and Athena gave me glory.
I killed their biggest and most powerful man,
left his huge body sprawling on the ground.
Would I were that young now, my strength as firm.
Hector of the shining helmet would soon have
a man to fight. But now you warriors here,
although the finest of Achaean men,
aren't keen at all to face up to Hector."

Old man Nestor shamed them. Nine men in all stood up.
First to rise, well before the rest, was Agamemnon,
king of men. Strong Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
jumped up after him. Next came the two Ajaxes,
men clothed in an impetuous ferocity.
Then Idomeneus, his comrade Meriones,
and Eurypylus, Eumaeon's fine son, then Thoas,
son of Andraemon, then lord Odysseus.
They were all willing volunteers to fight with Hector.
Geranian horseman Nestor spoke out once again:

"To choose, you must cast lots. Shake them well.
The chosen man will greatly benefit
well-armed Achaeans and his own heart, too—
if he comes away from this grim fight,
this dangerous combat."

Nestor spoke. The nine men
marked their lots and put them in Agamemnon's helmet.
Troops held up their hands, praying to the gods, saying,
as they gazed up at wide heaven:

"Father Zeus,
let the choice fall on Ajax, or Tydeus' son,
or on Mycenae's king, rich in gold."

Geranian horseman Nestor shook the helmet.
From it fell out the very lot men were hoping for,
the one for Ajax. A herald carried round the lot,
showing it to all the best Achaeans in the throng,
moving from left to right. But no one took it.
Each man declined. But when, in passing through the crowd,
the herald came to the one who'd scratched his mark
upon the lot and cast it in the helmet,

noble Ajax held out his hand. Approaching Ajax,
the herald dropped the token in his palm.
Ajax looked at the mark and saw that it was his.
His heart was happy. Throwing the lot down on the ground [190]
beside his feet, he said:

"Friends, this marker here
belongs to me. And I'm happy in my heart,
for I think I'll overcome lord Hector.
But come, while I put on my battle armour, 230
you should pray to lord Zeus, son of Cronos,
but silently, so Trojans don't find out—
or do it aloud, since we fear no one.
No man is going to force me to move off
through his power or will, if I don't consent,
or through his fighting skill. For I was born
and raised in Salamis, so I'm no novice."

Ajax spoke. Men prayed to lord Zeus, son of Cronos. [200]
Gazing up to heaven, they uttered words like these:

"Father Zeus, ruling from Mount Ida, 240
most glorious one, most powerful—
grant Ajax victory, the winner's triumph.
But if you love Hector and look out for him,
grant them both equal strength, equal glory."

So men prayed. Ajax armed himself in glittering bronze.
When all his armour was in place around his body,
he moved forward, like some gigantic Ares
when he sets off to battle among warriors
whom Zeus, son of Cronos, has stirred up for war, [210]
to fight with that war frenzy which consumes men's hearts. 250
That's how huge Ajax, bulwark of Achaeans,
came up then, a grim smile on his face, moving his feet
with giant strides. He clutched a long-shadowed spear.
When Argives looked at him, they felt great joy,
while the limbs of all the Trojans shook with fear.
Even in Hector's chest the heart beat rapidly.
But there was nothing he could do to pull back now,
retreat into the ranks, for he had made the challenge,
made it eagerly. Ajax approached bearing his shield.
It was like a tower made of bronze, with seven layers, 260
each one of ox-hide, a weapon made by Tychius, [220]

the best of leather workers, who lived in Hyle.
He'd made the glittering shield for Ajax from the hides
of seven well-fed bulls. On top of these, he'd set
an eighth layer made of bronze. Telamonian Ajax
carried this shield in front of him. He came up,
stood quite close to Hector, then spoke out grimly:

"Hector, now you'll come to recognize,
one against one, just what the finest men
are like among Danaans, not counting
Achilles, breaker of men, with his lion's heart.
He now lies by his curved sea-worthy ships,
angry at Agamemnon, his people's shepherd.
But there are lots of us who'll stand against you.
So come on then. Let's start this fight."

Great Hector of the shining helmet then replied:

"Noble Ajax, son of Telamon,
leader of your people. Don't play with me,
as if I were a witless child or woman
who knows nothing of what war requires.
For I understand well how to fight,
how to kill men. I know how to shift
my tanned leather shield to right or left,
to me a crucial skill in fighting battles.
I know how to charge into the frenzy
of fast chariots, and I know how to dance
to Ares's tune in the grim killing zone.
I don't want to hit you with a sneaky shot,
not a man like you, but in open combat,
if I can manage it."

Once Hector spoke,
he balanced his long-shadowed spear and hurled it.
He hit Ajax's fearful seven-layered shield
on the outer covering of bronze, its eighth layer.
The tireless spear tore its way through six layers.
But it stopped at the seventh. Then noble Ajax,
in his turn, threw his long-shadowed spear at Hector.
His spear hit the even circle of Hector's shield,
broke through the glittering shield, and forced its way
through the breast plate and tunic covering his ribs.
Hector twisted to one side, evading a black fate.

The two men then both pulled the long spears from their shields
and charged each other, like flesh-eating lions
or savage boars, whose strength is inexhaustible.
With his spear Hector struck the centre of Ajax's shield,
but the bronze did not break through—its point bent aside.
Then Ajax charged ahead and speared Hector's shield, [260]
breaking clean through and striking Hector as he lunged.
Its motion slashed at Hector's neck. Dark blood seeped out.
But Hector of the shining helmet did not stop the fight.
He stepped back, picked up in his powerful hand a rock 310
lying there on the plain, a huge black jagged stone.
With this he hit Ajax's seven-layered shield
on its central boss, making the bronze ring out.
Then Ajax, in his turn, seized a much bigger stone,
swung it round and threw it with tremendous force.
The rock, like a millstone, hit Hector's shield and smashed it. [270]
Strength drained from Hector's limbs. He was thrown on his back,
with his shield pressing him on top, weighing him down.
At once Apollo raised him up. Now they would have fought
hand to hand with swords, if heralds, those messengers 320
of gods and men, had not stepped in, one from Trojans,
one from bronze-clad Achaeans—two trusted men,
Talthybius and Idaios. They held out their staffs,
symbols of their herald's office, between the two.
Then herald Idaios, a wise and prudent man, spoke out:

"You dear lads, fight no more. End this combat.
Cloud-gatherer Zeus cares for you both. [280]
You're both fine fighters. We all know that.
But night already is approaching.
And it's good to be persuaded by the night." 330

Telamonian Ajax then said in reply:

"Idaios, tell Hector here to give the word.
For he was keen to challenge our best men.
Let him speak first. I'll gladly follow what he says."

Great Hector of the shining helmet answered Ajax:

"Ajax, god has given you size, power,
judgment, and you're the strongest with the spear,
among Achaeans. For today let's end [290]
our battle combat. We'll fight once again,

later on, until god decides between us,
awarding one of us the victory.
For night already is approaching,
and it's good to be persuaded by the night.
So you can bring joy to all Achaeans
by their ships, especially your clansmen,
your companions. And I can bring joy
to the mighty city of king Priam,
to Trojans and women in their trailing gowns.
They'll gather in holy processions now,
giving thanks on my behalf in prayer.
But come, let's exchange noteworthy presents
with each other, so Trojans and Achaeans
may say, 'These men fought in murderous war [300]
but were reconciled and parted friends.'"

This said, Hector gave Ajax a silver-studded sword,
along with a scabbard and a well-cut sword belt.
Ajax gave Hector a shining purple belt.
Then they parted, Ajax going to Achaean troops,
Hector rejoining Trojans, who were overjoyed
to see him return alive, safe and sound,
surviving Ajax's fury, his unconquerable hands.
They'd given up all hope for Hector's safety.
Now they took him back with them into the city. [310]

Well-armed Achaeans, for their part, led Ajax,
elated by his victory, to lord Agamemnon.
When they all came inside Agamemnon's hut,
the son of Atreus, king of men, sacrificed an ox,
a male five years old, to the exalted son of Cronos.
They flayed the beast, prepared and carved it up,
chopping it skilfully into tiny pieces.
They skewered these on spits, cooked them carefully,
and drew them off. This done, they prepared a meal and ate.
No one went unsatisfied. All feasted equally. [320]
Wide-ruling Agamemnon, heroic son of Atreus,
acknowledged Ajax with the whole back cut of meat.
When everyone had had his fill of food and drink,
old Nestor spoke up first, outlining for them
a plan he had. Earlier his advice had seemed the best.
Keeping in mind their common good, he said:

"Son of Atreus, you other Argive leaders,
many long-haired Achaeans have been killed.
Fierce Ares has scattered their dark blood
beside the fair-flowing Scamander river.
Their souls have departed down to Hades.
So tomorrow you should call a halt.
Stop Achaeans fighting. We should all assemble,
then carry off the bodies of the dead
with mules and oxen. Then we'll burn them
a short distance from our ships, so each of us,
when we return, may carry back the bones.
Let's set up one single common funeral mound
close by the fire and angled on the plain.
Then with all speed from that mound we'll build
some high walls with turrets, to guard us and our ships.
In those walls we'll construct tight-fitting gates,
so there's a path to drive our chariots through.
Outside we'll dig a deep trench close beside it,
to enclose the walls and hold out chariots—
soldiers, too, if those impetuous Trojans
should ever drive us back in battle."

So Nestor spoke. All the kings approved his plan.
Meanwhile the Trojans were meeting on the city heights,
by Priam's palace doors—they were confused and fearful.
Antenor, a wise counsellor, was the first to speak:

"Listen to me, you Trojans, Dardan allies,
so I may say what the heart in my chest prompts.
Come now, let's give back Argive Helen
and her possessions to the sons of Atreus
for them to keep. We've broken the truce
and are fighting once again, so I don't see
how things will work out very well for us,
unless we carry out what I propose."

Antenor spoke, then sat down. Before them all,
lord Alexander, husband of fair-haired Helen,
stood up to reply. His words had wings:

"Antenor,
I'm not pleased with what you've said.
You know very well how to think up
some alternative, some better plan.

But if you truly mean what you've just said,
the gods themselves have muddled up your wits. [360]
Now I'll speak to horse-taming Trojans.
I flatly refuse. I won't give up my wife.
But I will surrender all the goods
I carried back from Argos to our home.
I'm willing to give up all of it,
even to add to it things of my own."

Paris spoke, then sat back down. Priam stood up,
descendant of Dardanus, wise as the gods.
Thinking of their common cause, he spoke out:

"Listen to me, Trojans, Dardan allies,
so I may state what the heart in my chest prompts.
You should prepare your dinner and then eat, [370]
here in the city, as before. But remember—
keep sentries posted. Each man should stay awake.
Tomorrow morning Idaios should go
to the hollow ships, to tell the sons of Atreus,
both Agamemnon and Menelaus,
what Alexander has just now proposed,
the very man whose cause launched this dispute.
Idaios should propose this wise suggestion—
if they'll consent to postpone grim warfare,
so we can burn our dead, we'll fight later,
until god adjudicates between us
and awards one side the victory."

They heard what Priam said and readily agreed.
Throughout the army, in the ranks, they ate their dinner. [380]

At dawn Idaios went out to the hollow ships.
There he found Danaans, companions of Ares,
assembled by the stern of Agamemnon's ship.
The loud-voiced herald, standing in their midst, spoke out:

"Son of Atreus, other Achaean leaders,
Priam and other noble Trojans asked me
to tell you what Alexander has proposed,
if that meets with your approval, an offer
you will want to hear. That man began our strife.
All the property which Paris brought here
in his hollow ships to Troy—how I wish [390]

he'd died before that day!—he'll hand over
and add to that more goods from his own home.
But he says he'll not return that noble lady,
wife of Menelaus, though the Trojans wish
he'd do that. There's more. My orders tell me
to speak to you to see if you are willing
to put a stop to the harsh clash of war,
until such time as we have burned our dead.
We will fight later, until god chooses
between us, makes one of us the victors."

Idaios spoke. They all remained silent, speechless.
At last Diomedes, skilled at war shouts, cried out:

"Let no man now accept Alexander's stuff,
nor Helen. For it's quite clear, even to a fool,
the Trojans are tied down to lethal fate." [400]

Diomedes spoke. All Achaea's sons roared out,
approving what horse-taming Diomedes said.
Mighty Agamemnon then addressed Idaios:

"Idaios, you yourself have heard our answer,
what Achaeans think of what you offer.
And I agree with them. But I don't object
to burning corpses, for when men die,
one should not deny the bodies of the dead
a swift propitiation in the flames. [410]
So let Zeus, Hera's loud-thundering husband,
stand as witness here to our pledged word."

Saying this, Agamemnon held up his sceptre,
invoking all the gods. Idaios then returned,
going back to sacred Ilion. There the Trojans
and Dardanians were seated in a meeting,
a general assembly, awaiting his return.
He came, stood in their midst, and delivered his report.
Then they quickly organized two working parties—
some to gather bodies, others to get firewood.

Argives also moved swiftly from their well-decked ships.
Some hurried to bring in the dead, others to find wood. [420]
Just as the sun began to shine down on the fields,
rising from the gently flowing Ocean depths,

climbing in the sky, the two groups met each other.
At that point it was hard to recognize each dead man.
They washed blood off with water and piled them onto carts,
shedding hot tears. Great Priam did not permit
his Trojans to lament. So they heaped the corpses
on the pyre in silence, hearts full of anguish.
Once they'd burned the bodies, they went back to sacred Troy.
Opposite them, in the same way, well-armed Achaeans [430]
heaped their dead up on a pyre, sick at heart, burned them,
and then returned back to their hollow ships.

Next day, just before dawn, still at night, in half light,
a chosen group of Achaeans was awake around the pyre.
Beside it, on an angle, they made a common grave,
back from the plain. From that mound they built a wall,
with high towers, to defend them and their ships.
Inside the rampart they set close-fitting gates,
to make a passage so chariots could pass through.
Outside the wall they dug a big ditch, wide and deep, [440]
close to the rampart, setting stakes down in the trench.

As long-haired Achaeans worked, gods sitting beside Zeus,
lord of lightning, gazed down on the huge construction,
the project undertaken by bronze-armed Achaeans.
Earthshaker Poseidon was the first to speak:

> "Father Zeus, will any mortal man
> on boundless earth, after this event,
> inform gods of his plans, of his intentions?
> Don't you see that long-haired Achaeans
> have built a new wall to protect their ships,
> dug a ditch around it, and yet have made
> no splendid sacrifice to us, the gods? [450]
> The fame of this wall will reach everywhere,
> as far as light of dawn. People will forget
> that wall which Phoebus Apollo and myself
> worked hard to build for heroic Laomedon."[1]

Cloud-gatherer Zeus, quite irked, answered Poseidon:

[1]As a punishment for rebelling against Zeus, Apollo and Poseidon were condemned to serving a mortal man for wages. They built the walls of Troy for Laomedon, king of Troy.

"Such talk from you, mighty Earthshaker, is silly.
Another god might well fear this design,
some god with a far less powerful hand,
a weaker spirit than your own. Your fame
will reach as far as the shining light of dawn.
Come now, when the long-haired Achaeans leave,
sailing their ships to their dear native land,
you can smash their wall, take it out to sea,
bury the great shore under sand, and so erase
that great Achaean wall completely."

As the gods discussed these things amongst themselves,
the sun went down and Achaeans finished working.
They slaughtered oxen by their huts and ate their dinner.
Many ships had come, bringing wine from Lemnos,
sent by Jason's son Euneus—born to Jason,
his people's shepherd, from Hypsipyle.
Euneus had donated wine, a thousand measures,
to go to Agamemnon and Menelaus.
From these ships long-haired Achaeans bought their wine.
Some bartered with bronze, some with shiny iron,
others with hides, live oxen, or with slaves.
And then the men prepared a sumptuous banquet.
Long-haired Achaeans feasted all night long,
as did Trojans and their allies in the city,
while throughout the night, Counsellor Zeus,
thundering ominously, plotted bad things for them.
Pale fear gripped men. They kept pouring wine from goblets
onto the ground. No one dared to drink before he made
an offering to Zeus, almighty son of Cronos.
Then they went to bed, to receive the gift of sleep.

BOOK EIGHT
THE TROJANS HAVE SUCCESS

[At a council on Olympus, Zeus decides to favour the Trojans, leaves for Ida, and holds up the golden scales; Diomedes comes to Nestor's help; Diomedes confronts Hector; Zeus stops Diomedes with a lightning bolt; Hera tries to get Poseidon to plot against Zeus; Agamemnon's speech to rally the troops; Zeus sends an omen to encourage the Argives; the Argives rally; Teucer's success against the Trojans; Hector wounds Teucer, drives him from the battle; Hera and Athena set out to help the Achaeans; Zeus sends Iris to stop them; Hector's speech to his troops the night before the big battle; Trojans sacrifice to the gods]

As Dawn first spread her yellow robe across the earth,
thunder-loving Zeus summoned an assembly of the gods
on the highest crest of many-ridged Olympus.
Zeus himself addressed them. The other deities,
those ranked below him, listened carefully.

"Hear me, all you gods and goddesses,
I'll speak what the spirit in my chest prompts.
And let no female god, no male one either,
seek to thwart my plan. Let's get agreement
from all of you to end this matter quickly.
If I see any of you breaking ranks of gods,
keen to assist the Trojans or Danaans,
that god I'll beat up ignominiously
and send back to Olympus. Or I'll seize him
and pitch him into black Tartarus, way down,
into the deepest pit below the earth,
where the gates are iron, the threshold bronze,
as far below Hades as heaven lies
above the earth. Then he'll acknowledge
just how strong I am, the strongest of all gods.
Come on, try it—then everyone will know.
Take a golden cord, hang it from heaven.
Let gods and goddesses, all together,
grab hold of one end of it and pull.
You'd not drag Zeus, the highest counsellor,
down from heaven to the ground, never,
no matter how hard you tried to do it.
But when I wished to pull in earnest,
I'd yank up earth itself, the sea as well.
I'd loop that cord round some Olympian peak
and hang it in mid-air—the whole of it.
I'm that much stronger than the gods and men."

Zeus finished. All the gods were speechless, shocked
at what Zeus had said, at the power of his tone.
At last Athena, the bright-eyed goddess, spoke up:

"Son of Cronos, you're the father of us all,
highest ruling force. We well know your strength.
It's invincible. Still, we're sorry for the troops,
Danaan spearmen dying, suffering dreadful fates.
But we'll stand apart from battle, as you wish,
although we'll give the Argives our advice,
help them, to prevent destruction of them all,
just to answer your displeasure."

Cloud-gatherer Zeus, smiling at Athena, said:

"My dear child Tritogeneia, have no fears.
I wasn't speaking all that seriously.
I want to treat you in a friendly way."

Zeus harnessed his two horses, swift-flying animals,
with hooves of bronze and flowing golden manes.
He encased his body all in gold, took up his whip,
a gold one, finely crafted, climbed in his chariot,
then lashed the horses onward. They flew off eagerly.
Midway between the earth and starry heaven,
Zeus reached Mount Ida with its many springs,
mother of wild beasts. He reached Gargaros,
site of his grove and temple, fragrant with sacrifice.
There, the father of gods and men reined in his horses,
untied them from the chariot, and hid them in thick cloud.
Then he sat on the mountain peak, proud and splendid,
gazing down on the Trojan city, the Achaean ships.

Long-haired Achaeans gulped a quick meal by their huts.
Then they armed themselves. On the other side, in town,
Trojans, too, prepared for war, fewer in number,
but keen to fight on in the killing zone, a harsh necessity,
for wives and children. They threw open all the gates.
The army streamed out, foot soldiers and charioteers,
making a huge din. As the two groups moved out
to the same spot, they crashed together, smashing shields
and spears, the battle frenzy of bronze-armed warriors.
Embossed shields collided one against the other,

a tremendous noise. Screams of pain and triumph
came from soldiers—those killing, those being killed—
and the earth was saturated with their blood.

In early morning, as that sacred day grew stronger,
weapons hurled by both sides grimly took their toll—
men kept on dying. But when the sun was at its height,
Father Zeus set up his golden balance, placed on it
two fatal destinies, one for horse-taming Trojans, [70]
one for bronze-armed Achaeans. Gripping the scales,
he raised them by the centre. One scale sank down, 80
the one which held the Achaeans' fate that day—
it moved down towards the all-sustaining earth,
while the Trojans' fate rose up toward wide heaven.
From Mount Ida, Zeus sent out a loud thunder clap
and hurled a lightning bolt down on Achaean troops.
Men looked and were astounded. Pale fear gripped them all.
At that, Idomeneus did not dare to stand his ground,
nor did Agamemnon, nor the two men named Ajax,
companions of the war god Ares. Only Nestor, [80]
the Geranian, guardian of Achaeans, 90
kept his place, but not because he wanted to.
One of his horses had been hurt, hit by an arrow
on its head, right on top, that spot where on a horse
hairs start to grow out from the skull, a deadly place.
The arrow had been loosed by Alexander,
lovely Helen's mate. The beast reared up in agony,
as the arrow pierced its brain. Skewered by the shaft,
the beast's convulsions confused the other horses.
While old Nestor with his sword was hacking feverishly
to cut the traces holding the animal in place, 100
Hector's fast horses came through the fighting men, [90]
bearing Hector with them and their bold charioteer.
Nestor would have died right there, if Diomedes,
skilled in war cries, had not seen him right away.
He let out a loud shout to Odysseus, urging him
to come to Nestor's help.

> "Noble Odysseus, Laertes' son,
> you resourceful man, why move away,
> turning your back on all these flying weapons,
> like a coward? Watch someone doesn't spear you
> right in the back as you run off. Come on, 110
> let's save old man Nestor from wild Hector."

Diomedes's words missed godlike, firm Odysseus,
who moved off to the Achaeans' hollow ships.
Diomedes, though left alone, charged straight ahead,
back into the fight. He made a stand right there,
in front of old Nestor's chariot, calling out to Nestor,
son of Neleus—his words had wings.

"Old man, in this fight
these young men are pressing you too hard.
Your strength is waning. Old age weighs you down.
Your attendant's weak, your horses slow.
So come on, climb up in my chariot.
You'll see how these Trojan horses do,
experts in moving to and fro across the plain,
in pursuit or flight. I took them from Aeneas.
These horses would fill any man with terror.
So turn your team over to subordinates.
With my two let's charge against the Trojans.
Let Hector see how my hand wields a spear."

Geranian horseman Nestor followed this suggestion.
At once, the two strong officers Sthelenus
and noble Eurymedon took Nestor's horses.
The two men climbed up in Diomedes' chariot.
Nestor grabbed the shining reins and lashed the horses.
They closed in on Hector quickly. Then he, in turn,
eager to fight, charged them impetuously.
The son of Tydeus threw his spear at Hector.
He missed, but struck Hector's companion charioteer,
Eniopeus, son of proud Thebaios, in the chest,
right by the nipple, as Eniopeus held the reins.
He tumbled from the chariot. The swift horses swerved.
Then strength and spirit left him as he lay there.
Savage grief seized Hector for his charioteer,
but he left him lying there, for all the pain he felt
for his companion. He went to find a substitute,
a second driver full of courage. Before long,
those horses had another charioteer,
for Hector soon ran into Archeptolemos,
son of Iphitus, and placed him in the chariot
behind swift horses, then handed him the reins.

At that point irrevocable disaster might have struck [130]
the people all penned up in Troy like sheep,
if the father of gods and men had not kept sharp watch.
Sounding a dreadful thunder clap, he loosed his lightning,
a dazzling fiery bolt which hit the ground
immediately in front of Diomedes' horses.
A dreadful flash came from the blazing sulphur.
In terror, both horses reared up in their harnesses.
Nestor let the shining reins drop from his hands.
Feeling fear inside his chest, he cried:

"Son of Tydeus,
wheel your sure-footed horses round. Go back.
Don't you see Zeus is not protecting you? [140]
Today the son of Cronos grants Hector glory.
Tomorrow he'll give victory to us,
if that's his will. No man stops Zeus's plans,
no one, not even the mightiest warrior.
Zeus's force is more powerful by far."

Diomedes, expert in war cries, then replied:

"Everything you say, old man, is true enough.
But this brings fearful pain into my heart and chest.
For Hector then will speak out in Troy.
He'll say,

'The son of Tydeus, in fear of me,
scurried off, back to his ships.'

That's what he'll boast.
Then let the wide earth open up for me." [150]

Geranian horseman Nestor answered Diomedes:

"Son of fiery-hearted Tydeus, why talk like that?
Even if he slanders you and calls you coward,
he'll not convince the Trojans or Dardanians,
or Trojan wives, married partners of brave men
you've thrown into the dirt, still in their prime."

With these words he turned the sure-footed horses back,
fleeing through the battle zone. Hector and the Trojans,

with a shout, threw volleys of lethal weapons at them.
Hector with his glittering helmet then yelled out:

"Son of Tydeus,
fast-riding Danaans at their banquets
have awarded you a place of honour,
with lots of meat, a wine cup always full.
Now they're ashamed of you. You've turned out
no better than a woman. Run off then,
you coward girl. I'll not back away,
let you climb our walls, or take our women.
Before that happens, I'll send you to your death."

At Hector's words, the son of Tydeus was torn two ways,
debating whether to wheel the horses round and fight,
face Hector man to man. Three times he thought it through
in his mind and heart, and three times Counsellor Zeus
pealed thunder from Mount Ida, signalling to Trojans
that victory now would shift to them. Then Hector,
with a great shout, cried out to his Trojan warriors:

"You Trojans, Lycians, and Dardanians—
soldiers who fight in the killing zone—
my friends, be men. Summon your warlike spirit.
I see the son of Cronos grants us victory,
great glory, a disaster for Danaans.
What fools they were to build this feeble wall,
a puny hazard—it will not check me,
my warlike spirit. As for the trench they dug,
my horses will jump over that with ease.
When I reach their hollow ships, don't forget the fire,
which wipes out everything I'll burn their fleet
and slaughter them, those Argives by their ships,
as they suffocate, choking on the smoke."

And Hector urged his horses on, saying these words:

"Xanthus, and you Podargus, Aithus,
noble Lampus! Now's the time to pay me back
for all my care, all the sweet grain you've had
from Andromache, great Eëtion's daughter,
for the wine she's mixed for you to drink,
whenever you desired. She took care of you,
even before me, her own fine husband.

Come on then, go after them with speed,
so we may capture Nestor's shield, whose fame
extends right up to heaven—it's all gold—
the shield itself, cross braces, too.
From horse-taming Diomedes' shoulders
we'll strip the decorated body armour,
a work created by Hephaestus.
I think if we could capture these two things,
Achaeans would climb aboard their ships tonight."

So Hector bragged. That made queen Hera angry.
She shook with fury, sitting on her throne,
making high Olympus tremble. Then she spoke out
to great god Poseidon:

"Alas, great Earthshaker,
don't you feel any anguish in your heart,
as Danaans are destroyed? After all,
they bring you presents, many pleasing gifts,
to Helice and Aegae. Don't you want them to win?
Now, if all those of us who protect Danaans
were to agree to drive the Trojans back,
we'd leave wide-seeing Zeus up there by himself,
sulking where he sits alone on Ida"

Mighty Earthshaker Poseidon, very angry,
answered Hera:

"Hera, you fearless talker,
What are you saying? That's not what I want,
the rest of us to war on Zeus, son of Cronos.
For he is much more powerful than us."

As the two gods talked together in this way,
horses and shield-bearing troops were jammed together,
crammed into the space encircled by the ditch,
from ships to wall, pinned down there by Hector, Priam's son,
like swift Ares, now that Zeus was giving him the glory.
And then he would have burned those well-balanced ships
with searing fire on the spot, if queen Hera
had not set a plan in Agamemnon's mind
to rouse Achaeans with all speed on his own.
He strode through Achaean huts and ships,
holding a huge purple cloak in his large fists.

He took up a position by Odysseus' ship,
a black vessel, broad in the beam, whose place,
in the middle of the row, allowed his voice
to reach both ends of the line, from the huts of Ajax,
son of Telamon, to those belonging to Achilles,
for these two men had placed their balanced ships
at either end, relying on their courage and strong hands.[1]
Agamemnon, from that spot, then shouted out,
making himself heard to all Danaans:

"You Argives! What a shameful bunch of men!
Splendid to look at, but a sour disgrace!
What's happened to our sworn oaths, when we claimed
we were the best, the bravest? Idle boasters!
In Lemnos, as you stuffed yourselves with meat [230]
from straight-horned cattle and drank bowls of wine,
foaming to the brim, you talked of how you'd stand,
each and every one of you, firm in battle
against a hundred or two hundred Trojans.
Now we're matched by Hector, just one man,
who'll quickly set our ships alight with fire.
Father Zeus, have you ever so deluded
a high-minded king and stolen his glory?
While sailing well-decked ships to this disaster,
I say I never overlooked your lovely altars.
On every one I burned fat and thighs of oxen— [240]
I was so keen to conquer Troy, its well-made walls.
But Zeus, grant me now at least this prayer—
let us get out of here alive, in safety.
Don't let Trojans kill Achaeans off like this."

As Agamemnon spoke, tears streaming down his face,
Father Zeus pitied him and nodded his assent—
the army would be saved and not demolished.
At once Zeus sent the surest of all bird omens,
an eagle, gripping in its talons a young fawn,
child of some swift deer. The eagle released the fawn,
dropping it right beside that splendid altar [250]
where Achaeans sacrificed to all-knowing Zeus.
Seeing that Zeus had sent the bird, men resumed the fight,
attacking Trojans eagerly, their battle spirits roused.

[1]The ends of the line of ships would be the most exposed to enemy attacks. Hence, these places indicate the warrior prowess of Achilles and Ajax.

Then none of those many Danaans there could claim
he was quicker with his horses than Diomedes,
driving them ahead and charging through the ditch,
to confront their enemies face to face and fight.
Well ahead of all the rest, Diomedes killed his man,
a well-armed Trojan, Agelaus, son of Phradmon.
He'd turned his team around to get away.
But once he showed his back, Diomedes speared him
between his shoulder blades, driving through his chest.
He fell from the chariot, armour rattling round him.
After Diomedes, the sons of Atreus came charging in,
Agamemnon and Menelaus, and after them
both Ajaxes, encased in war's ferocity,
followed by Idomeneus and his attendant,
Meriones, the equal of man-killing Ares.
Then came Eurypylus, brave son of Euaemon.
Ninth came Teucer, stretching his curved bow.
He stood beneath the shield of Ajax, son of Telamon.
As Ajax cautiously pulled his shield aside,
Teucer would peer out quickly, shoot off an arrow,
hit someone in the crowd, dropping that soldier
right where he stood, ending his life—then he'd duck back,
crouching down by Ajax, like a child beside its mother.
Ajax would then conceal him with his shining shield.
Who were the first Trojans skilful Teucer killed?
Orsilochus died first, then Ormenus, Ophelestes,
Daitor, Chromius, godlike Lycophontes,
Amopaon, son of Polyaimon, and Melanippus—
all these Teucer dropped one by one on fertile earth.
Watching him cause havoc with his bow in Trojan ranks,
Agamemnon, king of men, was overjoyed.
He went up, stood beside him, then spoke out:

"Teucer, son of Telamon, master of your people,
my dear comrade, keep on shooting as you're doing.
You'll be a saving light to the Danaans,
and to your father Telamon, who raised you,
took care of you, a bastard, in his own home.
Though he's far off, cover him with glory now.
For I'll tell you something—and this will happen—
if Athena and aegis-bearing Zeus permit me
to devastate that well-built city Ilion,
you'll be the first to take the prize of honour,

after me, of course—a tripod, two horses, [290]
their chariot as well, or some woman
to climb up into your bed with you."

Skilful Teucer then replied to Agamemnon:

"Mighty son of Atreus, why urge me on?
I'm eager to continue shooting.
Since we first drove them back to Ilion,
I've not stopped fighting as hard as I know how,
cutting men down with my bow and killing them.
I've shot off eight long-barbed arrows. Each one
has sunk itself deep inside a soldier's flesh,
some strong, swift warrior. But this man,
Hector, I can't hit. He's like some crazy dog."

With that, Teucer launched another arrow from his bowstring, [300]
directly facing Hector, eager to hit him.
The arrow missed, but struck handsome Gorgythion,
son of Priam, in the chest, a man whose mother,
lovely Castianeira, divinely beautiful,
went from Aisyme to become a wife to Priam.
Just as the head on a garden poppy leans aslant,
loaded down with heavy seed and spring rain showers,
so Gorgythion's head sagged under his helmet's weight.
Teucer loosed yet another arrow from his bowstring,
straight at Hector, his spirit still keen to hit him. [310]
Again he missed, for Apollo deflected it.
But the arrow did hit Archeptolemos,
Hector's bold driver, as he was coming to the fight.
It struck him in the chest, right by the nipple.
He fell from the chariot. The fast horses swerved.
Then and there his strength and spirit abandoned him.

In his heart Hector felt sharp pain for his charioteer,
but he left him there, though grieving for his comrade.
He called out to his brother Cebriones,
who was near by, to take up the chariot reins.
Cebriones heard him and willingly agreed.
Hector jumped down from his glittering chariot [320]
with a fearful yell. Picking up a boulder
lying on the ground, he went straight at Teucer,
his heart aroused to hit him with it. At that moment,
Teucer had just taken a sharp arrow from his quiver,

set it on the bowstring, and was drawing back the bow,
once again desperately eager to hit Hector.
But Hector struck him with that jagged rock
right on the shoulder, where collar bones divide
neck from chest, an especially vulnerable spot.
The rock broke the bowstring and numbed his hands and wrists.
Teucer fell forward on his knees and stayed there,
letting his bow fall from his hand. Seeing his brother down,
Ajax quickly hurried up and straddled Teucer,
covering him with his shield.[1] Two loyal attendants,
Mecisteus, son of Echios, and noble Alastor,
hoisted Teucer up—he was groaning heavily—
then took him with them back to the hollow ships.

Once more Olympian Zeus put force into the Trojans.
They drove Achaeans back, right back to their deep trench,
Hector at the front, proudly showing off his strength.
Just as some hunting dog in a swift-footed chase
gets a grip on a wild boar or lion from the back,
on the flank or rump, and watches that beast's every move,
that's how Hector harried the long-haired Achaeans,
always killing off the stragglers as they fled.
By the time Achaeans had rushed through the stakes,
as they crossed the ditch, many had died at Trojan hands.
At last they halted by the ships and stayed there,
calling out to one another. Raising their hands,
each man prayed fervently to all the gods.
Hector drove his fine-maned horses back and forth,
his eyes glaring like a Gorgon or man-killing Ares.

Seeing all this, white-armed Hera pitied the Achaeans.
She quickly spoke these winged words to Athena:

"Alas, child of aegis-bearing Zeus,
Achaeans are being massacred. It's their last stand.
Aren't we concerned about them anymore,
as their evil fate accomplishes its purpose?
They're being destroyed by one man's charging frenzy.
Hector, son of Priam, is on a rampage.
He can't be stopped. He's already done great harm."

Bright-eyed goddess Athena answered Hera:

[1]Teucer and Ajax were both sons of Telamon, but they had different mothers.

"I wish Hector somehow would lose his strength
and die, killed in his own native land
at Argive hands. But my father, too,
is in a rage, destruction on his mind.
What a wretch he is, always in the way,
wrecking my plans. He does not remember
how many times I saved Hercules, his son,
worn down by work he got from Eurystheus.
If I'd had the foresight to anticipate
what Zeus is doing now when Eurystheus
sent Hercules down to the house of Hades,
the Gate Keeper, to fetch back from Erebus
Hades' dreadful hound, he'd never have escaped
the deep rushing waters of the river Styx.[1]
Now Zeus dislikes me. He's carrying out
what Thetis wants. She kissed his knee, cupped his chin,
begged him to grant due honour to Achilles,
destroyer of cities. But the day will come
when Zeus calls me dear bright eyes once more.
Now harness your sure-footed horses for us,
while I go to aegis-bearing Zeus's home
and arm myself with weapons for this battle,
so I may see whether this son of Priam,
this Hector of the shining helmet, is pleased
when we two show up in the battle lanes,
or whether some Trojan will make a meal
for dogs and birds with flesh and body fat,
as he falls there beside Achaean ships."

Athena finished. White-armed Hera agreed with her.
Then Hera, honoured goddess, great Cronos's daughter,
went off and started harnessing her horses
with their golden headpieces. Meanwhile, Athena,
daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, threw her dress
down on the floor of her father's house, a soft robe,
richly embroidered, which she'd made with her own hands.
She pulled on the tunic of cloud-gatherer Zeus
and armed herself with weapons for destructive war.
Then she stepped up into the flaming chariot,

[1]Hercules, a mortal son of Zeus, was forced to carry out a series of difficult tasks for Eurystheus, king of Argos. One of those required him to capture Cerberus, the three-headed dog guarding the underworld and bring it back to Athens.

grasping the huge thick strong spear she used to break
heroic warrior ranks which had provoked her,
making the daughter of a mighty father angry.
Hera immediately whipped the horses forward.
With a groan, the gates of heaven opened on their own,
those gates which the Seasons, custodians of Olympus
and great heaven, too, look after, pushing open
the heavy cloud, then pushing it shut once more.
Through these gates the goddesses lashed on their horses.

Father Zeus noticed them from Ida. In a huge rage,
he sent down gold-winged Iris with a message for them.

"Off with you, swift Iris. Turn them back again.
Don't permit them to come into my presence.
For if we come to blows, then we'll have trouble.
But I do say this—and it will surely happen—
I'll cripple their fast horses in their traces,
throw them from the chariot, smash it in pieces.
Ten revolving years won't be sufficient
to cure the wounds my lightning will inflict,
so the bright-eyed goddess knows what it means
to fight against her father. As for Hera,
I'm not so angry or upset with her,
for no matter what I say, she undermines it."

Zeus spoke. Then Iris, swift as a storm, rushed off,
taking his message. She came down from Mount Ida
and made for high Olympus. She met the goddesses
at the outer gate of many-ridged Olympus.
She stopped them and reported Zeus's message:

"Where are you rushing off? Have you lost your wits?
The son of Cronos has forbidden anyone
to assist the Argives. And he's made this threat—
which he intends to carry out—he'll maim
your swift horses in their traces, throw you both
out of the chariot, smash it in pieces.
Ten revolving years won't be sufficient
to cure the wounds his lightning will inflict,
so that you'll understand, bright-eyed goddess,
what it means to fight against your father.
With Hera's he's not so angry or upset.
For no matter what he says, she undermines it.

But as for you, you shameless schemer,
are you daring to fight Zeus with one large spear?"

Having said this, swift-footed Iris went away.
Hera then said to Athena:

"What a mess,
child of aegis-bearing Zeus! I'm not keen,
not now, that two of us should take on Zeus
for the sake of mortal men. Let some die
and others live, as chance will work it out.
Let Zeus judge between Trojans and Achaeans,
as his heart desires. That's how it should be."

With these words, she turned her sure-footed horses back.
The Seasons unyoked the horses with the lovely manes,
led them to their heavenly stalls, and leaned the chariot
against the courtyard's luminescent inner wall.
The goddesses then sat down on their golden thrones,
among the other gods, with anger in their hearts.
Father Zeus drove his fine-wheeled chariot and horses
from Ida to Olympus, to the place where gods
were all assembled. The famous Earthshaker,
Poseidon, loosed his horses from their harness for him,
put the chariot on its stand, and covered it with cloth.
Then wide-seeing Zeus himself sat on his golden throne.
Underneath his feet great Olympus trembled.
Athena and Hera were sitting by themselves,
away from Zeus, not saying anything to him
or asking questions. Knowing what was in their hearts,
Zeus spoke:

"Why are you so irritated,
Hera and Athena? Surely you're not tired
from those battles where warriors win glory,
exhausted after killing off the Trojans,
for whom you feel such deadly hatred
Be that as it may, such is my power,
the strength in my own hands, it's impossible
for all the Olympian gods combined
to turn me from my purposes. As for you,
you both were trembling in your shining limbs
even before you looked on any fight
or witnessed first-hand war's destructiveness.

But I'll tell you what would have taken place—
neither of you would have come back to Olympus,
the immortals' home, riding in your chariot.
My lightning would have blasted both of you."

Zeus finished speaking. Hera and Athena muttered,
sitting together, plotting trouble for the Trojans.
Athena sat in silence, not saying anything,
angry with her father, consumed with rage. [460]
But Hera could not hold the fury in her chest. She said: 540

"Dread son of Cronos, what are you saying?
We know well enough how strong you are—
invincible. But nonetheless, we pity
Danaan spearmen who are being destroyed,
suffering a dreadful fate. But we'll hold back,
refrain from fighting, if that's your order.
We'll provide useful advice to Argives,
so they don't all die from your displeasure."

In response to Hera, cloud-gatherer Zeus then said:

"Ox-eyed queen Hera, if you're so inclined, 550 [470]
tomorrow morning you can witness
the exalted son of Cronos, as he kills
many Achaean spearmen in their army.
For warlike Hector won't stop fighting,
until beside the ships he stirs to action
swift Achilles, son of Peleus, on that day
they fight with bloody desperation
by the ships' sterns—they'll be battling over
the body of Patroclus. That's been decreed.
I don't care at all if this annoys you. 560
Even if you descend to the lowest place
beneath the earth and sea, where Iapetus
and Cronos live, where they get no pleasure
in any sunlight from Hyperion, [480]
or any breeze, in the depths of Tartarus—
even if you went as far away as that
in your wandering, I'd still pay no attention

to your displeasure. For you've no rival
when it comes to behaving like a bitch."[1]

Zeus spoke. White-armed Hera did not answer him.

Now the sun's bright light sank down into the ocean,
dragging black night over fertile crop lands.
The end of daylight made the Trojans sorrowful,
but Achaeans welcomed the arrival of black night,
something they had been praying for constantly.

Then glorious Hector assembled all the Trojans
some distance from the ships, by the swirling river,
in open ground where there were no corpses in plain view.
Jumping from their chariots to the ground, warriors
listened for what Hector, loved by Zeus, would say.
In his hand, he gripped a spear eighteen feet long,
its bronze point glittering there in front of them,
a golden ring around it. Leaning on this spear,
Hector then addressed his Trojans:

"Listen to me,
you Trojans, Dardanians, you allies.
Just now I stated we'd go back to Troy today,
once we'd destroyed the ships and slaughtered
all Achaeans. But darkness intervened.
That's the only thing that spared the Argives
and saved their ships drawn up on the beach. Come,
let's do what black night demands—prepare a meal.
So from your chariots take out of harness
those horses with their lovely manes, feed them,
then quickly bring here from the city
cattle and stout sheep. Bring sweet wine as well,
and bread from your own homes. Get lots of wood,
so all night long, until first light of dawn,
we can burn many fires, lighting up the sky.
Sometime in the night, long-haired Achaeans
may make their move to get away by sea.
We must not let them embark easily,
without a fight. Let some of them be hit,
take something home they need to nurse with care—

[1]Zeus overthrew his father Cronos and the immortal Titans (including Iapetus) and imprisoned them deep in the earth.

an arrow wound, a slash from some sharp spear
as they jump in their ships—so someone else
will think twice about bringing wretched war
upon horse-taming Trojans. Let the call go out
from heralds, whom Zeus loves, through all the city,
for growing boys and grey-haired men to camp
up on the city's walls, built by the gods.
Let each grown woman get ready a large fire
in her home. Let all keep a sharp lookout,
to stop a group from entering our city
while the army is elsewhere. Do all this,
you great-hearted Trojans, just as I've said.
That's all I have to tell you at this time.
I've more orders for horse-taming Trojans
for tomorrow. I hope and pray to Zeus,
to other gods as well, I'll drive away
these death-infected dogs, conducted here
in their black ships by mortal fates. Right now,
let's watch out for ourselves tonight. At dawn,
let's arm ourselves with weapons and re-ignite
this bitter warfare by the hollow ships.
Then I'll know if mighty Diomedes,
son of Tydeus, will repel me from the ships,
or whether with my bronze I'll slaughter him
and take away the spoils all stained with blood.
Tomorrow he'll understand how good he is,
whether he can stand against my spear,
as it comes after him. I think he'll fall.
He'll be among the first men speared to death,
with many of his comrades round him,
at tomorrow's sunrise. I wish I were as sure
I were immortal, ageless for all time,
that I'd be worshiped as Athena is,
and Apollo, too, as I am that this day
will bring destruction to the Argives."

Hector finished speaking. Trojans gave a shout.
They untied their sweaty horses from their yokes,
tethered them with straps, each by its chariot.
From the city they soon brought cattle and stout sheep,
sweet wine and bread from home. They gathered piles of wood
and made perfect sacrificial offerings to the gods.
From the plain, the wind carried the sweet-smelling smoke
right up to heaven. But the blessed gods were not willing

to accept it, for sacred Ilion, and Priam,
and Priam's people, rich in sheep, did not please them.
So all night long men sat there in the battle lanes,
with high expectations, burning many fires.
Just like those times when the stars shine bright in heaven,
clustered around the glowing moon, with no wind at all,
and every peak and jutting headland, every forest glade
is clearly visible, when every star shines out,
and the shepherd's heart rejoices—that's the way
the many Trojan fires looked, as they burned there
in front of Ilion, between the river Xanthus [560]
and the ships, a thousand fires burning on the plain.
By each sat fifty men in the glow of firelight.
Horses munched on wheat and barley, standing there
by their chariots, awaiting the regal splendour of the dawn.

BOOK NINE
PEACE OFFERINGS TO ACHILLES

[The Argives in despair; Agamemnon proposes they go home; Diomedes responds, rebuking Agamemnon; Nestor proposes a reconciliation with Achilles; Agamemnon agrees, outlines his offer; Phoenix, Odysseus, and Ajax go to Achilles with the offer; he welcomes them with a meal; Odysseus outlines Agamemnon's offer; Achilles refuses; Phoenix urges Achilles to accept, tells the story of Meleager; Achilles refuses Phoenix; Ajax speaks last; Achilles makes a slight concession; the envoys return with Achilles's answer; Achaeans retire for the night.]

Meanwhile, as the Trojans maintained their careful watch,
Panic, chilling Fear's dread comrade, gripped Achaeans,
their best men suffering unendurable anguish.
Just like those times two winds blow in from Thrace—
North Wind and West Wind suddenly spring up
and lash the fish-filled seas—black waves at once rise up,
then fling seaweed in piles along the shoreline—
so spirits in Achaean chests were now cast down.
Atreus' son, heart overwhelmed with painful sorrow,
went to give out orders for clear-voiced heralds [10] [10]
to summon all the warriors to assembly,
calling them one by one, not with a general shout.
He himself, with his heralds, carried out the task.
The counsellors sat heart sick. Agamemnon stood,
his face shedding tears like a black water spring
whose dark stream flows down a sheer rock precipice.
With a sigh, Agamemnon addressed the Argives:

"My friends, leaders, Argive counsellors,
Zeus, son of Cronos, has snared me badly
in grievous folly. Deceptive god, [20]
he promised me—he nodded his assent—
that I'd lay waste to well-built Ilion, [20]
before I went back home. Now he tricks me.
He's devised a cruel deceit for me,
telling me to return to Argos in disgrace,
after the deaths of so many warriors.
That's what now delights all-powerful Zeus,
who has hurled down so many lofty towns,
and who'll still demolish many more—
such is his power, irresistible. [30]
But come, let's all follow what I propose—

let's sail back to our dear native land.
For we're never going to capture Troy."

He finished. All those there stayed silent, stunned.
Achaea's sons just sat there, speechless with grief. [30]
At last Diomedes, skilled in battle cries, spoke out:

"Son of Atreus, I'll be the first to challenge
your foolishness, as is my right, my lord,
in our assembly. So don't be angry.
First of all, you slighted my bravery 40
in front of all Danaans, when you claimed
I was no soldier, an unwarlike man.
Achaeans, young and old, all know this.
The son of crooked-minded Cronos gave you
a two-edged gift—he gave you honour
to govern all men with your sceptre,
but he didn't give the strongest power,
courage. My misguided king, do you think [40]
Achaea's warriors are fearful cowards,
as you state? If your heart wishes to go home, 50
then go. The road lies there in front of you.
The many ships which sailed here with you
from Mycenae stand ready by the sea.
But the rest of the long-haired Achaeans
will stay here, until we demolish Troy.
If they flee back to their dear native land
in their ships, too, then Sthenelus and I
will fight on to our goal, to take Ilion.
For the gods were with us when we came."

With a roar, all Achaea's sons endorsed his words, 60 [50]
pleased with the speech made by horse-taming Diomedes.
Then horseman Nestor, standing up before them, said:

"Son of Tydeus, you're excellent in battle
and the best Achaean of your age in council.
No Achaean will fault what you've just said
or oppose it. But your speech is incomplete.
You are still young—you might well be my son,
my youngest born. Still, you spoke sensibly,
in what you said to the Achaean king.
For you spoke justly and kept to the point. 70
But come, I can claim to be your senior, [60]

so I shall explain this matter fully.
Let no one take issue now with what I say,
not even mighty Agamemnon.
Any man who's keen on civil war
is an evil outlaw, without a heart,
without a home. So for the time being,
now that night has come, let's do what we must.
Let's get dinner ready, something to eat.
And let's have sentries camp beside that trench
we dug outside the wall. I'm saying young men
should do this. Then, issue your instructions,
son of Atreus, for you are chief king here.
Prepare a meal for senior counsellors—
that's the right and proper thing to do.
You've got lots of wine stockpiled in your huts,
which Achaea's sons bring here every day
over the wide sea from Thrace—you've got
all you need to show such hospitality,
for you are ruler over many men.
Once many people have assembled there,
you should follow whoever offers you
the best advice. All we Achaeans need
good practical advice, especially now,
when enemies are burning many fires
right beside our ships. Who finds that pleasant?
This night saves our army or destroys it."

Nestor spoke. Those present listened carefully,
then followed what he'd said. Armed sentinels went out,
led by Thrasymedes, Nestor's son, his people's shepherd,
with Ascalaphus and Ialmenus, strong fighters,
and Meriones, Aphareus, and Deïpyrus,
along with noble Lycomedes, Creion's son.
These seven were captains of the sentinels.
A hundred young men, all armed with their long spears,
went with each of them. They marched off and took positions
half way between the ditch and wall. Then the men lit fires
and prepared their meals. Atreus' son led his advisors
to his hut and gave all of them a generous meal.
They ate the food prepared and set before them,
and each man ate and drank to his full heart's content.
Old Nestor, whose previous advice had seemed the best,
was the first to begin explaining what he thought.
Keeping in mind their common good, he spoke out:

"Mighty son of Atreus, Agamemnon,
king of men, I'll begin and end my speech
with you, for you are lord of many men.
Zeus gave you sceptre and laws to rule them.
Thus, you, above all, should speak and listen,
then act upon what other men may say,
if their spirit prompts them to speak well.
You'll get the credit for what they begin.
So I'll say what seems to me the best advice.
No one else has set out a better scheme
than the one which I've been mulling over
a long time now, ever since you, my lord,
made Achilles angry by taking back
that young girl Briseis from his hut,
against my judgment. Repeatedly,
I urged you not to do it. But then you,
surrendering to your arrogant spirit,
shamed our strongest man, honoured by the gods.
You still have that prize you took. So now let's think
how we may make amends, win him back with gifts
and gracious speeches, and be friends once more."

Agamemnon, king of men, then answered Nestor:

"Old man, you expose my folly justly.
I was deluded. I don't deny that.
The man whom Zeus loves in his heart is worth
whole armies. And this man Zeus now honours
by destroying an army of Achaeans.
Since my delusion made me follow
my mistaken feelings, I'm now willing
to make amends, to give in recompense
immense treasures. I'll list these rich gifts
in presence of you all—seven tripods
which fire has not yet touched, ten gold talents,
twenty shining cauldrons, twelve strong horses
whose speed has triumphed and earned them prizes.
A man who has as much as I have won
from racing these sure-footed animals
would not be poor, or lack possessions,
or need precious gold. And then I'll give him
seven women of Lesbos, skilled in crafts,
whom I chose for myself when he captured

well-built Lesbos. They surpass all women [130]
for their beauty. These I shall present to him.
With them the one I seized from him, Briseis,
daughter of Briseus. I'll solemnly swear
I never once went up into her bed
or had sex with her, as is men's custom,
where men and women are concerned.
All these things he will receive immediately.
If gods grant we destroy Priam's great city,
when we Achaeans allocate the spoils,
let him come and load his ship with gold,
with bronze, as much as he desires. He may choose
twenty Trojan women for himself,
the loveliest after Argive Helen. [140]
If we get back to the rich land of Argos,
he can then become my son-in-law.
I'll honour him just as I do Orestes,
my son, whom I dearly love. He's being raised
in great prosperity. In my well-built home,
I have three daughters—Chrysothemis,
Iphianessa and Laodice.
He can take whichever one he chooses
back home as his wife to Peleus's house
and pay no bridal gift. I'll give much more
to bring about our reconciliation,
a dowry bigger than any man so far
has ever handed over with his daughter.
I'll give him seven populous cities,
Cardamyle, Enope, grassy Hire, [150]
holy Pherae, fertile Antheia,
lovely Aepea, and vine-rich Pedasus,
all near the sea, beside sandy Pylos.
People living in these places own a lot,
many sheep and cattle. They will honour him
and give him gifts, as if he were a god.
Under his laws and sceptre they'll do well.
I shall give all this if he will abate
his anger. Let him concede. Only Hades
is totally relentless and unyielding.
That's why of all the gods, he's the one
men hate the most. And let him acknowledge
my authority, for I'm the greater king. [160]
In age I can claim to be his senior."

Geranian horseman Nestor then said in reply:

"Mighty son of Atreus, Agamemnon,
king of men, the gifts you're offering
to lord Achilles can't be criticized.
But come, let's send out hand-picked men
to go with all speed to Achilles' hut,
Peleus' son. And may those I select
agree to do it. First, let Phoenix,
whom Zeus loves, be leader, then great Ajax,
and lord Odysseus. Let herald Odius
accompany them, along with Eurybates. [170]
Bring some water for our hands. Let's observe
a holy silence, so we may pray to Zeus,
son of Cronos, to take pity on us."

Nestor spoke. All present approved of what he said.
Attendants then poured water on their hands.
Young men filled mixing bowls with wine up to the brim
and passed them round. With every cup they made libations.
Once they'd made offerings and drunk their fill of wine,
they left the hut of Agamemnon, son of Atreus.
Geranian horseman Nestor, looking at each man,
especially at Odysseus, kept encouraging them [180]
to persuade Achilles, Peleus' excellent son.

Along the shore of the tumbling, crashing sea,
the envoys made their way, offering up their prayers
to world-circling Earthshaker Poseidon to help them
more easily convince the great heart of Achilles.
They came to the ships and huts of the Myrmidons.
There they found Achilles. He was easing his spirit
with a tuneful finely decorated lyre.
It had a silver cross-piece. He'd seized it as a prize
when he'd destroyed the city of Eëtion.
With the lyre he was bringing pleasure to his heart,
singing about the celebrated deeds of men.
Patroclus, his sole companion, sat there facing him, [190]
waiting in silence until Achilles finished singing.
The envoys approached, lord Odysseus in the lead.
They stood in front of him. In astonishment,
Achilles got up off his chair and stood up quickly,
still holding the lyre. Patroclus did the same,

standing up as soon as he saw the embassy.
Swift-footed Achilles greeted them and said:

"Welcome.
My dear friends have come. I must be needed.
Among Achaeans you're the men I love the most,
even in my anger."

With these words,
lord Achilles conducted them inside his hut
and seated them on chairs covered with purple rugs.
Moving up close to Patroclus, Achilles said:

"Son of Menoetius, set out for us
a larger wine bowl, and mix stronger wine.
Prepare a cup for everyone. These men,
my closest friends, are under my own roof."

Achilles spoke. Patroclus obeyed his dear companion.
Then in the firelight he set down a large chopping block,
placed on it slabs of mutton, goat, and the chine
of a plump hog, swimming in fat. Achilles carved,
while Automedon held the meat. He sliced up
small pieces, then got them ready on the spits.
The son of Menoetius, godlike man, stoked the fire,
a huge one. Once the blaze died down and flames subsided,
Patroclus spread the glowing embers, laid the spits
lengthwise on top, setting them in place on stones
and sprinkling on the sacred salt. When the meat was cooked,
he laid it out on platters. Patroclus took the bread,
then passed it in fine baskets round the table.
Achilles served the meat and sat down by the wall,
directly opposite godlike Odysseus.
Achilles told Patroclus, his companion,
to sacrifice to all the gods. Patroclus threw the offerings
into the fire. Then each man helped himself,
eating the food prepared and set before him.
They all ate and drank to their full heart's content.
Then Ajax gave a nod to Phoenix. Seeing that,
lord Odysseus filled up his cup with wine
and proposed a toast:

"Good health, Achilles.
We have not had to go without our share

of feasts, either in Agamemnon's hut,
Atreus' son, or here, for you've prepared
a richly satisfying meal. But now
our business is not pleasant banqueting.
For we are staring at a great disaster.
And, my lord, we are afraid, in a quandary,
whether we can save our well-decked ships, [230]
or whether they will be destroyed, unless
you put on your warlike power once again.
For haughty Trojans and their famous allies
have camped close to the ships and barricade
and lit many fires throughout their army.
They claim nothing can prevent them now
from attacking our black ships. And Zeus,
son of Cronos, has sent them his signal,
on their right a lightning flash. Hector,
exulting hugely in his power,
in a terrifying manic frenzy,
puts his faith in Zeus, fears neither man nor god.
A killing passion now possesses him.
He prays for holy dawn to come quickly, [240]
vowing he'll hack apart the high sterns
of our ships, burn them in destructive fire,
and by those very ships kill the Achaeans
driven out in desperation by the smoke.
I have a dreadful fear deep in my heart
that the gods will make good all his boasting,
seal our fate, to perish here in Troy,
far away from Argos, where horses breed.
So rouse yourself, late though it may be,
if you've a mind to save Achaeans
from their suffering at this Trojan onslaught.
If not, you'll suffer future agonies.
You won't find any cure for such despair. [250]
Before that happens, you should think about
how to help Argives at this evil hour.
My friend, that day your father, Peleus,
sent you off, away from Phthia,
to join Agamemnon, didn't he say this,

> 'My son, Athena and Hera will give you
> power, if they so wish, but you must check
> that overbearing spirit in your chest.
> It's better to show good will, to give up

malicious quarrelling. Then Achaeans,
young and old, will respect you all the more'?

That's what your old father said, advice
which you've forgotten. So even now
you should stop, cease this heart-corroding rage. [260]
For if you will mitigate your anger,
Agamemnon will give you worthy gifts.
If you will hear the list, then I'll repeat
what Agamemnon has promised to you.
All gifts are in his huts—seven tripods
which fire has not yet touched, ten gold talents,
twenty shining cauldrons, twelve strong horses
whose speed has triumphed, earned them prizes—
a man who's won as much as Agamemnon
from racing these sure-footed animals
would not be poor or lack possessions
or precious gold. Then he will add to this
seven women of Lesbos, skilled in crafts, [270]
whom he chose for himself when you captured
well-built Lesbos. They surpass all women
for their beauty. These he will present to you,
with them the one he seized from you, Briseis,
daughter of Briseus. He'll solemnly swear
he never once went up into her bed
or had sex with her, as is men's custom,
where men and women are concerned.
All these things you will receive immediately.
If gods grant that we destroy Priam's great city,
when we Achaeans allocate the spoils,
you may come and load your ship with gold,
with bronze, as much as you desire. You may choose [280]
twenty Trojan women for yourself,
the loveliest after Argive Helen.
If we get back to the rich land of Argos,
you can then become his son-in-law.
He'll honour you just as he does Orestes,
his son, whom he dearly loves. He's being raised
in great prosperity. In his well-built home
he has three daughters—Chrysothemis,
Iphianessa, and Laodice.
You can take whichever one you choose
back home as your wife to Peleus' house
and pay no bridal gift. He'll give much more [290]

to bring about your reconciliation,
a dowry bigger than any man so far
has ever handed over with his daughter.
He'll give you seven populous cities,
Cardamyle, Enope, grassy Hire,
holy Pherae, fertile Antheia,
lovely Aepea, and vine-rich Pedasus,
all near the sea, beside sandy Pylos.
People living in these places possess
many sheep and cattle and will honour you
and give you gifts, as if you were a god.
Under your laws and sceptre they'll do well.
He will give all this, if you will abate
your anger. But if your heart still resents [300]
Atreus' son and his gifts, then take pity
on all Achaeans, our exhausted soldiers.
They will pay you honours like a god.
Among them you'll earn enormous glory,
for now you might kill Hector, who may well
approach you—he's so obsessed with slaughter,
he thinks there's not a warrior his equal
among Danaans brought here in our ships."

Swift-footed Achilles then answered Odysseus:

"Divinely born son of Laertes,
resourceful Odysseus. I must be blunt
about what I think, where all this will lead, [310]
so you do not sit there and, one by one,
try to entice me with sweet promises.
I hate like the gates of Hell any man
who says one thing while thinking something else
which stays hidden in his mind. So I'll declare
what, in my view, it's best for me to say—
I don't believe that Agamemnon,
Atreus's son, or any other Argive
will persuade me, for no thanks are given
to the man who always fights without rest
against the enemy. Whether one fights
or stays behind, the shares are still the same
Coward and brave man both get equal honour.
Death treats idle and active men alike. [320]
I've won nothing for all I've suffered,
battling on, pain in my heart, with my life

always under threat. Just as a bird
takes scraps of food, whatever she can find,
to her fledglings, but herself eats little,
so have I lain without sleep many nights,
persevered through bloody days of fighting,
in battling men in wars about their wives.
With ships, I've seized twelve towns and killed their men.
On land, in the area of fertile Troy,
I claim eleven more. From all these
I took fine treasure, lots of it, brought it [330]
to Agamemnon, Atreus' son—I gave it
all to him. He stayed back, at the swift ships.
He shared very little of what he got,
keeping most of it for his own use.
He gave prizes to the best of men, the kings,
and they hung on to them. From me alone
he stole away a prize, a woman I love.
Let him have his pleasure in bed with her.
Why must Argives fight against the Trojans?
Why did Atreus' son collect an army
and lead it here if not for fair-haired Helen?
Are Atreus's sons the only mortal men [340]
who love their wives? Every good and prudent man
loves his wife and cares for her, as my heart
loved that girl, though captured with my spear.
Since he's taken my prize out of my hands
and cheated me, let him not try to take
another thing from me. I know him too well.
He will never persuade me to agree.
But, Odysseus, let him rely on you
and other kings as well to save his ships
from fiery destruction. He has done much
without me already. He's built a wall,
constructed a large wide ditch around it, [350]
and fixed stakes inside. But for all these things,
he's not been able to check the power
of man-killing Hector. When I fought
beside Achaeans, Hector wasn't eager
to push the battle far from his own walls.
He came out only to the Scaean Gates
and to the oak tree. Once he met me there
alone. He barely got away from my attack.
But now I don't want to fight lord Hector.
Tomorrow I'll make holy sacrifice

to Zeus, to all the gods, and load my ships,
once I've dragged them down into the sea.
You'll see, if you wish, if you're interested,
tomorrow my ships will be sailing off,
on the fish-filled Hellespont, men rowing [360]
with great eagerness. And if Poseidon,
famous Earthshaker, gives us fair sailing,
in three days I will reach fertile Phthia.
There I own many things I left behind
when I made this disastrous trip to Troy.
I'll take back from here more gold, red bronze,
fair women, and grey iron—all I captured.
But mighty Agamemnon, Atreus's son,
in his arrogance, seized back from me
the prize which he awarded. Tell him that.
Repeat in public everything I say,
so other Achaeans will grow angry, [370]
if he, still clothed in shamelessness, hopes
at any time to deceive some Argive.
Cur that he is, he doesn't dare confront me
face to face. I'll discuss no plans with him,
no actions. He cheated me, betrayed me.
His words will cheat no more. To hell with him!
Let him march to his death by his own road,
for Counsellor Zeus has stolen his wits.
I hate his gifts. And he's not worth a damn!
Not even if he gave me ten times, no,
twenty times more than all he owns right now,
or will possess in future, not even [380]
all the wealth amassed in Orchomenus,
or Egyptian Thebes, where huge treasures sit
piled up in houses—that city of gates,
one hundred of them, through each can ride
two hundred men, horses and chariots
all together—not even if he gave me
gifts as numerous as grains of sand
beside the sea or particles of dust,
not for all that would Agamemnon win
my heart, not until he satisfies me
in full for all my heartfelt bitter pain.
I'll never take as wife any daughter
of Agamemnon, son of Atreus,
not even if her beauty rivals that
of golden Aphrodite, or her skill

in crafts equals bright-eyed Athena's.
I will not marry her. Let him select
another Achaean, someone like himself,
a more prestigious king than me. For me,
if the gods keep me safe and I get home,
Peleus himself will find me a wife.
There are plenty of Achaean women
in Hellas and in Phthia—daughters of lords,
men who govern cities. From them I'll choose
the one I want to make my cherished wife.
My heart has often felt a strong desire
to take a woman there as my own wife,
someone suitable for marriage, to enjoy
the riches which old Peleus has acquired.
Life is worth more to me than all the wealth
they say was stored in well-built Ilion
some time ago, when they were still at peace,
before the sons of Achaea came here,
more than all the treasures of the archer,
Phoebus Apollo, stacked on the stone floor
in rocky Pytho. Men can steal cattle,
fat sheep, get tripods, herds of sorrel horses.
But no man gets his life back, not by theft
or plunder, once it has flown out from him,
passed beyond the barrier of his teeth.
My goddess mother, silver-footed Thetis,
has said two fates may bring about my death.
If I remain here, continuing the fight
against the Trojans' city, that means
I won't be going home, but my glory
will never die. But if I go back home,
my fame will die, although my life will last
a long time—death will not end it quickly.
And so I encourage all the rest of you
to sail back home. You'll not attain your goal,
steep Ilion, because far-seeing Zeus
shields that city with his hand. Its people
have confidence in that. Thus, you should go.
Report this message to Achaean leaders—
that's the privilege of senior men—
their minds must come up with some better plan
to save the Achaean fleet and army
beside the hollow ships. The one they've got
won't work, since anger still keeps me away.

Let Phoenix stay here with me, sleep here,
so tomorrow he may join our voyage
to his dear native land, if that's his wish.
For I will not take him back by force."

Achilles spoke. Astounded by his speech, they all sat there, [430]
in silence, stunned by the sheer force of his refusal.
After a pause, old horseman Phoenix spoke:

"Glorious Achilles, if your mind
is really set on going back, if you
are totally unwilling to protect
our swift ships from destructive fire,
because that anger has consumed your heart,
how can I remain here, dear lad, alone,
away from you? Old horseman Peleus
sent me with you, on that day he shipped you
from Phthia to join Agamemnon.
You were young, knowing nothing about war, [440]
which levels men, or about public debates,
where men acquire distinction. So Peleus
sent me to teach you all these things,
so you could speak and carry out great actions.
Given all this, dear lad, how can I wish
to be alone and separated from you?
No, not even if god himself promised
to cast off my old age, to make me young,
the man I was when I first left Hellas,
land of beautiful women, running off
from my angry father, Amyntor,
Ormenus' son. He was incensed with me
about his fair-haired mistress. He loved her,
thus dishonouring his wife, my mother, [450]
who begged me constantly—on her knees—
to have sex with that mistress, so she'd hate
my father. I obeyed, did what she asked.
My father soon found out what I had done—
he cursed me many times repeatedly,
praying to dread Furies that no dear son
born from me would ever sit upon his knees.
The gods made sure his curses took effect,
underworld Zeus and dread Persephone.
I planned to murder him with my sharp bronze.
Some god checked my rage, putting in my heart

what men would say, their great contempt—
how among all Achaeans I'd be called
the man who'd slaughtered his own father.
My heart no longer felt the slightest wish
to stay in my father's house with him so angry.
My friends and relatives who lived around me
begged me repeatedly to stay right there.
And then they butchered many well-fed sheep,
shuffling cattle with crumpled horns, and laid out
many hogs, swimming in fat, to be singed
in Hephaestus' flames. They drank many jugs
of the old man's wine. For nine nights,
they kept watch over me throughout the night,
taking turns as guards. Fires always burned,
one underneath the enclosed portico,
another in the hallway right outside
my bedroom doors. Ten nights later, as night fell,
I broke through the tight-closed bedroom doors,
went out, and jumped with ease across the wall
around the outer court, without being seen
by men and women checking up on me.
I ran away through all of spacious Hellas,
then came a suppliant to fertile Phthia,
where flocks are bred, to king Peleus.
He received me hospitably, loved me,
as a father dearly loves his only son,
heir to all his goods. He made me wealthy,
assigning me to govern many people.
I lived in the borderlands of Phthia,
reigning as king over the Dolopes.
And I was the one, godlike Achilles,
who raised you up to be the man you are.
You would refuse to attend a banquet
with anyone or eat in your own home,
unless I set you on my knees, fed you,
cut the meat, and held the wine cup for you.
Often you soaked the tunic on my chest,
slobbering your wine, a helpless baby.
I've gone through a lot for you, worked hard,
bearing in mind that gods had taken care
I'd never have some children of my own.
Godlike Achilles, I made you my son,
so that if I ever met disaster,
you'd protect me. So, Achilles, subdue

your giant passion. It's not right for you
to have an unyielding heart. Gods themselves
are flexible, and they have more honour
than we possess, more power, too. Men pray
when they go wrong or make mistakes, [500]
propitiating gods with offerings,
gentle prayers, libations, and sacrifice.
Prayers are the daughters of almighty Zeus.
Lame, wrinkled, cross-eyed, they try to follow
behind Folly, who, because she's strong and quick,
runs far in front of them, appearing
all over the world, bringing harm to men.
Far behind, Prayers carry on their healing.
If a man honours these daughters of Zeus
as they come near, they will help him greatly,
paying attention to him as he prays.
If someone spurns them, rudely rejecting them, [510]
they go to Zeus, son of Cronos, begging
for Folly to pursue that man, who then
harms himself and suffers punishment.
For that reason, Achilles, you should give
Zeus's daughters your respect. They have changed
the minds of other men, even great ones.
If Agamemnon were not bringing gifts—
and naming more to come—but persisting
with his anger, I would not advise you
to cast aside your rage and help the Argives,
no matter how painful their distress.
But he's giving plenty now, more later.
He has sent out his greatest warriors, [520]
selected from the whole Achaean army,
your finest friends among the Argives.
Don't show contempt for what they have to say
or insult their coming here. Up to now,
your resentment has been quite justified.
But we learn this from previous actions
of heroic men—when furious anger
came over some of them, they were swayed
by gifts and by persuasive speeches.
I recall an old tale from long ago.
Since you are all my friends, I'll tell it.
The Curetes and staunch Aetolians
were fighting and killing one another, [530]
around Calydon, with the Aetolians

defending Calydon and the Curetes
eager to destroy the place in war.
Gold-throned Artemis had driven them to fight,
in her rage that Oeneus had not given her
a harvest-offering, first fruits of his orchard.
Other gods had received their sacrifices,
but he'd failed to offer anything to her,
a daughter of great Zeus. He forgot, or else
grew careless, a lapse within his foolish heart.
The archer goddess, in her rage, incited
a savage white-tusked wild boar against him.
This beast from the gods reached Oeneus' orchard [540]
and was causing serious damage there,
knocking tall plants to the ground, entire trees,
including roots and flowering apples.
Meleager, Oeneus' son, killed the beast.
First he gathered huntsmen and hunting dogs
from many cities, for a small group
could not subdue such an enormous boar.
It had killed many men and sent them off
to their funeral pyres in agony.
Artemis began a war about this beast,
that battle between the Curetes
and the Aetolians, courageous men
fighting for the boar's head and bristly hide.
So long as war-loving Meleager [550]
was in the fight, the Curetes did not do well.
For all their numbers, they could not hold
their ground outside the city walls.
But then anger swept through Meleager,
just as it forcibly swells up in chests
of other men, including wise ones, too.
His heart was angry with his dear mother,
Althea. So he stayed home with his wife,
Cleopatra, the attractive daughter
of the lady with the lovely ankles,
Maripessa, daughter of Euenus
and Ides, strongest of all men then alive.
He was the one who took his bow to make
a stand against a god, Phoebus Apollo, [560]
fighting for the girl with lovely ankles.
Cleopatra's father and noble mother
at home called her by the name Alcyone.
Her mother shared the same fate as that bird,

the mournful halcyon, for she cried
when Apollo, the far shooter, seized her.
Beside this Cleopatra Meleager lay,
brooding on the rage that pained his heart,
infuriated by his mother's curses.
In her grief over her brothers' killing,
she prayed to the gods, beating fertile earth
with her hands over and over, kneeling down,
her breasts wet from crying, begging Hades
and fearful Persephone to kill her son.[1] [570]
The night-walking Furies, with their stone hearts,
listened to her prayers from Erebus.
Then around the gates of Calydon
the battle din grew loud, war's turmoil.
The gates were being demolished. The old men
of the Aetolians begged Meleager
to come to their assistance. They sent
their gods' most important holy priests.
They promised him great gifts, telling him
he could take for himself, from anywhere
on the richest plain of lovely Calydon
fifty acres of the finest farm land,
half for a vineyard and half for farming, [580]
open fields for ploughing. Oeneus,
the old horseman, kept imploring him,
standing at the threshold of his high room,
beating on the firmly bolted doors,
begging his son. His sisters and his mother
often entreated him. But he refused.
His companions, those most faithful to him,
his closest friends of all, added their prayers.
But they could not overcome those passions
in his chest, not until his own room
was under fierce attack, once the Curetes
had scaled the tower and begun to burn
that great city. Then his lovely wife,
in her grief, implored Meleager, [590]
telling him the evils which can overtake
men whose town is violently seized—
how men are butchered and the city burned,
with women and children seized by strangers.
Once he'd heard of these disasters, his heart stirred.

[1]Meleager's mother wanted him dead because he had killed her brothers in the quarrel over the wild boar.

He went outside, put his shining armour
around his body—and thus averted
a disastrous day for the Aetolians,
by following his heart. But the Aetolians
did not give him the many splendid gifts,
although he'd saved them from catastrophe.
My friend, don't think like Meleager. [600]
Don't let some god make you choose that way.
Once the ships catch fire, it will be harder
to defend them. So accept the gifts. 760
Achaeans are honouring you like a god.
If you return to man-killing battle
without the gifts, you'll never get such honour,
even though you may push the conflict back."

Swift-footed Achilles then said in reply:

"Phoenix, dear old father, noble lord,
I don't need such honours, for I possess
honour in the will of Zeus. That will keep
me here beside my own hollow ships,
so long as there is breath within my body, 770 [610]
strength in my limbs. But I'll say this to you—
bear it in mind—do not confuse my heart
with these laments, these speeches of distress,
all serving that heroic son of Atreus.
You should not love him, in case I hate you,
who are now my friend. You would be noble
to join with me, and so injure the man
who injures me. Be equal king with me.
Take half my honours. These men report back.
You stay here. Sleep in your soft bed. At dawn, 780
we shall consider whether to go back
to our own land, or whether to remain."

Achilles spoke. His eyebrows gave a silent signal [620]
to Patroclus to set a firm bed out for Phoenix,
so the others would quickly think of leaving.
But Ajax, godlike son of Telamon, spoke up:

"Noble son of Laertes, resourceful Odysseus,
let's be off. I don't think we'll bring this talk
to a successful end, not on this trip.
We must report this news, though it's not good, 790

to the Danaans waiting to receive it.
For Achilles has turned his great spirit
into something savage in his chest.
He's cruel and doesn't care for friendship
of his comrades, how we honoured him
above all others there beside the ships.
He has no pity. Any man accepts
reparations for a murdered son or brother.
The man who killed them pays a large amount
to stay there in his own community.
The other man's angry heart and spirit
are checked, once he takes the compensation.
But with you, gods have put inside your chest
unchanging evil passions, and all this
over a single girl. Now we are offering
seven of the best we have and much more.
You should turn your passion into kindness,
the hospitality of your own house.
For we are guests here under your own roof,
chosen from the Argive host. We believe
that we, of all Achaeans, are the ones
most dear to you, your closest friends,
far more so than all the other warriors."

Swift-footed Achilles then said in reply:

"Ajax, noble son of Telamon, your people's leader,
everything you say matches what I feel.
But my heart chokes with rage when I recall
how that son of Atreus behaved towards me
with contempt, as if he were dishonouring
some vagrant. But you'd better go, take back
this message—I shall not concern myself
with bloody war until lord Hector,
murderous son of Priam, comes against
the huts and sea ships of the Myrmidons,
killing Achaean soldiers as he goes,
until he starts to burn our ships with fire.
I think that Hector will be held in check
around my hut, around my own black ship,
for all his eagerness to battle on."

So Achilles spoke. The men each took a goblet
with two handles, gave offerings, and went back to the ships,

with Odysseus in the lead. Patroclus ordered
his companions and the women slaves to set up
a sturdy bed without delay for Phoenix.
They obeyed his orders and prepared a bed,
with sheepskin fleece and rug and fine linen sheets.
The old man lay down, to stay till morning.
Achilles slept in a corner of the well-built hut.
Beside him lay a woman he'd seized from Lesbos,
fair Diomede, one of Phorbas's daughters.
Patroclus slept opposite Achilles. Beside him
lay lovely Iphis, whom Achilles gave him
after capturing steep Scyros, Enyeus's city.

The others reached the huts of Atreus's son.
Achaea's sons stood up and welcomed them with toasts
in golden cups, one after another, asking questions.
The first to speak was Agamemnon, king of men:

"So come, tell me, famous Odysseus,
great glory of Achaeans, does he wish
to protect our ships from all-destroying fire,
or does he refuse, his mighty spirit
still gripped with anger."

Lord Odysseus,
who had endured much, replied:

"King of men,
mighty Agamemnon, son of Atreus,
that man's unwilling to let go his rage.
He's full of anger, more so now than ever.
He despises you, your gifts, and tells you
to sort out for yourself with the Argives
how you may save Achaean ships and men.
As for him, he made this threat—at first light
of dawn, he'll drag his trim balanced ships
down to the sea. He said he would encourage
others to sail home, for you'll not attain
your goal of lofty Ilion, since Zeus,
whose gaze ranges far and wide, holds his hand
over Troy, whose people now have confidence.
That's what he said. The others who went with me
will confirm this for you—Ajax and two heralds,
both prudent men. Old Phoenix stayed there,

to go to sleep, as Achilles told him,
so that he may go away with him
in his ships back to their dear native land,
if he wants, for he won't take him by force."

Odysseus spoke. They all were silent and disheartened,
especially by the force with which Achilles had refused.
Achaea's sons sat a long time speechless, troubled.
At last, Diomedes, skilled in war cries, spoke:

"Mighty Agamemnon, king of men,
you should not have begged noble Peleus' son,
offering countless gifts. At the best of times,
he's a proud man Now you've encouraged him [700]
to be prouder still. Let's leave him alone,
whether he goes or stays. For he'll fight
when the spirit in his chest moves him,
or when god drives him to it. But come on,
let's all follow what I now propose.
We've had our fill of food and wine. So now,
you should get some sleep, for strength and stamina.
When fair rosy-fingered Dawn appears,
you should range your army—men and horses—
before the ships, then rouse their spirits,
with you fighting at the front in person."

All the kings applauded horse-taming Diomedes. [710]
They poured libations. Then each man went to his hut,
where he lay down and stretched out to take the gift of sleep.

Book Ten
A Night Raid

[Agamemnon worries about the state of his army; he and Menelaus set off to summon the chief leaders; at the meeting Nestor suggests someone spy out the Trojan position; Diomedes volunteers but asks for a second man; Diomedes selects Odysseus to go with him; Hector calls for a volunteer to spy out the Achaean ships, promises Achilles's horses and chariot; Dolon volunteers and set off; Odysseus and Diomedes catch and interrogate Dolon; Diomedes kills Dolon; Odysseus and Diomedes attack the Thracian camp, kill many men, and take the horses of king Rhesus; Odysseus and Diomedes return in triumph to the ships.]

By their ships, Achaea's most important leaders
slept through the night, overpowered by soft sleep,
all except Agamemnon, son of Atreus. Sweet slumber
did not embrace this shepherd of his people,
for his mind was disturbed with many worries.
Just as when Zeus, husband of fair-haired Hera,
flashes lightning to announce a massive rain storm,
an immense downpour of hail or snow, when fields
are sprinkled white, or to foretell some bitter warfare,
the gaping jaws of battle—in just that way then
the groans reverberated in Agamemnon's chest,
deep in his heart, making his whole body tremble.
Every time he looked out on the Trojan plain
he was overcome at the sight of countless fires
burning in front of Ilion, at the sound of flutes,
pipes, the loud noise all those soldiers made. Looking back
at the Achaean army and the ships, he tugged
many tufts of hair out of his scalp, roots and all,
praying to high Zeus above, his brave heart groaning.
To him the best plan seemed to be to go to Nestor,
son of Neleus, before seeing anybody else,
to check if he could come up with some good advice,
some plan to save all the Danaans. So he got up,
slipped a tunic on over his chest, laced up
fine sandals over his sleek feet, and then put on
a tawny lion's skin, large and fiery red,
extending to his feet. Then he got his spear.

Menelaus, too, was troubled with anxieties.
No sleep sat on his eyelids either. He was afraid
Argives would be hurt, those who on his account
had crossed wide seas to Troy, planning to make war.
He covered his broad back with a spotted leopard skin,

picked up his bronze helmet, set it on his head,
then picked a spear up in his powerful fist.
Next he went to rouse his brother, commander
of the Argives, who worshiped him just like a god.
Menelaus found him putting his fine armour on
by his ship's stern. Agamemnon welcomed him,
as he approached. Menelaus, skilled in war cries,
spoke first:

"Brother, you're arming yourself. Why?
Are you going to encourage some companion
to scout the Trojans out? I really doubt
that anyone will do that for you,
set off to spy against a hostile force
under the cover of immortal night.
Such work would require a courageous heart."

Mighty Agamemnon answered Menelaus:

"You and I, lord Menelaus, need advice,
some shrewd plan to protect or save the Argives,
together with their ships. Zeus's mind has changed.
His heart prefers Hector's sacrifices
more than ours. For I've never witnessed yet,
nor heard anyone report, how one man
made so much havoc in a single day,
as Hector, Zeus's friend, has brought upon us,
Achaea's sons, all by himself. He's not a god,
nor even a god's son. But he's damaged
Argives in a major way, with actions
they'll remember for many years to come.
That's how badly Hector's harmed Achaeans.
But, come, why don't you run quickly by the ships
to summon Ajax and Idomeneus.
I'll go for godlike Nestor, to rouse him,
see if he wants to check our watchmen
and tell that strong contingent what to do.
They'll attend to him ahead of anyone,
because his son is captain of the sentries,
along with Meriones, an officer
of Idomeneus. We entrusted them,
above all others, with this special work."

Menelaus, expert at war cries, then replied:

"How do you want me to carry out
your orders? Shall I stay there with them,
wait for you to come, or hurry back to you,
once I've told them your instructions?"

Agamemnon, king of men, answered Menelaus:

"Stay there, in case we somehow miss each other
as we go, for there are many pathway
through the camp. But make sure you call out
each place you pass, telling troops to stay awake.
Call each soldier by his father's name,
complimenting all of them. Don't make a show
of your own proud heart. We must work hard, too— [70]
that's what Zeus charged us with when we were born,
a heavy burden of responsibility."

Agamemnon spoke, sending his brother off
with detailed orders. Then he set out to find Nestor,
shepherd of his people. He came across him
beside his hut and his black ship, on a soft bed.
His fine armour lay there with him—shield, two spears,
his glittering helmet, and that shining belt
which the old man strapped around him every time
he armed himself to lead his troops in battles
which destroy men's lives. Nestor made no concessions
to the infirmities of age. Sitting up there,
head resting on his arm, he spoke to Agamemnon, [80]
questioning him:

"Why are you alone like this,
wandering among the ships throughout the camp
in the pitch-dark night, while others sleep?
What are you looking for? A mule? Some comrade?
Tell me. Don't approach in silence. What do you need?"

Agamemnon, king of men, replied:

"O Nestor,
son of Neleus, great glory of Achaeans.
You should recognize me—Agamemnon,
son of Atreus, the one whom Zeus
always loads with miserable fortune,
more so than other men, so long as breath

stays in my chest and movement in my limbs. [90]
I'm wandering like this because sweet sleep
won't sit upon my eyelids. Instead, this war,
this danger to Achaeans, has me worried.
I'm dreadfully afraid for the Danaans.
My spirit isn't resolute. It wavers.
My heart's about to burst outside my chest.
My fine limbs tremble. If you want some action,
since sleep hasn't come to you here either,
go with me. We'll walk down to the sentries
and check if they're exhausted and asleep,
worn out, forgetting to maintain a watch.
Hostile troops are camped close by. We don't know [100]
if somehow they may be keen to fight at night."

Geranian horseman Nestor then said in reply:

"Glorious son of Atreus, king of men,
Agamemnon—Counsellor Zeus won't fulfill
all the things that Hector has in mind,
all his present hopes. In my opinion,
Hector will be struggling with more troubles
than you face, if Achilles changes his fond heart
from its hard anger. Yes, I'll come with you.
And let's get other leaders stirring also—
Tydeus's son, famous for his spear,
Odysseus, swift Ajax, and Phyleus' brave son. [110]
Someone should go summon two more men,
godlike Ajax and lord Idomeneus.
Their ships aren't near here—they're a long way off.
But I have some harsh words for Menelaus,
although he's a friend and I respect him.
I won't hide that, even if I anger you.
For he's still sleeping, leaving you alone
to do the work. Right now he should be active,
working on all the finest men, begging them
to help us. The need confronting us is urgent."

Agamemnon, king of men, replied to Nestor:

"Old man, at other times I'd urge you on [120]
to criticize him, for often he holds back,
reluctant to carry out the heavy tasks,
not because he's lazy or soft in the head,

but because he's looking for my signal,
waiting for me to make a move. But this time,
he was up and roaming well ahead of me.
He came to see me. I sent him off
to summon those very men you mention.
Let's go. We'll find them right before the gates,
where I ordered them to meet the sentries."

Geranian horseman Nestor then replied:

"If that's the case, none of the Argives
will say bad things of him or disobey,
when he spurs them on or issues orders."

With these words, Nestor put a tunic on his chest,
laced lovely sandals over his sleek feet. Around him
he buckled on a purple cloak in a double fold,
one thickly lined with wool. Selecting a strong spear
with a sharp bronze point, he set off on his way
down to the bronze-clad Achaeans' ships. The first person
Geranian horseman Nestor roused from sleep
was Odysseus, equal to the gods for wise advice.
Nestor called out to him. His voice entered
Odysseus' mind at once. He came out of his hut,
then questioned Nestor:

"What are you doing here,
going around alone like this among the ships,
in the immortal night? Is there something urgent?"

Geranian horseman Nestor answered Odysseus:

"Divinely bred son of Laertes,
resourceful Odysseus, don't be angry.
Achaeans are experiencing much suffering.
But come now, so we may rouse another man
someone who should be there when we discuss
our plans, whether we should flee or battle on."

Nestor finished speaking. Resourceful Odysseus
went into his hut, then slung across his shoulder
his finely decorated shield and set off with them,
to find noble Diomedes, son of Tydeus.
They came across him with his weapons outside his hut.

His comrades were asleep around him, their shields
under their heads, spears driven upright in the ground
by the butt spike. Their bronze spear points glittered
like Father Zeus's lightning. Diomedes slept
with the hide of a field ox spread out under him
and a bright rug underneath his head. Approaching him,
Geranian horseman Nestor shoved him with his foot,
waking him up. Nestor then said teasingly:

"Wake up, son of Tydeus. Why sleep
all night long? Aren't you aware that Trojans
are encamped here on the edges of the plain,
near the ships, only a short distance off?"

Nestor spoke. Diomedes woke up quickly,
then answered him—his words had wings:

"Old man,
you're a hard one. You never stop working.
What about Achaea's other sons,
the younger ones? Can't each of them go round
waking up the kings? You old man,
we can't do anything to check you."

Geranian horseman Nestor answered Diomedes:

"My friend, everything you say is true enough
I have excellent sons and many soldiers.
Any of them could go round with orders.
But Achaeans here are in their greatest need.
For now things stand upon a razor's edge—
miserable destruction for Achaeans
or their salvation. You're a younger man,
so if you feel compassion for me,
set off and wake up Meges and swift Ajax."

Nestor spoke. Diomedes threw a lion's skin
around his shoulders, a huge red pelt which reached his feet.
Then Diomedes grabbed a spear and went away.
He woke those warriors and brought them back with him.
When they joined up with the company of sentries,
they did not find the captains of the watchmen sleeping.
They were all sitting with their weapons, wide awake.
Just as dogs maintain a tired watch over their sheep

in some farm yard, when they hear a savage beast,
who's just moved down from wooded hills, men and dogs
raising a din around it, so those dogs get no rest,
that's how sweet sleep had left those sentries' eyelids,
as they kept guard that wretched night, always turning
towards the plain, in case they heard the Trojans coming.
Old man Nestor was pleased to see them. He called out, [190]
speaking winged words of encouragement.

"That's the way, dear friends, to keep good watch.
Don't let sleep seize on any one of you,
so we don't bring pleasure to our enemies."

With these words, Nestor hurried through the ditch. Argive kings,
those who'd been called to council, accompanied him.
Meriones went, as did Thrasymedes, too,
Nestor's noble son, who'd been asked to join the group.
They went through the scooped-out ditch. Then in an open spot
they sat down where there seemed to be no corpses,
no bodies of the slain. It was where fearful Hector [200]
turned back from killing Argives, once night hid everything.
Sitting down there, they talked to one another.
Then Geranian horseman Nestor began to speak.

"My friends, is there some man confident enough
of his own daring spirit to venture out
among stout-hearted Trojans, to see
if he can trap an enemy soldier,
some straggler, or catch wind of some report
of what the Trojans say among themselves,
whether they are keen to stay beside the ships,
away from home, or to go back to the city,
now that they have beaten the Achaeans? [210]
A man who could find out these things,
return to us unharmed, would be famous
among all men living under heaven,
and get rich gifts, as well. For our best men,
those commanding every ship, will give him
a black sheep with suckling lamb. Compared to that,
there's no possession finer. At banquets
and our drinking parties, he'll be always there."

Nestor spoke. The others were quiet, saying nothing.
Then Diomedes, expert in war cries, spoke up:

"Nestor, my heart and my proud spirit prompt me
to infiltrate the hostile Trojans' camp,
which stands close by. But another man
should come with me. Things would go much better.
We'd have more confidence. When two set out,
one may see something good before the other.
A man alone might notice it, but his mind
is less perceptive, less resourceful, than two."

Diomedes spoke. Many men wished to volunteer.
The two Ajaxes, attendants of the war god Ares,
were willing, Meriones, too. And Nestor's son
was really eager. Famous spearman Menelaus,
son of Atreus, was ready, and brave Odysseus
was keen to steal into the Trojan army,
for the spirit in his chest was always daring.
Then, Agamemnon, king of men, spoke up:

"Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
you delight my heart. But you must choose
the other man. Take the one you want,
the best of those in view. Many are keen.
Don't reject the better man, following
a sense of duty in your mind, taking
someone less worthy as your comrade,
thinking only of his birth. Don't do that,
even if the second is the greater king."

Agamemnon spoke, afraid for fair-haired Menelaus.
Diomedes, skilled in war cries, spoke to them again:

"If you bid me choose a comrade for myself,
how could I reject godlike Odysseus,
his heart and daring spirit always keen
for every challenge? Pallas Athena loves him.
With Odysseus at my side, we'd both return,
even from blazing fire. For he knows,
better than other men, how to use his mind."

Odysseus, that long-suffering, godlike man, replied:

"Son of Tydeus, don't over-praise me,
or censure me. You're speaking to the Argives,
who know everything about me. Let's go.

Night is passing quickly. Dawn approaches.
The stars have shifted forward. Most of the night
has passed, two thirds of it, with one third left."

This said, the two men pulled on fearful armour.
Warlike Thrasymedes gave a two-edged sword
to the son of Tydeus, for he'd left his own
beside the ships, and a shield as well. On his head he put
a helmet made of leather, without crest or plume,
what people call a skull-cap. It protected heads
of brave young men. Meriones gave Odysseus [260]
bow, quiver, and a sword. On his head Odysseus set
a hide cap, on the inside skilfully reinforced
with leather thongs. Outside, wild boars' white teeth
were placed here and there, strategically and well.
In between these layers was a piece of felt.
This cap had once been stolen by Autolycus,
from Amyntor, Ormenus' son. He'd broken in
his well-built home in Eleon. Sometime later,
Autolycus gave it to Amphidamas of Cythera,
to take back home to Scandeia. Amphidamas
then gave the cap to Molus, as a present
for his hospitality. Molus later gave it
to his son Meriones. And now it sat there, [270]
covering Odysseus' head.[1]

The two men,
having put their fearful armour on, set off,
leaving behind there all the most important chiefs.
On their right, close to the path, Pallas Athena
sent them a heron. In the darkness of the night
they did not see it with their eyes, but they heard its cry.
Odysseus was pleased with this omen of the bird.
He prayed then to Athena:

"Child of aegis-bearing Zeus,
untiring goddess, hear me. You've always stood
beside me in all sorts of troubles.
I don't move without you watching me.
But now especially be my friend, Athena. [280]
Grant that we two come back to the ships

[1]Autolycus, the one who originally stole the cap, was Odysseus's maternal grandfather, so in a roundabout manner, the cap has come back to the family.

covered in glory, after doing something great,
something the Trojans will regret."

Then noble Diomedes, skilled in war cries, prayed:

"Child of Zeus, invincible goddess, hear me.
Stand by me as you did my father,
lord Tydeus, at Thebes, that time he went
as messenger, sent there by Achaeans.
He'd left bronze-clad Achaeans at the Asopus,
taking peace proposals to Cadmeans.
On his way back, he did some fearful things,
with keen support from you, divine goddess.
Be willing now to stand by me like that,
protect me, and I'll sacrifice to you
an unbroken yearling ox with a broad head
which no man yet has put beneath the yoke.
I'll make that sacrifice to you, and more—
on that beast I'll plate both horns with gold."

So they prayed, and Pallas Athena heard them.
Their prayers to the daughter of great Zeus complete,
they continued on their way, like two lions,
in the darkness of night, through the slaughter,
through corpses, armour, through black pools of blood.

For his part,
Hector did not let his proud Trojans go to sleep.
He called their finest men together, all the ones
who commanded Trojans troops, with all their rulers.
To those assembled, he laid out a shrewd idea:

"Is there someone who'll undertake for me
an exploit, who'll do it for a worthy gift?
I guarantee he'll get a fine reward.
I'll give a chariot and two strong-necked horses,
the finest ones there are by those fast ships
of the Achaeans, to any man who dares,
who's fit to seize the glory for himself,
by approaching close to those swift ships,
to find out whether they're being guarded,
as before, or whether those men, beaten
at our hands, plan among themselves to flee,

and no longer wish to keep alert at night,
exhausted by their desperate efforts."

Hector finished. They all sat there in silence,
saying nothing. Now, among the Trojans
was a man called Dolon, son of Eumedes,
a sacred herald, a man rich in gold and bronze.
Dolon wasn't much to look at, but he ran fast.
He was the only male child, with five sisters.
At that point he spoke up to Hector and the Trojans:

"Hector, my heart and my proud spirit prompt me
to volunteer to sneak up to those fast ships
and find out what I can. Come, raise your sceptre,
swear to me that you'll give me those horses
and that chariot decorated all in bronze
which carry the fine son of Peleus.
I'll not be a useless scout or disappoint you.
I'll go straight through the army, till I reach
Agamemnon's ship, where their best men
must be in council talking of their plans,
whether to flee or to continue fighting."

Dolon spoke. Holding up his sceptre, Hector swore

"Let Zeus himself, Hera's loud-thundering husband,
be my witness, that no other Trojan
will be carried by those horses. I affirm
that you will glory in them all your life."

Hector spoke. He'd sworn an empty oath, but Dolon
was encouraged. At once, he slung across his shoulder
his curved bow, then threw a grey wolf skin over it.
On his head he set a cap of marten skin,
grabbed a sharp spear, and set off, going from the camp
towards the ships. He would not be coming back,
bringing Hector information from the ships.
But when he left the crowd of men and horses,
he went eagerly along the path. As he moved,
noble Odysseus saw him and said to Diomedes:

"Diomedes, someone's coming from the camp.
I don't know if he's going to scout our ships
or strip some dead man's corpse. Let's let him

at first get past us on the plain, just a bit.
Then we can go after him and catch him fast.
If his feet outrun ours, we'll keep following him
and chase him from his camp towards our ships.
Keep brandishing your spear behind him,
so he doesn't make it to the city."

After these words, the two men lay down beside the road,
among the corpses. Dolon ran past them quickly, [350]
quite unaware. When he'd gone about as far
as mules plough in a single day—and in deep fields
they outwork oxen pulling double-jointed ploughs—
the two men ran after him. When he heard their noise,
Dolon stopped, hoping in his heart they were comrades
coming from the Trojans to get him to turn back,
Hector having changed the orders. But when they came
within the distance of a spear throw or even less,
he saw that they were enemies and started running,
to get away as quickly as his legs could carry him.
They set off chasing him with speed. Just as when two dogs, [360]
skilled hunting hounds with sharp fangs, harass some doe
or hare relentlessly across a wooded country,
the prey screaming as it runs, that's how Tydeus's son
and Odysseus, destroyer of cities, pursued him,
keeping Dolon from his people with their constant chase.
When Dolon was about to run into the sentries
in his flight towards the ships, at that point
Athena put fighting power into Tydeus's son,
so no bronze-clad Achaean could make the boast
that he'd hit Dolon first and that Diomedes
had come up later. Springing forward with his spear,
powerful Diomedes yelled:

"Stop! [370]
Or I'll hit you with my spear. I don't think
you'll long escape destruction at my hands."

Diomedes shouted this, then threw the spear,
deliberately missing Dolon. The polished spear point
sailed over his right shoulder, then stuck in the ground.
Dolon just stood there terrified, stammering, pale with fear—
his teeth were chattering in his mouth. The two men ran up,
panting, and grabbed his hands. Dolon began to cry and beg:

"Take me alive, and I'll ransom myself.
At home there is bronze, gold, well-wrought iron.
My father will give lots of it to you—
an immense ransom—if he once finds out
I'm at Achaean ships and still alive."

Crafty Odysseus smiled at him and said:

"Don't worry. Don't let death weigh down your heart.
Come now, tell me—and be sure to speak the truth.
Why are you going like this to the ships alone,
away from your army in the dead of night,
when other warriors are fast asleep?
Are you going to strip some dead man's body,
or has Hector sent you out as a spy,
to learn something about the hollow ships?
Or did your own spirit prompt you to this?"

Dolon answered Odysseus, his limbs trembling.

"Hector led my mind astray with foolish hopes,
lots of them. He promised he'd give me
the sure-footed horses of Achilles,
Peleus' excellent son, and his chariot
with its bronze decoration. He told me
to venture out into the swift dark night,
get close to hostile troops, and then find out
if they were guarding their swift ships as before,
or whether, now we have defeated them,
they were planning flight among themselves,
unwilling to keep up watch at night,
exhausted by their desperate efforts."

Shrewd Odysseus, still smiling, then continued:

"Your heart has been ambitious for big gifts.
Those horses of warrior Achilles,
descendant of Aeacus, are hard to manage
or control for any mortal person,
except Achilles, son of an immortal mother.
Tell me, now, and be sure to speak the truth.
When you came here, where did you leave Hector,
shepherd to his people? Where's his armour?
Where are his horses? How are the sentries

of the other Trojans set? Where are they sleeping?
Tell me what they talk of amongst themselves,
whether they are keen to stay beside the ships,
quite far from home, or whether they'll return
to the city, with Achaeans beaten."

Dolon, son of Eumedes, answered Odysseus:

"I'll answer you in this quite truthfully.
Right now Hector is with his advisors,
holding a council meeting by the tomb
of godlike Ilus, some distance from the noise.
As for the guards you asked about, noble sir,
there's nothing special to protect the troops,
or keep lookout. By all Trojan watch fires,
as necessity requires, there are men
who stay awake, calling to each other,
to keep up their guard. But the allied force,
which comes from many lands, is sleeping.
They leave it to Trojans to stay on watch,
for their wives and children aren't close by."

Crafty Odysseus, with a smile, then asked Dolon:

"Now, those allies—are they intermingled
with horse-taming Trojans where they sleep
or separate from them? Tell me. I need to know."

Dolon, son of Eumedes, answered Odysseus:

"I can reveal the truth of this as well.
By the sea lie Carians, Paeonians,
with their curved bows, Lelegians, Caucones,
god-like Pelasgians. Around Thymbre
are positioned Lycians, Mysians,
impetuous fighters, and the Phrygians,
who fight on horseback, and from Maeonia
there are charioteers. But why ask me details
of these matters? If you're keen to infiltrate
the Trojan army, over there are Thracians,
fresh troops, new arrivals, furthest distant
from the rest, among them their king Rhesus,
son of Eioneus. His horses are the best,
the finest and largest ones I've ever seen,

whiter than snow, as fast as the winds.
His chariot is finely built—with gold
and silver. He came here with his armour—
an amazing sight—huge and made of gold.
It's not appropriate for mortal men [440]
to wear such armour, only deathless gods.
But take me now to your fast ships, or else
tie me up, leave me here in painful fetters,
so you can go and check my story out,
see whether I have told the truth or not."

Mighty Diomedes scowled at Dolon and said:

"Don't fill your heart with thoughts you'll get away,
Dolon, even though your news is good.
You've fallen in our hands. Now, if we
released you or set you free for ransom,
you'd come back to the swift Achaean ships, [450]
either to spy or fight us openly.
But if my hands subdue you and you die,
you'll pose no problems for the Argives later."

As Diomedes finished, Dolon was intending
to cup his chin with his strong hand in supplication.
But with his sword Diomedes jumped at him,
slashed him across the middle of his neck, slicing
through both tendons. Dolon's head rolled in the dust,
as he was speaking. They stripped the cap of marten skin,
then took the wolf hide, long spear, and his curved bow.
Lord Odysseus held these objects high above him [460]
for Athena, goddess of battle spoils, and prayed:

"Goddess, these are for you, to bring you joy.
We invoke you first of all immortal gods
living on Olympus. Send us on again
to where Thracians sleep and to those horses."

So Odysseus prayed. He lifted the loot up high,
placed it on a tamarisk bush, then set there
a clear marker, grabbing up reeds and branches
of tamarisk in full bloom, so they wouldn't miss
finding the spoils in the dark night, when they returned.
The two proceeded on through weapons and black blood.
They quickly reached the camp of Thracian soldiers. [470]

The men were sleeping, worn out by their hard work.
Their lovely armour lay on the ground beside them,
properly arranged in triple rows. Beside each man
stood his yoked horses. In the middle Rhesus slept,
close by him his swift horses, tethered with their straps
to the chariot's top rail. Odysseus saw him first.
He pointed him out to Diomedes.

"There's our man,
Diomedes. And these are the horses
which Dolon told us of, the man we killed.
Come now, let's see that mighty strength of yours.
It's not right for you to stand there idly
with your weapons. So loose those horses.
Or else kill the men, while I take care of them."

Odysseus spoke. Athena with her glittering eyes
breathed fighting power into Diomedes.
Moving around everywhere, he began the killing.
Agonizing groans came from those his sword then butchered.
The earth grew soggy with their blood. Just as a lion
comes across an unguarded flock of sheep or goats
and leaps on them, heart thirsting for the kill,
so Tydeus' son went at those Thracian soldiers,
until he'd slaughtered twelve. Whenever Diomedes
stood over some man he'd just killed with his sword,
crafty Odysseus, from behind, would grab his feet
and drag the body clear. For his mind was planning
how he might steal the fine-maned horses easily,
if he didn't frighten them by forcing them to step
on dead men's bodies, for they were not used to that.
Tydeus' son came across the king, the thirteenth man
whose sweet life he had taken. Rhesus lay there,
in his last gasp. A bad dream had stood beside his head
that night, a device sent by Athena—and that dream
was the son of Tydeus. Meanwhile, bold Odysseus
untied the sure-footed horses, roped them together,
and drove them from the camp, prodding with his bow,
for he'd forgotten to pick up the shining whip
from the ornate chariot. Then he gave a whistle,
to signal noble Diomedes. But he just stayed there,
wondering how he could do something really bold.
Should he take away the chariot, which contained
the king's finely decorated armour, pull it

by the pole, or lift it up above his head
and carry it like that? Or should he take the lives
of still more Thracians? While Diomedes turned over
these matters in his mind, Athena came, stood by him,
then said to noble Diomedes:

"Think of going back,
to the hollow ships, son of great-hearted Tydeus,
in case you get driven there in quick retreat,
if some other god wakes up the Trojans."

She spoke. He recognized the goddess by her voice.
He quickly climbed up on one of the horses.
Odysseus smacked them with his bow. They raced ahead,
in a rush to reach the swift Achaean ships.

But Apollo of the silver bow had not been
unvigilant, once he'd perceived Athena
taking care of Tydeus' son. Angry with her,
he went down into that huge crowd of Trojans
and woke up Hippocoön, a Thracian counsellor,
one of noble Rhesus' family. Roused from sleep
he saw that where the horses stood was empty,
the fearful carnage with men gasping in their death throes.
He screamed in grief, crying out for his companion,
calling him by name. Trojans created a commotion,
totally confused, as they rushed in all at once,
to gaze astonished at the terrible destruction
those two men did before returning to the hollow ships.

When the pair came to where they'd slaughtered Hector's spy,
Odysseus, dear to Zeus, pulled their swift horses up.
The son of Tydeus jumped down onto the ground,
handed over to Odysseus their bloodstained spoils,
then got back on his horse. They whipped the horses on,
racing willingly towards the hollow ships
with eager hearts. Nestor was the first to hear them.
He spoke up:

"Friends, Argive leaders and counsellors—
my spirit prompts me to speak. But will I say
something true or false? A sound beats in my ear,
fast-moving horses' hooves. Perhaps, as we speak,
Odysseus and mighty Diomedes are driving

sure-footed horses back from Trojans. But I fear,
in my anxious heart, that Achaea's best
are in trouble from pursing Trojan forces."

Before Nestor could finish, the two men arrived. [540]
They dismounted and were welcomed joyfully.
Men shook their hands, with warm congratulations.
Geranian horseman Nestor was the first with questions:

"Renowned Odysseus, great glory of Achaeans,
tell me how you two obtained these horses. 650
Did you sneak into that crowd of Trojans?
Or did you meet some god who gave them to you?
They're astonishing, like rays of the sun.
I'm always going in among the Trojans,
and I claim I don't malinger by the ships,
although I'm an old man for a warrior.
But I've never seen, never imagined [550]
horses like these. I think some god met you
and gave them to you. For cloud-gathering Zeus
loves both of you, as does bright-eyed Athena, 660
daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus."

Odysseus smiled at Nestor and answered him:

"O Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory
of Achaeans, if a god wanted to,
he'd easily give even better horses,
for gods are much more powerful than us.
But these horses which you ask about,
old man, are from Thrace, new arrivals.
Brave Diomedes killed their master,
along with all twelve of his companions, 670 [560]
their finest men. There was a thirteenth killed,
a spy we captured near the ships, sent there
by Hector and the other haughty Trojans,
to scout around our camp."[1]

Odysseus finished. Then he laughed with triumph,
driving the sure-footed horses past the ditch.
Other Achaeans came after him, rejoicing.

[1]The number of those killed in Odysseus's report doesn't quite match the earlier details, which indicate the number of the dead as fourteen, including Dolon.

When they reached Diomedes' well-constructed hut,
they tethered the horses with cut straps in the stall
where Diomedes' own swift horses stood, munching
their sweet grain. Odysseus put the bloodstained loot
from Dolon into his ship's stern, until they'd made [570]
an offering to Athena. Then the two men waded
into the sea, washed off their legs and necks and thighs,
removing all the sweat. Once the surf had taken
layers of sweat from off their skin and their hearts
had been refreshed, they stepped in shining tubs and bathed.
They washed, rubbing lots of smooth oil on themselves,
then sat down to eat. From the brimming wine bowl
they drew off sweet wine and poured libations to Athena.

BOOK ELEVEN
THE ACHAEANS FACE DISASTER

[The description of Agamemnon's armour as he prepares for battle; the battle resumes; Agamemnon's exploits on the battlefield; the Trojans are pushed back close to the city; Zeus sends Hector a message; Agamemnon is wounded, has to withdraw from the battle; Hector re-enters the battle, kills many Achaeans; Diomedes and Odysseus make a stand against the Trojans; Diomedes is wounded by Paris; Odysseus is left alone; Odysseus is wounded; Menelaus and Ajax come to help Odysseus; Machaon is wounded, taken from the battle by Nestor; Hector moves against Ajax; Ajax is forced to retreat; Eurypylus is wounded; Achilles sends Patroclus to find out news of the battle; Patroclus visits Nestor and Machaon; Nestor's long speech about his youthful fighting; Nestor questions Patroclus about Achilles; Patroclus meets Eurypylus, takes him to his hut, gives him medicines.]

As Dawn rose from her bed beside lord Tithonus
bringing light to immortal gods and men alike,
Zeus sent Strife down to the fast Achaean ships
the savage goddess, carrying the sign of war.
She stood by Odysseus's broad-beamed black ship
in the middle of the line, so she could be heard
in both directions, from the huts of Ajax,
son of Telamon, to those of Achilles,
whose well-balanced ships were drawn up at the ends,
for these men trusted courage and their own strong hands.
Standing there, the goddess screamed out a piercing call, [10]
a dreadful sound. In the heart of each Achaean,
she put strength for war, for unremitting combat.
To men war then became sweeter than sailing back,
going home in their hollow ships to their dear native land.
The son of Atreus shouted to his Argives
to get their armour on. He pulled on his shining bronze.
First on his legs he set his shin guards—beautifully made,
fitted with silver ankle clasps. Then he put
a breast plate round his chest, something he had received
as a gift of hospitality from Cinyras, [20]
who had learned in Cyprus the great news that Achaeans
were intending to set sail in their ships for Troy.
So to please the king, Cinyras gave the breastplate
to Agamemnon. On it were ten metal strips,
each dark blue, twelve of gold, and twenty made of tin.
On each side, three enamelled snakes coiled to the neck,
like rainbows which the son of Cronos sets in clouds,
prophetic omens for mortal men. On his shoulder,
he slung his sword studded with shining gold.

The scabbard was silver, fitted with golden straps.
Then he picked up his richly decorated shield,
which covered his whole body, a beautiful work,
with ten bronze circles, twenty bosses of white tin,
and in the centre a boss of blue enamel.
On that shield, as crowning symbol, stood the Gorgon,
a ferocious face with a horrifying stare.
Terror and Panic were placed on either side.
On the shield's silver strap writhed an enamel snake,
its three heads intertwined, all growing from one neck.
On his head Agamemnon placed his helmet,
with four bosses, a double ridge, and horsehair plume,
which nodded menacingly on top. He took two strong spears,
sharp ones with bronze points, whose glitter shone from him
right up to heaven. Athena and Hera gave
peals of thunder overhead, paying tribute to him,
Agamemnon, king of Mycenae, rich in gold.

Then each man told his charioteer to curb his horses
and line up in good formation at the ditch's edge,
while they marched ahead on foot in all their armour,
moving fast, shouting bravely in the early dawn.
They arranged their ranks on the far side of the ditch,
well beyond the chariots following at some distance.
Then Cronos' son brought them confusing signs of trouble,
sending down from high in heaven a rain of blood
dripping from the sky, for his intention was
to hurl the heads of many brave men down to Hades.

On the opposite side, by the high ground on the plain,
Trojans gathered round Hector, fine Polydamas,
Aeneas, whom Trojan people honoured like a god,
and three sons of Antenor—Polybus, Agenor,
godlike man, and youthful Acamas, who seemed
like one of the immortals. In the front ranks,
Hector carried his shield, an even perfect circle.
As some ominous star now suddenly appears,
shining through the clouds, and then disappears again
into the cloud cover, that's how Hector looked,
as he showed up in front, then in the rear,
issuing orders. All in shining bronze, he flashed
like lightning from Father Zeus, who holds the aegis.

Then, just as reapers work in some rich man's fields,
arranged in rows facing each other, cutting the crop,
wheat or barley, scything handfuls thick and fast,
that's how Trojans and Achaeans went at each other,
slicing men down. No one thought of lethal flight.
The sides were matched in fury equally—they fought
like wolves ripping at each other. Looking on, Strife,
goddess who brings much sorrow, was delighted.
She was the only god present at this battle.
The others were far off, sitting at their ease,
in their own homes on many-ridged Olympus,
where a fine house had been built for each of them.
All blamed the son of Cronos, lord of the dark cloud,
because he planned to give glory to the Trojans.
But Father Zeus was not concerned on their account.
Withdrawing some distance from them, he sat apart,
exultant, glorious. He looked out at Troy,
at the Achaean ships, at the flashing bronze,
at warriors killing, and at warriors being killed.

Throughout the early morning, as that sacred day
grew stronger, weapons thrown by both sides
took their destructive toll—men kept on falling.
But at the hour a woodcutter prepares his meal
in some mountain glade, when his arms are tired
cutting big trees, when weariness comes in his heart
and sweet appetite for food overtakes his mind,
that's when Danaans, calling to each other in the ranks,
courageously broke through. The first to kill a man
was Agamemnon. He slaughtered Bienor,
shepherd of his people, and his companion, too,
Oïleus, the charioteer, who had jumped down
from the chariot to challenge Agamemnon.
He charged straight at him, but his forehead took a blow
from a sharp spear. The rimmed helmet made of heavy bronze
did not stop the spear, which smashed through it, through the bone,
and splattered his brain inside the entire helmet.
That stopped his bloodthirsty charge. Agamemnon,
king of men, stripped off their tunics and left them there,
their white skin showing. Then he moved on to butcher
Isus and Antiphus, two of Priam's sons—
one was a bastard, the other one legitimate—
both travelling in a single chariot. The bastard,
Isus, held the reins, and renowned Antiphus

stood beside him as the fighting man. These two men
Achilles had once tied up with willow shoots,
when he captured them while they were herding sheep
along Mount Ida's lower slopes. He let them go
for ransom. But this time, wide-ruling Agamemnon,
son of Atreus, with his spear struck Isus in the chest,
above the nipple, and his sword sliced Antiphus
right by his ear, throwing him out of the chariot.
He quickly stripped off their fine armour. He knew them, [110]
for he had noticed them before by the fast ships,
when swift-footed Achilles led them in from Ida.
Just as a lion chews up with ease the tender offspring
of some nimble deer, when he comes in their den—
his strong teeth seize them and rip out their tender life—
and the mother, even close by, cannot help them,
for a fearful trembling panic seizes her, so she runs fast,
bolting in a lather through dense foliage and trees,
from that mighty beast's attack—in just that way,
no Trojan then could save these two from slaughter, [120]
for they were running off in flight from Argives.

Next, Agamemnon battled brave Hippolochus
and Peisander, sons of fiery-hearted Antimachus,
a man who had received much gold from Alexander,
a splendid gift, so he'd agree not to hand back
Helen to fair-haired Menelaus. This man had two sons.
Mighty Agamemnon now caught them, both riding
in one chariot, attempting to control their horses.
The shining reins had fallen from the driver's hands,
panicking the horses. The son of Atreus jumped out
and faced them like a lion. From the chariot
the two warriors appealed to Agamemnon: [130]

> "Take us alive, son of Atreus. You'll get
> a worthy ransom. There are many treasures
> in Antimachus's homes—bronze and gold
> and well-worked iron. Our father will be glad
> to give a massive ransom from all that,
> if he learns we're at Achaean ships alive."

The men said this in tears, addressing the king
with tender words. But the reply they heard was harsh:

"If you're the two sons of Antimachus,
that hot-hearted man who, when Menelaus came
as envoy once to the assembled Trojans
with godlike Odysseus, urged the Trojans [140]
to kill Menelaus, to stop him going back
to the Achaeans, now you'll pay the price
for those shameful actions of your father."

Agamemnon spoke. Then he struck Peisander.
He knocked him from the chariot to the earth
with a spear thrust to his chest. He crashed on the ground
and lay there motionless. Hipplochus jumped out.
But Agamemnon killed him on the ground.
His sword sliced away his arms and slashed his head off.
Then he set the head rolling through the crowd,
like some round stone. Leaving the bodies there, he charged
into the line where soldiers' ranks were most confused,
leading other well-armed Achaeans with him.
Their men on foot cut down soldiers compelled to flee. [150]
Chariots went at chariots. On the plain, dust clouds arose
from underneath, kicked up by thundering horses' hooves.
Men butchered men with bronze. Mighty Agamemnon
surged on ahead, always killing as he moved,
shouting out instructions to the Argives.
Just as destructive fire strikes thick woodland scrub,
driven in all directions by the swirling wind,
burning thickets to their roots, so they disappear,
swallowed up in the inferno's fiery rush,
that's how the heads of Trojans fell, as they ran off,
brought down by Agamemnon, son of Atreus.
Many strong-necked horses in the battle lanes
rattled past with empty chariots, missing their drivers, [160]
excellent charioteers now lying on the ground,
far more friendly to the vultures than their wives.

Zeus pulled Hector back from the flying weapons,
dust, slaughter, blood, and noise, but Agamemnon,
bellowing orders to his Danaans, still pursued.
Trojans rushed back across the middle of the plain,
past the tomb of ancient Ilus, son of Dardanus,
even past the fig tree, desperate to reach the city.
But with his invincible blood-spattered hands,
Agamemnon kept up his pursuit relentlessly.
When Trojans reached the Scaean Gates and oak tree, [170]

they stopped there, to wait for their remaining men.
But they were still in flight across the middle of the plain,
like cows scattered by a lion coming at them
in the dead of night—a general stampede,
but clearly grim destruction for one of them,
whose neck the lion first seizes in strong teeth,
breaks it, then gorges on the blood and all the innards—
that's how mighty Agamemnon, son of Atreus,
harassed Trojans, always killing off the stragglers,
as they fled back. Many men collapsed face down,
or on their backs, at the hands of Atreus' son,
as with his spear he raged up and down the field.
But just as Agamemnon was about to reach
the steep walls of the city, the father of gods and men
came down from heaven, sat on the peaks of Ida,
with its many springs, holding a thunderbolt.
He sent off gold-winged Iris with a message:

"Go, swift Iris, and tell Hector this—
as long as he sees Agamemnon,
that shepherd of his people, rampaging
at the front, slicing down rows of men,
he must restrain himself, tell other troops
to fight the enemy in the killing zone.
But when Agamemnon, hit by a spear
or wounded with an arrow, mounts his chariot,
then I'll give Hector power to kill and kill,
until he moves up to the well-decked ships,
at sunset, when sacred darkness comes."

Zeus finished. Wind-swift Iris obeyed, going down
from Ida to sacred Ilion. She found Hector,
wise Priam's noble son, standing with his horses,
in his well-made chariot. Coming close beside him,
swift-footed Iris spoke:

"Hector, son of Priam,
like the gods for your wise counsel, Father Zeus
has sent me to give you these instructions—
for as long as you see Agamemnon,
that shepherd of his people, rampaging
at the front, slicing down rows of men,
you must restrain yourself. Tell other troops
to fight the enemy in the killing zone.

But when Agamemnon, hit by a spear
or wounded with an arrow, mounts his chariot,
then Zeus will give you power to kill and kill,
until you move up to the well-decked ships,
at sunset, when sacred darkness comes."

After saying this, swift-footed Iris sped away. [210]
With his weapons Hector jumped out of his chariot
down to the ground. Brandishing his sharp spear, he moved
all through the army, urging men to battle on,
encouraging their spirits for the dreadful fight.
The troops rallied and stood up against Achaeans.
Opposing them, the Argives reinforced their ranks.
Agamemnon was among them, first to charge ahead,
eager to fight well out in front of everyone.

Tell me now, you Muses inhabiting Olympus,
who was the first to come against Agamemnon—
one of the Trojans or one of their famous allies? [220]
It was Iphidamas, son of Antenor,
a fine large man, raised in the fertile land of Thrace,
which nurtures flocks. His mother was lovely Theano.
Cisseus, his mother's father, raised him in his house
when he was very young. Once Iphidamas had reached
the age when younger men seek glory, Cisseus tried
to keep him there, marrying him to his own daughter.
But he left his bridal chamber to chase after fame
against Achaeans, taking with him twelve beaked ships,
which followed him. He left these well-balanced ships
at Percote, then come on foot to Ilion. [230]
Now he moved out to face Atreus' son Agamemnon.
When the two were close, within each other's range,
Agamemnon threw and missed—his spear turned aside.
But Iphidamas struck Agamemnon in his belt,
just below the breast plate, thrusting with all his force,
trusting his strong hands. But he did not penetrate
the gleaming belt, for the spear hit the silver first,
then bent aside, like lead. Wide-ruling Agamemnon
grabbed the spear in his fists and yanked it towards him
with the fury of a lion, pulling it away,
right out of Iphidamas's hands. Then he hit him,
his sword slashing through his neck—his limbs collapsed, [240]
and Iphidamas fell there into a bronze sleep,
unhappy man, far from the wife he married,

to help his fellow citizens, far from that lady
from whom he had no favours, though for bride price
he had offered much. First, he'd given a hundred cattle
and promised a thousand goats and sheep combined,
taken from the immense numbers in his flocks.
But then Agamemnon, son of Atreus, killed him,
stripped him, and went off through the Achaean throng,
carrying his armour.

When Coön noticed this,
an eminent man, Antenor's eldest son,
his eyes darkened with grief for his fallen brother.
He moved out of lord Agamemnon's line of sight,
to one side, then struck his forearm with his spear,
just below the elbow. Coön's shining spear point
sliced straight through. Agamemnon, king of men, shuddered,
but did not stop the fight or pull back from battle.
He charged at Coön, holding up his battered spear.
Coön was frantically dragging his blood brother,
Iphidamas, out by the feet, crying for help
to all the finest men. Agamemnon struck him
with his bronze-tipped spear shaft below his embossed shield,
as he was pulling Iphidamas out from the crowd.
Coön's limbs gave way. Agamemnon stood over him,
then hacked off his head, so it fell on Iphidamas.
Thus, Antenor's sons came to their fatal end
at king Agamemnon's hands and went down to Hades.

While the warm blood was still flowing from his wound,
Agamemnon strode around the other ranks,
with spear and sword and massive rocks. But once that wound
began to dry and blood stopped flowing, then sharp pain
started to curb Agamemnon's fighting spirit.
Just as a sharp spasm seizes women giving birth,
a piercing labour pain sent by the Eilithyiae,
Hera's daughters, who control keen pangs of childbirth,
that's how sharp pain sapped Agamemnon's fighting strength.
He climbed into his chariot and told his driver
to go back to the hollow ships. His heart was heavy.
He gave a piercing shout, calling his Danaans:

"Friends, leaders, rulers of Argives,
it's up to you now to guard our seagoing ships

in this dangerous war. For Counsellor Zeus
won't let me fight these Trojans all day long."

Agamemnon spoke. His charioteer lashed the horses [280]
with the lovely manes toward the hollow ships.
The horses flew on willingly, chests flecked with foam,
their underbellies caked with dust, as they took
the exhausted king away and left the battle.

When Hector saw Agamemnon going back,
he gave a loud shout to the Lycians and Trojans:

"Trojans, Lycians, Dardan spearmen,
be men, my friends, call on your fighting strength.
Their best man is leaving. Zeus, son of Cronos,
gives me glory. Drive your sure-footed horses
straight at those strong Danaans, so you can seize
an even greater glory." [290]

Hector spoke.
In every man he stirred up the spirit of war.
Just as a hunter urges on his white-fanged hounds,
to chase a lion or wild boar, that's how Hector,
son of Priam, like that man-destroyer Ares,
urged his great-hearted Trojans on against Achaeans.
He himself moved with those in front, fully confident,
falling on the enemy like a furious storm
swooping down to lash the purple ocean.

Who were the first, who were the last men slaughtered
by Hector, son of Priam, once Zeus gave him glory? [300]
First was Asaeus, then Autonous, Opites,
and Dolops, son of Clytius, then Opheltius,
Agelaus, Aesymnus, Orus, and Hipponous,
a strong fighter. Hector killed these Danaan leaders.
Then he went after common soldiers. Like West Wind,
when it demolishes white South Wind's clouds,
striking them with heavy squalls, while many waves roll on,
massive and swollen, scattering spray high in the air,
under the howling of the veering wind storm—
that's how thick and fast Hector destroyed those men.

At that very moment, disaster would have struck, [310]
inflicting on Achaeans irreparable damage—

they'd have been routed and fallen on their ships,
if Odysseus had not called out to Diomedes:

"Son of Tydeus, what's the matter with us?
Have we no memory of our warlike courage?
Come here, friend, stand by me. We'll be disgraced,
if Hector of the gleaming helmet takes the ships."

Powerful Diomedes then answered Odysseus:

"I'll stay and stand up to their attack.
But we won't enjoy this fight for very long,
since cloud-gatherer Zeus would sooner give
the victory to Trojans rather than to us."

Diomedes spoke. With his spear, he hit Thymbraeus [320]
in his left nipple, tossing him from his chariot to the ground.
Odysseus struck Molion, godlike attendant
to lord Thymbraeus. They left the two men there,
for their fighting days were done, and charged to battle,
creating havoc. Just as two furious wild boars
fall on the dogs chasing after them, that's how
Diomedes and Odysseus turned back again
to slaughter Trojans. So Achaeans got welcome relief
in their flight from godlike Hector.

The two warriors
then seized a chariot with two men, their people's finest,
two sons of Merops from Percote, a man skilled,
above all others, in prophecy. He would not let his sons [330]
go off to war's destruction. But they did not obey.
For Fates lured them on to the darkness of their deaths.
That famous spearman Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
stole their living spirit and stripped their lovely armour.
Odysseus then killed Hippodamas and Hypeirochus.

Gazing down from Ida, the son of Cronos made the fight
an equal combat, so on both sides men killed each other.
With his spear, Tydeus' son wounded brave Agastrophus,
son of Paeon, on the hip. There were no horses ready,
close at hand for his escape, a fatal blunder.
His attendant was holding them some distance off, [340]
while he went on foot through those fighting at the front,
until lord Diomedes robbed him of his life.

Hector kept a sharp watch on those men. With a shout,
he went after them, taking ranks of Trojans with him.
Brave Diomedes, skilled at war cries, noticed this.
He shuddered and said to Odysseus, who was close by:

"Mighty Hector's lethal wave engulfs us.
Let's make a stand, stay here, and beat him back."

Diomedes spoke. He drew back his long-shadowed spear,
then hurled it unerringly. The spear hit Hector,
on the head, catching his helmet at the very top.
Bronze deflected bronze—the spear missed his splendid skin,
prevented by the triple layers on the helmet,
which he'd been given by Apollo. Jumping back,
Hector quickly rejoined the massed ranks of his troops.
He fell on his knee and stayed there, holding himself up
with his strong hand on the ground. Black night hid his eyes.
But as the son of Tydeus rushed in to retrieve his spear
from where it hit the earth among the front-line fighters,
Hector revived. He leapt into his chariot once more,
drove back into the crowd, eluding his black fate.
Brandishing his spear, powerful Diomedes yelled:

"You dog—once more you're evading death for now.
But you've narrowly escaped disaster.
Phoebus Apollo has saved you once again.
No doubt you always pray to him, every time
you go into the sound of thudding spears.
Next time we meet, I'll surely finish you,
if some god is there to help me out, as well.
But now I'll attack the rest, any man
I chance to meet."

Diomedes spoke.
Then he stripped the armour off the son of Paeon,
a famous spearman. But fair-haired Helen's husband,
Alexander, now aimed his bow at Diomedes,
his people's shepherd, leaning against a gravestone,
part of the funeral mound men had built for Ilus,
son of Dardanus, an elder of the people long ago.
Diomedes was stripping the gleaming breast plate
off the chest of strong Agastrophus, taking, too,
the shield from off his shoulders and his heavy helmet.
Alexander drew back on the centre of the bow.

He shot. The arrow did not leave his hand and miss.
It hit Diomedes' foot, the right one, on the top—
it passed through and drove into the ground. Laughing aloud,
Paris jumped from his cover, shouting out this boast:

"You're hit. My arrow was not wasted.
I wish I'd got you low down in the gut,
taken your life. That way, there'd be some relief
for Trojans from the misery you bring.
Right now they shake with fear in front of you,
like bleating goats confronted by a lion."

Without a sign of fear, strong Diomedes then replied:

"You useless archer, brave only with your bow,
seducer, if you stepped out to face me
with real weapons, that bow and clutch of arrows
would be no use to you. So now you've grazed me
on my foot, and you boast like this. It's nothing—
like some blow from a woman or witless child.
A weapon from a coward has no bite at all.
But from me, it's different, even a slight hit.
My spear is sharp. The man it hits, it kills.
His wife tears at her cheeks, his children then
are orphans. Earth is blood-soaked where he rots,
with vultures instead of women round him."

Diomedes spoke. Famous spearman Odysseus
came up and made a stand before him. He sat down
behind Odysseus and pulled the arrow from his foot.
Sharp pain shot through his flesh. Then he got in his chariot,
took the reins, and with a heavy heart went to the hollow ships.

Now famous spearman Odysseus was left alone,
no Achaean there beside him, for fear gripped them all.
Greatly troubled, he spoke to his proud heart:

"Here's trouble. What's going to happen to me?
If I run away from this crowd in fear,
I'll be badly shamed. But to be trapped here,
all alone, that could be worse. For Cronos' son
has made the rest of the Danaans flee.
But why's my fond heart arguing all this?
I know that those who leave the war are cowards.

The man who wants to fight courageously
must stand his ground with force, whether he's hit,
or whether his blows strike his enemy."

While in his mind and heart he turned this over,
ranks of shield-bearing Trojans advanced against him,
encircling him. But this only brought them trouble.
As when young men and hunting dogs harass a boar,
the beast charges from dense foliage on every side,
whetting white teeth on its curving jaws, and they dodge
all round it, to the sound of champing tusks,
hunters and dogs standing firm, for all their fear—
that's how Trojans then kept going at Odysseus,
whom Zeus loved. First he wounded fine Deïopites
above his shoulder, lunging at him with his sharp spear.
Then he killed Thoön, Ennomus, and Chersidamas,
whom Odysseus speared as he jumped from his chariot.
He hit him in the groin below his shield. As he fell,
he clawed handfuls of dust. Odysseus left these men,
then with his spear struck Charops, son of Hippasus,
blood brother of rich Socus. That god-like man
came up, stood close to him, and cried:

"Renowned Odysseus,
your store of tricks, of suffering, is infinite.
Today you'll boast you killed both sons of Hippasus,
slaughtered two men and stripped away their armour,
or else you'll lose your life, hit by my spear."

Saying this, Socus struck the even circle of Odysseus' shield.
The strong spear punctured the bright shield, forcing its way
through the finely decorated breastplate, slicing off
the flesh along his ribs. But Pallas Athena
stopped it from sinking into any vital organ.
Odysseus knew the spear had not hit a fatal spot.
He drew back and spoke to Socus:

"You poor man,
now's the moment grim death surely takes you.
Yes, you've prevented me from fighting Trojans,
but I promise here this very day you'll meet
the fatal darkness of your death, killed on my spear.
I'll get the glory. You'll give your life to horseman Hades."

Odysseus spoke. Turning round, Socus began to run.
But Odysseus hit him as he was moving off,
spearing him in the back between the shoulder blades,
driving the spear clean through his chest. He fell with a thud.
Lord Odysseus cried out in triumph:

"Ah, Socus, [450]
son of fierce horse-taming Hippasus,
Death's final end was quick—no escape for you.
Unhappy man, you'll not have your father
or your noble mother close your eyes in death.
Flesh-eating birds will now rip you apart,
spreading their thick wings all over you.
But if I die, god-like Achaeans will provide
a proper burial for me."

With these words,
Odysseus pulled Socus's strong spear out of his flesh
and removed it from his shield. But as he drew it out,
he began to bleed. Odysseus grew concerned.
When great-hearted Trojans saw blood on Odysseus,
they shouted through the ranks and rushed him all at once. [460]
Odysseus stepped back, calling out to his companions.
Three times he yelled, as loud as any man can shout.
Three times warlike Menelaus heard him call.
He quickly spoke to Ajax, who stood close by.

"Ajax, divinely born son of Telamon,
leader of your people, I've just heard
a voice call—it belonged to brave Odysseus.
It sounds as if Trojans have him cut off,
caught him on his own in the killing zone.
Let's go to that crowd. We'd better save him.
I'm afraid that he's in trouble. He's a fine man— [470]
he'd be a great loss to the Danaans."

Saying this, Menelaus led on. Ajax, that godlike man,
went with him. They found Odysseus, whom Zeus loved,
encircled by Trojans, like red mountain jackals
surrounding a horned stag wounded by an arrow
from some man's bow—its legs enable it to flee,
for while its warm blood flows, its limbs have power—
but as soon as that sharp arrow drains its strength,
in some forest shade, wild mountain carnivores attack,

but should some god then lead a hungry lion there,
the jackals scatter, and the lion eats the stag—
that's the way resourceful fierce Odysseus was attacked
by many daring Trojans. The single warrior,
wielding his spear, held at bay his pitiless fate.
Then Ajax approached, carrying his towering shield.
He made a stand beside Odysseus. Trojans scattered
in all directions. Taking Odysseus by the hand,
warlike Menelaus led him from the crowd,
until his attendant could bring up his chariot.
Ajax then charged the Trojans. He killed Doryclus,
one of Priam's bastard sons. Then he hit Pandocus,
Lysander, Pyrasus, and Pylartes. As some river,
a mountain torrent in full winter flood, crashes down
onto the plain, gaining its power from Zeus's storms,
sweeping up many withered oaks and pine trees,
throwing piles of mud into the sea—that's how
glorious Ajax then charged out onto the plain,
creating havoc, slaughtering men and horses.

Hector did not notice Ajax, for he was fighting
on the far left of the battle, by Scamander's banks,
where the slaughter was most fierce. A constant din arose
around great Nestor and warlike Idomeneus.
Hector was in the crowd there with them, grimly killing
with chariot and spear, decimating young men's ranks.
But the brave Achaeans would not have given way,
if Alexander, fair-haired Helen's husband,
had not stopped Machaon, shepherd of his people,
as he was proving himself among the very best.
Alexander's arrow, with a triple barb,
hit Machaon's right shoulder. Then Achaeans,
who breathe fighting spirit, feared for Machaon—
they thought he might he captured, should the battle change.
At that point Idomeneus spoke to Nestor:

"Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory
of Achaeans, come, climb up into my chariot.
Let Machaon get in there beside you.
Drive those sure-footed horses to the ships,
and quickly, too. Machaon's a healer
and so worth more than other men, with skill
to cut out arrows and use healing potions."

He finished. Geranian horseman Nestor heard him.
He climbed in the chariot, Machaon beside him,
son of that excellent healer Asclepius.
Nestor whipped the horses. They dashed off willingly,
their spirits happy to be heading for the hollow ships. [520]

Then Cebriones noticed Trojans were being driven back.
Going up to Hector, he spoke to him:

"Hector,
here the two of us mingle with Danaans,
but on the outskirts of this hard-fought battle.
Other Trojans, both men and horses,
are being driven back in great confusion,
routed by Ajax, son of Telamon.
I know him well. He carries a huge shield
around his shoulders. Let's get our horses
and drive there in our chariot—that's where
most of those fighting with horses or on foot
are slaughtering each other, where men fight
with most intensity. The noise never stops." [530]

Saying this, Cebriones urged on their horses
with the lovely manes, cracking his whip over them.
Obeying the lash, they took the fast chariot at top speed
in the direction of the Trojans and Achaeans,
trampling on shields and corpses as they galloped on.
The axle was completely spattered underneath,
as were the rails behind, with gobs of blood thrown up
from horses' hooves and chariot wheels. Hector pushed on,
eager to join the throngs of men, to jump into the fight,
to smash that group to pieces. He made Danaans
totally confused—his spear hardly seemed to pause.
He ranged up and down Achaean soldiers' ranks [540]
with spear and sword and massive rocks. But he kept away
from any fight with Ajax, son of Telamon.

Then Father Zeus, enthroned on high, put fear in Ajax.
He stood bewildered, shifted his seven-layered shield
onto his back, turned, looked round at throngs of Trojans,
like some wild beast, then backed off step by step, retreating,
but often turning back. Just as a tawny lion
is driven from a farmyard holding cattle
by dogs and farmers, who keep watch all night long

to stop it tearing some well-fed cow to pieces,
but the beast, ravenous for meat, keeps charging in,
without success, for a storm of spears rains down on him,
thrown by eager hands, followed then by burning sticks,
which, for all his fierce desire, make him afraid,
so, at dawn, he slinks away in bitter disappointment—
that's how Ajax most unwillingly retreated then,
away from Trojans, his spirit in distress.
He was very much afraid for the Achaean ships.
Just as when some donkey taken past a cornfield—
a stubborn beast on whose sides many sticks are broken—
bolts from boys tending it and goes to munch deep corn,
while boys beat it with sticks—although their strength is small,
at last they drive it out, once it's had its fill—
that's how proud Trojans and allies from many lands
then pushed back great Ajax, son of Telamon,
their spears always jabbing at the centre of his shield.
From time to time, remembering his warlike spirit,
Ajax would turn again, holding off the ranks
of horse-taming Trojans. Then he'd turn back to retreat.
But he blocked the way to the swift ships for all of them.
He stood alone between the Trojans and Achaeans,
fighting furiously. Some spears hurled by brave hands
flew swiftly forward, then stuck in his great shield,
and many stood upright in the space between them,
impaled in earth, still eager to devour his flesh.

When Eurypylus, fine son of Euaemon,
saw Ajax being attacked by this hail of spears,
he went and stood by him. He hurled his shining spear
and hit Apisaon, son of Phausius,
a shepherd to his people, below his diaphragm,
in the liver. His legs gave way. Eurypylus rushed up
to strip armour from his shoulders, but he was seen
by godlike Alexander, as he was pulling off
the armour from Apisaon. So Paris grabbed his bow,
aimed at Eurypylus, then shot an arrow in his leg,
his right thigh. The arrow shaft snapped off.
His thigh was crippled. So Eurypylus moved back
among his comrades and thus escaped destruction.
But he shouted far and wide, calling to Danaans:

"Friends, leaders and rulers of the Argives,
rally your ranks. Save Ajax from a brutal death.

He's being attacked with spears, and I don't think
he's able to get out of this grim fight.
Come, stand by great Ajax, son of Telamon!"

Eurypylus yelled this out as he lay wounded.
Men closed their ranks around him, leaning their shields
against their shoulders with their spears extended.
Ajax came to meet them. When he reached his comrades,
he turned around and stood his ground once more.

Thus these soldiers went at the fight like a raging fire,
as Neleus's horses carried Nestor from the fight.
Swift-footed Achilles, looking on, noticed Nestor.
Achilles stood by the stern of his broad-beamed ship,
watching the harsh work of battle, the pitiful retreat.
At once he spoke out to Patroclus, his companion,
calling him beside the ship. From inside the hut
Patroclus heard him. He came out, looking like Ares.
This moment marked the start of his final rush to death.
Patroclus, Menoetius' fine son, was the first to speak:

"Why did you summon me, Achilles?
Is there something you need me to carry out?"

Swift-footed Achilles then said in reply:

"Fine son of Menoetius, joy of my heart,
I think the time has come for the Achaeans
to stand around my knees in supplication,
for their needs have now become unbearable.
But Patroclus, dear to Zeus, go now—
ask Nestor who that wounded person is
he's taking from the battle. From the back,
he looked exactly like Machaon,
son of Asclepius. But I didn't see
his face, for the horses passed me quickly
in their haste to gallop on."

Achilles spoke.
Patroclus then obeyed his dear companion.
He went on the run through Achaean huts and ships.

When the others reached the huts of Nestor, Neleus' son,
they stepped out on the fertile earth. Then Eurymedon,

Nestor's aide, unharnessed horses from the chariot. [620]
The two men let the sweat dry on their tunics,
standing in the seashore breeze. They went inside the hut
and sat down on some chairs. Fair-haired Hecamede
made them a soothing drink. Old Nestor had taken her
from Tenedos, when Achilles ransacked the place.
Daughter of great-hearted Arsinous, she'd been chosen
for him by Achaeans, because he excelled them all
in giving wise advice. First, she pushed out in front of them
a well-polished table with feet of blue enamel.
Then she set there a bronze basket holding onions,
to spice up their drink, with pale honey and bread [630]
made of sacred barley. Beside these she set a cup,
a magnificent work Nestor had brought from home,
studded with gold. There were four handles on it,
around each one a pair of golden doves was feeding.
Below were two supports. When that cup was full,
another man could hardly lift it from the table,
but, old as he was, Nestor picked it up with ease.
In this cup Hecamede, looking like a goddess,
made a soothing drink for them from Pramnian wine.
In it with a bronze grater she shredded goat's cheese, [640]
then shook white barley grain on top. When she'd prepared it,
she invited them to drink. The two men drank
and quenched their parching thirst. They started talking,
enjoying each other's pleasant conversation.
Then Patroclus stood in the doorway, like some god.
Seeing him, old Nestor leapt up from his shining chair,
took him by the hand and invited him to sit.
Patroclus declined, staying where he was. He said:

"Old man, divinely bred, I can't sit down.
You'll not talk me into it. The man who sent me
is honourable but quick to take offence.
I'm here to learn the name of that wounded man
you drove in with. But I see him for myself. [650]
I know Machaon, his people's shepherd.
Now I'll go back and tell this to Achilles.
You know well enough, divinely bred old man,
what he's like—not someone to take lightly.
He'd be quick to blame an innocent man."

Geranian horseman Nestor then said to Patroclus:

"Why is Achilles showing pity now
for Achaea's sons, those men hurt with spears
and arrows? He knows nothing of our trouble,
the great suffering which afflicts the army.
For our best men lie injured at the ships,
crippled by arrows, spears, and swords.
Strong Diomedes, son of Tydeus, is hurt,
as is Odysseus, famous for his spear,
Agamemnon and Eurypylus as well,
with an arrow in his thigh. This man here,
hurt with an arrow from some bowstring,
I've just brought in from battle. Achilles is brave,
but shows no pity, feels nothing for Danaans.
Is he waiting till our fast ships by the sea
are set on fire with all-consuming flames,
and Achaeans, powerless to stop it,
are slaughtered one by one? My strength now
in my supple limbs is not what it used to be.
I wish I were as young, my strength as firm,
as when the Eleans and our people
went to war for stolen cattle, when I killed
Itymoneus, brave son of Hypeirochus,
a man from Elis, as I was driving off
what we'd seized in reparation. He was fighting
for his cattle. In the foremost ranks,
a spear from my hand struck him. He collapsed.
His country people ran away, and so we seized
a huge amount of plunder from that plain—
fifty herds of cattle, as many flocks of sheep,
fifty droves of pigs, fifty herds of wandering goats,
one hundred fifty horses, all chestnut mares,
many with foals still standing under them.
At night we drove these to the citadel
of Neleus' city, Pylos. Neleus rejoiced,
glad at heart, because I'd shared in so much loot,
though I was just a young man going to war.
Next day at dawn, heralds proclaimed out loud
that all those to whom Elis stood in debt
should meet together. The leading men of Pylos
thus gathered to appropriate the spoils,
for Epeians were in debt to many men.
Those of us in Pylos were few and weak.
Mighty Hercules had come some years before

and sapped our strength by killing our best men.[1]
Neleus once had twelve worthy sons—
I'm the only one remaining. The others
were all wiped out. Bronze-armed Epeians
at that point took advantage of us,
committing evil and aggressive acts.
From that plunder old Neleus selected
a herd of cattle, a large flock of sheep,
taking three hundred of them with their shepherds.
Holy Elis owed him an enormous debt—
four prize-winning horses with their chariot,
which had come to Elis to compete, intent
on racing for a tripod. But Augeias, [700]
king of men, kept the horses there in Elis.
He sent their diver back, grieving for his team.
Old Neleus was angry with Augeias
for what he'd said and done. That's why he took
so much booty for himself. The rest he gave
to be distributed among the people
in equal shares, so no one would object.
We allocated each and every bit
and sacrificed to all the city gods.
On the third day Epeians came in force,
all together, with their sure-footed horses,
at top speed, lots of them. Among them came
the two Moliones, fully armed, still young,
not knowing much of serious warfare. [710]
Now, there's a certain city Thryoessa,
far off on a steep hill by the Alpheius,
at the very end of sandy Pylos.
Desperately eager to destroy this place,
they pitched their forces round it in a siege.
But once Epeians crossed the entire plain,
Athena came speeding from Olympus
down to us at night. She brought a message—
we should arm ourselves. She mustered a force
of volunteers in Pylos, all keen for war.
Neleus would not let me take up arms.
He hid my horses—he thought I was ignorant
of anything to do with war. But even so,

[1]Hercules attacked Pylos because king Neleus would not give him absolution for killing Iphitus. Hercules killed all of Neleus's sons except Nestor and ransacked the kingdom. For this action the Delphic Oracle told Hercules he had to serve Omphale, queen of Lydia.

though I fought on foot, I made my mark [720]
among our charioteers. For Athena
planned the battle out in just that way.
There is a river Minyeïus, which meets the sea
near Arene. The Pylian horsemen
waited there till dawn while squads of men on foot
came streaming in. We moved out quickly 830
with our weapons, all together. At noon
we reached the holy river Alpheius.
We sacrificed fine beasts to Zeus almighty,
a bull to Poseidon, and one to Alpheius.
To Athena with the glittering eyes we offered
a cow from our own herd. Then we had dinner
at our positions there throughout the camp. [730]
We went to sleep, each man with his weapons,
along the river bank. The brave Epeians
were encircling the city, hearts set on razing it. 840
Before they managed that, they saw a fight,
a major battle. For when the sun appeared
above the earth, we sacrificed to Zeus
and to Athena, then started our attack.
When Pylians and Epeians began the battle,
I was the first to kill a man and seize
his sure-footed horses. That man was Mulius,
a spear fighter, son-in-law to Augeias.
He'd taken as his wife fair-haired Agamede, [740]
the eldest daughter, who knew all medicines 850
this wide earth provides. As he came against me,
I struck him with my bronze-tipped spear. He fell
into the dust. I jumped in his chariot,
taking my place among the foremost fighters.
Stout-hearted Epeians saw the man go down,
leader of their horsemen, their best fighting man.
They ran away in all directions. I pursued,
going after them like some black whirlwind.
I captured fifty chariots. In every one
two warriors bit the dust, slain by my spear. 860
And I'd have slaughtered both the Molines, [750]
Actor's descendants, but their father,
the wide-ruling shaker of the earth, Poseidon,
with a thick concealing mist let them escape.
Then Zeus put great power into Pylians.
We pursued Epeians over that wide plain,
killing them and gathering their fine weapons,

until we pushed our horses into Bouprasium,
a wheat-rich region, to the rock of Olene,
the place which people call Alesium hill.
There Athena turned our soldiers back.
I killed the final warrior and left him there.
Achaeans quickly led their fast horses back
from Bouprasium to Pylos, all of them [760]
paying tribute among all the gods to Zeus,
and among all men to Nestor. That's how
I once used to be, when I was a man
among the men. But what of Achilles?
His courage will profit no one but himself.
I think he might bitterly regret all this,
once our army is destroyed. O my friend,
that day Menoetius sent you from Phthia
in Agamemnon's cause, he gave you orders.
Both lord Odysseus and myself were present.
We heard all he said to you there in his house.
We'd come to the well-built home of Peleus,
mustering men across fertile Achaea. [770]
And we found warrior Menoetius and yourself,
together with Achilles. In the courtyard,
old horseman Peleus was burning thigh bones
rolled in fat to thunder-loving Zeus.
He held a golden cup, poured gleaming wine,
libations, on the flaming sacrifice.
The two of you were busy with the ox meat.
We two stood in the doorway. Achilles
jumped up in great surprise, took our hands,
brought us inside, inviting us to sit.
Then we received fine hospitality,
the sort appropriate for strangers. Later,
when we'd had our fill of food and drink, [780]
I began to speak, asking you to come with us.
You were really eager. Both older men
gave you instructions about many things.
Old Peleus ordered his son Achilles
always to be the best, to stand pre-eminent,
above all other men. Menoetius, son of Actor,
told you:

'My son, Achilles is by birth
a finer man than you. But you are older.
In strength he is by far your better,

but it's up to you to give shrewd advice,
prudent counsel, and direction to him.
He'll comply, for that works to his benefit.'

That's what the old man said. But you forget.
Even now, if you'd speak to fierce Achilles,
you might persuade him. Who knows? Some god
might help you shift his spirit with your words.
A friend's persuasion is an excellent thing.
But if his heart knows of some prophecy
that he's avoiding, something from Zeus
his mother's mentioned to him, then at least
let him send you to war, in command
of other Myrmidons—it may well be
you'll prove a saving light to the Danaans.
Let him also give you his fine armour
to carry into battle, so Trojans may confuse
the two of you and thus refrain from fighting.
Achaea's warrior sons are tired out.
They might gain a breathing space, something rare
in warfare. Your troops are fresh. They might drive
Trojans worn out with fighting to the city,
far from our ships and huts."

Nestor finished speaking.
His words stirred up the heart inside Patroclus' chest.
He went off on the run along the line of ships,
towards Achilles, descendant of Aeacus.
But as Patroclus ran by lord Odysseus' ships,
right where they held assemblies and judicial court,
where they'd built their altars to the gods as well,
he met Eurypylus, royal son of Euaemon,
limping from the battle, his thigh wounded by an arrow.
Down his head and shoulders ran rivulets of sweat.
Black blood seeped from his nasty wound. But his spirit
was still strong. Seeing him, Menoetius' worthy son
felt compassion. He spoke winged words of sympathy:

"You leaders, you rulers of Achaeans,
it seems to be your destiny to feed the dogs
with your white flesh at Troy, far from your friends,
far from your native land. But come now,
Eurypylus, you royal warrior, tell me
whether Achaeans will manage to contain

warlike Hector, or whether they'll all die,
slaughtered here on Hector's spear."

Wise Eurypylus then said in answer to Patroclus:

"Lord Patroclus, there's no longer anything
can save Achaeans, who'll fall back to their black ships.
All those who were our finest fighters
are lying by the ships, hurt or wounded
at Trojan hands, whose strength keeps growing.
But take me safely back to my black ship,
cut the arrow from my thigh, and with warm water [830]
wash away the black blood there, then rub on
fine soothing medication, whose use, they say,
Achilles taught you, an art he learned
from Cheiron, most righteous of the Centaurs.
Of our healers, Podalerius and Machaon,
one, I believe, lies wounded in our huts,
himself requiring some worthy healer,
the other's out there on the plains, holding off
the fighting spirit of the Trojans."

Menoetius' fine son then said to Eurypylus:

"How can you get this cure? What can we do,
noble Eurypylus? I'm on my way
to inform warlike Achilles of the news
which Geranian Nestor, Achaea's guardian, [840]
asked me to report. But I won't leave you
in such suffering."

When Patroclus had finished,
he put his arm around Eurypylus' chest, then took
that shepherd of his people to his hut. Seeing them,
an aide put down some ox hides. Settling him there,
with a knife Patroclus cut out the arrow, razor sharp,
from his thigh, and washed the blood off with warm water.
He put some bitter root onto his hands and rubbed it in,
something to relieve the hurt, remove all pain.
The wound then dried, and blood stopped flowing.

BOOK TWELVE
THE FIGHT AT THE BARRICADE

[The battle continues at the wall, with Achaeans hemmed in; Polydamas advises Hector to leave the chariots behind; Trojans organize themselves into five companies for the assault; two Lapith spearmen guard the Achaean gate; Trojans receive a bad omen; Polydamas advises Hector not to the attack the wall; Sarpedon's speech to Glaucus about their warrior code; Sarpedon assaults the wall; Menestheus asks for help from Ajax and Teucer; Ajax responds; Glaucus is wounded; Hector demolishes the doors in the gate; the Trojans breach the wall; Achaeans retreat to their ships.]

And so, as Patroclus, Menoetius' fine son, looked after
wounded Eurypylus in his hut, Trojans and Achaeans
kept fighting on in clusters. The Danaan ditch
and the high broad wall weren't going to hold out long.
They'd built the wall, then dug the ditch around it,
to protect the ships and guard the ample plunder
stored inside. But they built it without sanction
from immortal gods—they had made no splendid offering,
no sacrifices to the gods, asking them to keep
their swift ships safe, so the wall soon fell apart.
As long as Hector lived and Achilles' anger
did not relent and Priam's city was not captured,
the huge Achaean wall remained intact.
But after so many of the finest Trojans died,
many Achaeans, too, though many did survive,
in the war's tenth year, Priam's city was destroyed.
When Achaeans sailed back to their dear native land,
then Poseidon and Apollo planned to erase that wall,
by stirring up the raging power of all rivers
flowing from Mount Ida to the sea—Rhesus,
Heptaporus, Caresus, Rhodius, Granicus,
Aesepus, the sacred Scamander and Simoeis,
where many ox-hide shields and helmets had fallen
in the dust, along with a race of people half-divine.
Phoebus Apollo merged the mouths of all these rivers,
then for nine days drove the flood against the rampart.
Zeus brought constant rain to wash the wall away
into the sea more quickly. And Poseidon, too,
the Earthshaker himself, holding his trident,
led the work, his waves eroding all foundations,
wood and stone Achaeans had worked so hard to set there.
He smoothed the shores of the fast-flowing Hellespont,
covering huge beaches once again with sand. The wall gone,

he changed the rivers, so they flowed on as before,
their lovely waters in their customary channels.
All this Apollo and Poseidon would do later on.

But then the din of war raged round the sturdy wall.
The battered timbers on the tower rattled.
Argives, broken by Zeus's whip, were all hemmed in
beside their hollow ships, held back by fear of Hector,
whose powerful presence scared them, for, as before,
he battled like a whirlwind. Just as some wild boar
or lion faced with dogs and huntsmen keeps turning,
confident of his strength, and men form in a line,
prepared to go against the beast, hurling spears
in volleys from their hands—still it doesn't tremble,
show any fear in its brave heart, but its courage
kills the beast—repeatedly it whirls itself around,
threatening the ranks of men—that's how Hector then
moved through the troops, urging men to attack the ditch
and charge across it. But his swift-footed horses balked,
standing at the very edge, neighing loudly,
terrified because the trench was wide to cross.
They could not easily jump over or get through.
On both sides there were steep banks along its length,
with many large sharp stakes driven in the upper edge,
set there by Achaea's sons as a protection
against their enemies. There was no easy way
horses pulling chariots with wheels could move across.
Even men on foot were not sure they could move through.
Then Polydamas, coming up beside bold Hector, said:

"Hector, you other leaders, you allies,
it's foolish to think of driving our swift horses
through this trench. It's difficult to get across,
with those sharpened stakes projecting from it,
right by the Achaean wall. There's no way
any charioteer could get down and fight.
There's not much room. I think we'd get badly hurt.
If high-thundering Zeus intends to help the Trojans
and harm Achaeans, wipe them out completely,
I'd prefer that happened right away,
so Achaeans all die here, far from Argos,
unremembered. But if they turn us back,
drive us from the ships, and trap us in the trench,
and if Achaeans then reorganize,

I don't think any of us will get back
to our city with the news. But come,
let's all agree to what I now propose—
attendants should hold the horses at the ditch.
We'll arm ourselves with heavy weapons,
then all follow Hector bunched up tightly.
Achaeans will not push us back, if it's true
they're already headed for destruction."

What Polydamas had just proposed pleased Hector. [80]
With his weapons, he jumped from his chariot to the ground.
The other Trojans did not hesitate. Seeing him do that,
they leapt quickly from their chariots and left them there.
Each man told his charioteer to keep the horses
in good order by the ditch. The men broke up in groups
and organized themselves to form five companies,
with each one following its own leadership.
Some went with Hector and worthy Polydamas.
They were the best and most numerous, especially keen
to breach the wall and fight on at the hollow ships. [90]
Cebriones went with them as third commander.
Paris led the second group, along with Agenor
and Alcathous. Helenus and godlike Deïphobus,
two sons of Priam, led the third contingent,
with a third commander, warlike Asius,
son of Hyrtacus, whose huge horses had carried him
all the way from Arisbe by the river Selleïs.
The fourth group of warriors was headed by Aeneas,
Anchises' brave son, along with Archelochus
and Acamas, two sons of Antenor, well skilled [100]
in all the elements of war. The famous allies
Sarpedon led. He'd chosen to command with him
Glaucus and warlike Asteropaeus, for they seemed
clearly the best of all the others, after himself,
for among them all he was pre-eminent.
These men linked themselves with sturdy bull's hide shields,
then in their eagerness made straight for the Danaans.
They thought no one could stop them, as they charged the ships.

Other Trojans and their famous allies followed
what excellent Polydamas had said to them,
but Asius, son of Hyrtacus, leader of men, [110]
did not want to leave his horses or their driver,
the attendant charioteer. He brought them with him

as he went for the ships. The fool! He would not escape
his grim fate and come back from the ships to windy Troy,
proudly boasting of his chariot and horses.
Before that happened an unwelcome fate took him
on the spear of Deucalion's proud son, Idomeneus.
Asius moved off to the left of the line of ships,
where Achaeans used to pass with horse and chariot
when returning from the plain. That's where he drove
his chariot and team. He found the gates unbarred—
men had drawn the long bolt and were holding them ajar,
just in case they might save one of their companions
escaping from the battle to the ships. At those gates
Asius firmly aimed his horses. His men followed,
shouting loudly. They thought Achaeans could hold out
no longer, that they'd be assaulting the black ships.
How wrong they were! For at the gates they found two men,
two of the finest—proud-hearted sons of Lapith spearmen.
One was powerful Polypoetes, son of Peirithous,
the other Leonteus, a warrior like man-killing Ares.
These two made their stand before the lofty gate,
like two high-topped mountain oak trees which defy
wind and rain each and every day, anchored there
by huge extensive roots—just like that, these two men,
trusting the power in their arms, held their position,
as great Asius approached. They did not run off.
Holding bull's hide shields up high, with loud shouts,
Asius's men came straight for the well-built wall,
behind lord Asius, Iamenus, Orestes,
Adamas, Asius' son, Thoön, and Oenomaus.

Up to now, the two Lapiths had been urging
well-armed Achaeans from inside the rampart
to defend their ships. But when they noticed Trojans
charging the wall and Danaans running off and shouting,
the two men hurried out to fight beyond the gates.
Like wild mountain boars taking on a confused mob
of men and dogs attacking them—the beasts charge sideways,
shattering trees around them, ripping out the roots,
gnashing their teeth noisily, till someone
hits them with his spear and takes away their lives—
that's how the shining bronze sounded on these two,
as they moved out against the flying weapons.
But they fought bravely, relying on their strength
and on those troops standing on the wall above them,

who kept throwing rocks down from the sturdy tower,
defending themselves, their huts, their well-built ships.
Stones fell to earth like snowflakes which some strong wind
pushing shadowy clouds drives downward in a storm,
so they strike the fertile earth, that's how thick and fast
flying weapons rained down then from Trojans and Achaeans.
Helmets and bossed shields rang out as they were hit
with rocks the size of millstones. Then Asius,
son of Hyrtacus, groaned in vexation, struck his thigh,
and cried out:

"Father Zeus, how you love to lie!
I did not think these warrior Achaeans
could withstand the force of our all-powerful hands.
But they're like yellow-banded wasps or bees
who've made their home by some rough road
and won't leave their hollow house, but stay there,
guarding their offspring from the hunting men.
That's how these men refuse to yield the gate,
though there's just two of them, until they kill us
or are killed themselves."

Asius complained,
but his words did not win over Zeus's mind,
for in his heart he wished to give Hector glory.

Other troops were battling on at other gates.
It would be hard for me to report all these events,
even if I were a god. For by that stone wall
blazing fires broke out everywhere. Though in distress,
Achaeans had no choice but to defend their ships—
gods helping Danaans in the fight were sad at heart.

The two Lapiths now began to kill in earnest.
Powerful Polypoetes, son of Peirithous,
with his spear struck Damasus through his cheek piece.
The bronze helmet did not stop the spear—its bronze point
tore straight through his skull, splattering his brains
all through his helmet. That checked his fighting fury.
Then he slaughtered Pylon, as well as Ormenus.
With his spear, Leonteus, Ares' assistant, hit
Hippomachus, son of Antimachus, in his belt.
Then, pulling out his sharp sword from its scabbard,
he charged the Trojan mass, struck Antiphates,

hitting him at close range first. So he lay there,
on his back, motionless. Leonteus then struck down
in quick succession Menon, Iamenus, and Orestes—
all these lay prone there, on the all-nourishing earth.

While the two Lapiths were stripping shining armour
from the dead, young troops with Polydamas and Hector,
the most numerous and bravest of the men,
the ones most keen to breach the wall and burn the ships,
still stood along the ditch in some perplexity.
For as they'd assembled, eager to cross the trench, [200]
a bird had gone above them, a high-flying eagle,
moving past the left flank of the troops, gripping
in its talons a huge blood-red snake, still alive,
still struggling. It hadn't lost its will to fight.
Doubling up, it struck the bird that clutched it
beside the neck. The eagle, stung with pain,
let the snake fall down onto the ground, dropping it
right in the middle of the crowd. Then with a cry,
it flew off downwind. Seeing that writhing snake,
lying there in their midst, Trojans shuddered. It was a sign,
a powerful omen, from aegis-bearing Zeus.
Polydamas then approached bold Hector and spoke out: [210]

"Hector, you're always taking me to task,
though I give good advice in our assemblies.
For you maintain it's not appropriate
that someone else speak out against you,
either in a council meeting or in war,
for he should always back your leadership.
But now I'm going to say what seems to me
the best course we should take. Let's not advance
to fight Danaans by their ships. In my view,
this is how all this will end. If that omen
was sent to Trojans keen to cross the ditch,
a high-flying eagle on our army's left
holding in its talons a blood-red snake, [220]
still living, which it let drop before it reached
its nest, thus failing in its purpose,
to bring that snake back for its offspring,
then, like that bird, if we, with our great strength,
breach the gates and the Achaean wall,
and if Achaeans then retreat, we'll come back
from the ships by this same route in disarray,

leaving behind many Trojans slaughtered
by Achaean bronze, as they defend their ships.
That's how a prophet would interpret this,
someone who in his heart knew the truth of signs
and in whom the people placed their trust."

Hector with his gleaming helmet scowled and said:

"Polydamas, I don't like what you've just said.
You know how to offer better comments.
But if you're serious in what you say,
the gods themselves must have destroyed your wits.
You're telling me to set aside the plans
of thunder-loving Zeus, what he promised,
what he himself agreed to. You tell me
to put my faith in long-winged birds. I don't care,
or even notice, whether they fly off
to the right, towards Dawn's rising sun,
or to the left, towards the evening gloom.
Let's put our trust in great Zeus's counsel,
for he rules all mortals, all immortals.
One omen is best—fight for your country.
Why are you afraid of war, of battle?
Even if the others are all slaughtered
by Achaean ships, you need have no fear
that you'll be killed. Your heart is neither brave
nor warlike. But if you hold back from war,
or with your words convince some other man
to turn away from battle, then you'll die,
struck by my spear."

Hector finished speaking.
Then he led his troops away. They followed him,
making a huge noise. Thunder-loving Zeus then sent
gusting storm winds down from Ida, driving dust
straight at the ships, to disorient Achaeans
and give glory to Hector and the Trojans.
Trusting Zeus's sign and their own power, they tried
to force the great Achaean wall, dragging down
the tower's supporting beams, smashing parapets,
prying up projecting columns Achaeans had first put
into the earth to shore up their wall's foundations.
They dragged these back, hoping to undermine the wall.
But even now Danaans did not back away.

They repaired the parapets with leather hides,
then hurled out weapons from there across the rampart
at the attacking Trojans.

The two Ajaxes
moved back and forth along the wall, urging men on,
firing up the fighting spirit in Achaeans.
To some men they called out words of encouragement.
Others, the ones they saw clearly moving off,
back from the fight, they taunted with abuse.

"Friends, whether you're an Achaean leader,
or average, or one of the worst—for men [270]
are not all equal when it comes to battle—
there's enough work here for everyone,
as you yourselves well know. So let no one here
turn back towards the ships, now you've heard
from your commander. Keep pushing forward,
keep shouting to each other, so that Zeus,
Olympian lord of lightning, may grant
we beat off this attack, repel the Trojans,
and drive them to their city."

Shouting words like these,
the Ajaxes incited the Achaeans to fight on.
As snowflakes on a winter's day fall thick and fast,
when Counsellor Zeus begins to snow, to demonstrate [280]
to men his weapons—first he calms the winds,
then snows steadily, till he's completely covered
high mountain peaks, jutting headlands, grassy meadows,
fertile farms of men, shedding snow on harbours,
inlets of the blue-grey sea, where waves roll in
to push back snow, while, from above, all the rest
is covered over, when Zeus storms with heavy snow—
that's how thick the stones fell then on both sides,
some thrown on Trojans, some from Trojans on Achaeans.
The noise reverberated all along the wall.

At that point, glorious Hector and the Trojans [290]
would not have crashed the gates or long bolts in the wall,
if Counsellor Zeus had not stirred his son Sarpedon
against Achaeans, like a lion going at short-horn cattle.
Sarpedon held his round shield in front of him,
forged by a smith of beautifully hammered bronze,

the inside formed of leather stitched in layers,
held in place with golden wires encircling the rim.
Holding this shield before him, brandishing two spears,
he hurried forward like a mountain lion
long ravenous for meat, whose bold spirit pushes him
to go even into the protected sheep fold
to attack the flock, and even if he comes across
herdsmen with dogs and spears guarding sheep inside,
he won't leave that fold without making an attempt,
so he springs on one, seizes it, or is hit himself
in the first rush by a spear from some swift hand—
that's how godlike Sarpedon's spirit drove him then
to assault the wall, break down the parapets.
He called to Glaucus, Hippolochus' son:

"Glaucus,
why are we two awarded special honours,
with pride of place, the finest cuts of meat,
our wine cups always full in Lycia,
where all our people look on us as gods?
Why do we possess so much fine property,
by the river Xanthus, beside its banks,
rich vineyards and wheat-bearing ploughland?
It's so we'll stand in the Lycian front ranks
and meet head on the blazing fires of battle,
so then some well-armed Lycian will say,

'They're not unworthy, those men who rule Lycia,
those kings of ours. It's true they eat plump sheep
and drink the best sweet wines—but they are strong,
fine men, who fight in Lycians' front ranks.'

Ah my friend, if we could escape this war,
and live forever, without growing old,
if we were ageless, then I'd not fight on
in the foremost ranks, nor would I send you
to those wars where men win glory. But now,
a thousand shapes of fatal death confront us,
which no mortal man can flee from or avoid.
So let's go forward, to give the glory
to another man or win it for ourselves."

Sarpedon spoke. Without making any move
Glaucus agreed. They marched on straight ahead,

leading their large company of Lycians.
Seeing their advance, Menestheus, son of Peteos,
shuddered, for they were aiming at his part of the wall,
bringing destruction with them. He looked around
at the Achaean tower, hoping he might see
some leader to protect his comrades from disaster.
He saw both Ajaxes, so keen for war, standing there.
Nearby was Teucer, who'd just come from his huts.
But there was no way they'd hear him if he shouted—
the noise was too intense. The din of smashed-in shields,
gates, and horsehair helmets—that sound reached heaven.
The doors were now all barred. Men stood outside them, [340]
trying to knock them down by force to pass on through.
Menestheus quickly sent herald Thoötes to Ajax:

"Noble Thoötes, run and call Ajax—
or rather both of them, if that's possible—
that would be the best solution. Here we face
complete destruction any minute now.
Lycian leaders are pressing us so hard,
the ones who previously in bloody fights
have demonstrated their ferocity.
But if they're having trouble where they are,
with fights breaking out, let mighty Ajax,
son of Telamon, come by himself—
and with him that expert archer Teucer." [350]

Menestheus finished. Thoötes heard him and obeyed.
He ran along the bronze-clad Achaeans' barricade,
then came and, standing by both Ajaxes, spoke up at once:

"You Ajaxes, leaders of bronze-armed Achaeans,
the son of Peteos, raised by gods, is calling you
to go to him and help relieve the battle strain,
if only for a while. And he'd prefer
you both come. That would be the best solution.
There they face immediate destruction.
Lycian leaders are pressing them so hard,
the ones who previously in bloody fights
have demonstrated their ferocity. [360]
But if you're having trouble where you are,
with fights erupting, then let mighty Ajax,
son of Telamon, come by himself—
and with him that expert archer Teucer."

Thoötes finished. Great Telamonian Ajax then agreed.
At once he spoke winged words to Oïlean Ajax:

"Ajax, you and powerful Lycomedes,
you both stay here, stand firm. Rouse Danaans
to battle hard. I'll go over there,
deal with that fight, and come back quickly,
once I've helped them out as best I can."

That said, Telamonian Ajax left. With him [370]
went Teucer, his brother, both from the same father.
Pandion also went, carrying Teucer's curving bow.
Moving along the wall the three men reached the place
where stout-hearted Menestheus stood. Here they found
soldiers hard pressed in the fight. The Lycians,
led on by powerful commanders, their kings,
were climbing up the parapets like some black whirlwind.
Ajax and the others jumped right into the fight.
The noise grew more intense.

Ajax, son of Telamon,
was the first to kill a man, brave Epicles,
companion of Sarpedon. Ajax hit him
with a massive jagged rock lying inside the wall, [380]
near the top. No man now alive could heft that stone
in his two hands, not even someone young and strong,
but Ajax raised it high, then hurled it, smashing
the man's four-ridged helmet and completely crushing
his entire skull. Epicles fell, like a diver,
from that high tower, and his spirit left his bones.
Teucer struck mighty Glaucus, son of Hippolochus,
with an arrow shot from high up on the wall,
as Glaucus was moving up. He hit him on the arm,
on a part he saw exposed. That stopped Glaucus' charge.
He climbed back down the wall, but stealthily, [390]
so no Achaean man could see that he'd been hit
and boast aloud about it. Sarpedon was upset
at Glaucus's departure, when he noticed it,
but he did not neglect to keep up the attack.
He lunged at Alcmaon, Thestor's son, speared him well,
then yanked his spear back, which pulled Alcmaon with it.
He fell forward—his finely decorated armour,
all of bronze, echoed as he crashed onto the ground.
With his strong hands, Sarpedon grabbed the parapet and pulled.

The whole construction fell apart, breaching the wall,
creating a passage through for many men.

Ajax and Teucer now advanced together [400]
to attack Sarpedon. Teucer hit him with an arrow
on the gleaming strap around his chest which held
his protective shield. But Zeus defended his own son
from deadly fates to make sure he'd not be destroyed
by the ships' sterns. Ajax then jumped in, striking his shield.
The point did not pass through, but its momentum
knocked Sarpedon back in the middle of his charge.
Sarpedon withdrew a little from the parapet,
but did not retreat completely, for his heart
was set on seizing glory. So he called out,
rallying his godlike Lycians:

"You Lycians,
Why is your fighting spirit lessening?
It's hard for me, although I'm powerful, [410]
to breach this wall alone and carve a pathway
to the ships. So come, battle on with me.
The more men there are, the better the work done."

Sarpedon called. Fearing the censure of their leader,
troops made a heavy push around their counsellor king.
On the other side, the Argives reinforced their ranks
inside the wall. For both sides a major fight ensued.
Lycians, though strong, could not break the Danaan wall
and cut their way through to the ships. Danaan spearmen
could not push the Lycians back, repel them from the wall, [420]
now they'd reached it. As two men with measuring rods
quarrel over survey markers in a common field,
striving for a fair division in some narrow place,
that's how the parapet kept these troops apart.
High on the wall they hacked each other's armour—
leather bucklers and large round shields across their chests,
quivering targets. Many men were wounded,
flesh slashed with pitiless bronze, those who turned aside
and left their backs exposed while fighting and those
hit right through their shields. Everywhere along the wall,
along the parapet, men's blood was spattered [430]
from Trojans and Achaeans. But even so,
Trojans could not dislodge Achaeans from the wall.
Just as an industrious and honest woman

holds her scales, a weight on one side, wool on the other,
until they balance, so she can glean a pittance
for her children, that's how evenly the battle raged,
until Zeus gave glory above all other men
to Hector, son of Priam, who was the first man
to jump inside that wall of the Achaeans.
He raised a resounding yell, crying to his Trojans:

"Drive forward, you horse-taming Trojans.
Breach that Argive wall. Then burn the ships
with a huge fire."

With these words, he drove them on.
Their ears all caught his call. Hurling themselves at the wall
in a dense mass, gripping sharp spears, they began to climb.
Hector picked up a rock lying before the gates,
thick at its base but tapering sharply on the top.
Two of the best working men now living
could not lever that stone out of the ground easily
into their cart, but Hector carried it with ease alone.
Crooked-minded Cronos' son made it light for him.
Just as a shepherd has no trouble carrying
a ram's fleece in one hand, hardly noticing the weight,
so Hector lifted up that rock, then carried it
straight to the doors guarding the strongly fitted gates,
high double doors with two cross pieces holding them inside
secured with a single bolt. Hector moved up closer,
planted himself before the doors, his legs wide apart
to throw with greater force, then hurled that rock
right at the centre of the doors. He smashed both hinges.
The stone's momentum took it clear through the doors.
The gates groaned loudly. The bolts were sheared right off.
The impact of that boulder shattered all the planks.
Glorious Hector, his face like night's swift darkness,
leapt inside. The bronze which covered his whole body
was a terrifying glitter. In his hand he held two spears.
Once he'd jumped inside the gates, no one moving out
to stop him could hold him back, except the gods.
From his eyes fire blazed. Wheeling through the throng,
he shouted to his Trojans to climb the wall.
His men responded to his call. Some scaled the wall,
others came pouring through the hole made in the gates.
Danaans were driven back among their hollow ships
in a rout, and the noisy tumult never stopped.

BOOK THIRTEEN
THE TROJANS ATTACK THE SHIPS

[Zeus turns away from the battle; Poseidon secretly helps the Achaeans, talks to the two Ajaxes and other warriors; Hector keeps advancing until stopped by close-packed Achaeans; Poseidon talks with Idomeneus; Idomeneus and Meriones meet at the huts, then return to battle; Idomeneus's exploits in the fight; Aeneas moves against him; Menelaus on the battle field; Polydamas gives advice to Hector; Hector insults Paris; Ajax and Hector exchange boasts; the armies resume the fight.]

Thus Zeus brought Hector and the Trojans to the ships.
Then he left the soldiers there to carry on their strife,
their wretched endless war. He turned his shining gaze
away from them, looking far off into the distance,
at the land of Thracian horsemen, Mysians,
men who fight hand to hand, proud Hippemolgi,
who drink mare's milk, to the most righteous men of all,
the Abii. Zeus no longer turned his radiant eyes
toward Troy, for in his heart he did not believe
a single one of the immortal gods would move
to give assistance to the Trojans or Danaans.

But mighty Earthshaker Poseidon was keeping watch.
High on the tallest crest of wooded Samothrace
he sat looking down upon the war going on.
From that point, Mount Ida was clearly visible,
Priam's city, too, and the Achaean ships.
He'd come up from the sea and seated himself there,
pitying Achaeans, as Trojans beat them back,
and nursing a powerful anger against Zeus.
Poseidon came down quickly from that rocky peak,
moving swiftly on his feet. Mountain peaks and woods
trembled under Poseidon's immortal stride.
He took three paces—with the fourth he reached his goal,
Aegae, where his famous palace had been built
of eternal gold and marble deep within the sea.
Going inside, he harnessed to his chariot
swift bronze-hooved horses with flowing golden manes.
Dressed in gold, he took his well-made golden whip,
climbed in the chariot, then set off across the waves.
From the depths, sea creatures played around him everywhere,
acknowledging their king. The joyful ocean parted.
He sped on quickly, keeping the bronze axle dry.
The prancing horses carried him to the Achaean ships.

Halfway between Tenedos and rocky Imbros,
a wide cavern sits deep within the sea. In that spot,
Earthshaker Poseidon reined in his horses,
freed them from the chariot, and threw down ambrosia,
food for them to eat. Around their feet he placed
golden hobbles which they could not slip or break,
so they'd remain secure there till their lord's return.
Then Poseidon moved on to the Achaean camp.

At that point, Trojans, like some fire or windstorm,
marched behind Hector, son of Priam, in a mass,
shouting and screaming with excitement, hoping
to seize Achaean ships and kill the best men there.
But Poseidon, who encircles and shakes the earth,
roused the Argives, once he moved up from the sea.
Taking on the shape and tireless voice of Calchas,
he first spoke to the Ajaxes, both keen to fight.

"You Ajaxes, you must save Achaean troops.
Think of your fighting power, not cold flight.
In other places, I don't fear the Trojans,
whose powerful arms have brought hordes of them
across our wall. For well-armed Achaeans
will check them all. But I fear them here,
where we may experience disaster,
because of Hector, who leads their charge.
He's like a man possessed, a blazing fire,
as if he were a son of mighty Zeus.
But perhaps some god will inspire the hearts
in both your chests, so you two can stand firm.
You could get other men to do the same.
Hector may be keen, but you could push him
back from our swift ships, even if Zeus himself
is driving him ahead."

Poseidon finished speaking.
Then, the shaker and encircler of the earth
touched both men with his staff, infusing them
with power, strengthening their legs and upper arms.
Then Poseidon left. Just as a swift-winged hawk
takes off while hovering above some high sheer rock,
swooping down over the plain to hunt another bird—
that how Earthshaker Poseidon went off then.
Swift Ajax, son of Oïleus, was the first

to recognize the god. At once he spoke to Ajax,
son of Telamon:

"Ajax, one of the gods
dwelling on Olympus, in a prophet's shape,
tells us both to fight on by the ships.
For that man was no prophet Calchas, [70]
who reads our omens. It was easy for me,
as he went away, to see that from the back 80
by the markings on his feet and legs.
Besides, it's easy to recognize the gods.
So now the spirit here in my own chest
is even keener than before to fight.
My upper arms have lots of energy.
I feel it also in my lower limbs."

Telamonian Ajax then answered Oïlean Ajax:

"I'm ready to wrap my conquering hands
around my spear. My fighting power grows.
My feet can now move fast. So I'm eager 90
to meet Hector, son of Priam, one on one—
the man whose fury so desires this fight." [80]

As the two Ajaxes talked like this to one another,
relishing the warlike spirit the god had put
into their hearts, the Encircler of the Earth
was encouraging Achaeans at the rear,
those whose spirits were recovering by the swift ships,
their limbs exhausted from their anguishing ordeals,
their hearts weighed down with sorrow at the sight
of Trojan soldiers coming over their great wall. 100
When they saw that, their eyes shed tears—they thought
they'd not escape destruction. Earthshaker Poseidon
moved round with ease, bringing strength into the ranks. [90]
He moved first to encourage Teucer and Leïtus,
then brave Peneleous, Thoas, Deïpyrus,
then Meriones and Antilochus, both skilled
in war shouts. He spoke to them—his words had wings:

"Shame on you Argives, nothing but young boys!
I'm counting on your strength to save our ships.
If you're holding back in this grim fight, 110
then now's the day the Trojans overcome us.

Alas! What my eyes witness here astounds me,
a dreadful thing I never thought would happen—
Trojans moving up to our own ships,
men who previously were shy, like deer,
which in the woods are prey to jackals,
wolves, and leopards, as they wander round,
alone and frightened, with no will to fight.
Before now, Trojans never wished to stand
confronting the fierce fighting power
of Achaean arms, not even for a moment.
But now, far from their city, they fight here,
right by our hollow ships. And the reason's this—
our leadership's been bad, our army slack.
For those who quarrel with our general
won't protect our fast-moving ships from harm,
and so are being cut down among them there.
But even if wide-ruling Agamemnon,
heroic son of Atreus, is to blame,
if he really is the reason for all this,
because he treated swift Achilles badly,
in this battle we must hold back nothing.
Let's fix all this—and quickly. In their hearts
fine men can change. It's bad if you restrain
your fighting spirit any longer,
especially you, the best of all our troops.
Myself, I wouldn't argue with a man
not keen to fight because he is a coward.
But in you my heart is disappointed.
Friends, by this hanging back you'll help to make
an even worse disaster. Let each of you
feel shame and indignation in his heart.
A great battle has just started. Hector,
skilled at war cries, is fighting by our ships.
His force has smashed our gates, our long bolts, too."

By rousing men this way, Earthshaker Poseidon
pushed Achaeans into action. Round both Ajaxes
soldiers made a stand and strongly held their ground.
If Ares had come there, he would have approved of them,
as would Athena, who inspires men in war.
Those known for their great bravery did not back off.
They fought lord Hector and the Trojans spear for spear,
shield with layered shield, in close-packed formation,
shields linked together and helmet touching helmet,

troops shoulder to shoulder. As men moved their heads,
horsehair crests on shining helmet ridges touched—
that's how densely packed they stood in that formation.
Their strong hands held the spears out so they overlapped.
Their minds were firm and fully ready for the fight.

The Trojans came on in a mass, led by Hector,
always charging forward, like a rolling boulder,
which some river in a winter flood dislodges
from a cliff beside its banks, its great flood eroding
what supports that lethal stone. In its fall, it bounces—
woods crash underneath it, as it accelerates
in a straight line, unimpeded—then it hits the plain,
where, for all its impetus, its motion stops.
That's how Hector threatened then to smash his way
with ease down to the sea, to Achaea's huts and ships.
But when he ran into the tight-packed lines of men,
he came close but was held in check. Achaea's sons
faced up to him with swords, with double-bladed spears,
and pushed him back. Shaken, Hector had to give ground.
He let out a piercing shout, calling to his Trojans:

> "Trojans, Lycians, you Dardan spearmen,
> hold your place. Achaeans won't keep me back,
> not for long. Even though they've set themselves
> in a defensive wall, I think they will retreat
> before my spear, if the greatest of the gods,
> Hera's loud-thundering mate, inspires me."

Saying this, Hector gave heart and spirit to each man.
Deïphobus, son of Priam, moved out before them,
full of ambitious hopes. Holding his round shield
in front of him, he stepped lightly forward,
under cover of that shield. Then Meriones
after taking aim, threw his shining spear at him.
He didn't miss. He struck that round leather shield.
But the spear did not break through. Before it could,
it snapped off at the socket. Then Deïphobus,
his heart afraid of warlike Meriones' spear,
held his leather shield at arm's length away from him.
But Meriones had withdrawn into the group
of his companions, upset at his double loss—
the victory and the spear which had just shattered.

He set off for the Achaean huts and ships,
to fetch another spear he left inside his hut.

The others kept on fighting. The din was constant.
The first to kill a man was Teucer, son of Telamon. [170]
He slew Imbrius, a spearman, son of Mentor,
who owned many horses. He lived in Pedaeum
before Achaea's sons arrived, then married
one of Priam's bastard daughters, Medesicaste.
When the curved ships of the Danaans came to Troy,
he went back. The people there thought much of him.
He lived with Priam, who honoured him as well,
as if he were his child. But the son of Telamon
with a long spear thrust hit Imbrius below the ear.
Teucer pulled the weapon back. Imbrius collapsed.
Just as an ash tree growing on a mountain top,
visible from every side, is chopped down by bronze, [180]
its foliage crashing to the ground—that's how he fell.
His armour, finely decorated bronze, rang out,
reverberating round him. Teucer then jumped out,
eager to strip away his armour, but as he charged,
Hector threw a shining spear at him. Teucer,
seeing it coming, safely dodged the bronze spear point.
But Hector's spear hit Amphimachus, son of Cteatus,
Actor's son, in the chest, as he was coming up,
about to join the battle. He fell with a crash,
his armour echoing around him. Hector ran up,
eager to tug away the helmet tightly bound
around the temples of brave Amphimachus.
But with his bright spear Ajax lunged at Hector, [190]
as he came forward. He didn't touch his flesh,
for Hector was encased in terrifying bronze.
But Ajax struck the central boss on Hector's shield,
and his great power pushed him back. Hector withdrew
and left the corpses, so Achaeans dragged them off.
Amphimachus was carried back to the Achaean troops
by Stichius and by noble Menestheus,
who led Athenian troops. The two Ajaxes,
still full of battle rage, hauled Imbrius away.
As two lions snatch a goat from sharp-toothed hounds,
then take it in their jaws off through thick underbrush,
holding it well off the ground, that's how both Ajaxes [200]
held Imbrius up. They stripped off his armour.
In his anger at the killing of Amphimachus,

Oïlean Ajax hacked through the tender neck,
then, with a swing of his body, threw away the head,
like some ball, into the crowd. It fell into the dust,
right at Hector's feet.

At that point, Poseidon,
angry that his grandson Amphimachus had died
in that harsh fight, went through Achaea's huts and ships,
rousing Achaeans, planning trouble for the Trojans.
He met the famous spearman Idomeneus
coming from a comrade who'd just left the fight.
A sharp bronze blow had struck him in the knee.
His companions brought him in. Idomeneus,
having issued his instructions to the healers,
was going to his hut, still eager to fight on.
The mighty Earthshaker spoke to him, making his voice
sound like Thoas, son of Andraemon, who ruled
Aetolians all through Pleuron and steep Calydon,
honoured by his people like a god:

"Idomeneus,
Cretan counsellor, what's happened to those threats
Achaea's sons once made against the Trojans?"

Idomeneus, Cretan leader, then said in reply:

"As far as I know, Thoas, no one's to blame.
For all of us are very skilled in fighting,
and no one is timid here or frightened,
or, gripped by doubts, holds back from evil war.
Somehow it must please Cronos' mighty son
that Achaeans perish now without a name,
far from Argos. But Thoas, in times past,
you were a man who always stood his ground
and encouraged other men to do the same,
if you saw someone shirking. Don't stop now.
Issue your instructions to each man."

Earthshaker Poseidon then replied:

"Idomeneus,
may the man who will not fight today,
and willingly, never return from Troy.
May he become a toy for dogs to play with.

But get your armour and then come with me.
If we're to work well, we must work together,
although we're only two. For courage
of the highest sort comes when men combine,
even among men worth very little,
and we two know how to battle with the best."

Having said this, Poseidon went away, a god
among the toiling men, and Idomeneus
went into his well-made hut, strapped fine armour [240]
round his body, took two spears and then strode out,
looking like a lightning bolt which Cronos' son
grips in his hand and hurls down from bright Olympus,
revealing in its dazzling flash a sign for mortal men,
that's how, as he moved, bronze glinted on his chest.

Meriones, his brave attendant, met him
close by the hut. He'd come in search of a bronze spear.
Strong Idomeneus said to him:

"Meriones,
swift-footed son of Molus, the companion
I cherish most, why have you come here, [250]
leaving the war and giving up the fight?
Have you been hurt? Or wounded by a spear?
Are you in pain? Or have you come with news?
Me, I don't want to stay here in my hut.
I want to fight."

Wise Meriones then replied:

"Idomeneus, counsellor of bronze-armed Cretans,
I've come to get a spear, if by any chance
there's one left in your huts. The one I had
shattered in pieces when I hit the shield
of that arrogant fighter Deïphobus."

To this, Idomeneus, Cretan leader, then replied:

"Spears? As many as you want—in my hut [260]
twenty-one stand against the sunny wall,
Trojans spears I take from warriors I kill.
I never think of fighting hostile troops
from far away—that's why I've got there

brightly shining spears and embossed shields,
with helmets, too, and body armour."

Wise Meriones then answered Idomeneus:

"In my hut, too, and in my black ship,
there's lots of Trojan loot. But it's not close—
too inconvenient. For I can claim
I don't neglect my fighting prowess.
Whenever battles start, I stand and fight
with the men in front, in those encounters [270]
where men win glory. Other Achaeans
might not know my fighting quality, but you,
I think you've seen it for yourself."

Idomeneus, leader of the Cretans, answered Meriones:

"I know your courage. Why talk that way?
If by the ships right now we were naming
the best men for an ambush, where one sees
a warrior's courage most conspicuously,
where cowards and brave men truly show themselves—
for a coward's colour always changes,
the man's so nervous he just can't sit still, [280]
shifting around, resting first on one foot,
then another, heart pounding in his chest,
his mind preoccupied with thoughts of death,
and his teeth keep chattering in his mouth,
while a brave man's colour never changes,
he feels no great fear as he takes his place
in the group selected for the ambush,
no—he prays the killing will soon start.
In such a scene no one could challenge you,
or fault your battle rage or your strong arms.
For if, in the middle of the fighting,
some flying weapon hit you, or you were stabbed,
that weapon would not strike your neck or body
in the back. No, you'd be hit in front, [290]
in chest or stomach, as you charged ahead,
getting your joy from fighting at the front.
But let's not chat about this any longer,
standing here as if we were young children.
That could make some people very angry.
Go in my hut. Get yourself a heavy spear."

Idomeneus finished. Then Meriones,
like swift Ares, quickly took a bronze spear from the hut.
Filled with an urge to fight, he went with Idomeneus.
Just as man-killing Ares sets off to battle
accompanied by his son Terror, just as strong,
as fearless, who makes any man afraid,
no matter how courageous he may be—the two of them
setting out from Thrace, having armed themselves to fight
Ephyreans or brave Phlegyans, giving glory
to one of them, without listening to either side—
that's how Meriones and Idomeneus,
leaders of men, set off to battle, fully armed
in glittering bronze. Meriones was the first to speak:

"Son of Deucalion, where do you think
we should rejoin the fight? On the right side
of the whole army, the middle, or the left?
To my mind, this last place is the one
where long-haired Achaeans stand most in need."

Cretan leader Idomeneus answered Meriones:

"In the middle there are other men
to shore up the troops—the two Ajaxes,
Teucer, too, the best Achaean archer,
good in hand-to-hand combat as well.
Those warriors will give Hector, Priam's son,
all he can handle, even if he's keen
to fight and really strong. He'll find it hard,
though in full battle frenzy, to overcome
their spirit, their all-powerful hands,
and then burn the fleet, unless Zeus himself,
son of Cronos, hurls a flaming firebrand
on our swift ships. That son of Telamon,
great Ajax, will not yield to any mortal man
who eats Demeter's grain, who can be smashed
by massive rocks or bronze. He'd not give way
in a stand-up fight, not even to Achilles,
who destroys ranks of men and is so fast—
in running no one can beat Achilles.
No, we should move toward the army's left,
as you say, find out as soon as possible
if we'll win glory or give it to another."

Idomeneus spoke. Like swift Ares, Meriones
led the way until they reached the army,
where Idomeneus had instructed him to go.
When Trojans saw mighty Idomeneus,
like some flame, and his attendant Meriones
in his richly shining armour, they called out
to each other in the crowd, then made a massive charge.

By the ships' sterns both sides met in frantic battle.
Just as keen winds sometimes whip up gusts of air,
when dirt lies heavy on the roads, and stir up
all the dust into huge clouds—that's how this fight
gathered momentum then. In that crowd, men's hearts
were set to slaughter one another with sharp bronze.
That man-destroying combat bristled with long spears
gripped by men to hack each other's flesh apart.
As troops moved up tightly bunched, men's eyes went blind
in the blaze of glittering bronze, glaring helmets,
finely polished body armour, gleaming shields.
It would take a hard man to find joy in the sight
of all that suffering and show no trace of sorrow.

Then two mighty sons of Cronos, at cross purposes,
made painful trouble for those mortal warriors.
Zeus wanted victory for Hector and his Trojans,
to give swift Achilles glory—not that he wished
Achaea's army to be totally destroyed
in front of Troy, but he did want to honour Thetis,
and her great-hearted son, as well, Achilles.
But Poseidon moved around among the Argives,
urging action, coming out in secret from the sea,
angry that Trojans were destroying Achaeans,
and incensed at Zeus. Both gods had a common father—
the same family, too—but Zeus was older and more wise.
So Poseidon avoided giving any overt help.
He did his work in secret through the army,
in human form, urging men to fight. So these two
looped the cords of powerful war and deadly strife
around both contending armies, then pulled them taut,
a knot no one could undo or slip away from,
a knot that broke the limbs of many fighting men.

Idomeneus, though old enough to have gray hair,
called out to the Danaans and then charged the Trojans,
driving them away. He killed Othryoneus,
a man from Cabesus, who now lived in Troy.
He'd come recently, responding to the news of war,
and asked to marry Cassandra, most beautiful
of Priam's daughters, without paying a bride price.
Instead he promised a great action—he would drive
Achaea's sons from Troy. Old Priam had agreed,
promising to give her to him. Othryoneus,
trusting the king's promises, went off to fight.
Aiming his shining spear at him, Idomeneus threw.
The spear struck him as he was striding forward.
The bronze breastplate he was wearing did not help him—
the spear lodged in his gut. He fell down with a crash.
Then Idomeneus cried out in triumph:

"Othryoneus,
of all mortal men I'd consider you
the happiest, if you'd accomplished
all those things you promised Dardan Priam,
so he'd give you his daughter. But come,
we'll make you the same proposition—
and we'll deliver. We'll give you the loveliest
of Agamemnon's daughters, bring her here
from Argos, so you can wed her, if you,
for your part, will join us to destroy
the well-built city Ilion. So let's go.
We can arrange the marriage contract
by our seaworthy ships. We'll be generous
about your marriage price."

As he said this,
warrior Idomeneus dragged him by the feet
through lines of fighting men. But Asius then stepped up
to guard Othryoneus. He was on foot,
going before his horses, which his charioteer
kept so close they breathed on Asius's shoulders.
He had set his heart on hitting Idomeneus.
But Idomeneus was too quick for him.
He hit Asius with a spear below his chin,
forcing the bronze straight through his neck. Asius fell.
Just as a mountain oak, poplar, or tall pine falls,
cut down by working men with freshly sharpened axes,

to make timbers for some ship, that how Asius lay,
stretched out there before his chariot and horses,
gagging, his fingers clawing at the bloody dust.
His charioteer, scared out of whatever wits he had,
did not think of wheeling round his horses to escape
his enemies' hands. Taking aim, bold Antilochus
speared him in the stomach. The bronze breastplate he wore
was no protection. The spear struck in his stomach.
He fell out of the well-made chariot gasping.
Antilochus, brave Nestor's son, then drove the horses
from the Trojans over to well-armed Achaeans.

Grieving the loss of Asius, Deïphobus
came up to Idomeneus and hurled his polished spear.
Idomeneus, seeing him clearly, dodged the spear,
covering himself with the round shield he carried,
one made of bull's hide and shining bronze in rings,
with two cross braces fitted on. Idomeneus
crouched down underneath this shield. The flying bronze
grazed the metal with a rasping sound. But that throw
from the strong arm of Deïphobus was not wasted.
His spear hit Hypsenor, son of Hippasus,
his people's shepherd, low down in the liver.
His legs collapsed. Deïphobus gave a noisy shout,
boasting aloud about his triumph:

> "Now Asius
> is avenged! As he goes down to Hades,
> the mighty gatekeeper, his heart, I think,
> will be pleased I've given him an escort."

Deïphobus spoke. His boast depressed the Argives,
and gave special pain to warlike Antilochus.
Despite his sorrow, Antilochus did not forget
his comrade. He came running up and stood over him,
with his shield above his body. Two loyal companions,
Mecisteus, son of Echius, and Alastor, bent down,
then carried Hypsenor groaning to the hollow ships.

Idomeneus did not relent his fighting frenzy.
He kept on trying to wrap some Trojan soldier
in death's dark night or to fall himself, defending
Achaeans from disaster. He killed Alcathous,
dear warrior son of divinely bred Aesyetes,

Anchises' son-in-law. He'd married Hippodamia,
eldest of the daughters. Her mother and father
had set their heart's love on her when she was at home.
She surpassed all girls her age in beauty, work,
good sense. That's why the very finest man in Troy
had married her. Now at Idomeneus' hands
Poseidon slaughtered Alcathous. The god cast a spell—
he covered his bright eyes and froze his glistening limbs,
so he could not flee or dodge the spear, but stood there,
motionless, like a pillar or some high leafy tree.
Warrior Idomeneus hit him with his spear
square in the chest, shattering the bronze breastplate,
which earlier had kept his skin untouched by death.
But now it cracked aloud as the spear ripped through.
He fell with a crash, the spear stuck in his chest.
The power of his heart beat made that spear shaft quiver,
right to the butt, until great Ares stilled its force.
Idomeneus then spoke out, boasting aloud
about his triumph:

> "Deïphobus,
> since you like to brag this way, my friend,
> shall we now call it even, three men killed
> a fair exchange for one? Why don't you step out—
> face me here, so you can see for yourself
> what kind of child of Zeus confronts you.
> Zeus first fathered Minos to rule Crete.
> Minos then fathered worthy Deucalion.
> Deucalion fathered me, a king ruling
> many men in spacious Crete. Now my ships
> have brought me here as a destroying force,
> against you, your father, and other Trojans."

Idomeneus spoke. Deïphobus was of two minds—
should he step back and pick out a companion
from stout-hearted Trojans, or should he try to fight
all on his own? As he thought about his options,
he thought his best plan was to find Aeneas.
He met him standing at the back, among the crowd,
for Aeneas, who excelled among the warriors,
always resented Priam for not showing him
enough respect. Deïphobus approached Aeneas,
then spoke to him—his words had wings.

"Aeneas, Trojan counsellor,
now you must defend your brother-in-law,
if you feel any grief. It's urgent.
Come with me and fight for Alcathous,
who was your sister's husband. He raised you
as an infant in his home. Now Idomeneus,
that celebrated spearman, has just killed him."

Deïphobus finished. His words stirred the heart
in Aeneas's chest. He strode off to face Idomeneus,
fiercely eager for this fight. But no fear gripped [470]
Idomeneus, as if he were some pampered child.
He stood his ground. Just as a wild mountain boar,
trusting its own strength, stands firm against a mob,
a crowd of men who chase it in some lonely place,
with hair bristling along its back, its eyes lit up,
like fire, gnashing its teeth ferociously, eager
to toss dogs and men aside—that's just the way
the famous spearman Idomeneus stood then,
without backing off, as swift Aeneas came at him.
He called out to the companions he could see,
Ascalaphus, Aphareus, Deïpyrus, Meriones,
Antilochus—all famous for their war shouts.
Idomeneus yelled, urging them to help him—
his words had wings: [480]

"My friends—over here!
I'm alone, so bring some help. I'm worried.
Aeneas, who moves fast, is coming at me.
He's powerful at killing men in battle.
He's also in the flower of his youth,
when strength is at its peak. Were I his age
and both of us had equal courage,
he or I would soon win a huge victory."

Idomeneus finished. All his companions,
united by a common spirit, came at his call.
They stood beside him as a unit, sloping their shields
down from their shoulders. On his side, Aeneas
called out to those companions he'd caught sight of—
Deïphobus, Paris, and Agenor—leaders, [490]
just as he was, of those Trojan warriors.
Men came up behind them. Just as a flock of sheep
follows the ram from pasture to their water,

filling the shepherd's heart with joy, so Aeneas
was happy in his chest to see that band of soldiers
standing there around him.

The men now battled on,
close combat with long spears, over Alcathous.
As they lunged at one another in the crowd of men,
their bronze chests echoed with the fearful noise.
Two men stood out above the rest for bravery—
Aeneas and Idomeneus, equals of Ares, [500]
striving to slash each other's flesh with ruthless bronze.
First, Aeneas threw a spear at Idomeneus,
who, seeing it coming, eluded the bronze spear,
which then impaled itself in earth, still quivering—
it had flown from that strong hand but missed its target.
Then Idomeneus struck Oenomaus in the stomach,
smashing the front plate on his body armour.
His bowels spilled out, as he dropped in the dust
and clutched the dirt. Idomeneus yanked his long spear
out of the corpse. But he could not strip away [510]
any of the lovely armour on its shoulders,
for he was being attacked with flying weapons.
His lower limbs were no longer fast enough
for him to charge in quickly after his own spear
or dodge aside. He could keep grim death at bay
in pitched battle, but that is all his legs could do—
they were too slow for him to run away from combat.
As Idomeneus retreated step by step,
Deïphobus tried to hit him with a shining spear—
he had always hated Idomeneus—but he missed,
hitting Ascalaphus instead, a son of Ares.
The heavy spear passed straight through his shoulder.
He collapsed in the dust, hands clawing at the ground. [520]

Loud-voiced mighty Ares was not yet aware
his own son had fallen in the killing zone.
He sat on the highest part of Mount Olympus,
under golden clouds, confined by Zeus's will,
along with the rest of the immortal gods,
forbidden to participate in warfare.

The close fighting over Ascalaphus continued.
Deïphobus stripped off the corpse's shining helmet.
But Meriones, like swift Ares, jumped out

and speared him in the arm. The plumed helmet,
with a clang, fell on the ground. Like a vulture,
Meriones leapt out again, pulled the heavy spear
out of his upper arm, then moved back to his group,
But Deïphobus's blood brother Polites,
with both arms round his waist, hauled him from the fight,
until he came to his swift horses in the rear.
They were standing there, waiting for him,
with charioteer and finely decorated chariot.
These took him away, back to the city, tired out,
moaning heavily, blood dripping from his wounded arm.
The rest kept fighting, with no let up in the noise.

Then Aeneas went at Aphareus, son of Caletor,
as he was facing him. His sharp spear hit his throat.
Aphareus's head snapped back—his shield and helmet
fell down on him, and Death, which takes the living spirit,
gathered him in.

Antilochus kept watching Thoön.
As he turned, he rushed up and stabbed him,
severing the vein which runs the full length of the back
up to the neck—Antilochus slashed through this vein.
Thoön fell, stretching his arms up from the dust,
reaching to his friends. Antilochus jumped on him
and began to strip the armour on his shoulders.
But he kept his eyes alert, for he was surrounded,
with Trojan men on every side, thrusting their spears
at his broad shining shield. But their ruthless bronze
could not scratch the tender skin behind that shield,
for Earthshaker Poseidon was guarding Nestor's son,
even in that hail of spears. So Antilochus
never moved far from his enemies. He kept going,
ranging around among them. His spear never stopped,
always in motion, quivering, his eager heart
keen to throw that spear at someone or attack him.

As Antilochus went through that crowd of men,
he was observed by Adamas, son of Asius,
who charged close in—his sharp bronze spear struck
the middle of his shield. But dark-haired Poseidon,
unwilling to concede Antilochus's life,
made the spear point fail—so part of it got stuck
in Antilochus's shield, like the charred end of a stick,

and half fell on the ground. Adamas then withdrew,
returning to the group of his companions,
avoiding death. But Meriones went after him,
as he moved back, and hit him underneath his navel,
in the scrotum, the most agonizing way
for men to perish miserably in battle.
When that spear struck Adamas, he doubled up, [570]
bent down over the spear, writhing like a bull
which farmers in the mountains bind with willow shoots
and drag along by force, against the creature's will.
That's how Adamas, once hit, twitched there for a while,
but not for long. Warlike Meriones, running up,
pulled out his spear. Then darkness covered up his eyes.

At close quarters, Helenus then hit Deïpyrus,
striking his helmet with a massive Thracian sword,
knocking it off, so it fell to earth and rolled away
among the soldiers' feet. Some Achaean picked it up.
Deïpyrus' eyes grew cloudy, and darkness took him.

Atreus's son Menelaus, skilled at war shouts, [580]
was overcome with grief. He stepped up, threatening
and waving a sharp spear at warrior Helenus.
Helenus pulled back on the centre of his bow.
They both let fly together—one with a sharp spear,
the other with an arrow from his bowstring.
Priam's son hit Menelaus with his arrow—
on the front plate of his armour, in the chest.
The keen arrow bounded off. Just as black beans or peas
fly off a broad shovel on large threshing floors,
driven by the sharp wind or winnower's strength— [590]
that's how the arrow point glanced off the breast plate,
then flew aside, away from glorious Menelaus.
When Atreus's son Menelaus, skilled at war shouts,
threw his spear, he hit Helenus in the hand,
the one which held the finely polished bow.
The bronze sliced through his hand into the bow.
Helenus drew back into the group of his companions,
escaping death. He let his hand hang by his side,
dragging the ash spear behind him, till brave Agenor
pulled it out. Agenor then bound up his hand
in a strip of twisted sheep's wool and made a sling,
which his attendant carried for him, his people's shepherd. [600]

Then Peisander made straight for glorious Menelaus.
But an evil fate was leading him towards his death,
destroyed at your hands, Menelaus, in lethal war.
When the two men had approached each other,
standing at close range, Menelaus threw but missed—
his spear point was deflected. Then Peisander struck,
hitting glorious Menelaus's shield, but his bronze
could not break through. The broad shield withstood the blow,
which snapped the spear off at its socket. But in his heart,
Peisander still felt a joyful hope of victory.
The son of Atreus pulled out his silver-studded sword,
then leapt at Peisander, who, from under his own shield,
produced a fine axe of well-cast bronze, with a long shaft
of finely-polished olive wood. The two men met.
Peisander struck Menelaus on his helmet ridge,
at the top, just underneath the horsehair crest.
But as Peisander charged, Menelaus hit him—
right on the forehead, just above his nose.
The bones cracked. Both his bloody eyes fell out
into the dirt beside his feet. Peisander doubled up
and then collapsed. Menelaus stepped on his chest,
stripped off his armour, crying out in triumph:

"You arrogant Trojans, who can't get enough
of war's destructive noise, this is the way
you'll go back from these ships of the Danaans,
who ride fast horses. You're not reluctant,
where insults and dishonour are concerned,
to go after me, you worthless mongrel dogs,
without fearing in your hearts harsh anger
from thundering Zeus, god of hospitality,
who someday will destroy your lofty town.
For you carried off the wife I married,
lots of my property, and brought them here,
although she'd entertained you royally
in her own home. Now you're madly eager
to throw deadly fire on our sea-going ships,
to kill Achaean warriors. But you'll be stopped,
no matter how much you now want to fight.
O father Zeus, people say for wisdom
you exceed all others, men and gods alike.
Yet all this comes from you, the way you show
favours to these insolent men, these Trojans,
whose aggressive spirit has no limit,

who can never get enough of battle,
though they're not winning in an equal fight.
To all things there is a limit set—to sleep,
to love, sweet songs, and gorgeous dancing.
A man would rather have his fill of these, not war.
But Trojans here are gluttons for a fight."

After Menelaus spoke, he stripped the body, [640]
then gave its bloody armour to his comrades.
He went back and rejoined those fighting in the front.
The next man to charge against him was Harpalion,
son of king Pylamenes, who came to fight at Troy
following his dear father. But he never did return
to his own country. With his spear at close range,
he struck the centre of Menelaus's shield,
but the bronze could not penetrate completely.
So he drew back into the throng of his companions,
escaping death. He looked around him carefully,
as he moved, so no warrior's bronze would hit his flesh.
But on his way back, Meriones shot at him. [650]
The bronze-tipped arrow hit his right buttock, pushing
underneath the bone, going right into the bladder.
He sat down there, in the arms of his dear comrades,
choking his life away, convulsing on the ground,
like some worm. His dark blood gushed out, soaking the earth.
Brave Paphlagonians came up to help Harpalion.
They set him in a chariot and took him away,
full of sorrow, to sacred Ilion. His father
went back with them, in tears, for he could find
no satisfaction for the slaughter of his son.

Harpalion's death made Paris really angry. [660]
For with the Paphlagonians he had welcomed Paris
as his guest. In a fit of anger, Paris shot off
a bronze-tipped arrow. Now, there was a certain man
called Euchenor, son of Polyidus the prophet,
a rich, brave man, who lived at home in Corinth.
He had set sail knowing full well his deadly fate,
for many times his brave old father, Polyidus,
had told him—he would either die in his own home
from some foul disease or be destroyed by Trojans
among Achaean ships. Euchenor thus escaped
both the stiff penalty exacted by Achaeans
and deadly sickness—he felt worthy in his heart. [670]

The arrow Paris shot hit this man by his jaw,
right on the ear. At once his spirit left his limbs,
and hateful darkness carried him away.

Thus the men keep fighting like a blazing fire.
But Hector, dear to Zeus, had not heard and did not know
how the Achaeans were killing off his army
at the left end of the ships. Glory in this battle
would soon have been awarded to Achaeans—
that's how powerfully Earthshaker Poseidon,
who enfolds the earth, was driving Argives forward,
helping them with his own strength as well. But Hector
charged on from where he had first breached the gates and wall,
smashing up the close-packed ranks of the Danaans,
right to the ships of Protesilaus and Ajax,
drawn up on the beach beside the blue-gray sea.
By these ships the wall was lowest. So there the fight
with men and horses was particularly fierce.
There Boeotians fought, Ionians in long tunics,
Locrians, Phthians, and glittering Epeians.
But they had trouble standing up to Hector's charge,
as he attacked the ships. They could not push him back,
away from them, as he came up, like an inferno,
not even the finest men of the Athenians,
with their leader Menestheus, son of Peteos,
alongside Pheidas, Stichius, and brave Bias,
with the Epeians led by Meges, son of Phyleus,
Amphion, Dracius, and the Phthians,
led by Medon and Podarces, both brave men.
Medon was a bastard son of noble Oïleus
and Ajax's brother. But he lived in Phylace,
far from his native land, for he had killed a man,
one related to Eriopis, his stepmother,
wife of Oïleus. Podalerius was Iphicles' son,
child of Phylaces. These men in their armour
were fighting at the head of those brave Phthians,
standing with Boeotians to defend the ships.

Ajax, son of Oïleus, would not move away
from Ajax, son of Telamon—he fought beside him.
Just as in a meadow a pair of wine-dark oxen
strain with the same heart to pull a jointed plough,
beads of sweat running from the bottom of their horns,
with nothing but a well-polished yoke between them,

as they labour down the furrows, till the plough
slices through the edges of the field—that's the way
the two Ajaxes stood together then, side by side.
Telamonian Ajax had many comrades with him,
courageous soldiers, who relieved him of his shield [710]
when his sweaty limbs grew tired. But the Locrians
had not come forward with brave Oïlean Ajax—
they lacked courage for fighting in the killing zone, 840
for they had no plumed bronze helmets, no round shields,
and no ash spears. They had come to Troy with Ajax
trusting in their bows and slings of twisted sheep's wool.
Later they battled on with these, firing thick volleys,
breaking ranks of Trojans. So one group of men,
those with glittering weapons, fought at the front
against bronze-armed Hector and his Trojans, [720]
while another shot from safe positions at the back.
The arrows drained the Trojans' fighting spirit.

The Trojans would then have been shamed into retreat, 850
moving back from the ships and huts to windy Troy,
if Polydamas had not approached bold Hector, saying:

"You're a difficult man to deal with, Hector,
for you don't take advice. God has made you
more excellent in war than other men.
Thus, in council you want us all to think
you're better than the rest. But in yourself
you can't be everything at once. The gods
make one man superior in warfare, [730]
another in the dance, or singing, 860
or playing the lyre. For some others,
all-seeing Zeus puts wisdom in their hearts—
and from these men many people benefit,
many are saved, for such men know what's right.
So I'll say what I think it's best to do.
All around you war's fiery circle rages,
but some brave Trojans, having breached the wall,
are standing idle with their weapons.
Others, scattered around the ships, fight on—
but in small groups against a larger mass. 870
You should fall back, then summon here to you [740]
all our finest men. Then we can weigh our options—
whether we should assault the well-decked ships,
in the hope god wants to give us victory,

or whether, for safety's sake, we leave the ships.
I'm afraid Achaeans may avenge the hurt
we gave them yesterday, since by their ships
there sits a man with appetite for war—
I think he may change his decision not to fight."

Polydamas finished. His advice pleased Hector.
At once he jumped out of his chariot to the ground.
He took up his weapons and spoke—his words had wings:

"Polydamas, keep all the best men here.
I'll go back to battle over there,
returning when I've told them what to do."

Saying that, Hector strode off, like a snowy mountain,
going by Trojans and allies, shouting instructions.
When these men heard what Hector wanted them to do,
they all came running over to Polydamas,
kind son of Panthous. Hector marched through the ranks
of their best warriors, looking for Deïphobus,
brave prince Helenus, Adamas, son of Asius,
and Asius, son of Hyrtacus. But these men
had not come through unscathed. Some were already dead,
killed at Argive hands by the sterns of Achaea's ships.
Others inside the wall had spear or arrow wounds.
On the left flank of that destructive battle,
Hector met Paris, husband of fair-haired Helen,
encouraging his comrades, urging them to fight.
Approaching him, Hector taunted Paris:

"You may be the best-looking man around,
but you're a useless woman-mad seducer.
Where are Deïphobus, brave prince Helenus,
Adamas, son of Asius, and Asius,
son of Hyrtacus? Where's Othryoneus?
Tell me that. All of lofty Ilion
has been destroyed. Your own death is certain."

Then noble Alexander answered Hector:

"Hector, you're now blaming someone innocent.
At other times I have held back from war,
but not this time. When my mother bore me,
she did not produce a total coward.

Since the moment you told your men to fight
beside the ships, we've been in combat here,
in a constant struggle with Danaans.
Those comrades you just mentioned have been killed.
Only Deïphobus and brave Helenus
have gone back, both wounded in the arm—
hit by long spears—but Zeus saved them from death.
But now, lead on where your spirit tells you,
we'll follow you quite willingly. I don't think
we'll show a lack of courage while our strength holds out.
Once that goes, no matter how keen a man may be,
he can no longer continue in the war."

Warrior Paris's words won his brother's heart.
They set off for the centre of that noisy battle,
with Cebriones, noble Polydamas,
Phalces, Orthaeus, godlike Polyphetes,
Palmys, Ascanius, Morus, son of Hippotion,
men who had come from fertile Ascania the day before
as reinforcements. Now Zeus incited them to war.
The Trojans advanced. Just like blasts of storming winds
striking the earth under Father Zeus's thunder,
then with a roar slicing into the sea, whipping up
a crowd of surging waves across a booming ocean,
with lines of arching foam, one following another—
that's how the Trojans marched behind their leaders,
in a tight formation, one behind the other,
glittering in bronze. Like man-destroying Ares,
Hector, son of Priam, led them. He held his shield
in front of him, an even circle made of hide,
densely packed, then covered with a solid layer
of hammered bronze, helmet gleaming round his temples.
He moved out, testing all parts of the Achaean lines,
to see if they'd retreat from him as he came forward
covered by his shield. But Achaean hearts stood firm.
The first fighter to challenge Hector was great Ajax,
who marched out with long strides and shouted:

"Come closer,
you poor man. Why try to scare the Argives?
When it comes to fighting, we're not ignorant.
Zeus's harsh whip has lashed Achaeans back,
and your heart now wants to break our ships.
But we've got hands to raise in their defence.

In fact, I think it's far more likely now
we'll take your well-built city—these hands of ours
will smash it long before you seize our ships.
I say the time has come when you'll run back,
praying to Father Zeus and other gods,
to make your horses with their lovely manes
fly as fast as hawks, when they speed through dust
to get you to your city on the plain."

As Ajax spoke, a bird flew out on the right,
a high-flying eagle. Encouraged by the omen,
the Achaean soldiers responded with a cheer.
Glorious Hector then said to Ajax in reply:

"What are you saying, you stupid boaster?
I wish it were as certain that I was
the son of aegis-bearing Zeus himself,
with Hera for my mother, and honoured
like Apollo or Athena, as I am that this day
brings disaster to the Argives—all of them.
You'll lie among the dead, if you dare
to stand up to my long spear. It will slice
your lily skin. Then once you fall down there,
beside Achaea's ships, Trojan dogs and birds
will feed upon your flesh and fat."

Hector spoke.
Then he advanced—the troops moved up behind him,
making a huge din, even from soldiers at the back.
On the other side, the Argives raised a shout.
They had not lost their courage. They had held their line
against the finest Trojans launching their attack.
The noise from both sides went up into bright Zeus's sky.

BOOK FOURTEEN
ZEUS DECEIVED

[Nestor leaves his hut to look around, sees the Achaeans in retreat; Nestor meets the wounded kings inspecting the field; Agamemnon advises going home; Odysseus responds harshly to the suggestion; Diomedes advises them to visit the battle; Poseidon continues to encourage the Argives; Hera thinks of a plan to deceive Zeus; she prepares herself to look seductive; Hera gets Aphrodite's love charms; Hera visits Sleep and gets his cooperation; Hera visits Zeus on Ida, has sex with him, and Zeus goes to sleep; Poseidon rallies the Argives and leads them into battle; Ajax wounds Hector badly with a rock; Hector withdraws; the killings continue on both sides, the Argives getting the better of the battle.]

As Nestor sat drinking wine, listening to the noise of war,
he said to Asclepius' son:

"Noble Machaon,
think about how this battle will end up—
the shouting from our young men by the ships
is getting louder. You should sit here for now.
Drink some sparkling wine, till Hecamede
with the lovely hair draws you a warm bath
and washes the dried blood off your body.
I'll go to a lookout, see what's going on."

Nestor took the well-made shield belonging to his son,
horse-taming Thrasymedes. It lay there in the hut,
gleaming bronze. The son was fighting with his father's shield.
Nestor took a strong spear with a sharp bronze point,
then stood outside the hut. At once he saw a shameful sight—
Achaeans in retreat, pushed back by their enemies,
high-hearted Trojans. The Achaean wall was breached.
Just as the great sea heaves with a sullen purple swell,
anticipating the swift passage of sharp winds—
but uncertainly—so its waves have no direction,
until some steady storm blows down from Zeus—that's how
the old man was lost in thought, his heart divided
between two courses. Should he seek out the crowd
of swift-riding Danaans, or see if he could find
Agamemnon, son of Atreus, his people's shepherd?
As he thought it over, the best course seemed to be
to find the son of Atreus.

Meanwhile, the other men
kept up the fight, kept on butchering each other.

Around their bodies the unwearied bronze rang out,
as they thrust with swords and double-bladed spears.
Then Nestor came across the kings the gods sustain—
they were walking round among the ships—all the ones
whom bronze had wounded—Diomedes and Odysseus,
along with Agamemnon, son of Atreus.

They had drawn their ships on shore beside the blue-gray sea, [30]
far from battle, dragging up their own ships first,
hauled them inland, then built the wall along the sterns.
The beach was wide, but not long enough for all the fleet.
The army did not have much space to hold the boats.
So they had left the ships in rows, and thus filled up
the whole wide coastal bay between the headlands.
The kings had set out in one group together,
each one leaning on a spear, to see the fighting
and check the progress of the war. Deep in their chests
they were very troubled. When old Nestor met them,
the anxiety in their Achaean hearts
was even more acute. Mighty Agamemnon [40]
spoke to him and said:

"Nestor, son of Neleus,
great glory of Achaeans, why are you here?
Why have you left the battle? I'm afraid
that mighty Hector will make good those words
he used to threaten us, in that speech
he gave his Trojans, saying he'd not return
from our ships to Troy until he'd burned them
and slaughtered all the men. That's what he said.
And now it's happening. What chaos!
Other well-armed Achaeans in their hearts
must be angry with me, like Achilles, [50]
unwilling to continue fighting by our ships."

Geranian horseman Nestor answered Agamemnon:

"What's happened so far is over, done with—
not even high-thundering Zeus himself
could make that something else—our wall is down.
We put our faith in it as a firm defence
for ships and for ourselves. At this moment,
men are constantly in action by our ships,
with no relief. Whichever way you look,

even if you really try, you cannot tell
from what direction we are being attacked.
It's all confused. The killing is haphazard.
The battle shouts fill heaven. As for us,
if thinking is a help, we should consider
how these events will end. I'm not saying
we should rejoin the fight—that's not expected
from those who have been wounded."

Agamemnon, king of men, replied:

"Nestor,
since the men now fight at our ships' sterns,
and since our strong wall and ditch are useless—
something crushing for Danaans, whose hearts
had trusted they'd provide a firm defence
and keep our soldiers and our ships secure—
from this I gather that almighty Zeus
must enjoy it when Achaeans perish
without a name, right here, far from Argos.
I felt when Zeus was giving the Danaans
his full assistance, and I know it now,
when he gives the glory to the Trojans,
like blessed gods, while draining all our strength,
our fighting spirit. But come now, let's agree
to what I propose. Let's drag down those ships
drawn up there in line closest to the surf
and pull them all into the sacred sea,
and moor them with stones in deeper water,
until the coming of immortal night—
which may prevent the Trojans' fighting.
Then we can shift the other ships. To flee
from ruin, even at night, brings no shame.
It's better to escape one's own destruction—
to run off—than let it overtake you."

In response to this, Odysseus scowled and said:

"Son of Atreus, how can such words as these
come from your mouth? I'm finished with you.
I wish you ruled some other army,
some useless men, and were not our leader.
Zeus sees to it that from our youthful days
to our old age we must grind away

at wretched war, till, one by one, we die.
Are you really willing to leave Troy,
city of wide streets, for whose sake we've borne
so many evils? You'd better keep that quiet—
another Achaean man may hear the news,
learn what you've proposed in words no man
should ever let pass through his mouth at all,
no man whose heart has any understanding
of what's appropriate to say, no one
who is a sceptred king whom men obey—
as many as those Argive troops you lead.
From what you've said, I think you've lost your mind.
In the middle of a fight, you tell us now
to drag our well-decked ships down to the sea,
so that, though Trojans may be winning now,
they'd get what they most pray for realized—
the complete annihilation of us all.
For once we drag our ships into the sea,
Achaeans then will never go on fighting—
the whole time they'll be looking over here
and pulling out from battle. Then your plan,
you leader of the army, will destroy it."

Agamemnon, king of men, replied:

"Odysseus,
that harsh rebuke of yours has stung my heart.
But I'm not the man to tell Achaea's sons
to drag our well-decked ships into the sea
if they're not willing. So show me someone
with a better plan than mine—young or old—
I'll welcome it."

Then Diomedes,
skilled in battle shouts, spoke up:

"That man's close by.
We've no need to search too long, if you'll listen,
without any one of you resenting me
because I'm younger than the rest of you.
I claim worthy descent through Tydeus,
who lies in Thebes hidden underground.
Portheus had three fine sons in Pleuron
and steep Calydon—Agrius, Melus,

and a third, Oeneus, my father's father.
He was the most courageous of them all.
He stayed there, but my father roamed around.
He came to Argos. That was what Zeus willed—
other gods, as well. He married a daughter
of Adrestus, lived in a prosperous home,
with many wheat-bearing fields and orchards
planted all through his estate—and many sheep.
He was the best of all the Argive spearman.
You must have heard all this and know it's true.
So you would never label me by birth a coward,
a weakling, and thus demean what I advise,
if what I say is good. We must go back there,
to the battle, though we're wounded. Once there,
we'll stand back from combat, beyond the range
of flying weapons, in case someone is hit
and gets more wounds. But we'll urge on the others,
even those who, wallowing in their feelings,
have stood aside, without fighting up to now."

They listened well to Diomedes and agreed.
So they set off, led by Agamemnon, king of men.

Famous Earthshaker Poseidon saw all this.
He walked among them in the shape of an old man.
Taking Atreus' son Agamemnon by his right hand,
Poseidon talked to him—his words had wings.

"Son of Atreus, in Achilles' chest
his destructive heart is rejoicing now,
to see Achaeans slaughtered and in flight.
He's not in his right mind, not in the least.
Well, he may be killed anyway—some god
may strike him. As for you, the blessed gods
aren't angry with you over anything,
so Troy's kings and leaders may yet make dust
while scurrying over this wide plain,
while you watch them running to their city,
back from these huts."

Poseidon said these words,
then, as he raced off to the plain, let out a mighty roar—
as loud as the din from nine or ten thousand men
when on a battleground they first clash with Ares.

That's how loud the sound was which came out then
from powerful Earthshaker's chest, infusing
great strength in each man's heart to keep on going,
to fight on there and not to pause for rest.

As this was happening, on a peak of Mount Olympus
Hera of the golden throne was standing watching.
She recognized her brother-in-law at once,
as he kept busy in the war where men win glory,
for he was her brother and her husband's, too.
Hera's heart was pleased. She looked across at Zeus,
sitting on the highest peak on top of Ida,
with its many fountains. Hatred filled her heart.
So ox-eyed queen Hera then began considering
how she might deceive the mind of aegis-bearing Zeus.
In her heart the best course of action seemed to be
to make herself look most attractive, go to Ida,
then see if Zeus would want to lie down with her,
embrace her, and make love. Then she could pour out
on his eyelids and his crafty mind a deep warm sleep.
She went off to her bedroom, which Hephaestus,
her dear son, had made for her, with close-fitting doors
set against their posts, secured with a secret lock,
which no other god could open. She went in there,
then closed the shining doors. First, with ambrosia
she washed from her lovely body all the stains,
then rubbed her skin with fragrant oil, divinely sweet,
made specially for her. If this perfume were merely stirred
inside Zeus's bronze-floored house, its scent would then diffuse
throughout heaven and earth. She used this perfume
all over her fair body, then arranged her hair.
With her own hands she combed her shining locks in braids,
a stunning style for an immortal goddess.
Then she wrapped around herself a heavenly robe,
which Athena made for her from silky fabric,
adorning it with gorgeous embroidery.
She pinned the robe around her breast with golden brooches.
On her waist she put a belt with a hundred tassels.
Hera then fixed earrings in her pierced ear lobes,
each with three gemstones, an enchanting glitter.
Next the queen of goddesses placed on her head
a fine new dazzling shawl, white as the sun.
She then slipped lovely sandals over her sleek feet.

Once Hera had dressed her body in this finery,
she left the room and summoned Aphrodite.
Some distance from the other gods, she said to her:

"My dear child, will you agree to do [190]
what I ask of you, or will you refuse,
because you're angry with me in your heart,
since I help Danaans and you aid the Trojans?" 230

Zeus's daughter Aphrodite answered her:

"Hera,
honoured goddess, daughter of great Cronos,
say what's on your mind. My heart tells me
I should do what you request, if I can,
if it's something that can be carried out."

Then queen Hera, with her devious mind, replied:

"Then give me Love and Sexual Desire,
which you use to master all immortals,
and mortal men as well. I'm going to visit
the limits of this all-nourishing earth, 240 [200]
to see Oceanus, from whom the gods arose,
and mother Tethys, the two who reared me,
taking good care of me inside their home,
once they got me from Rhea, that time Zeus,
who sees far and wide, forced Cronos
underground, under the restless seas.
I'm going to visit them. And I'll resolve
their endless quarrel. For a long time now,
they've stayed apart from one another,
not sharing love there in the marriage bed, 250
since anger fills their hearts. If my words
could reconcile the hearts in these two gods,
bring them to bed again, once more in love,
they'd think of me with loving reverence." [210]

Laughter-loving Aphrodite answered Hera:

"It would not be appropriate for me
to say no to your demand, since you sleep
in the arms of Zeus, the greatest of the gods."

Aphrodite spoke, then loosened from her breasts
the finely decorated, embroidered garment
in which all her magic charms were fixed—for love,
erotic lust, flirtation, and seduction,
which steals the wits even of clear-thinking men.
Aphrodite put this in Hera's hands, then said:

"Take this garment. Tie it round your breasts.
Everything is interwoven in the cloth.
I don't think you'll come back unsuccessful
in getting what it is your heart desires."

Aphrodite finished. Ox-eyed queen Hera smiled,
and, as she did so, put the garment round her breasts.
Then Aphrodite, Zeus's daughter, went back home.

Hera sped off, leaving the crest of Mount Olympus.
She touched down on Pieria, lovely Emathia,
rushed by the highest mountains of Thracian horsemen—
her feet did not touch ground on those snow-covered peaks.
From Athos she went across the heaving sea,
coming to Lemnos, city of godlike Thoas.
There she met Sleep, Death's brother. Clasping his hand,
she spoke to him:

"Sleep, king of all men and gods,
if you've ever listened to what I say,
obey me now. I'll be grateful always.
Lull Zeus's radiant eyes to sleep for me,
when I'm stretched out for sex beside him.
I'll give you as a gift a lovely throne,
indestructible gold which my own son
Hephaestus with his ambidextrous skills
will make for you. Under it he'll set a stool,
so you can rest your feet when drinking wine."

Sweet Sleep then said in reply:

"Honoured goddess Hera,
daughter of mighty Cronos, I could with ease
bring some other immortal one to sleep,
even the streams of river Oceanus,
the source of all of them. But I won't come
near Zeus, lull him to sleep, unless he bids me,

asks in person. Your request some time ago
taught me my lesson, on that very day
when Hercules, son of almighty Zeus,
set sail from Ilion, after he'd sacked
the Trojans' city. That's when I seduced
the mind of aegis-bearing Zeus, pouring
my sweetness over him. You then carried
evil in your heart for Hercules, driving
blasts of hostile winds across the sea,
taking him at last to well-settled Cos,
far from all his friends. When Zeus woke up,
he was incensed, throwing gods around his house,
looking, above all, for me. He'd have tossed me
from heaven into the sea, if Night,
who subdues gods and men, had not saved me.
I ran away to her, and Zeus held back,
though still enraged, not wishing to offend
swift Night. Now here you are again, asking me
to do something I simply must not do."

Ox-eyed queen Hera then answered him:

"Sleep,
why concern your heart about these matters?
Do you think all-seeing Zeus feels for Trojans
the same rage he felt then for Hercules,
his own son? But come, I'll give you as your wife
one of the younger Graces. You can marry
Pasithea, whom you long for every day."

Hera finished. Sleep was overjoyed and said:

"All right, then. Swear to me by waters
of the inviolable river Styx, setting
one hand on the all-nourishing earth,
the other on the shimmering sea,
so all may witness our agreement,
even those gods underground with Cronos,
that you will give me one of the Graces,
Pasithea, whom I long for every day."

White-armed goddess Hera agreed to Sleep's request.
She made the oath, as he had asked, invoking
all the gods under Tartarus, those called the Titans.

Once she finished saying the oath, they both set off,
wrapping themselves in mist. They left behind them
the cities of Lemnos and Imbros, moving quickly,
then came to Mount Ida with its many springs,
mother of wild creatures, and arrived at Lectum,
where for the first time they left the sea. They walked
on dry land, shaking treetops underneath their feet.
Sleep then stopped, before Zeus's eyes could see him,
climbed a high pine tree, at that time the tallest one
growing on Ida. It stretched up through the lower air
right into the sky. Concealed in that tree's branches,
Sleep perched there, shaped like the clear-voiced mountain bird
which gods call Chalcis, but people name Cymindis.

Hera moved quickly on to Ida's peak, high Gargarus.
Cloud-gatherer Zeus caught sight of her. As he looked,
his wise heart became suffused with sexual desire,
as strong as when they'd first made love together,
lying on a couch without their parents' knowledge.
Zeus stood up in front of her, called her, and said:

"Hera, what are you looking for, coming
down here from Olympus? Your chariot,
your horses are not here. You should use them."

Queen Hera with her crafty mind then answered Zeus:

"I'm going to visit the outer limits
of this all-nourishing earth, to Oceanus,
from whom gods came, and mother Tethys,
who looked after me in their own home.
They raised me well. I'll try to mediate
their endless quarrel. For a long time now,
they've stayed apart from one another,
not sharing love there in the marriage bed,
since anger fills their hearts. As for my horses,
they're standing at the foot of Ida,
with its many springs, to carry me
across dry land and sea. I've come here now,
down from Mount Olympus, to stop you
from being angry with me afterwards,
if I say nothing about going to visit
deep-flowing Oceanus in his home."

Cloud-gatherer Zeus then answered:

"Hera,
you can go there later. But why don't we
lie down and make joyful love together?
I've never felt such sexual desire before
for any goddess, for any mortal woman.
It's flooding through me, overpowering the heart
here in my chest—not even when I lusted for
Ixion's wife, who bore me Peirithous,
a man as wise as gods, or Danaë,
with her enchanting ankles, daughter
of Acrisius, who gave birth to Perseus,
most illustrious of men, nor the daughter
of famous Phoenix, who bore me Minos
and godlike Rhadamanthus, nor Alcmene,
who gave birth to Hercules in Thebes,
a mighty hearted son, nor Semele,
who bore that joy to mortals Dionysus,
nor fair-haired lady Demeter, nor Leto,
that glorious girl, not even for yourself—
I felt for none of these the love I feel
for you right now—such sweet desire grips me."

Queen Hera with her cunning mind then said in reply:

"Most fearsome son of Cronos, what are you saying?
If you now want us to make love lying here,
on Ida's peaks, where anyone can see,
what if one of the immortal gods observes us,
as we sleep, then goes and tells the other gods?
I could not get up from this bed and go
into your home. That would be scandalous.
But if that's your wish, if your heart's set on it,
you have that bedroom your own son Hephaestus
had built for you. It has close-fitting doors
fixed into posts. Let's go and lie down there,
since you're so keen for us to go to bed."

Cloud-gatherer Zeus then answered her:

"Hera,
don't be afraid that any god or man
will glimpse a thing. I'll cover you up

in a golden cloud. Even sun god Helios
will not see the two of us, and his rays
are the most perceptive spies of all."

Zeus finished. Then Cronos' son took his wife in his arms.
Underneath them divine Earth made fresh flowers grow—
dew-covered clover, crocuses, and hyacinths,
lush and soft, to hold the lovers off the ground.
They lay together there covered with a cloud,
a lovely golden mist, from which fell glistening dew.
Then Zeus slumbered peacefully on Mount Gargarus,
overcome with love and sleep, his wife in his embrace.

Sweet Sleep rushed to the Achaean ships, to inform
Poseidon, the Encircler and Shaker of the Earth.
Coming up to him, Sleep spoke—his words had wings:

"Poseidon, you could now help the Argives
quite readily and give them glory,
if only for a while—Zeus is resting now.
I've covered him with a delicious sleep.
Hera has seduced him on a bed of love."

Saying this, Sleep left there for some well-known tribes of men.
But he made Poseidon want to help Danaans,
even more so than before. He ran to those in front,
calling in a loud voice:

"You Argives,
are we really going to give the victory
to Hector, son of Priam—allow him
to take our ships and get the glory?
That's what he says. He even boasts about it—
since Achilles stays beside his hollow ships,
anger in his heart. But we won't miss him much
if the rest of us get fighting strength
and help each other. So come, let's all follow
what I suggest. Let's arm ourselves with shields,
the best and biggest in our whole army,
cover our heads with gleaming helmets,
take in our hands the longest spears, and go.
I'll lead us. I don't think Hector, Priam's son,
will hold, no matter how much he wants to fight."

Poseidon spoke. The soldiers heard him and obeyed.
The kings themselves, though wounded, organized the men—
Agamemnon, Diomedes, and Odysseus. [380]
Moving among the warriors, they supervised
the exchange of weapons. The best men put on
the best equipment, the worst men got the worst.
Once their bodies were encased in gleaming bronze,
they marched out. Earthshaker Poseidon led them,
gripping in his powerful fist a fearful sword,
with a long edge, like a lightning bolt, which no man
in grim battle could withstand—his fear would hold him back.
On the other side, glorious Hector organized his men. [390]
Then he and dark-haired Poseidon launched the fight,
the most destructive moments of that battle,
one commanding Trojans, the other leading Argives.
The sea surged up to the Achaean huts and ships,
as the two sides met with a tremendous noise,
louder than ocean surf booming on shore, driven there
from the depths by the harsh North Wind, louder, too,
than roaring fire as it jumps to burn the trees
in some mountain clearing, louder than the wind
which howls through the highest branches of some oak tree,
a wind which at its worst makes the most piercing noise—
that's how loud the shouting came from Trojans and Achaeans, [400]
terrifying screams, as they went at each other.

Glorious Hector first threw his spear at Ajax,
as he had turned to face him. The spear hit Ajax,
right where two straps intersected on his chest,
one for his shield, one for his silver-studded sword.
These saved his tender flesh. Hector was annoyed—
his weapon had flown from his hand and missed its mark.
He drew back into the group of his companions,
evading death. But great Telamonian Ajax
hit Hector with a rock as he was moving back—
there were many of them there rolling underfoot, [410]
right where they fought, rock wedges used to prop the ships.
Ajax picked up one of these and struck Hector's chest,
just above the shield rim, close to Hector's neck.
The impact spun Hector like a top, reeling
round and round. Just like those times Father Zeus
uproots some oak tree with a lightning bolt—it falls,
with an awful smell of sulphur spreading from it,
which no one close by can look at without fear,

for Zeus's lighting bolts fill men with terror—
that's how mighty Hector fell down in the dust.
His spear dropped from his hand. His shield fell on him,
his helmet, too. The finely worked bronze armour
round his body rattled. Raising a loud shout,
Achaeans ran up, hoping to drag Hector back.
Their spears flew thick and fast, but no one could wound him,
that shepherd of his people, with sword or spear.
Before that happened, the best men rallied by him,
Polydamas, Aeneas, lord Agenor,
Lycian leader Sarpedon, and noble Glaucus.
None of the others ignored Hector. In front of him,
they held round shields. His companions picked him up
and took him in their arms out of the fighting,
until they came to his swift horses waiting for him
with their charioteer and richly ornate chariot
behind the battle lines. With chariot and horses
they took Hector, groaning badly, towards the city.
But when they reached the ford on that lovely river,
the swirling Xanthus, whose father is immortal Zeus,
they lifted him out and set him on the ground.
They poured on water to revive him. His eyes opened.
He rose to his knees, but then vomited dark blood
and fell down on his back again, lying on the ground.
Black night was covering up his eyes, for his spirit
was still overpowered by that blow from Ajax.

When Argives saw Hector carried back, they charged in,
going at Trojans even more, their battle fury roused.
Far ahead of all the rest came Oïlean Ajax.
Jumping out with his sharp spear, he struck Satnius,
son of Enops, who'd conceived him with a Naiad nymph,
while he was tending cattle by the river banks
at the Satnioeis. Ajax, son of Oïleus,
famous spearman, came up and struck him in the side.
Satnius fell backwards. Trojans and Danaans
then fought on around him. Spearman Polydamas,
son of Panthous, came up to help. He threw and hit
Prothoënor, son of Areilycus, in his right shoulder.
The heavy spear tore through the shoulder. He fell down—
lying in the dust and clawing dirt. Polydamas,
with a great shout, exulted in his triumph:

"I don't think that spear flew in vain
from the strong hand of Panthous' valiant son.
Some Argive has got it in his flesh.
I think as he goes down to Hades' house,
he'll use it as a walking staff."

Polydamas's loud boasting pained the Argives.
He especially roused the spirit in fierce Ajax,
son of Telamon. For Prothoënor fell [460]
right next to him. So Ajax quickly moved ahead
and hurled his shining spear. But jumping to one side,
Polydamas nimbly avoided his dark fate.
The spear hit Archelochus, Antenor's son—
the gods had planned his death. It struck his spine up high,
where the head attaches to the neck—slicing through,
it cut both sinews. As he fell, his head, mouth, and nose
hit the earth well before his knees, and Ajax cried
to brave Polydamas:

"Consider this, Polydamas, [470]
and tell me the truth—is not this man here
worth killing to avenge Prothoënor?
He doesn't seem to be unworthy,
or from inferior parents. He looks like
a brother of horse-taming Antenor,
perhaps his son—he looks a lot like him."

Ajax shouted this, knowing very well the man he killed.
Trojans hearts were seized with grief. Then Acamas,
standing above his brother's body, with his spear
struck Promachus, a Boeotian, as he was trying
to drag Archelochus by his feet. Over the body
Acamas shouted then in triumph:

"You Argive boasters,
how you love to threaten! Misery like this,
all this suffering, is not for us alone. [480]
You too some day will be killed like this.
See how your Promachus now sleeps in death,
thanks to my spear. Whatever's owed to me
for my brother has not been unpaid long.
That's why in time of war a soldier prays
he leaves at home a brother to avenge him."

Acamas shouted this, bringing grief to Argives.
He really stirred the heart of warlike Peneleus.
He charged at Acamas, who did not stay there
to confront the charge of noble Peneleus,
so he then struck Ilioneus, son of Phorbas,
who owned many flocks, a man whom Hermes loved [490]
above all Trojans—he had made him wealthy.
Ilioneus was the only child his mother bore
to Phorbas. But then he was hit by Peneleus,
below his eyebrows, just underneath his eye.
The spear knocked out the eyeball, went in his eye,
drove through his neck, and sliced the tendons at the nape.
Ilioneus collapsed, stretching out his arms.
Peneleus drew his sharp sword and struck his neck,
chopping head and helmet, so they hit the ground,
the spear still sticking from the socket of his eye.
Holding it up high, like a flowering poppy,
Peneleus shouted a loud boast at the Trojans: [500]

> "Trojans, you can now tell the dear father
> and mother of fine Ilioneus to lament
> all through their house. When we Achaean lads
> sail in our ships from Troy, then the wife
> of this Promachus, son of Alegenor,
> will not be celebrating the return
> of her beloved husband."

Peneleos finished.
The Trojans were shaken, limbs trembling. Every man
looked around to see how he could evade grim death.

Tell me now, you Muses living on Olympus,
which of the Achaeans was first to carry off
bloody trophies from the men who'd just been slaughtered,
when famous Earthshaker turned the tides of war. [510]
The first for that was Ajax, son of Telamon.
He hit Hyrtius, the son of Gyrtius,
who led the courageous Mysians. Then Antilochus
stripped spoils from Mermerus and Phalces.
Meriones killed Morus and Hippotion,
while Teucer slaughtered Prothoön and Periphetes.
and Menelaus hit Hyperenor in the side,
a shepherd to his people. As it went through him,
the spear forced out his guts. His life-spirit left him

through the wound, and darkness veiled his eyes.
But Ajax, swift son of Oïleus, killed the most. [520]
For none could match his speed on foot, as he ran,
chasing men in flight when Zeus forced them to flee. 610

BOOK FIFTEEN
THE BATTLE AT THE SHIPS

[Trojans are being driven in retreat; Zeus wakes up on Ida, turns on Hera; Zeus instructs Hera to send Iris and Apollo to him; Hera returns to Olympus, gets Ares angry at Zeus; Athena restrains Ares; Iris and Apollo go to Zeus on Ida; Iris goes to Poseidon with Zeus' orders; Poseidon's resentment of Zeus; Poseidon withdraws from battle; Zeus sends Apollo to Hector; Apollo helps Hector recover; the battle starts again with Apollo leading the Trojans and pushing the Achaeans back; Apollo knocks down the wall and fills in the ditch; the armies fight around the ships; Ajax plays a leading role in defending the Achaeans; Hector seizes the stern of a ship, but Ajax holds Achaeans off with a long pike.]

Trojans, in full retreat, passed the wall and ditch,
with many slaughtered by Danaans. Then they stopped,
regrouping by their chariots, pale with fear, terrified.
At that point Zeus, lying on the peaks of Ida
alongside Hera of the golden throne, woke up.
He stood up quickly, looked at Trojans and Achaeans,
saw Trojans running off with Argives driving them
from the back, among them god Poseidon.
He saw Hector lying on the plain, his companions
sitting round him. Hector was gagging painfully,
dazed and vomiting blood. The warrior who struck him
was not the weakest of Achaeans. Watching him,
the father of gods and men pitied Hector.
Looking at Hera with a fearful scowl, Zeus said:

"You're impossible to deal with, Hera,
devising such deceitful tricks to get
lord Hector from the fight and make the army
run away. But I think you may be the first
to get rewarded for your wretched scheme,
when I flog you with my whip. Don't you recall
the time I strung you up on high, putting
two anvils on your feet, tying your wrists
with unbreakable gold rope? You hung there,
in the air among the clouds. Other gods,
all through Olympus, were very anxious,
but just stood there, unable to untie you.
If I'd caught one trying, I'd have grabbed him,
tossed him from the threshold so he hit ground,
his strength all gone. But even with all that,
I couldn't ease the constant pain I felt
for god-like Hercules. You and North Wind

drove him with storm blasts over restless seas.
Your evil scheming later carried him
to well-settled Cos. I rescued him from there
and brought him back to horse-breeding Argos,
but only after he'd endured too much.
I'll remind you of these things once more,
so you'll stop your malicious trickery,
so you'll see the advantages you get
from this seduction, this couch where you lay
to have sex with me, when you came from the gods
intending to deceive me."

Zeus spoke. Ox-eyed queen Hera
trembled as she answered—her words had wings:

"Let earth and wide heaven above be witnesses,
with the flowing waters of the river Styx,
on which the most binding, most fearful oaths
are made by blessed gods—let your sacred head,
our marriage bed as well, stand witnesses,
things on which I'd never swear untruthfully—
the harm that Earthshaker Poseidon did
to Hector and the Trojans, to help Argives—
in all that I had no part. His own heart
pushed and drove him on. He saw Achaeans
being beaten by their ships and pitied them.
I'd not advise him to go against you,
lord of the dark cloud, but to follow you,
wherever you might lead."

Hera finished.
The father of gods and men smiled and then replied—
his words had wings:

"Ox-eyed queen Hera,
if from now on you and I were of one mind,
as you took your seat among immortals,
then, no matter how much Poseidon's views
differed from our own, he'd quickly bring them
into line with yours and mine. If you're being frank,
speaking the truth, go now to that group of gods,
and order Iris to come here with Apollo,
the famous archer, so she may visit
bronze-armed Achaean soldiers and instruct

lord Poseidon to stop fighting and return
to his own house. And Phoebus Apollo,
after reviving Hector for the fight,
will breathe new strength into him. He'll forget
that pain which now weighs down his spirit.
He'll drive Achaeans back a second time,
once he's turned them into cowards. They'll run
back to Achilles' ships with many oars.
The son of Peleus will send out his companion,
Patroclus, whom glorious Hector will then kill
in a spear fight right in front of Ilion,
after many other young men have gone down,
killed by Patroclus, including my own son,
godlike Sarpedon. Then, in his anger
at Patroclus' death, godlike Achilles
will slaughter Hector. From that moment on,
I'll make the Trojans steadily fall back,
leaving the ships, until Achaeans take
steep Ilion, with Athena's guidance.
Until that time, I'll not restrain my anger,
nor let any other immortal god
assist Achaeans here, not before
Achilles' wishes have been carried out,
as I first promised, nodding my assent,
that day when goddess Thetis held my knee
and begged me to bring honour to Achilles,
destroyer of cities."

Zeus finished speaking.
White-armed goddess Hera obeyed him, leaving
Mount Ida for high Olympus. Just as the mind
races in a man who has voyaged to many lands,
when in his fertile head he recalls everything,
and thinks "I wish I were here! I wish I were there!"—
that's how fast queen Hera hurried in her eagerness.
Reaching steep Olympus, she found immortal gods
together at Zeus's palace in a meeting.
Seeing her, they all stood up and offered her
their cups in welcome. Ignoring all the others,
Hera took the cup of fair-cheeked Themis, the first
who came running up to meet her. Themis spoke to her—
her words had wings:

"Hera, why have you come? [90]
You look upset. Perhaps your husband,
the son of Cronos, has frightened you?" 110

Ox-eyed queen Hera then replied:

"Goddess Themis,
don't question me like this. You know his moods,
how he can be so harsh and overbearing.
You should start the communal banquet now,
here in the palace. You'll learn about these things
when all the immortals do—the evil plans
Zeus is proposing, something, in my view,
which won't please all hearts alike, in gods or men,
although some may still enjoy our feast."

Hera finished speaking. Then she sat down. 120 [100]
In Zeus's palace gods were angry. Hera's lips smiled,
but above her dark eyebrows her forehead frowned.
Irritated with them all, Hera then burst out:

"What fools we are to get incensed at Zeus
so stupidly! We're still keen to get close to him,
so we can hold him back with words or force.
But he sits there, all by himself, without a care,
without a worry, claiming he's supreme
among immortal gods, manifestly so,
for strength and power. So you just accept 130
whatever trouble he sends each of you.
In fact, I think bad trouble has now come [110]
to Ares—in that fight his son's been killed,
his favourite man, Ascalaphus, whom Ares,
mighty war god, acknowledges as his."

Once Hera finished, Ares struck his sturdy thighs
with the flat of his hands and, in his grief, burst out:

"Don't blame me, you dwellers on Olympus,
if I go down now to Achaean ships,
to avenge my son's slaughter, even if 140
it's my fate to be struck by Zeus's lighting,
to lie there with the dead in blood and dust."

Ares finished. Then he told Terror and Flight
to yoke up his horses, while he dressed himself [120]
in his glittering armour. Now, at that moment,
feelings between Zeus and other immortal gods
could have become much harsher, more incensed,
if Athena, fearing what might happen to the gods,
had not jumped up from the throne where she was sitting,
rushed out the door, seized Ares' helmet from his head, 150
grabbed the shield from off his shoulders and the spear
out of his mighty fist, and thrown them to one side.
Then with these words Athena went at raging Ares:

"You idiot! Have you lost your mind, gone mad?
Do those ears of yours hear anything at all?
Where's your common sense or your discretion?
Did not you get what Hera said just now, [130]
the white-armed goddess who's come straight from Zeus?
Do you want a belly full of trouble,
forced to come back to Olympus, though in pain, 160
sowing seeds of danger for the rest of us?
For Zeus will abandon men immediately—
those proud Trojans and Achaeans—and come here,
to Olympus, then start to go at us.
He'll lay his hands on each one of us in turn,
guilty or innocent. So I'm telling you—
set aside that anger for your son.
Better men with stronger hands than his
have already been destroyed and will be. [140]
It's hard to keep the families and children 170
safe for everyone."

Athena finished.
Then she made angry Ares sit down on his throne.
Hera called Apollo from the house with Iris,
messenger for the immortal deities.
Hera addressed them both—her words had wings:

"Zeus is ordering you two to go to Ida,
as fast as possible. Once you get there,
look in Zeus's face, do what he commands."

Having said this, queen Hera went inside the house,
sat on her throne. Flying off in a rush, the two gods 180 [150]
reached Ida with its many springs, mother of wild beasts.

They found all-seeing Zeus sitting on Gargarus,
wrapped in a finely scented cloud. The two approached,
came up, and stood there before cloud-gatherer Zeus.
Seeing them, Zeus's heart felt no anger. They'd been quick
obeying his dear wife. Zeus spoke first to Iris—
his words had wings:

"Go now, swift Iris,
convey to lord Poseidon these instructions,
report it all precisely—he's to stop,
to leave the battle strife, and go away
to the group of gods or to his sacred sea.
If he won't obey my orders and ignores them,
he should consider in his mind and heart
this point—no matter how mighty he may be,
he can't stand up to me if I attack him.
For I can say I'm stronger than he is,
more powerful. And I'm the first born.
Yet his fond heart thinks it's all right to claim
equality with me, whom all others fear."

Zeus spoke. Swift Iris, with feet like wind, obeyed.
She set off from Mount Ida for sacred Ilion.
Just as snow or icy hail flies down from clouds, swept on
by gales from North Wind, child of the upper sky,
that's how quickly swift and eager Iris moved.
She stood close by the famous Earthshaker and said:

"A message for you, Encircler of Earth,
dark-haired god—I've brought it here from Zeus,
who holds the aegis. He orders you to stop,
to leave the battle strife. You're to go away,
to the crowd of gods or to your sacred sea.
If you ignore and disobey his orders,
he threatens you he'll come in person,
to stand in war against you. And Zeus says
you should avoid his hands, asserting
he's a stronger god than you, more powerful,
and was born first. Yet your fond heart
thinks nothing of claiming equality
with him, whom other gods all fear."

The famous Earthshaker, enraged, replied:

"It's unjust!
He may be best, but he speaks too proudly,
if he restrains me by force against my will,
for I'm as worthy of respect as he is.
We are three brothers, sons of Cronos,
born from Rhea—Zeus, myself, and Hades,
third brother, ruler of the dead. The whole world
was divided in three parts, and each of us
received one share. Once the lots were shaken,
I won the blue-grey sea as mine to live in
forever. Hades got the gloomy darkness,
Zeus wide heaven, with the upper air and clouds.
But earth and high Olympus still remained
to all of us in common. So I won't go.
I won't follow Zeus's will. Let him stay,
for all his strength, happy with his third.
Let him not try to scare me with the power
of his hands, as if I were some coward.
It would be better if he'd use his threats,
his bluster, on those sons and daughters
which he himself produced. They, at least,
will have to listen to his orders."

Swift Iris, with feet like the wind, replied:

"Dark-haired Earthshaker, is that the message
I'm to take from you to Zeus, these harsh,
defiant words? Or will you change your mind?
For the finest hearts can change. The Furies,
as you know, always serve the elder one."

Earthshaker Poseidon then said:

"Goddess Iris,
what you say is right. It's commendable
when a messenger understands things well.
But this business brings harsh pain into my heart,
my spirit, when the deity whose share
is the same as mine and who's been given
a common destiny, wants to abuse me
with angry words. However, for now
I'll concede, for all my indignation.
But I'll tell you—this threat comes from my heart—
if, despite me, Athena, goddess of spoils,

Hera and Hermes and lord Hephaestus,
Zeus spares steep Ilion, if he's unwilling
to destroy it and to give great power
to the Argives, let him know that with us
an anger will arise that no one can appease."

With these words the Earthshaker left Achaean troops.
Going to the sea, he plunged in. Achaeans troops
missed his presence there among them.

Cloud-gatherer Zeus then spoke to Apollo:

"Dear Phoebus,
go down to bronze-armed Hector. Poseidon,
who encircles and shakes the earth, has gone
back to the sacred sea and thus avoided
my harsh anger. If he'd fought it out with me,
others would certainly have heard about it,
even gods below, down there with Cronos.
But for me this is much better, and for him, too,
that before we came to blows he backed off,
away from my hands, despite his anger.
We'd have had to sweat it out to end it.
But take this tasselled aegis in your hand
and shake it well to scare Achaean warriors.
And Apollo, far-shooting god, make Hector
your special care. Infuse him with great strength,
until Achaeans run back to their ships
and reach the Hellespont. From that point on,
I'll figure out how in word and deed
Achaeans may get new relief from war."

Zeus spoke. Apollo did not disobey his father.
Swooping down from Mount Ida like some swift hawk
killing pigeons, the fastest of all flying creatures,
he found lord Hector, wise Priam's son, sitting up,
no longer prone. He was just starting to recover,
to recognize his comrades round him. He had stopped
gasping and sweating, for aegis-bearing Zeus
had revived his mind. Apollo, the far worker,
stood close to him and said:

"Hector, son of Priam,
why are you having fainting spells right here,
away from all the others? Are you in trouble?"

Hector of the shining helmet, still weak, replied:

"Which of the mighty gods are you, my lord,
questioning me face to face? Don't you know
that Ajax, skilled at war cries, hit me,
as I was slaughtering his companions
by the ships' sterns? He got me in the chest [250]
with a rock and stopped my frenzied fighting.
I thought today my heart would breathe its last,
that I'd be seeing the dead in Hades' house."

Lord Apollo, son of Zeus, then answered Hector:

"Take courage now. Cronos' son has sent you
a powerful defender from Mount Ida,
to stand beside you as your protector,
Phoebus Apollo with his golden sword,
who's helped you before, you and your city.
But come now, tell your many charioteers
to charge the hollow ships with their swift horses.
I'll go ahead and smooth the horses' path. [260]
I'll turn back these Achaean warriors."

With these words Apollo breathed power into Hector,
his people's shepherd. Just as some horse in a stall
who at the manger has eaten well, then breaks his halter
and runs off across the plain at a thundering gallop,
eager for its usual bath in the flowing river,
exulting as it goes, with head held high, its mane
flowing across its shoulders, fully confident
of its own splendour, limbs carrying it lightly
to places where the mares are in the pasture,
that's how quickly Hector moved his feet and limbs,
as he urged on his charioteers, once he'd heard [270]
Apollo's voice.

Just as dogs and country farmers
chase a horned stag or wild goat, but the creature
saves itself in a sheer rock face or dark underbrush,
and men have no luck finding it, but their shouts

attract a bearded lion to their path, who scatters them,
despite their eagerness—that's how Danaans
for a while continued to press on in groups,
thrusting away with swords and double-bladed spears.
But when they saw Hector moving among the ranks,
they were afraid. Each man's heart sank to his feet.
Then Thoas, Andraemon's son, spoke out, the best man,
by far, among Aetolians, expert in the spear throw,
good at fighting hand to hand, and in assemblies
few Achaeans could beat him when young men argued.
Thinking of their situation, Thoas said:

"Here's something—
My eyes are watching an amazing sight.
Hector's got up again, evading death.
In our hearts we all hoped that he'd been killed
at the hands of Ajax, son of Telamon.
But some god has once more rescued Hector,
saved the man who's drained strength from many limbs
among Danaans. That will continue now,
I think, for he's not standing there like that,
so keen to fight, against the will of Zeus,
the thunderer. But come, let's all follow
what I propose. Let's tell most of the men
to move back to the ships. Those among us
who claim to be the best men in the army
will make a stand. If we can reach him first
and hold him off with our extended spears,
for all his fury I think his heart will fear
to mingle with this Danaan company."

Thoas spoke. The others heard him and readily agreed.
Those with Ajax, lord Idomeneus, Teucer,
Meriones, and Meges, like the war god Ares,
summoning the best men, recommenced the battle,
confronting Hector and his Trojans. Behind them,
most of the troops went back to the Achaean ships.

Trojans charged in a mass assault, led by Hector,
moving with huge strides. Phoebus Apollo marched
in front of Hector, his shoulders covered up in clouds,
holding the fearful aegis, with its double fringe
glittering ominously. The smith Hephaestus
had given it to Zeus to make men run from war.

Apollo now held this aegis in his hands,
as he lead on the army. The Argives, closely packed,
stood their ground. Shrill war cries came from either side,
arrows flew from bowstrings, many spears were thrown.
Some impaled themselves in the flesh of quick young men.
Many fell halfway before they reached white skin,
skewered in the earth, still longing to taste flesh.
As long as Phoebus Apollo held the aegis steady
in his hands, on both sides weapons hit their mark—
men kept on dying. But when Apollo stared directly [320]
at the swift Danaans and then shook the aegis,
howling a horrific roar, he bewitched them all—
the spirit in their chests then lost the will to fight.
Just as two wild beasts stampede a herd of cattle
or large flock of sheep, coming suddenly in dark night,
with no herdsman present, that's how Achaeans,
in their weakness, were then put to flight. Apollo
sent the panic, glorifying Hector and his Trojans.

Then, as men killed each other, the battle front collapsed.
Hector slew Stichius and Arcesilaus—
one a leader of bronze-armed Boeotians, [330]
one a trusted comrade of brave Menestheus.
Aeneas slaughtered Medon and Iasus.
Medon was a bastard son of noble Oïleus,
thus brother to Ajax, but lived in Phylace,
far from his native land. For he'd killed someone,
a relative of his step-mother Eriopis,
wife to Oïleus. Iasus, a commander
of Athenians, was known as a son of Sphelus,
son of Bucolus. Polydamas killed Mecisteus,
and Polites killed Echius fighting at the front.
Then lord Agenor slew Clonius, and from behind [340]
Paris struck Deïochus just below the shoulder,
as the latter fled from soldiers fighting in the front.
He drove the bronze spear straight through the man.

While Trojans were stripping armour from the corpses,
Achaeans jumped in the ditch they dug, on the stakes,
running to and fro, forced to withdraw behind their wall.
Hector then gave a great shout to his Trojans:

"Charge the ships! Leave the bloodstained spoils alone!
Whoever I see not moving to the ships

on the other side, I'll make sure he dies
right there. His relatives, men and women,
won't be burying him, once he's dead,
with the proper rites of fire. Instead,
the dogs will rip him up before our city."

Saying this, Hector swung his whip down from his shoulders,
lashing on his horses, calling Trojans in the ranks.
They all shouted with him, then drove the horses
pulling chariots. A tremendous noise arose.
In front, Phoebus Apollo easily knocked down
the banks of the steep trench—with his feet he pushed dirt
into the middle, making a long broad causeway,
as wide as the distance a man can throw his spear
when he's showing off his strength. Trojans poured through,
wave after wave of them, with Apollo leading on,
holding up the priceless aegis. The Achaean wall
he easily demolished, as a child will scatter sand—
in a childish game beside the sea he builds a sand wall,
then with his hands and feet flattens it for fun.
That's how you, archer Phoebus, at that time knocked down
what the Achaeans had built with so much effort,
such hard work. You sent them flying back in panic.
The Danaans halted to regroup beside their ships,
shouting to each other, lifting up their hands
to all the gods, with each man praying fervently.
Geranian Nestor, Achaea's guardian,
prayed most of all, hands stretched to starry heaven:

"Father Zeus, if, in wheat-yielding Argos,
any man has ever burned fat thighs
of bulls or sheep in sacrifice to you,
praying for his return, and you answered him,
nodding your head and promising assent,
Olympian god, remember that. Protect us
from a pitiful doom. Don't let Trojans
destroy Achaeans in this way."

Nestor prayed.
Counsellor Zeus, hearing the prayers of that old man,
son of Neleus, gave a great clap of thunder.
When Trojans heard aegis-bearing Zeus's thunder,
they attacked the Argives all the more, drawing on
their battle fury. Just as a great wave crashes

from the wide sea onto the planking of a ship,
driven by forceful winds whipping up the waves—
that's how Trojans, with tremendous shouts, came down,
through the wall, driving their chariots to the fighting,
the hand-to-hand combat with double bladed spears
by the ships' sterns. Trojans battled from their chariots,
Achaeans from high up on the planks of their black ships.
They climbed up on the decks to fight there with long pikes
lying in place for battles out at sea, jointed weapons
with forged bronze at the tip.

As long as Trojans and Achaeans
were fighting by the wall away from the swift ships,
Patroclus stayed sitting in Eurypylus's hut,
cheering him up with pleasant conversation,
relieving his black pain by spreading ointments
on his painful wound. But when he realized
Trojans were capturing the wall, while Danaans
were crying out and in retreat, Patroclus groaned.
Striking his thighs with the flat of his hands, he spoke
in evident distress:

"Eurypylus, I can't stay
with you any longer here, though you need help.
For a fierce battle has begun. Your companion
must look after you. I'll run to Achilles,
to urge him on to fight. Who know? With god's help,
I may rouse his spirit with my words.
A friend's persuasion perhaps can do some good."

Patroclus finished speaking and went off on foot.

Achaeans, with fewer numbers, still held firm
against advancing Trojans, but could not push them back
or dislodge them from the ships. Trojans could not break through,
get past Danaan ranks to assault the ships and huts.
Just as a carpenter's line makes ship's timber straight,
when a craftsman's hand applies it, a skilled expert
in all facets of his trade, inspired by Athena—
that's how tensely poised the fighting in that battle stood.
Men fought in various groups from one ship to the next.

Hector went straight for glorious Ajax, both men
struggling over the same ship. Hector was unable

to push Ajax back and burn the ship, while Ajax
could not drive Hector off, now that Apollo
had brought him so far. Noble Ajax hurled his spear.
He hit Caletor, son of Clytius, in the chest,
as he was bringing fire to the ships. With a crash,
he collapsed, and the burning torch dropped from his hands.
When Hector saw his cousin fall there in the dirt
by the black ship, right before his eyes, he called out
to his Trojans and Lycians with a powerful shout:

"Trojans, Lycians, Dardan spearmen,
don't hold back from battle in this danger.
Save the son of Clytius, just in case
Achaeans strip his armour now he's fallen
among this group of ships."

Saying this,
Hector threw his bright spear at Ajax, but missed.
Instead he hit Lycophron, son of Mastor,
from Cythera, one of those attending Ajax.
Since he'd killed someone in holy Cythera,
he lived with Ajax. Hector's sharp bronze struck him
on the head, above his ear, as he stood near Ajax.
He fell into the dust, tumbling from the stern
down to the ground. Then his limbs went slack.
Ajax shuddered and cried out to his brother:

"Teucer, my friend,
Mastor's son, our worthy comrade, has been killed.
He lived with us when he arrived from Cythera.
In our house we honoured him just as we did
our parents. Proud Hector has now killed him.
Where are your swift lethal arrows and the bow
Phoebus Apollo gave you?"

Ajax finished.
Teucer heard him and came up running to stand there,
beside Ajax, with his curved bow in his hand
and a quiver full of arrows. He began to shoot,
loosing arrows in quick succession at the Trojans.
He hit Cleitus, fine son of Peisenor, a companion
of Polydamas, noble son of Panthous,
who was holding chariot reins. He'd been busy
managing his horses, which he was driving

to where the ranks were most confused, as a favour
to Hector and his Trojans. But he was struck
by that evil no man can defend himself against,
no matter how much he desires. The painful arrow
lodged behind his neck. He tumbled from the chariot,
forcing his horses to swerve aside—that made
the empty chariot rattle. Polydamas
saw this right away and was the first to rush
into the horses' path. He then handed them
to Astynous, Protiaon's son, firmly telling him
to keep them close and watch. Then Polydamas
went back to join those fighting at the front.

Taking out another arrow, Teucer tried to hit
bronze-armed Hector. That would have stilled his heart
and stopped his fighting at Achaean ships, if Teucer
had hit him as he was showing off how brave he was.
But the perceptive mind of Zeus guarding Hector
was paying attention. He robbed Teucer of that triumph
by snapping the fine bow's tightly twisted string,
just as Teucer was lining up a shot at Hector.
The heavy bronze-pointed arrow flew awry.
The bow fell from his hands. Teucer, with a shudder,
spoke out to his brother Ajax:

> "Look at that!
> Some god is thwarting all our efforts in this fight.
> He's knocked the bow out of my hands and snapped
> my freshly twisted bowstring. I strung it
> just this morning so it would last a while
> and I could shoot scores of arrows with it."

Great Telamonian Ajax then answered Teucer:

> "My friend, leave your arrows and your bow—
> set them down, since some god has broken them
> to spite Danaans. Take hold of a long spear,
> set a shield against your shoulder—fight the Trojans.
> Encourage other troops to do the same.
> They won't take our well-decked ships without a fight,
> even though they're overpowering us,
> so let's concentrate our minds on battle."

Ajax spoke. Teucer took his bow into his hut,
then slung a four-layered shield against his shoulder.
On his strong head he set a well-made helmet, [480]
with a horsehair crest which nodded menacingly.
He took a strong spear with a sharp point and set off,
running quickly to take his place by Ajax.

When Hector saw that Teucer's arrow shot had missed,
he called in a loud voice to Trojans and to Lycians:

"Trojans, Lycians, Dardan spearmen, 570
be men, my friends. Recall your warlike power
among these hollow ships. For I've witnessed
with my own eyes how Zeus has cancelled out
an arrow shot at us by their best man.
It's easy to see how Zeus assists men, [490]
those to whom he grants great victories,
or how he drains men's strength, refusing
to protect them, as he now saps the power
among the Argives and works to help us,
as we fight by the ships. So stay together. 580
Should one of you meet his fate and die,
stabbed by a spear or cut down with a sword,
let the man die. To be killed defending
one's own native land is no ignoble act.
The man's wife is safe, his children live,
his house and land remain, if Achaeans leave,
returning to their country in their ships."

With these words, Hector roused each man's fighting spirit. [500]
On the other side, Ajax called out to his companions:

"For shame, Argives. Now the issue's clear— 590
either we'll be killed or we'll be saved,
if we can push the danger from our ships.
Are you expecting, if the ships are taken
by Hector of the shining helmet,
you'll all get to your native land on foot?
Don't you hear frenzied Hector urging on
his men. He's frantic now to burn the ships.
He's inviting them to fight, not to a dance.
For us there's no better choice or tactic
than to bring our arms and warrior strength 600 [510]
against them and keep fighting hand to hand.

It's better to settle this once and for all—
whether we live or die—than be hemmed in,
fighting a long grim battle, as we are now,
among our ships against inferior men."

Ajax's words rallied the fighting spirit in each man.

Hector then killed Schedius, son of Perimedes,
leader of Phocians. Ajax slew Laodamas,
noble Antenor's son, who led up troops on foot.
Polydamas slaughtered Otus of Cyllene,
comrade of Phyleus' son, who led brave Epeians.
Seeing this death, Meges then attacked Polydamas,
who slipped away from him, eluding Meges' charge.
Apollo would not let Panthous' son be killed
among those fighting in the front. But Meges
thrust his spear into Croesmus, right in his chest.
He fell with a crash. Meges started stripping armour
from his shoulders, but Dolops charged at him,
the bravest son of Lampus, son of Laomedon,
a skilled spear-fighter, who knew all there was to know
about fighting close in. Dolops moved up to Meges,
then with his spear struck the centre of his shield.
Meges' thick armour with fitted breastplates saved him.
Phyleus had brought this armour from Ephyre,
from the river Selleïs. A guest of his there,
Euphetes, ruler of men, had given it to him
to wear in war, protection from his enemies.
Now this armour saved his son's flesh from destruction.
Meges then thrust his sharp spear at Dolops' helmet,
striking it on top, on the bronze ridge, which held in place
the horsehair plume. He sheared it off. The whole plume,
a bright fresh purple, fell onto the dusty ground.
While Meges fought on, still expecting victory,
warlike Menelaus came to his assistance.
Standing to one side, out of Dolops' line of sight,
Menelaus speared his shoulder from behind.
The eager spear kept going, driving into Dolops' chest.
He fell on his face. The two men hurried forward
to strip bronze armour from his shoulders. But Hector
shouted to his kinsmen one and all. The first man
he yelled at was strong Melanippus, Hicetaon's son,
who used to graze his shambling herds in Percote,
when enemies were far away. Once Danaans

arrived in their curved ships, he'd gone back to Ilion,
where Trojans held him in respect. He lived with Priam,
who honoured him as if he were a child of his.
Hector called to him, speaking some angry words:

"Melanippus, why are you so feeble?
Is that fond heart in you not worried
for your slain relative? Do you not see
how they're busy stripping Dolops' armour?
Come on, we can't fight Argives from a distance.
We've got to stay with them until we kill them off,
or they capture Ilion completely,
butchering her people."

Hector finished,
then led on. Godlike Melanippus followed.

Then great Telamonian Ajax roused the Argives:

"Friends, be men. In your hearts remember shame.
In the killing zone let each man shame the rest.
That sense of shame saves more men than it kills.
Those who flee help no one, and they get no glory."

Ajax spoke. The men were already keen to fight,
but they took his words to heart and fenced in the ships
within a hedge of bronze. Zeus drove the Trojans at them.
Then Menelaus, skilled at war shouts, urged Antilochus:

"Antilochus, no other Achaean warrior
is as young as you or quicker on his feet,
or as brave in battle. So jump out there—
see if you can hit one of the Trojans."

Menelaus finished speaking and moved back again.
But his words aroused Antilochus. He stepped forward,
ahead of those fighting at the front, glanced around,
and threw his shining spear. Trojans moved back,
as he made his throw. The spear was not thrown in vain.
It hit proud Melanippus, Hicetaon's son,
in the chest, as he was moving up to fight,
right beside his nipple. He collapsed with a crash,
and darkness fell upon his eyes. Then Antilochus
pounced on him, like a dog leaping on a wounded fawn,

which some hunter hits as it rushes from its den, [580]
loosening its limbs. That how bold Antilochus
went after you, Melanippus, to strip your armour.
But Hector noticed him. He came up on the run
to face Antilochus directly. But the latter,
though an impetuous warrior, did not stand his ground.
He ran back, like some wild beast intent on mischief,
one that's killed a dog or herder with the cattle,
and scampers off before a crowd of people gather.
That's how Nestor's son scurried back. Trojans and Hector,
shouting loudly, showered him with lethal weapons. [590]
When he reached the crowd of his companions,
Antilochus turned around and made a stand there.

Trojans attacked the ships like ravenous lions,
fulfilling Zeus's will. He kept on giving them
great fighting strength, while he drained Achaean hearts,
denying them glory, as he drove the Trojans forward.
Zeus's heart was set on glorifying Hector,
son of Priam, so he might throw onto the ships
a blazing tireless fire and thus fulfil completely
that disastrous request from Thetis. Counsellor Zeus
was waiting to glimpse with his own eyes the blaze [600]
from a burning ship, for that would be the moment
he was going to push the Trojans from the ships
and give the glory to Danaans. With this in mind,
Zeus drove Hector, son of Priam, against those ships,
something Hector was furiously keen to do.
He raged like spear-fighting Ares or deadly fire
in the thickets of deep mountain forests.
He was foaming at the mouth. Below his eyebrows
the eyes were raging fire. The helmet round his temples
shook with menace, as Hector battled on, for Zeus, [610]
the god of heaven, was his protector, giving him
glory and honour, though he was but one man
among so many, for Hector's life would soon be over.
Already Pallas Athena was pushing forward
that fated day when he'd die at the mighty hand
of Achilles, son of Peleus.

But now Hector
was striving to break through the warriors' ranks,
probing them wherever he saw the largest groups,
the finest armour. But he could not break through,

for all his eagerness. In their defensive wall,
Achaeans held their ground. Just as a huge stone cliff
by the blue-grey sea stands firm against the wind
howling straight at it or the surging surf which pounds it—
that's how Danaans stood up to the Trojans then,
firmly with no falling back. But then Hector,
blazing all over like some fire, charged the throng,
falling on them as a fierce wave whipped up by a storm
crashes against a ship, which gets hidden in the foam,
blasts of wind shrieking past the sail, and sailors' hearts
tremble with fear as they are carried off from death
inch by inch—that's how hearts in those Achaean chests
were cracking. Hector charged them like a vicious lion
going at cattle grazing in huge numbers
in the bottom wetlands of a spacious meadow,
guarded by a herdsman who still lacks the skills
to fight a wild beast for the mangled carcass
of some short-horn heifer—with the herd he goes
always beside the first or last ones of the group,
but the lion leaps into the middle and devours a cow,
as all the others scatter—that's how Achaeans then
were all driven back in awe-struck terror by Hector
and Father Zeus.

But Hector killed only one man—
Periphetes of Mycenae, dear son of Copreus,
who used to take messages from king Eurystheus
to mighty Hercules.[1] This dishonourable man
had a son with much more virtuous qualities—
he could run fast and was an excellent fighter,
and for his mind among the best in Mycenae.
But this man then gave Hector even greater glory.
For as he turned, he tripped against a shield rim,
the one he carried, which extended to his feet
and protected him from spears. He stumbled and fell.
The helmet round his temples gave a dreadful clang,
as he went down. Hector saw this at once, ran up,
stood by Periphetes, and struck him with his spear
in the chest, killing him beside his dear companions.

[1]In a fit of insanity brought about by Hera, Hercules killed his wife and children. When he asked the Delphic Oracle how he could atone for this act, the oracle told him to serve Eurystheus, king of Mycenae for twelve years. Eurystheus, with Hera's help, set Hercules the famous twelve labours of Hercules.

Those men were sorry for their comrade, but could not help—
they were too afraid of godlike Hector.

By now they were in among the ships, encircled
by the outer row of those they dragged up first.
But Trojans kept on pouring in. So Argives were forced
to move back from the ships' first row. But they stayed
in a single group beside the huts, not scattering
throughout the camp, held there by shame and fear.
They called out to one another continually,
especially Geranian Nestor, Achaea's guardian.
He kept appealing to each man's parents, saying:

> "Friends, be men. Let sense of shame from all men
> fill your hearts. Remember, each of you,
> your children, wives, possessions, and your parents—
> whether alive or dead. They are not here,
> but, on their behalf, I beg you to stand firm.
> Don't let yourselves turn round and run away."

With these words, Nestor boosted each man's spirit.
Then Athena removed the strange cloudy mist
and cleared their eyes, so on both sides light streamed in,
back to the ships and out towards the battle groups.
They saw Hector, skilled at war cries, his companions,
all the soldiers standing idle in the rear,
all those warriors battling on by their swift ships.

The spirit in great-hearted Ajax could not bear
to take up a position with Achaea's sons
where there was no fighting. So with his huge strides,
he kept moving up and down the decks along the ships.
In his fists he held a long pike used in sea fights,
one with fitted sockets—thirty feet in length.
Just as a man well skilled in guiding horses
harnesses together four chosen out of many,
then drives them at a gallop from the plain
to some large city on a public highway,
while many men and women look at him amazed,
as he keeps leaping from one horse to another,
landing firmly, never slipping as they race ahead—
that's how Ajax, with huge strides, kept on moving
over many decks on those swift ships, shouting

so his voice reached heaven, telling Danaans
in fearsome yells to defend their ships and huts.

Hector did not stay in the well-armed Trojan group,
but, like an eagle swooping down upon some flock 800 [690]
of winged birds feeding by a river bank—
wild geese or cranes or long-necked swans, he rushed
straight at the dark-prowed ships to take on Ajax.
With his mighty hand Zeus pushed him from the back,
while urging other warriors to accompany him.

The brutal fight began again among the ships.
You'd think they were not tired at all, but only starting—
they went at each other with such ferocity,
as they faced each other in that battle. Each side
fought for different reasons—Achaeans thought 810 [700]
they'd never escape that danger and would be destroyed—
for Trojans, the heart in each man's chest was hoping
they'd fire the ships and kill Achaean warriors.
That's what they thought as they fought one another.

Hector grabbed hold of a seaworthy ship, at the stern,
the fine fast boat which brought Protesilaus to Troy,
though it did not take him back to his own native land.[1]
In close combat by this ship, Achaeans and Trojans
were hacking at each other. By this point, the battle
was no more a matter of standing at some distance, 820
enduring showers of spears and arrows, but of fighting
at close quarters—united by a common spirit— [710]
battling with sharp axes, hatchets, long swords,
and double-bladed spears. Many lovely swords,
with dark mountings, fell to earth, from hands and shoulders
of those fighting warriors. Earth flowed black with blood.

Hector seized hold of that ship and would not let go—
gripping the ornamental marker on the stern,
yelling to his Trojans:

"Bring fire! Raise a general shout!
Now Zeus has given us a day that makes up 830
for everything—to seize the ships that came here, [720]

[1]Protesilaus, as we learn in Book 2, was the first Achaean leader to jump on shore when the Argive fleet arrived at Troy. He was killed as he did so.

contravening the gods' will, creating
many troubles for us, because our elders
in their cowardice restrained me, held back
my troops, when I was keen to fight it out
at the ships' sterns. But if all-seeing Zeus
dulled our minds then, now he commands us,
now he drives us forward."

Hector shouted.
Then Trojans attacked the Argives even more intensely.

Ajax could not hold his position any longer.
Assailed by flying spears, he backed off a little,
abandoning the deck on that well-balanced ship.
He moved to the raised platform, seven feet high,
and looked for Trojans, always jabbing with his pike, [730]
pushing from the ship any Trojan bearing tireless fire,
always yelling fearful shouts at the Danaans:

"Friends,
Danaan warriors, companions of Ares,
be men, my friends. Recall your battle fury.
Do we think we've got people to help out
somewhere behind us or some stronger wall
which will hold off our men's destruction?
There's no nearby city fenced with walls,
where we can defend ourselves or with many men
turn the tide of battle. No, we're here,
on this plain crammed with well-armed Trojans,
our backs to the sea, far from our native land. [740]
The light that will save us lies in our hands,
not in holding back from battle."

Saying this, Ajax kept on jabbing ferociously
with his sharp pike. Any Trojan who charged the ships
with blazing fire, seeking to please Hector,
found Ajax waiting to slice him with his pike.
He wounded twelve men in close fighting by the ships.

BOOK SIXTEEN
PATROCLUS FIGHTS AND DIES

[Patroclus begs Achilles to send him back to the war to help the Achaeans; Achilles agrees but sets conditions; Hector breaks Ajax's spear, sets fire to the ship; Achilles sends Patroclus to war with the Myrmidons; Patroclus arms himself, Achilles organizes the Myrmidons in fighting groups; Achilles prays to Zeus; Patroclus goes into battle, driving Trojans back from the ships; Trojans retreat; Sarpedon rallies the Lycians, fights Patroclus; death of Sarpedon; Apollo cures Glaucus's wound; the fight over Sarpedon's body; Trojans are driven back towards Troy; Hector kills Patroclus.]

While the men kept on fighting at the well-decked ships,
Patroclus went to Achilles, his people's shepherd,
shedding warm tears, like a fountain of dark water,
whose stream flows over the lip of a sheer rock face.
Looking at him, swift-footed, godlike Achilles
felt pity. So he spoke to him—his words had wings:

"Why are you crying, Patroclus, like some girl,
an infant walking beside her mother,
asking to be picked up. She pulls the robe
and stops her mother strolling on ahead,
looking up at her in tears, until the mother [10]
lifts her up. You're crying just like that girl,
Patroclus. Is there something you need to say
to the Myrmidons or me? Some news
from Phthia that only you have heard?
People say Menoetius, Actor's son,
is still living, and Peleus is alive,
Aeacus's son, among his Myrmidons.
If these two had died, we'd have something real
to grieve about. Or are you feeling sad
for Argives as they're being obliterated
among the hollow ships for all their pride?
Speak up. Don't conceal what's on your mind.
Then we'll both understand."

With a heavy sigh,
horseman Patroclus, you then replied: [20]

"Achilles,
Peleus' son, by far the strongest of Achaeans,
don't be angry with me. Such great despair
has overcome the Argives. For all those

who used to be the bravest warriors
are lying at the ships with sword and spear wounds—
powerful Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
hit by a spear, famous spearman Odysseus
with a stab wound, and Agamemnon, too.
An arrow struck Eurypylus in the thigh.
Many healers, exceptionally skilled
in various medicines, are with them now,
tending their wounds. But it's impossible
to deal with you, Achilles. I hope anger
like this rage you're nursing never seizes me.
It's disastrous! How will you be of use
to anyone in later generations,
if you won't keep shameful ruin from the Argives?
You're pitiless. Perhaps horseman Peleus
was not your father, nor Thetis your mother—
the grey sea delivered you, some tall cliff,
for you've an unyielding heart. If your mind
shuns some prophecy, or your noble mother
has told you news from Zeus, at least send me,
and quickly, with the others in our troop
of Myrmidons. I could be a saving light
for the Danaans. Give me your armour
to buckle round my shoulders, so Trojans,
mistaking me for you, may stop the fight.
Then Achaea's warrior sons could get some rest.
They're worn out. War doesn't offer much relief.
We're fresh, so we should easily repulse
the Trojans tired of the battle noise
back from our ships and huts towards the city."

Patroclus finished his entreaty. How wrong he was!
He was praying for his own death, his dreadful fate.
Swift-footed Achilles, with some heat, replied:

"My dear divinely born Patroclus,
what are you saying? I'm not concerned
with any prophecy I know about,
nor has my noble mother said a thing
from Zeus. But dreadful pain came in my heart
and spirit when that man wished to cheat
someone his equal and steal away that prize,
and just because he's got more power.
That really hurt, given that I've suffered

in this war so many pains here in my chest.
Achaea's sons chose that girl as my prize.
I won her with my spear, once I'd destroyed
her strong-walled city. Lord Agamemnon
took her back, out of my hands, as if I were
some stranger without honour. But let that be— [60]
it's over, done with. Besides, my spirit
did not mean to stay enraged forever,
although I thought I would not end my anger
until the cries of warfare reached my ships.
Come, put my famous armour on your shoulders
and lead war-loving Myrmidons to battle,
since black clouds of Trojans now surround the ships,
expecting victory, and Argives stand
hemmed in by the sea shore, with little space,
while a city full of Trojans comes at them
without fear, because they don't see near them [70]
my helmet with its glittering front. Soon enough,
they'd be running back, filling the gullies
with their dead, if mighty Agamemnon
treated me with kindness—but now they fight
all through our camp. For there's no spear raging
in the fists of Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
to protect Danaans from disaster.
I've not heard the voice of Agamemnon
crying out in his vile head. As for Hector,
that man-killer's voice echoes everywhere,
shouting at Trojans, who fill all the plain
with their noise, as they defeat Achaeans
in this battle. Even so, Patroclus, [80]
you must stave off disaster from the fleet.
Go after them in force—they may fire those ships
and rob us of the journey home we crave.
Now, pay attention to what I tell you
about the goal I have in mind for you,
so you'll win me great honour and rewards,
so all Danaans will send back to me
that lovely girl and give fine gifts as well.
Once you push Trojans from the ships, come back.
If Zeus, Hera's mate, who loves his thunder,
gives you the glory, don't keep on battling
those war-loving Trojans with me absent. [90]
You would decrease my honours. Don't let
the joy of fighting and of killing Trojans

lead you on to Ilion, just in case
some deathless Olympian god attacks you.
Apollo, the far-worker, loves his Trojans.
So make sure you come back here again,
once your saving light has reached our ships.
Let others keep on fighting in the plain.
O Father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo—
if only no single Trojan or Achaean
could escape death, and just we two alone
were not destroyed, so that by ourselves
we could take Troy's sacred battlements!" [100]

As these two were talking on like this together,
Ajax was losing ground, under attack from spears,
overcome by the will of Zeus and Trojans,
who kept throwing weapons. The bright helmet on his head
rattled dangerously as it was struck. Many hits
landed on the well-made armour on his cheeks.
His left shoulder was worn out from always holding up
his shining shield. But for all the onslaught with their spears,
the Trojans could not budge him. Still, he was in trouble,
breathing heavily, sweat pouring down in rivulets
from every limb. He had no time for any rest. [110]
In every way, his desperate plight was getting worse.

Tell me now, you Muses living on Olympus,
how the fire first got tossed onto Achaean ships.
It was Hector. He came up close to Ajax,
then with his great sword hacked at Ajax's ash spear,
right behind the point. He cut straight through it.
Telamonian Ajax still gripped the spear,
but it was useless without its bronze spear head,
which fell some distance off, clanging on the ground.
The heart in mighty Ajax recognized gods' work.
He shuddered, for he perceived how high-thundering Zeus
was denying completely all his fighting skill, [120]
wanting the Trojans to prevail. Ajax backed off,
out of range. Then onto that swift ship the Trojans threw
untiring fire, which spread itself immediately
in a fiery blaze that no one could extinguish.
The ship's stern started to catch fire.

At that moment,
Achilles, slapping his thighs, said to Patroclus:

"Up now,
divinely born Patroclus, master horseman.
In the ships I see destructive flames going up.
Trojans must not seize our ships and leave us
with no way to escape. Put armour on—
and quickly. I'll collect the soldiers."

Achilles spoke. Patroclus dressed in gleaming bronze. [130]
First, he fixed on his shins the beautiful leg armour,
fitted with silver ankle clasps. Around his chest
he put on the body armour of Achilles,
swift-footed descendant of Aeacus—finely worked
and glittering like a star. On his shoulders he then slung
his bronze silver-studded sword and a large strong shield.
On his powerful head he set the famous helmet
with its horsehair crest. The plume on top nodded,
full of menace. Then Patroclus took two strong spears
well fitted to his grip. He did not choose Achilles' spear, [140]
for no Achaean man could wield that weapon,
so heavy, huge, and strong, except for brave Achilles.
It was made of ash wood from the peak of Pelion.
Cheiron gave it to Achilles' father to kill warriors.
Patroclus told Automedon to yoke the horses quickly,
the man he most esteemed after Achilles,
breaker of men, and the one he trusted most
to carry out his orders in a battle.
For Patroclus Automedon put swift horses
in the harnesses, Xanthus and Balius, who flew along [150]
as swiftly as the wind. These horses Podarge,
the harpy, had conceived with West Wind, as she grazed
in a meadow beside the stream of Oceanus.[1]
In the side traces he set Pedasus in harness,
a fine horse Achilles had taken for himself,
when he captured the city of Eëtion.
Though mortal, it kept pace with his deathless horses.

Meanwhile Achilles went to and fro among the huts,
getting all his Myrmidons to arm themselves.
They rushed out, like flesh-eating wolves, hearts full [160]
of unspeakable fury, beasts which in the mountains
have caught and ripped apart some huge antlered stag.

[1] In Greek mythology, the Harpies were hostile flying monsters with the head and torso of a woman and with the tail, legs, wings, and talons of birds.

Then in a pack they charge off, jaws all dripping blood,
to lap black surface water with their slender tongues
in some dark spring, vomiting up clots of blood
from their crammed bellies, while in their chests their hearts
are resolute. That's how the leaders and commanders
of the Myrmidons rushed around brave Patroclus,
comrade of swift Achilles, Aeacus' descendant,
who stood among them there, urging on the horses
and the warriors carrying their shields.

Achilles had brought fifty ships to Troy—
in each were fifty men, his own companions.
He had picked five trusted leaders to give orders.
His great power gave him overall command.
The first contingent was led by Menesthius,
with his flashing breastplate, son of Spercheius,
the river fed from heaven. Lovely Polydora,
Peleus' daughter, had conceived Menesthius
with timeless Spercheius, a woman copulating
with a god. But in name Borus was his father,
son of Perieres, who married her in public,
after paying out a huge price for the bride.
The second group was led by warrior Eudorus,
a bastard child of Polymele, Phylus's daughter,
a lovely dancer. The god who slaughtered Argus,
mighty Hermes, fell in love when he noticed her
among the singing maidens in the chorus
dancing for Artemis, the golden-arrowed goddess
in the echoing hunt. Hermes the helper,
going at once into her upper room in secret,
had sex with her. She bore him a fine son, Eudorus,
outstanding as a warrior and speedy runner.
But when Eileithyia, goddess of labour pains,
brought him into the light and he saw sunshine,
then strong Echecles, Actor's son, took Polymele
to his home, after giving an enormous bride price.
Old man Phylus was very kind to the young boy.
He looked after him, surrounding him with love,
as if he were his son. The third commander
was warlike Peisander, son of Maemalus,
a man pre-eminent among the Myrmidons
for spear fighting, second only to Patroclus.
Phoenix led the fourth contingent, and Alcimedon,
splendid son of Laerces, was leader of the fifth.

Once Achilles had set all the ranks in order
behind their leaders, he addressed them sternly:

"My Myrmidons, let none of you forget [200]
those threats you spoke about by our swift ships,
while I was angry—you'd go on and on
against the Trojans. Each of you blamed me:

'Cruel son of Peleus, surely your mother
suckled you with bile, you pitiless man,
who keeps his comrades by their ships
against their will. Why don't we go home
in our seaworthy ships, since evil rage
has fallen on your heart?'

That's what you men
complained about me in your meetings.
Now a great work of war awaits you,
the sort of enterprise you used to love.
So make sure each man's heart is resolute,
as you go to battle with these Trojans."

With these words, Achilles stirred the spirit in each man. [210]
As they heard their king, the ranks bunched up more closely.
Just as a man constructs a wall for some high house,
using well-fitted stones to keep out forceful winds,
that's how close their helmets and bossed shields lined up,
shield pressing against shield, helmet against helmet,
man against man. On the bright ridges of the helmets,
horsehair plumes touched when warriors moved their heads.
That's how close they were to one another. In the front,
ahead of all of them, two men stood fully armed—
Automedon and Patroclus—sharing a single urge,
to fight in the forefront of their Myrmidons. [220]
Achilles went into his hut and opened up the lid
on a beautifully decorated chest
placed on board his ship by silver-footed Thetis
for him to take. She'd packed it with cloaks and tunics,
and woollen blankets, too—protection from the wind.
There he kept an ornate goblet. Other than Achilles
no one used it to drink gleaming wine. With this cup
Achilles poured libations to no god but Father Zeus.
Taking this out of the chest, first he purified it
with sulphur, then rinsed it out in streams of water.

He washed his hands and drew some gleaming wine. [230]
Standing in the middle of the yard, he poured it out,
gazing up at heaven. Thunder-loving Zeus looked on.

"Zeus, king, lord of Dodona, Pelasgian,
you who live far off, ruling cold Dodona,
around whom live the Selli, your prophets,
with unwashed feet, who sleep upon the ground,
you heard me when I prayed to you before.
You gave me honour then by striking hard
at the Achaean army. So grant me now
what I still desire. I intend to stay
beside this group of ships, but I'm sending out
my comrade and my many Myrmidons. [240]
Send glory with him, all-seeing Zeus.
Strengthen the heart inside his chest, so Hector
sees if Patroclus can fight on alone
or if his hands are always conquering
only when I'm with him in the raging war,
in the centre of the havoc Ares brings.
But when he's pushed the fight and battle noise
back from the ships, let him return to me,
here at my hollow ships, without a scratch,
with all his weapons and companions,
men who battle in the killing zone."

So Achilles prayed.
Counsellor Zeus heard his prayer. He granted part of it, [250]
part he denied. Father Zeus agreed that Patroclus
should drive the battle fighting from the ships,
but not that he would come back safely from the war.
Once Achilles had made his libation and prayed
to Father Zeus, he went back into his hut,
put the goblet in the chest, came out, and stood there,
before his hut, still wishing in his heart
to see the fatal clash of Trojans and Achaeans.

The armed warriors who went with brave Patroclus
marched out in formation, until, with daring hearts,
they charged the Trojans, immediately swarming out,
like wasps beside a road, which young lads love to torment, [260]
constantly disturbing them in their roadside nests—
those fools make mischief for all sorts of people.
If some man going past along the road upsets them

by accident, they all swarm out with fearless hearts
to guard their young—with that same heart and spirit
the Myrmidons then poured out from their ships
with a ceaseless roar. In a loud shout, Patroclus
called out to his companions:

"You Myrmidons,
companions of Achilles, son of Peleus,
be men, my friends, recall your fighting strength,
so we may honour the son of Peleus,
by far the best Achaean at the ships,
with the finest comrades in a close combat.
Wide-ruling Agamemnon, Atreus' son, will see
his folly in not honouring Achilles,
the best of the Achaeans."

With these words,
Patroclus spurred the strength and heart in every soldier.
Then, in a massed group, they fell upon the Trojans.
Terrifying cries came from Achaeans by their ships.

When Trojans saw the brave son of Menoetius
with his attendant, both in glittering armour,
all their hearts were shaken, and their ranks fell back.
They thought Peleus' swift-footed son by his ships
had set aside his anger and made friends again.
Each man glanced around, checking how he might escape
his own complete destruction.

Patroclus was the first
to throw his bright spear right at the central mass
where most troops clustered, by the stern part of the ship
of great-hearted Protesilaus. He hit a man,
Pyraechmes, who led Paeonian charioteers
from Amydon, by the broad flowing Axius.
Struck by that spear in his right shoulder, he fell down
screaming on his back there in the dust. Comrades round him,
his Paeonians, ran off—Patroclus terrified them,
now he had killed their leader and best fighter.
He drove them from the ships and doused the blazing fire.
The half-burnt ship he left there. The Trojans scattered,
making a tremendous noise. Danaans poured out
from among the ships throughout the constant uproar.
Just as from a high peak of some massive mountain,

Zeus, who gathers lightning, shifts a bulky cloud,
once more revealing all the peaks, high headlands,
and mountain glades, while from heaven the huge bright sky
breaks open—that's how Danaans saved their ships
from fire and could rest, if only for a moment,
since the fighting was not over yet. At this point,
Achaean troops had not fully pushed the Trojans
from the ships. They had been forced back from the sterns,
but they still stood there, facing the Achaeans.

The leaders then began to slaughter one another
in the scattered fighting. First, Menoetius' brave son
with his sharp spear struck Areilycus in the thigh,
as he was turning. He drove the bronze straight through,
breaking the bone. Areilycus fell face down in the dirt.
Then warlike Menelaus hit Thoas in the chest,
in a place where it was open right beside his shield.
The blow collapsed his limbs. Meges, Phyleus' son,
saw Amphiclus charging at him, but hit him first,
spearing the top of his leg, where a man's muscle
is the thickest. The spear point sliced his tendons,
and darkness closed his eyes. Then the sons of Nestor
went into action. Antilochus jabbed his sharp spear
at Atymnius, driving the bronze point in his side,
so he fell forward. Maris, who was close by,
angry about his brother, charged Antilochus
holding his spear, and then stood by his brother's body.
But godlike Thrasymedes moved too quickly for him.
Before Maris could thrust, he lunged out at his shoulder.
He didn't miss. The spear point sheared off muscle
at the bottom of his arm and broke the bone in two.
Maris fell with a crash, and darkness veiled his eyes.
Thus, these two, slaughtered by two brothers, went off
to Erebus. They'd been Sarpedon's brave companions,
spearmen sons of Amisodarus—he'd reared
the raging Chimera, who killed so many men.[1]
Ajax, son of Oïleus, jumped out at Cleobulus,
captured him alive, stuck in that confusion. Even so,
Ajax struck him with his sword across the neck,
draining his fighting strength. The sword grew warm with blood.
Dark death closed up his eyes, and strong Fate embraced him.

[1]The Chimera was a destructive monster with a composite body made up of different animals. For a description of the Chimera and the story of its death at the hands of Bellerophon, see 6.228 ff. above.

Then Peneleus and Lycon charged each other.
Each had thrown his spear and missed, wasting the throw.
So they went at one another once again with swords.
Lycon struck the helmet ridge on its horse-hair crest,
but his sword shattered at the hilt. Then Peneleus
slashed Lycon's neck below the ear. The sword bit deep,
sinking the entire blade, so Lycon's head hung over, [340]
held up on one side only by the uncut skin.
His limbs gave way.

Meriones, with quick strides,
caught up with Acamas, then hit him with his spear
in his right shoulder, as he was climbing in his chariot.
He tumbled out. A mist descended on his eyes.
Idomeneus's pitiless bronze then struck Erymas
right in his mouth—the spear forced itself straight through,
below his brain, splitting his white skull apart,
smashing out his teeth. His eyes filled up with blood.
More blood spurted from his nose and open mouth.
Then death's black cloud enveloped Erymas. [350]

Thus these Danaan leaders each killed his man.
Just as ravenous mountain wolves suddenly attack
young goats or lambs and seize them from the flock,
when in the mountains an inattentive shepherd
lets them wander off—once the wolves see them,
they attack at once, for those young lack the heart to fight—
that's how Danaans then went after Trojans,
whose minds now turned to shameful flight, for they had lost
their will to battle on.

Great Ajax kept on trying
to throw his spear at bronze-armed Hector.
But Hector's battle skills kept his broad shoulders hidden [360]
behind his bull's hide shield, as he watched arrows
and thudding spears flying past. Hector realized
the tide of victory in that fight was changing,
but he stood there, trying to save his loyal companions.
Just as those times a cloud comes from Olympus,
moving from the upper air across the sky,
when Zeus brings on a rain storm—that's how Trojans
fled yelling from the ships, crossing the ditch again
in complete disorder. Hector's swift-footed horses
carried him and his weapons back, leaving behind,

against their will, the Trojans held up at the trench
dug by Achaeans. In that ditch many swift horses
lost their master's chariots when poles snapped at the end.
In pursuit, Patroclus, intent on killing Trojans,
yelled fierce orders to Danaans. Meanwhile, the Trojans,
shouting and scattering in panic, were jammed up
in every pathway. Under the clouds a high dust storm rose,
as sure-footed horses strained to get away,
leaving the huts and ships and rushing for the city.

Wherever Patroclus saw the biggest crowd
of soldiers in retreat, with a yell he charged at them.
Bodies kept rolling underneath his axle,
as men fell out when chariot cars rolled over.
His swift horses, those immortal beasts the gods gave
as a priceless gift to Peleus, flew straight on
across the ditch, charging forward. Patroclus' heart
was set on finding Hector, eager to strike him down.
But Hector's own swift horses carried him away.
Just as in late summer rainstorms, the dark earth
is all beaten down, when Zeus pours out his waters
with utmost violence, when he's enraged with men
who have provoked him with their crooked judgments,
corrupting their assemblies and driving justice out,
not thinking of gods' vengeance, so all the rivers
crest in flood, their torrents carving many hillsides,
as they roar down from the mountains in a headlong rush
toward the purple sea, destroying the works of men—
that's how, as they sped on, the Trojan horses screamed.

When Patroclus had cut the Trojans' front ranks off,
he pushed them back again towards the ships,
keeping them from the city they were trying to reach.
Between the ships, the river, and the lofty wall,
in that middle ground, he kept charging at them,
killing them, avenging deaths of many comrades.
There he first struck Pronous with his shining spear,
where Pronous's shield had left his chest exposed.
His limbs gave way, and he fell down with a thud.
Patroclus next rushed at Thestor, son of Enops,
who just sat crouching in his polished chariot,
paralyzed with terror, reins slipping from his hands.
Coming up, Patroclus struck him with his spear
right on the jawbone, smashing through his teeth.

Patroclus pulled his spear back, dragging Thestor
out across the chariot rail. Just as a man
sitting on a rocky point hauls up a monstrous fish
out of the sea, using a line and bright bronze hook—
that's how Patroclus dragged Thestor from his chariot,
mouth skewered on the shining spear. He threw him down,
face first. As Thestor fell, his spirit abandoned him.
Then Erylaus rushed up, but Patroclus struck him
with a rock right on his head, smashing the entire skull
inside his heavy helmet. Erylaus collapsed
face down in the dirt.

Death, who destroys men's hearts,
flowed all around Patroclus, as he slaughtered
Erymas, Amphoterus, Epaltes,
Tlepolemus, son of Damastor, Echius,
Pyris, Ipheus, Euippus, and Polymelus,
son of Argeas—all these Patroclus laid out,
one by one, on the earth, which nourishes all men.

When Sarpedon observed his Lycian companions,
who wear no belt around their tunics, being cut down
by the hands of Menoetius' son Patroclus,
he called out to reprimand his godlike Lycians:

"Shame on you Lycians! Where are you running?
Now's the time for you to fight on bravely.
I'll stand up to this man, so I'll find out
who it is that fights so well, who brings with him
so much destruction for the Trojans,
breaking the limbs of many fearless soldiers."

Sarpedon finished. He jumped out of his chariot
down to the ground holding his weapons. On the other side,
when Patroclus saw him, he leapt from his chariot.
Then they rushed at each other, screaming like vultures
fighting with hooked talons and curved beaks, screeching
on some rocky height.

Looking down on the two men,
the son of crooked-minded Cronos pitied them.
He spoke to Hera, his sister and his wife:

"Alas—Sarpedon, dearest of all men,
is fated now to die, killed by Patroclus,
son of Menoetius. My heart's divided,
as I think this over. Should I snatch him up
while still alive and place him somewhere else,
in his rich land of Lycia, far distant
from this wretched fighting, or have him killed
at the hands of Menoetius's son."

Ox-eyed queen Hera then replied to Zeus:

"Dread son of Cronos, [440]
how can you say this? The man is mortal,
doomed long ago by Fate. Now you desire
to rescue him from miserable death.
Do as you wish. But we other gods
will not all agree with you. And I'll tell you
something else—make sure you remember it.
If you send Sarpedon home alive,
take care some other god does not desire
to send his dear son from the killing zone.
Around Priam's great city, many men,
sons of the immortals, are now fighting.
You'll enrage those gods and make them bitter.
But if Sarpedon's dear to you, if your heart [450]
feels pity for him, then let him be killed
in a fierce combat at Patroclus' hands,
son of Menoetius. Once his living spirit
has abandoned him, send Death and sweet Sleep
to carry him away, back to the spacious land
of Lycia, where his brother and his kinsmen
will bury him with a mound and headstone.
That's what appropriate for those who die."

Hera spoke. The father of gods and men agreed.
But he shed blood rain down upon the ground, tribute
to his dear son Patroclus was about to kill [460]
in fertile Troy, far from his native land.

The two approached within range of each other.
Patroclus threw and struck renowned Thrasymelus,
lord Sarpedon's brave attendant, low in the gut.
His limbs gave way. Then Sarpedon charged Patroclus.
His bright spear missed him, but it struck a horse,

Pedasus, in its right shoulder. The horse screamed,
gasping for life, then fell down in the dust, moaning
as the spirit left him. The two other horses reared,
their yoke cracked, and their reins got intertwined
with the trace horse Pedasus lying in the dust.
But famous spearman Automedon cleared the tangle.
Pulling out the long sword on his powerful thigh,
he dashed in and, without a pause, cut the trace horse loose.
The two other horses straightened out, then pulled
together in their harness. The two men kept going,
taking up again their heart-destroying combat.

Once more Sarpedon failed with his bright spear. Its bronze point
sailed past Patroclus' left shoulder, missing him.
Then Patroclus, in his turn, threw his bronze spear,
which did not leave his hand in vain. It struck
right between Sarpedon's midriff and his beating heart.
Sarpedon toppled over, as an oak tree falls,
or poplar or tall mountain pine which craftsmen cut
with sharpened axes, to harvest timber for a ship—
that's how he lay there stretched out before his chariot
and horses, groaning and clawing at the bloody dust.
Just as a lion moves into a herd, then kills a bull,
a sleek great-hearted steer among the shambling cattle,
which bellows as it dies right in the lion's jaws—
that's how Sarpedon, leader of the Lycian spearmen,
struggled as he died, calling to his dear companion:

> "Glaucus, my friend, you warrior among men,
> now you must really show yourself a spearman,
> a true courageous fighter. You must now
> embrace this evil war, if you're brave enough.
> First, move round and urge the Lycian leaders
> to make a stand here by Sarpedon. And then,
> you fight over me in person with your bronze.
> I'll be a source of misery to you,
> and shame as well, for all your days to come,
> if Achaeans strip my armour now I'm down
> among the fleet of ships. So hold your ground
> with force. Spur on the army."

As he said this,
death's final end covered Sarpedon's eyes and nostrils.
Then Patroclus set his foot upon Sarpedon's chest,

pulled his spear out of the body. The guts came with it.
So in the same moment he tugged out the spear point
and took Sarpedon's life. Myrmidons reined in the horses,
snorting in their eagerness to bolt, now they had left
their master's chariot.

When Glaucus heard Sarpedon's voice,
he was overcome with savage grief, his heart dismayed
that he could not have come to his assistance.
With his hand he grabbed and squeezed his wounded arm,
still painful from being hit by Teucer's arrow,
as he attacked him on that high defensive wall.
Teucer had been defending his companions
from disaster. So Glaucus prayed then to Apollo:

"Hear me, my lord. You may be in Lycia,
somewhere in that rich land, or here in Troy.
But you can hear a man's distress from anywhere.
Bitter grief has now come in my heart.
For I have this cruel wound. Sharp pains
run up and down my arm, the flow of blood
won't stop. The wound wears out my shoulder,
so I can't grip my spear with any force,
or move to fight against our enemies.
And our finest man has perished—Sarpedon,
child of Zeus, who would not assist his son.
But, my lord, heal my savage wound at least,
and ease my pain. Give me strength, so I can call
my Lycian comrades, urge them on to war,
and I can fight in person by the corpse
of our Sarpedon now he's dead."

So Glaucus spoke in prayer.
Phoebus Apollo heard him. He eased the pains at once,
stopped the dark blood flowing from the cruel wound,
and filled his chest with fighting strength. In his heart
Glaucus recognized with joy that the great god
had quickly heard his prayer. First, he moved around
and spurred on Lycia's leading men in every spot
to rally round Sarpedon. Then, with long strides,
he went among the Trojans—to Polydamas,
son of Panthous, and brave Agenor. He searched out
Aeneas and Hector dressed in bronze. Approaching him,
he spoke—his words had wings:

"Hector,
now you're neglecting all your allies,
men who for your sake are far away from friends,
their native land, wasting their lives away.
You've no desire to bring assistance.
Sarpedon, leader of Lycian spearmen,
lies dead, the man who protected Lycia
with his judgment and his power—slaughtered
by Ares on the bronze spear of Patroclus.
My friends, stand by him, keep in your hearts
your sense of shame, in case the Myrmidons
strip off his armour and mutilate his corpse,
in their anger at the dead Danaans,
the ones killed by our spears at their fast ships."

Glaucus finished. Trojans were completely overwhelmed
with grief—unendurable and inconsolable.
For Sarpedon had always fought to guard their city,
although he was a distant stranger. Many soldiers
followed him, and he was pre-eminent in war.
Full of furious passion, they went at Danaans,
Hector in the lead, angry about Sarpedon.
But Patroclus, Menoetius' son, with his strong heart,
rallied the Achaeans. He spoke first to the Ajaxes,
both eager for the fight:

"You two Ajaxes,
now you must get your joy protecting us,
as you've done before, but even better.
The man who was the first to jump inside
Achaea's wall lies dead—Sarpedon.
We must try to mutilate the body,
to seize and strip armour off its shoulders,
slaughtering with our pitiless bronze
any of his comrades who defend him."

Patroclus spoke. The Ajaxes both were fiercely eager
to fight off the enemy in person. Then both sides
reinforced their ranks—Trojans and Lycians,
Achaeans and Myrmidons. These forces struggled,
with terrific shouts across the dead man's corpse.
The warriors' armour rang out harshly. Then Zeus,
to make the fight for his dear son more difficult,
spread ominous darkness over that fierce battle.

At first the Trojans pushed bright-eyed Achaeans back,
for they hit a man who was by no means the worst
among the Myrmidons—noble Epeigeus,
son of great-hearted Agacles. He had once been king
of populous Boudeum, but he killed a man,
a noble relative. So he came a suppliant
to Peleus and silver-footed Thetis, who sent him
to follow man-destroying Achilles, to sail with him
to Troy and fight the Trojans. Glorious Hector
struck him as he grabbed the corpse—with a rock
he hit his head and split the skull completely open
inside his heavy helmet. Epeigeus collapsed,
face down on the corpse. Death, who destroys men's hearts,
flowed over him.

Grief for his dead companion
filled Patroclus. He moved through those fighting in the front,
like a swift hawk swooping down on daws or starlings.
That's how fast, Patroclus, master horseman, you charged
the Lycians and Trojans then, with anger in your heart
for your companion. With a rock he hit Sthenelaus,
dear son of Ithaemenes, squarely in the neck,
snapping the tendons. Those fighting in the ranks in front,
including glorious Hector, moved back somewhat,
as far as a long javelin flies when it is thrown
by a man in competition showing off his strength,
or in a battle with a murderous enemy—
that's how far Achaeans forced the Trojans to move back.
Glaucus, leader of the Lycian spearmen, was the first
to turn around. He killed great-hearted Bathycles,
Chalcon's dear son, who lived at home in Hellas,
a man pre-eminent among the Myrmidons
for a wealthy and successful life. With his spear,
Glaucus turned suddenly, as Bathycles came up
in pursuit, then struck him in the middle of his chest.
He fell down with a crash. Achaeans felt keen sorrow
that such a worthy man had fallen. But Trojans,
elated, gathered in a crowd to make a stand
around him. Achaeans did not forget their courage—
they brought their fighting spirit to the Trojans.

Meriones killed a well-armed Trojan warrior,
Laogonus, daring son of Onetor, a priest
of Zeus at Ida, honoured by his people like a god.

Meriones threw and hit him underneath the jaw.
His spirit swiftly left his limbs, and he was carried off
by hateful darkness. Then Aeneas, hoping
to hit Meriones as he advanced under his shield,
threw his bronze spear at him. But Meriones,
looking right at Aeneas, evaded that bronze spear
by bending forward. The long spear impaled itself
behind him in the ground, its shaft still quivering,
until strong Ares took away its power.
With anger in his heart, Aeneas then called out:

"Meriones, you're a lovely dancer,
but if my spear had hit you, your dancing days
would have ended for all time to come."

Famous spearman Meriones then replied:

"Aeneas,
you may be brave, but it's hard for you
to crush the fighting strength of every man
who stands to defend himself against you.
For you, too, are made of mortal stuff.
If I threw, if my bronze spear hit you
in the middle of your body, then no matter
what your courage, or how much trust you place
in your strong hands, you'd quickly give me glory,
and your life to famous horseman Hades."

Meriones spoke. But then Menoetius' noble son
reprimanded him:

"Meriones, why do you,
an honourable man, talk on like this?
My friend, Trojans won't move back from the corpse
because someone abuses them with words.
They won't budge until the earth holds many men.
Our task here is to battle with our hands.
The assembly is the place for speeches.
We don't need more talk. We need to fight."

Saying this, Patroclus led off, and Meriones,
that godlike man, went too. Then the turmoil started—
just like the din woodcutters make in mountain forests,
a noise heard far away—that's how it sounded then,

the clamour rising from the widely travelled earth,
a clash of bronze and leather, well-made ox-hide shields,
as they fought there with two-edged spears and swords.
Not even a man who knew Sarpedon very well
could recognize him then, covered with blood and dirt
and weapons, from the soles of his feet up to his head.
For men were swarming round the corpse like farmyard flies
clustering by buckets full of milk in springtime,
when milk overflows the pails—that how those warriors
buzzed around Sarpedon then.

Zeus's bright eyes never once
glanced from that brutal combat, gazing down
and thinking in his heart of many different things
about how lord Patroclus ought to meet his death,
wondering whether glorious Hector should cut him down
with his bronze in that bitter fighting there
over godlike Sarpedon and then strip the armour
from his shoulders, or whether he should multiply
grim misery for still more men. As Zeus pondered,
he thought the best plan would be to let Patroclus,
brave companion of Achilles, son of Peleus,
drive the Trojans and bronze-armed Hector back again
towards their city, destroying the lives of many men.
So Zeus first took the courage out of Hector's heart,
so that he jumped into his chariot and turned in flight,
calling to other Trojans to run back, for he knew
that Zeus's sacred scales were changing. The Lycians,
though brave, did not hold their ground. They all fled back,
once they saw their king struck through the heart, lying there
in the pile of bodies. Many men had fallen down
on top of him, when Cronos' son intensified
fierce conflict. So the Achaeans stripped Sarpedon,
pulling the gleaming armour from his shoulders.
Menoetius' brave son gave it to his companions
to carry to the hollow ships.

At that moment,
cloud-gatherer Zeus spoke to Apollo:

"Up now,
dear Phoebus, and move Sarpedon out of range.
When you've cleaned the dark blood off his body,
take him somewhere far away and wash him

in a flowing river. Next, anoint him
with ambrosia, and put immortal clothes
around him. Then you must hand him over
to those swift messengers Sleep and Death,
twin brothers, to carry off with them.
They'll quickly place him in his own rich land,
wide Lycia, where his brothers and kinsmen
will bury him with mound and headstone,
as is appropriate for those who've died."

Zeus finished. Apollo did not disobey his father.
Descending from Mount Ida to that lethal war,
he carried lord Sarpedon quickly out of range.
After taking him a long way off, he washed him
in a flowing river. Next, he anointed him
with ambrosia and put immortal clothing round him.
Then Apollo gave Sarpedon up to Sleep and Death,
swift messengers, twin brothers, to take with them.
They quickly set him down in spacious Lycia,
his own rich land.

Patroclus then called to his horses
and to Automedon to pursue the Trojans,
the Lycians, as well. How blind he was, poor fool!
If he had done what the son of Peleus had told him,
he would have missed his evil fate, his own dark death.
But Zeus's mind is always stronger than a man's.
He can make even a brave man fearful, rob him
of his victory with ease. And Zeus can rouse a man
for battle, as he did then, putting desire to fight
into Patroclus' chest.

Who was the first warrior you killed,
Patroclus, and who the last, that time the gods
called you on to death? Adrestus was the first,
then Autonous, Echeclus, Perimus, son of Megas,
Epistor, and Melanippus. Then Patroclus killed
Elasus, Mulius, and Pylartes. The other Trojans,
each and every one of them, set their minds on flight.
At that point Achaea's sons would have captured Troy
and its high gates, at Patroclus' hands, as he raged
with his frenzied spear, but for Phoebus Apollo,
who stood there on the well-built wall, intending
to destroy Patroclus and assist the Trojans.

Three times Patroclus started to climb up a corner
on that high wall. Three times Apollo shoved him back,
his immortal hands repelling the bright shield.
But when Patroclus, for the fourth time, came on
like some god, Apollo, with a terrific cry,
shouted these winged words at him:

"Go back,
divinely born Patroclus. This city
of proud Trojans, according to its fate,
will not be ravaged by your spear, nor even
by Achilles, a far better man than you."

Apollo spoke. Patroclus drew back a little, [710]
evading the anger of Apollo, the far shooter.

Meanwhile, Hector pulled his sure-footed horses up
beside the Scaean Gate, uncertain what to do—
drive back to the confusion and then battle on,
or tell his soldiers to gather there inside the walls.
As he was thinking, Phoebus Apollo approached
in the form of Asius, a strong young man,
horse-taming Hector's uncle, Hecuba's blood brother,
Dymas' son, who lived by the river Sangarius
in Phrygia. In that shape, Apollo, Zeus's son, [720]
spoke out:

"Hector, why withdraw from battle?
That's not worthy of you. I wish I were
more powerful than you, as much as you're
superior to me. Then you'd quickly leave
this battle in disgrace. But come on,
drive your strong-footed horses at Patroclus,
so you can kill him, and then Apollo
can give you glory."

Saying these words, Apollo left,
a god among the toiling men. Glorious Hector
then told fiery Cebriones to lash the horses on,
drive them to battle. Apollo slipped into the throng
of fighting men. He totally confused the Argives,
conferring glory on Hector and his Trojans. [730]
The rest of the Danaans Hector left alone,
not killing any of them. His sure-footed horses

were heading at Patroclus, who, for his part,
jumped down from his chariot to the ground, holding a spear
in his left hand. In his right hand, he gripped a stone,
a large jagged rock, his fingers wrapped around it.
Taking a firm stance, he went for Hector right away.
He threw the rock and did not waste his throw—he hit
Cebriones, Hector's charioteer, a bastard son
of famous Priam, as he held onto the reins.
The sharp rock struck him on the forehead, bashing in
his eyebrows, breaking through the skull. His two eyes
dropped onto the ground, in the dust right at his feet.
Like a diver, Cebriones toppled over,
out of the well-made chariot. His spirit left his bones.
Then, horseman Patroclus, you made fun of him:

"Well now,
there's an agile man! What a graceful diver!
If he were on the fish-filled seas somewhere,
he'd feed a lot of men by catching oysters,
jumping over in the roughest water,
judging from that easy dive he made
out of his chariot onto the plain. I suppose
these Trojans must have acrobats as well."

This said, Patroclus rushed at warrior Cebriones,
moving like a lion who, while savaging some farm,
is hit in the chest, so his own courage kills him.
That's how you, Patroclus, rushed at Cebriones,
in your killing frenzy. Opposing him, Hector
leapt from his chariot down to the ground. The two men
then battled over Cebriones, like two lions
struggling on a mountain peak over a slaughtered deer,
both ravenous, both filled with fighting fury—
that's how those two masters of the war shout fought,
Patroclus, Menoetius' son, and glorious Hector,
over Cebriones, both keen to slash each other's flesh
with pitiless bronze. Hector grabbed the corpse's head,
refusing to let go. At the other end, Patroclus
gripped the feet. A desperate struggle then ensued
among the Trojans and Danaans fighting there.
Just as East and South Winds challenge one another
in mountain forests, shaking up deep stands of oak,
ash, and tapering cornel trees, hurling slim branches
one against the other, with tremendous noise

as the branches snap—that's how Trojans and Achaeans
collided with each other in that conflict.
Neither side had any thought of ruinous flight.
Around Cebriones many spears were driven home,
many winged arrows flew from bowstrings, many boulders
crashed on shields, as men kept fighting round him.
But the great man Cebriones, proud of his glory,
just lay there in the swirling dust, his horsemanship
now quite forgotten.

As long as the sun kept moving through
the middle sky, weapons from both sides found their mark—
men kept on dying. But when the sun came to the point
which shows the time has come to unyoke oxen,
then Achaeans, contravening Fate, were stronger.
They dragged warrior Cebriones out of range,
away from shouting Trojans, and stripped the armour
off his shoulders. Then Patroclus charged the Trojans,
intent on slaughter. Three times he assaulted them,
like war god Ares, with terrific shouts. Three times
he killed nine men. But when he attacked a fourth time,
then, Patroclus, you saw your life end. For Phoebus,
a terrible god, in that grim fight came up against you.
Patroclus failed to see Apollo, as he moved
through the confusion, for he advanced towards him
hidden in thick mist. Apollo stood behind him.
Then with the flat of his hand, he struck Patroclus
on his back, on his broad shoulders—that made his eyes
lose focus. Next, Phoebus Apollo knocked the helmet
from his head. The horsehair crest rolled with a clatter
under horses' feet. The dust and blood then stained
the helmet's plumes. Up to that time, gods had not let
that helmet with its horsehair plume get smudged with dirt,
for it was always guarding godlike Achilles' head,
his noble forehead, too. Later Zeus awarded it
to Hector to carry on his head, as his death loomed.
In Patroclus' hands, his heavy long-shadowed spear,
thick and strong, with its bronze point, was completely smashed.
His tasselled shield and strap fell from his shoulders
down on the ground. Next, Apollo, Zeus's son, loosened
the body armour on Patroclus. His mind went blank,
his fine limbs grew limp—he stood there in a daze.
From close behind, Euphorbus, son of Panthous,
a Dardan warrior, hit him in the back,

with a sharp spear between the shoulder blades.
Euphorbus surpassed all men the same age as him
in spear throwing, horsemanship, and speed on foot.
He'd already knocked twenty men out of their chariots,
and that was the first time he'd come with his own horses
to learn something of war. Euphorbus was the first
to strike you, horseman Patroclus, but he failed
to kill you. Pulling the spear out of Patroclus' flesh,
Euphorbus ran back again to blend in with the throng.
He did not stand his ground, even though Patroclus
had no weapons for a fight. So Patroclus,
overwhelmed by the god's blow and spear, withdrew,
back to the group of his companions, avoiding death.

But when Hector noticed brave Patroclus going back,
wounded by sharp bronze, he moved up through the ranks,
stood close to Patroclus, and struck him with his spear,
low in the stomach, driving the bronze straight through.
Patroclus fell with a crash, and Achaea's army
was filled with anguish. Just as a lion overcomes
a tireless wild boar in combat, when both beasts
fight bravely in the mountains over a small spring
where they both want to drink, and the lion's strength
brings down the panting boar—that's how Hector,
moving close in with his spear, destroyed the life
of Menoetius' noble son, who'd killed so many men.
Then Hector spoke winged words of triumph over him:

"Patroclus, you thought you'd raze our city,
robbing our women of their life of freedom,
taking them in ships to your dear native land.
You fool! In front of them, Hector's horses,
swift of foot, came out to fight. With the spear
I'm the very best war-loving Trojan,
and I've saved them from their fatal day.
Now vultures will eat you here. You poor wretch,
even Achilles, for all his courage,
was no use to you. Though he stayed behind,
he must have given you strict orders as you left,

'Don't return to me, horseman Patroclus,
at the hollow ships, until you've slashed blood
all over man-killing Hector's tunic
from his own chest.'

That's what he must have said
to win you over to such foolishness."

Then you, horseman Patroclus, your strength all gone,
replied:

"Boast on, Hector, for the moment.
Zeus, son of Cronos, and Apollo
have given you victory. They overcame me
easily, for they personally removed
the armour from my shoulders. If twenty men
came to confront me, just like you,
all would have died, slaughtered by my spear.
But deadly Fate and Leto's son have slain me—
and Euphorbus. So you're the third in line [850]
at my death. But I'll tell you something else—
bear this in mind—you'll not live long yourself.
Your death is already standing close at hand,
a fatal power. For you'll be destroyed
at brave Achilles' hands, descendant of Aeacus."

As Patroclus said these words to Hector,
the finality of death flowed over him.
His spirit fluttered from his limbs and went to Hades,
lamenting its own fate, the loss of youthful manhood.
As Patroclus died, splendid Hector spoke to him:

"Patroclus, why predict my own death for me?
Who knows? It may happen that Achilles, [860]
son of fair-haired Thetis, is hit first
by a spear of mine and gives up his life."

As he said this, Hector set his foot down on the corpse,
pulled the bronze spear from the wound, and pushed the body
backwards. Then with that spear he set off at once,
going after Automedon, godlike attendant
to the swift-footed kinsman of Aeacus,
eager to strike at him. But he'd been carried off
by those swift immortal horses, the priceless gift
presented by the gods to Peleus.

BOOK SEVENTEEN
THE FIGHT OVER PATROCLUS

[The men fight over the body of Patroclus; the exploits of Menelaus in that fight; Apollo rouses Hector to attack, Menelaus retreats; Ajax and Menelaus then move up over the body; Glaucus upbraids Hector; Hector attacks again, with Zeus's support; the battle goes back and forth over the body; Zeus spreads fog over the battle field; Apollo rouses Aeneas to fight; the horses of Achilles mourn Patroclus, refusing to move; Automedon takes them into battle with Zeus's help; Hector and Aeneas go after Achilles's horses, but are pushed back; Athena rouses Menelaus to fight on; Apollo does the same for Hector; Achaeans are driven back; Zeus lifts the fog from the battle; Menelaus goes to Antilochus, tells him to give Achilles the news of Patroclus's death; the Achaeans move off with the body of Patroclus, back towards the ships]

In that battle, warlike Menelaus, son of Atreus,
noticed that the Trojans had just killed Patroclus.
Dressed in gleaming armour, he strode through the ranks
of those fighting in the front, then made a stand
over the corpse, like a mother beside her calf,
lowing over her first born, with no experience
of giving birth till then. In just that way,
fair-haired Menelaus stood above Patroclus.
In front of him he held his spear and a round shield,
eager to kill anyone who might come at him.
But Euphorbus, son of Panthous, with his ash spear,
also knew that brave Patroclus had been killed.
Moving up close to the dead body, he spoke out,
addressing warlike Menelaus:

> "Divinely raised Menelaus, son of Atreus,
> leader of men—go back. Leave this corpse.
> Abandon these battle trophies. No Trojan
> and no famous ally hit Patroclus
> before I struck him with my spear
> in that murderous fight. So let the Trojans
> give me the honour and the fame. If not,
> I'll steal your sweet life with one spear throw."

With a great scowl, fair-haired Menelaus then replied:

> "By Father Zeus, such arrogant boasting
> has no great merit. The spirit in a leopard,
> lion, or ferocious boar, whose chest
> contains the fiercest and the strongest fury—
> none of these, it seems, can match the arrogance

in sons of Panthous with their long ash spears.
But not even horse-taming Hyperenor,
strong as he was, got much enjoyment
from his youthful vigour, once he'd mocked me,
as he waited when I came against him,
calling me the most unworthy warrior
among Danaans. I don't think he went home
to cheer up his dear wife and worthy parents
on his own two feet. So if you stand here
against me, I'll drain your strength as well,
just as I did his. In fact, I'd advise you
to retreat, get back to your companions.
Don't oppose me, in case you run into
something unwelcome. From experience
there are lessons even fools can learn."

Menelaus spoke,
but he failed to sway Euphorbus, who replied:

"Now, indeed, divinely raised Menelaus,
you'll surely make up for my brother's death,
Hyperenor, whom you killed. You speak
in triumph about widowing his wife
in her new bridal home, bringing sorrow,
grief beyond enduring, to his parents.
I may provide them with a way of easing
their sad misery, if I bring home your head
and armour and toss them in the hands
of Panthous and queen Phrontis. In any case,
we won't delay our struggle long. Let's start—
fight on, whether for victory or flight."

Saying this, Euphorbus struck Menelaus's round shield.
But the bronze did not break through. The powerful shield
bent back the point. Then Menelaus, Atreus's son,
praying to Father Zeus, charged in clutching his spear,
as Euphorbus was moving back. He struck him
at the bottom of his throat, putting his full weight
behind the blow, with confidence in his strong fists.
The spear point drove straight through Euphorbus's soft neck.
He fell with a thud, his armour clanging round him.
His hair, as lovely as the fine curls on the Graces,
with braids in gold and silver clips, was soaked in blood.
Just as a man tends a flourishing olive shoot,

in some lonely place with a rich source of water,
a lovely vigorous sapling stirred with the motion
of every breeze, so it bursts out in white blossoms—
but then a sudden stormy wind arising rips it
from its trench and lays it out prone on the earth—
that's how Menelaus, son of Atreus, cut down
Panthous' son, Euphorbus of the fine ash spear.
He then began to strip the armour off.

Just as a mountain lion, trusting its own strength,
snatches the finest heifer from a grazing herd,
seizing her first by the neck in its powerful jaws,
then breaks the neck and savagely rips that cow apart,
gorging itself on blood and all the entrails,
while around it dogs and herdsmen cry out in distress,
again and again, but at a distance, unwilling
to confront the beast, pale in the grip of fear—
in just that way, no Trojan's heart was brave enough
to move up and fight against fine Menelaus.
Then Atreus' son would have easily carried off
the celebrated armour of the son of Panthous,
if Phoebus Apollo had not been offended.
He urged Hector, swift Ares' equal, to challenge
Menelaus. Taking on the likeness of a man,
Mentes, leader of the Cicones, Apollo
addressed Hector with these winged words:

> "Hector,
> now you're going after something you'll not catch,
> chasing the horses of warrior Achilles,
> descendant of Aeacus. No mortal man,
> except Achilles, can control or drive them,
> for an immortal mother gave him birth.
> Meanwhile, warrior Menelaus, Atreus' son,
> standing by Patroclus, has just killed
> the best man of the Trojans, Euphorbus,
> son of Panthous, ending his brave fight."

With these words, Apollo withdrew again, a god
among the toiling men. A bitter cloud of sorrow
darkened Hector's heart. Looking through the ranks of men,
he quickly noticed Menelaus stripping off
the famous armour, with Euphorbus on the ground,
lying there, blood flowing from his open wound.

Armed in his gleaming bronze, Hector marched ahead
through those fighting in the front, with a piercing shout,
like the inextinguishable fires of Hephaestus.
Hearing that penetrating yell, Atreus's son
grew worried. He spoke to his courageous heart: [90]

"Here's trouble. If I leave this fine armour
and Patroclus, who lies here because he tried
to avenge my honour, some Danaan,
seeing this, will call me a disgrace.
But if I fight Hector and his Trojans
all by myself out of a sense of shame,
then they'll surround me—many warriors
against one man. Hector's gleaming helmet
is bringing all the Trojans straight at me.
But why's my fond heart debating about this?
When a man wants to cross what gods have willed,
fighting a man the gods are honouring,
then some disaster soon rolls over him.
So none of the Danaans seeing me here [100]
moving back from Hector will find that shameful,
seeing that Hector fights with gods' assistance.
But if I could find Ajax, skilled in war shouts,
the two of us, drawing on our fighting strength,
might come back, even against gods' will,
so we could find a way to save this corpse,
for Achilles' sake, the son of Peleus.
In this bad situation, that's what's best."

As Menelaus thought these matters over
in his mind and heart, the Trojan ranks moved forward,
with Hector in the lead. Menelaus then backed off,
leaving the corpse behind. He kept looking round,
like a bearded lion which dogs and men chase off— [110]
their spears and shouts drive it from the farm. The beast's heart,
though brave, grows cold, moving from that farmyard
against its will—that's how fair-haired Menelaus
backed off from Patroclus. He turned round, standing firm,
once he reached the company of his companions.
He looked for mighty Ajax, son of Telamon,
and soon observed him on the left flank of the army,
rallying his companions, urging them to fight.
For Phoebus Apollo had made them all fall back

in an amazing panic. Going off on the run,
Menelaus came up to Ajax, then spoke out:

"Ajax, my friend, come here. Let's hurry over [120]
to defend the dead Patroclus. Let's see whether,
for Achilles' sake, we can at least retrieve
the naked corpse. Hector with his bright helmet
already has the armour."

Menelaus spoke,
rousing the heart in warlike Ajax, who moved up
among those fighting in the front. With him went
fair-haired Menelaus. Once Hector had stripped off
the famous armour from Patroclus, he then tried
to drag away the body, so with his sharp bronze
he could hack Patroclus' head from off its shoulders,
then pull back the corpse to give to Trojan dogs.
But Ajax moved in close with his shield up, like a wall.
So Hector gave ground, withdrawing to the company
of his companions, then jumped up in his chariot. [130]
He gave the splendid armour to some Trojans
to carry to the city, something that would bring him
special glory. Ajax then covered Menoetius' son
with his broad shield and made his stand there, like a lion
over its cubs, a beast which hunters run across
in the forest as it leads its young along.
The lion shows off its power and contracts its brows
into fine slits which conceal its eyes—that's how Ajax
defended warrior Patroclus. With him there,
on the other side, stood war-loving Menelaus,
son of Atreus, heart filled with utmost sorrow.

Then Glaucus, son of Hippolochus, commander [140]
of the Lycians, looking at Hector with a frown,
criticized him harshly:

"Hector, to look at you,
you're the finest man we've got, but in battle
you're sadly lacking. That fame you have
as a courageous warrior is misplaced.
You're a man who runs away. Consider now,
how are you going to save your city
only with those soldiers born in Ilion?
For no Lycian will set out to fight

against Danaans for your city's sake,
since there's apparently no gratitude
for taking on our enemies without a rest.
How can you rescue a lesser warrior
from the thick of battle, ungrateful man,
when Sarpedon, once your companion,
your guest, you abandon to the Argives,
to become their battle spoils, their trophy.
He often served you well—both your city
and you personally, while he was alive.
But now you lack the courage to protect him
from the dogs. So now, if any Lycian man
will listen to me, we'll go home, and Troy
will witness its utter devastation.
If Trojans now could fill themselves with courage,
a resolute and dauntless spirit, the sort
men have when they defend their native land,
struggling hard against a hostile army,
then we'd haul Patroclus back to Ilion
at once. If we pulled him from the battle
and brought the corpse to Priam's mighty city,
Argives would quickly trade the lovely armour
belonging to Sarpedon, and we could then
take his body back to Troy. Their dead man
attended on the greatest of the Argives,
who leads the best spear fighters by their ships.
But you don't dare stand up to Ajax
in the thick of battle, look that brave warrior
in the eye, or confront him one on one,
since he's a better man than you."

Hector of the gleaming helmet, looking angry, then replied:

"Glaucus, why would a man like you speak out
so arrogantly? My friend, I thought you had
a better mind than any other man
living in fertile Lycia. But now,
on the basis of what you've just said,
I find your thinking questionable.
You say I didn't stand to fight great Ajax.
I'm not afraid of war, the din of chariots,
but there's always something more powerful,
the mind of Zeus, who bears the aegis.
Zeus makes even brave men run away,

stealing their victory with ease, or in person
rouses men to fight. But come, my friend,
stand here beside me. Look at what I do,
whether I'm a coward all day long,
as you allege, or whether I'll prevent
Danaans, for all their fighting frenzy,
from defending dead Patroclus."

Hector spoke.
Then, with a great shout, he called out to his Trojans:

"Trojans, Lycians, Dardan spearmen,
be men, my friends. Recall your battle fury,
until I can put on the lovely armour
of great Achilles, which I stripped off
the brave Patroclus, once I'd killed him."

With these words, Hector of the shining helmet
left that furious conflict and strode quickly off
with rapid strides, following his companions,
the men taking the famous armour of Achilles
towards the city. He caught them a short distance off.
Then, standing apart from that dreadful fight,
he changed his armour. He gave his own equipment
to war-loving Trojans to carry to the city,
sacred Ilion, then put on the immortal armour
of Achilles, son of Peleus, which heavenly gods
had given to Achilles' well-loved father.
Once he'd grown old, Peleus gave it to his son,
who, for all his father's armour, did not reach old age.

From far away, cloud-gatherer Zeus gazed down on Hector,
as he dressed himself in the battle armour
of Peleus' godlike son. Shaking his head, Zeus
then spoke to his own heart:

"You poor wretch,
you're not considering your own death at all—
it's getting closer. So you're putting on
the immortal armour of the finest man,
who makes other men afraid. You've just killed
his comrade, a kind, courageous man,
and then vainly stripped the armour off
his head and shoulders. But for the moment,
I'll give you great power, to compensate you,

since you'll not be coming back from battle,
or handing over to Andromache
the glorious armour of the son of Peleus."

The son of Cronos spoke, then nodded his dark brow.
He changed the armour so it suited Hector's body.
Then the fearful war god Ares entered Hector,
filling his limbs with strength and courage. He set off,
to the tremendous shouts of all his famous allies,
as he paraded there in front of them, dazzling them all
with the armour of the great-hearted son of Peleus.
Hector moved around with words of encouragement
to everyone—Mesthles, Glaucus, Medon,
Thersilochus, Asteropaeus, Deisenor,
Hippothous, Phorcys, Chroraius, and Ennomus,
who read omens found in birds. Hector urged them on—
his words had wings:

"Listen to me,
you countless tribes of allies, you neighbours.
I called you here, each from your own city,
not because I wished a large display
or needed it, but so you might help me
rescue Trojan wives and little children
from warrior Achaeans. With this in mind,
I squander the resources of my people,
with food supplies and presents, to strengthen
hearts in each of you. So now let everyone
turn round and face the enemy directly,
whether to survive or die. For in that choice
we find the joy which we derive from war.
Patroclus is dead, but whoever pulls him
to horse-taming Trojans here and makes Ajax
move away—I'll give him half the spoils,
keeping the other half myself, and he'll get
a share of glory equal to my own."

Hector finished. Trojans then threw their full weight
straight at the Danaans, holding spears up high,
their hearts hoping they would drag that body
away from Ajax, son of Telamon. What fools!
By that corpse Ajax took many of their lives.

Then Ajax said to Menelaus, skilled at war shouts:

"Divinely reared Menelaus, my friend,
I don't expect we two will be returning
from this battle. I'm not concerned so much
about Patroclus' corpse, which soon enough [240]
will be food for Trojan dogs and birds,
but I fear for my own head, and yours, as well,
which may be in danger. Hector's become
a war cloud which envelops everything.
And our complete destruction's plain to see.
So come, call out to Achaea's finest men.
One of them may hear."

Ajax finished.
Menelaus, skilled at war shouts, followed his advice.
He shouted to Danaans with a piercing yell:

"Friends, rulers and leaders of Achaeans,
all you who drink your wine at public cost
with Agamemnon and Menelaus, [250]
sons of Atreus, all you who rule your people,
to whom Zeus has given honour and glory,
it's difficult for me to see precisely
what each of you is doing—this conflict
rages on so fiercely. But all of you
must come here, even if not called by name,
for you'll feel shame and anger in your hearts,
if Patroclus should become a toy
for Trojan dogs to play with."

Menelaus stopped.
Swift Ajax, son of Oïleus, heard him clearly.
He was the first to come running through the battle
to meet Menelaus. After him came others—
Idomeneus and his companion Meriones,
the man-killing war god's equal, and others, too.
But what man has a mind which could name all those [260]
who came up behind these warriors in that conflict
to reinforce Achaeans?

Trojans then drove forward
in a single group with Hector leading them.
Just as a huge wave roars into a flowing stream
at the mouth of a river fed from heaven,
with headlands on both sides of the shoreline

echoing the boom of salt water surf beyond—
that's how Trojans roared as they came on in attack.
Achaeans held firm around Menoetius's son,
united by a common spirit, behind a fence
of their bronze shields. The son of Cronos
cast a thick mist down on their glittering helmets,
for Zeus had not felt hostile to Patroclus [270]
in earlier days, when he was alive and comrade
to Achilles. So Zeus did not want Patroclus
to become merely a plaything for the dogs
of his Trojan enemies. Thus, he encouraged
Patroclus's companions to defend him there.
At first the Trojans drove bright-eyed Achaeans back,
so they retreated from the body, leaving it behind.
But the Trojans, though confident with their long spears,
did not kill anyone, for all their eagerness.
Still, they did begin to drag away the body.
But the Achaean pull back was only temporary,
for Ajax quickly rallied them. Of all Danaans
he was the finest in his looks and actions [280]
after the son of Peleus. Ajax strode around
through those fighting in the front, like a mountain boar
who scatters dogs and strong young men with ease,
as it wheels through forest clearings—that's how Ajax,
splendid son of noble Telamon, easily pushed back
the Trojan ranks, as he moved among them. They stood there,
over Patroclus, wanting desperately to haul him off,
back to their city, and win glory for themselves.

Then Hippothous, noble son of Pelasgian Lethous,
began to drag the body by the feet back through the crowd.
He tied his shield strap round both ankle tendons, [290]
eager to please Hector and the Trojans. But right away
he faced a danger which no one could avert,
no matter how much he might want to. For Ajax,
moving quickly through the throng, struck him at close range
on the bronze cheek piece of his helmet. The spear point
smashed through the helmet with its horsehair crest, driven
by the force of Ajax's mighty fists in that huge spear.
Blood and brains gushed from the wound and oozed together
along the socket of the spear. The strength drained out of him
where he was standing. Hippothous let go the feet
of brave Patroclus, allowing them to fall and lie there.
Then he collapsed, falling face down on the body, [300]

far away from rich Larissa. He did not repay
his parents for the work they'd done to rear him—
he did not live long enough, slaughtered on the spear
of great-hearted Ajax.

Hector then threw his shining spear
at Ajax. But he was directly facing Hector,
so he saw it coming. Ajax dodged the weapon,
but only just. It hit Schedius, by far the best
of men from Phocis, son of great-hearted Iphitus,
who lived at home in celebrated Panopeus,
ruling many men. Hector's spear struck this man
right on the collar bone. The bonze point drove on through
and came out by his shoulder. He fell with a crash, [310]
his armour rattling round him. Then Ajax struck,
hitting warlike Phorcys, Phaenops' son, in the gut,
as he stood over Hippothous. Breaking the plate
on body armour, the bronze sliced out his innards.
Phorcys fell in the dust, fingers clawing at the earth.
At that point glorious Hector and his foremost men
drew back. With a tremendous shout, Argives dragged off
the bodies of dead Hippothous and Phorcys.
They began to strip the armour from their shoulders.

Right then war-loving Achaeans would have driven Trojans
back to Ilion, conquered by their own cowardice, [320]
with Argives winning glory beyond what Zeus decreed,
through their own strong power. But Apollo himself
stirred up Aeneas, taking on the form of Periphas,
the herald, son of Epytos, who had grown old
serving as herald to Aeneas's old father.
He was wise and well-disposed towards Aeneas.
In this man's form, Apollo, son of Zeus, spoke up:

"Aeneas, can you not defend steep Ilion
in defiance of some god? I've seen other men
who trusted their strong power and courage
and with their numbers held their country [330]
against Zeus's will. But Zeus wants us to win
far more than the Danaans, and you all suffer
countless fears and won't keep battling on."

He finished. Aeneas recognized Apollo,
the far shooter, once he looked into his face.
Aeneas then shouted out, addressing Hector:

"Hector and the rest of you commanders,
both Trojans and allies, it would be shameful
if war-loving Achaeans drive us back
all the way to Ilion, if we're beaten
by our cowardice. Some god's just told me—
he came and stood beside me—that even now
in this fight high counsellor Zeus is helping us.
So let's go straight at these Danaans,
and not let them carry dead Patroclus
back to their ships without a battle."

Aeneas finished.
He strode far ahead of all the fighters at the front,
then stood there. Trojans rallied round and made a stand,
facing the Achaeans. With his spear, Aeneas
then struck down Leocritus, son of Arisbas,
the courageous companion of Lycomedes.
As he fell, war-loving Lycomedes pitied him.
He moved in close, stood there, and threw his shining spear.
It hit Apisaon, a son of Hippasus,
shepherd of his people, below his abdomen,
right in the liver. Apisaon's limbs collapsed.
He'd come from fertile Paeonia, their best man
in a fight after Asteropaeus, and his fall
filled warrior Asteropaeus with sorrow.
He charged ahead, ready to fight Danaans.
But that was now impossible. For they stood there,
in a group around Patroclus, holding up their shields
on every side, with their spears extending outward.
Ajax moved around among them all, giving orders,
telling them that no man should move back from the corpse
or stride out to fight in front of massed Achaeans.
They must all stand firm around the body, fighting
hand to hand. That's what mighty Ajax ordered.
Dark blood soaked the earth. The pile of dead bodies grew,
as they fell—Trojans, proud allies, Danaans, too,
all together. For as Danaans fought, they shed
their own blood also. But far fewer of them died,
for they were careful to protect each other
from complete destruction in that fighting crowd.

So they fought on, like blazing fire. You could not tell
whether sun and moon still shone, for in that fight
a mist surrounded all the best men standing there
beside Menoetius' dead son. Meanwhile, other Trojans [370]
fought other well-armed Achaeans undisturbed,
under a clear sky, bright sunshine all around them,
no clouds above the entire earth or on the mountains.
So they fought more casually, keeping their distance,
staying out of range of each other's painful weapons.
But soldiers in the centre were suffering badly
in the fog and fighting. The pitiless bronze
was wearing down the finest men.

But two warriors,
Thrasymedes and Antilochus, well-known men,
had not yet learned about the death of lord Patroclus.
They thought he was still alive, fighting the Trojans
in the front ranks of the throng. These two were fighting [380]
some distance off, watching their companions, keeping track
of who was killed or fleeing back, as Nestor had instructed,
when he had urged them into battle by their black ships.

Throughout that entire day the great combat raged,
a bitter conflict. The men kept toiling on without a pause,
sweat dripping on their knees and legs, under their feet,
and running down men's eyes and hands, as both sides
battled over swift-footed Achilles' brave companion.
Just as a man gives his people a huge bull's hide
to stretch, after soaking it in fat, and they stand, [390]
once they've picked it up, in a circle pulling hard,
so the moisture quickly leaves the hide, as the fat
soaks in under the tension of so many hands
stretching the entire skin as far as it will go—
that's how those men on both sides pulled at the corpse,
back and forth in a narrow space, hearts full of hope—
Trojans seeking to drag it back to Ilion,
Achaeans to their hollow ships. Around Patroclus
the conflict grew intense. Neither Ares nor Athena,
who incite warriors to battle, if they'd seen that fight,
would have disparaged it, not even if they'd been
intensely angry. That's how destructive Zeus made [400]
the conflict for men and horses that day men fought
over Patroclus.

Godlike Achilles, at this time,
knew nothing of Patroclus' death, for they were fighting
under the walls of Troy, away from the fast ships.
He never imagined in his heart that Patroclus
was dead. He thought he was alive and would return
once he reached the gates. He did not think
he would lay waste the city with him or without him,
for often Achilles had learned this from his mother,
listening to her in private, when she told him
what great Zeus had planned. But at that time, Thetis
said nothing of the evil which had taken place,
the death of his companion, his dearest friend by far.

But those beside the corpse kept holding their sharp spears,
with no pause in the fighting. The mutual slaughter
continued on. Bronze-armed Achaeans talked together,
using words like these:

"My friends,
there'd be no glory for us if we went back
to the hollow ships. So let the black earth
open here for each of us. That would be better
for us all by far than if we leave this corpse
for horse-taming Trojans to carry off,
back to their city, winning glory."

Great-heated Trojans, too, spoke words like these:

"Friends, if we're all fated to be killed together
by this man, let no one leave the battle."

Men talked like this to strengthen their companions.
Then they fought on, the smash of iron rising up
through the bronze sky. But the horses of Achilles,
descendant of Aeacus, stood some distance from the fight,
weeping from the time they first learned their charioteer
had fallen in the dust at the hands of Hector,
killer of men. Automedon, brave son of Diores,
often lashed them with a stroke of his quick whip,
and often spoke to them with soothing words or threats,
but the two weren't willing to withdraw back to the ships
by the broad Hellespont, or go towards Achaeans
locked in battle. They stayed beside their ornate chariot,
immobile, like a pillar standing on the tomb
of some dead man or woman, heads bowed down to earth.

Warm tears flowed from their eyes onto the ground,
as they cried, longing for their driver. Their thick manes,
covered in dirt, trailed down below their harnesses
on both sides of the yoke. Looking at those horses,
as they mourned, the son of Cronos pitied them.
Shaking his head, Zeus spoke to his own heart:

"Poor horses!
Why did we give you to king Peleus,
a mortal man, for you're immortal, ageless?
Was it so you'd experience sorrow
among unhappy men? For the truth is this—
of all the things which breathe or move on earth,
nothing is more miserable than man.
But at least Hector, Priam's son, won't mount you
or drive your finely decorated chariot.
That I won't permit. Is it not enough
he wears his armour and then brags about it?
I'll put strength into your legs and hearts,
so you can carry Automedon safely
from this battle back to the hollow ships.
For I'll still grant glory to the Trojans,
to keep on killing till they reach the ships,
at sunset, when sacred darkness comes."

Saying this, Zeus breathed great strength into those horses.
The two shook out their manes, so the dirt fell on the ground.
They then set off towards the Trojans and Achaeans,
quickly pulling the fast chariot along with them.
Behind them Automedon joined the fighting,
though still grieving for his comrade, swooping down
in that chariot like a vulture on a flock of geese.
He easily escaped the Trojan battle noise
and then with ease charged into the large crowd once more.
But in these attacks he did not kill anyone,
as he rushed to chase men down. It was impossible,
for in the sacred chariot he was by himself.
He could not wield a spear and manage those swift horses.
But at last one of his companions noticed him,
Alcimedon, son of Laerces, Haemon's son.
Standing behind the chariot, he cried to Automedon:

"Automedon, what god put inside your chest
this useless plan, stealing your common sense?

You're fighting against the Trojans by yourself,
in the front ranks of the crowd. Your comrade
has been killed, and on his shoulders Hector
is now wearing the armour of Achilles—
he celebrates his glorious triumph."

Automedon, son of Diores, replied:

"Alcimedon, what Achaean warrior
is better able to control and guide
these strong immortal horses than yourself,
except Patroclus, a man as wise as gods,
while he was alive? Now he's met his death,
his fate. So take the shining reins and whip.
I'll get down from the chariot and fight."

Automedon spoke. Then Alcimedon, springing up
into that fast chariot, quickly grabbed the reins and whip.
Automedon jumped out. Seeing this, glorious Hector
at once spoke to Aeneas, who was close by:

"Aeneas, counsellor to bronze-armed Trojans,
I see the two-horse team of swift Achilles
coming to this fighting with poor charioteers.
That pair I'd like to capture, if your heart
is willing, since those men lack the courage
to confront the two of us, if we attack,
or to stand and fight against us both."

Hector spoke. Anchises' strong son was not unwilling.
So the two moved straight ahead, guarding their shoulders
under bull's hide shields, tanned and tough, with thick bronze
hammered out on top. With them went Chromius,
and godlike Aretus, fully hoping in their hearts
to kill the men, then drive those strong-necked horses off.
What fools! They would not return from Automedon
without shedding their own blood. Then Automedon
prayed to Father Zeus, and his dark heart was filled
with strength and courage. Immediately he spoke out
to Alcimedon, his loyal companion:

"Alcimedon,
make sure you keep the horses close to me,
so they breathe right on my neck. I don't think
Hector, son of Priam, will check his fury,

until he's killed the pair of us and climbed
behind the fine manes of these horses
belonging to Achilles, then driven in flight
the Argive ranks, or himself been slaughtered
among the front-line fighters."

Automedon finished,
then shouted to both Ajaxes and Menelaus:

"You Ajaxes, both Argive leaders, Menelaus,
leave that corpse to the rest of our best men,
who'll stand firm around it. Protect the two of us
from ruthless fate while we're still living. 630 [510]
For Hector and Aeneas, Troy's best men
in this harsh fight, are coming hard against us.
But these things lie in the lap of the gods,
so I'll attempt a throw—whatever happens,
it's all up to Zeus."

Saying this, Automedon
hefted his long-shadowed spear and threw it, hitting
the round shield of Aretus, which did not stop it.
The bronze went straight on through, severed his belt,
then drove low into his stomach. Just as a strong man
with a sharp axe strikes a farm ox right behind its horns, 640 [520]
slicing clean through sinews, so the ox stumbles forward
and falls down—that's how Aretus jerked forward and then fell
onto his back. Once that sharp spear impaled itself,
quivering in his organs, his limbs gave way.
Then Hector threw his bright spear at Automedon,
but since he was directly facing Hector,
he saw the bronze spear coming and evaded it
by leaning forward. The long spear stuck in the ground
behind him, its shaft trembling, until great Ares
stilled its force. Now they would have charged each other 650 [530]
and fought hand to hand with swords, but the Ajaxes
made them move apart for all their battle fury.
They came through the crowd answering their comrade's shout.
Hector, Aeneas, and godlike Chromius,
afraid of both Ajaxes, moved back once again,
leaving Aretus lying there with a mortal wound.
Automedon, swift Ares' equal, stripped the armour,
boasting in triumph:

"I've managed here
to ease somewhat my heart's grief for the death
of Menoetius' son, though the man I've killed
is a lesser man than he."

With these words,
he took the blood-stained spoils and put them in the chariot.
Then he got in, feet and upper arms all bloody,
like a lion that's just gorged itself on cattle.

Then once more over Patroclus the bitter fight
resumed—fierce and full of sorrow. Athena
stirred up the conflict, coming down from heaven,
sent by wide-seeing Zeus to urge on the Danaans.
For his mind had changed. Just as for mortal men
Zeus bends his coloured rainbow down from heaven,
an omen prophesying war or some harsh storm,
upsetting flocks and stopping men from work
upon the earth—that's how Athena then placed herself
in the Achaean throng, wrapped in a purple mist.
She stirred up all the men, giving encouragement
first to courageous Menelaus, son of Atreus,
who was close by her. Taking the form of Phoenix,
in his untiring voice she said:

"Surely, Menelaus,
you'll be disgraced, have to hang your head in shame,
if Achilles' fine and loyal companion
is ravaged by swift dogs beneath Troy's walls.
So be brave. Stand firm. Encourage all your men."

Menelaus, expert in war shouts, answered her:

"Old Phoenix, you venerable old man,
if only Athena would give me strength,
defend me from this shower of weapons,
I'd be happy to stand above Patroclus,
protecting him. His death has touched my heart.
But Hector has the power of deadly fire.
He won't stop cutting men down with his bronze,
for Zeus is giving him the glory."

Menelaus's words pleased the bright-eyed goddess,
Athena, for he'd first prayed to her of all the gods.
She put strength into his shoulders and his knees.

Then in his chest she set the persistence of a gnat, [570]
which, no matter how much one brushes it away
from someone's skin, keeps on biting—it finds human blood
so sweet—with that stamina she filled up his dark heart.
Standing over Patroclus, he hurled his shining spear.
Among the Trojans was a rich, brave man called Podes, 700
son of Eëtion, to whom Hector granted
special honour among men as his companion,
his good friend at a feast. Fair-haired Menelaus
struck him with his spear, as he began to flee.
He hit him on the belt. The bronze drove straight on through.
Podes fell with a thud. Then Menelaus, Atreus' son, [580]
dragged the corpse away from Trojans into the crowd
of his companions.

At that point, Apollo
came up close to Hector to reinforce his spirit.
He took the form of Phaenops, son of Asius, 710
of all Hector's guests the one he liked the most.
Phaenops lived at home in Abydos. In his shape,
Apollo, son of Zeus, spoke out:

"Hector,
which of the Achaeans will now fear you,
since you're afraid of Menelaus,
who so far has been a feeble spearman?
But all by himself he's snatched a body
from the Trojans and gone off with it.
He's killed your trusty comrade Podes,
Eëtion's son, a noble front-line warrior." 720 [590]

As he spoke, black clouds of grief enveloped Hector.
He strode by the foremost fighters, armed in gleaming bronze.
Then the son of Cronos took his tasselled aegis,
all glittering, hid Ida behind clouds, then flashed
his lightning, with a tremendous peal of thunder,
as he shook the aegis, awarding victory
to Trojans and making Achaeans run away.

The first to begin the rout was Peneleus,
a Boeotian. Standing there facing the enemy,
as usual, he was hit in the shoulder by a spear 730
from Polydamas, who'd come in close to throw.
It was a glancing blow, but the point of the spear

sliced quite near the bone. Then at close quarters, Hector
attacked Leitus, son of great-hearted Alectryon.
Hector sliced his wrist, and so his fighting ended.
Looking around him anxiously, Leitus drew back—
he knew if he could not grip his spear, he had no hope
of fighting Trojans. As Hector went at Leitus,
Idomeneus threw and struck his body armour
on the chest, right beside the nipple. But the long spear
broke at the socket. The Trojans gave a shout.
Then Hector threw a spear at Idomeneus,
Deucalion's son. He missed him, but not by much.
He did hit Coeranus, Meriones' comrade,
his charioteer, who'd followed him from well-built Lyctus.
Idomeneus had come from the curving ships that day
on foot and would have given Trojans a great triumph,
if Coeranus had not quickly driven up
with his swift-footed horses. For Idomeneus
he came as a saving light, protecting him
from ruthless fate. But the act cost him his life
at the hands of man-killing Hector, who struck him
underneath his jaw and ear. The spear smashed his teeth,
roots and all, splitting his tongue in half. Coeranus
tumbled from the chariot. The reins fell on the ground.
Meriones stooped down and scooped them from the plain
with his own hands, then spoke to Idomeneus:

"Now lash these horses on until you reach
our swift ships. For you recognize yourself
that Achaeans will not win this victory."

Meriones finished. And so Idomeneus
whipped the fair-maned horses back to the hollow ships,
for by now fear had fallen on his heart, as well.

Great-hearted Ajax and Menelaus also knew
that Zeus had turned the tide of battle now, giving
victory to the Trojans. The first one to speak
was Telamonian Ajax:

"Here's a problem.
Even a fool can see that Father Zeus
is now personally helping Trojans.
All their flying weapons hit a target,
whether a brave man throws them or a coward—

Zeus makes them all fly straight. In our case,
all our throws fall wasted on the ground.
But come, let's sort out the best course of action,
so we both can drag the corpse and then get back
in person to bring joy to our companions.
They must be anxious as they watch us here,
thinking we can't check the fighting frenzy
of man-killing Hector, his all-conquering hands,
and we'll withdraw to our black ships. I wish
some comrade would report back quickly [640]
to Peleus' son, for I don't think he's learned
the dreadful news of his dear comrade's death.
But I can't see any Argive who could do that.
Men and horses are all shrouded in this mist.
Father Zeus, rescue these Achaean sons
from this fog, make the sky clear, let us see
with our own eyes. Since it gives you pleasure,
kill us, but do in the light of day."

As he finished, Ajax wept. Father Zeus pitied him.
At once he dispersed the mist, scattering the haze.
The sun shone down, and all the fight came into view. [650]
Then Ajax spoke to Menelaus, skilled at war shouts:

"Look now, divinely raised Menelaus,
see if you can spot Antilochus alive,
son of great-hearted Nestor. Get him to go
with speed to rouse up fiery Achilles,
by telling him his companion, the man
he loves the most by far, has just been killed."

Ajax spoke. Menelaus, expert at war shouts, agreed.
He went off like some lion moving from a farm,
exhausted by his attacks on dogs and men,
who prevent it tearing flesh out of some cow,
keeping their watch all night—but ravenous for meat, [660]
the beast keeps charging in without success, for spears
rain down, thrown by keen hands, then burning sticks,
which, for all his fierce desire, make him afraid,
so he slinks away at dawn in disappointment—
that's how Menelaus, skilled at war cries,
left Patroclus, much against his will—he feared
Achaeans might be pushed back in painful flight,
leaving the corpse a trophy for the enemy.

He issued many orders to Meriones
to the Ajaxes, as well:

"You two Ajaxes,
Argive leaders, and you, Meriones,
let each man bear in mind the kindnesses [670]
of poor Patroclus, who, when he was alive,
knew how to treat every man with care.
Now fatal death has overtaken him."

With these words, fair-haired Menelaus went away, 820
glancing warily in all directions, like an eagle,
which, men say, has the sharpest sight of all the animals
flying in the sky—a bird which, while soaring high,
doesn't miss the swiftly running hare crouched down
under a leafy bush, and, swooping low, seizes it
at once, and then tears out its life—that's how, Menelaus,
raised by gods, your bright eyes kept searching all around
through groups of many comrades, seeking Nestor's son, [680]
to see if he was still alive. Then Menelaus,
quickly seeing him on the left flank of the battle 830
encouraging his companions, urging them to fight,
came up to him. Then fair-haired Menelaus said:

"Divinely raised Antilochus, come here,
so you can learn the painful news, something
I wish had never happened. You already know,
I think, for your own eyes can see it,
how some god is rolling this disaster
over the Danaans, giving victory
to the Trojans. The best Achaean,
Patroclus, has been slaughtered, a huge loss 840 [690]
for the Danaans, who miss him badly.
You must run quickly to Achaean ships
to tell Achilles, so he can bring the corpse
in safety to his ship—the naked body,
for now Hector of the gleaming helmet
wears his armour."

Menelaus finished speaking.
Hearing that news, Antilochus was overwhelmed.
For a long time he stood in shock, speechless. His eyes
filled up with tears, his strong voice failed. But even so,
he did not neglect what Menelaus told him. 850

Giving his armour to his noble comrade
Laodocus, who drove the horses close beside him,
he set off on the run. As he wept, his swift feet [700]
took him from the battle, bearing the bad news
to Achilles, son of Peleus. And then your heart,
divinely raised Menelaus, had no desire
to help defend the hard-pressed comrades left there
by Antilochus, men of Pylos, who felt his loss
severely. But to assist them, Menelaus
sent godlike Thrasymedes. Then he went in person 860
to stand by warrior Patroclus. Running over,
he took up a position by both Ajaxes and said:

"I've sent Antilochus to our fast ships,
to swift Achilles. Still, I don't expect
he'll come out now, no matter how enraged
he is with godlike Hector. He can't fight [710]
at all against the Trojans without armour.
But now we should consider for ourselves
the best thing we should do, so we'll be able
to haul off the corpse and leave this Trojan tumult, 870
escaping our own death and our destruction."

Great Telamonian Ajax then answered him:

"Glorious Menelaus, everything you say
is true enough. So you and Meriones
stoop down and lift the body quickly,
as fast possible. Take it from this fight.
We'll hold off the Trojans and godlike Hector,
standing behind you with a single heart, [720]
just as we share one name. We've stood firm before,
holding our positions by each other, 880
in the face of Ares, the fierce god of war."

Ajax spoke. Then they raised the body off the ground,
lifting it high with one great heave. Behind them,
Trojans soldiers gave a shout, as they saw Achaeans
hoisting up the corpse. They went after them like hounds
charging ahead of youthful hunters, as they chase
some wounded wild boar, keen to rip it into pieces,
but once it wheels around on them, sure of its strength,
they run back in fear, scattering in all directions—
that's how groups of Trojans kept following them a while, 890 [730]

thrusting at them with swords and double-bladed spears,
but when both Ajaxes turned round to stand against them,
their colour changed, and no one dared rush forward
to battle for the dead.

So these men worked hard
to bring that body from the battle to the hollow ships,
in the face of a fierce conflict, like some fire
suddenly rushing at a city full of people,
setting it alight, so houses fall among the flames,
as winds whip the inferno on. That's how the din
of chariots and spearmen coming up against them [740]
kept resounding as they moved along. But like mules
throwing their great strength into their work, as they haul
a beam or huge ship timber on an uneven path
down from the mountains, hearts worn out with the strain,
as they work on covered in sweat—that's how these men
strove hard to carry off the corpse. Behind them,
both Ajaxes held off the enemy. Just as
a wooded ridge which cuts across a plain holds back
a flood, even the strong flow of some harsh rivers,
pushing their waters back to go across the plain, [750]
for the strength of their current cannot rupture it—
that's how both Ajaxes held back the Trojans then
in that fight. But Trojans kept up their pursuit,
especially two of them—Aeneas, Anchises' son,
and glorious Hector. Just as a flock of daws or starlings
flies off in screaming fear, once they see a falcon
as it comes after them, bringing death to all small birds—
that's how the young Achaean soldiers ran off then,
away from Hector and Aeneas, screaming in panic,
forgetting all their fierce desire for battle.
As Danaans fled, plenty of fine weapons fell [760]
around the ditch. But there was no let-up in the war.

BOOK EIGHTEEN
THE ARMS OF ACHILLES

[Antilochus brings the news to Achilles of Patroclus's death; Achilles collapses in grief; Thetis hears his grief, talks to her sister Nereids, then visits Achilles, promises to bring him new armour from Hephaestus; Iris visits Achilles with a message from Hera; Achilles displays himself to the Trojans by the ditch and wall; Trojans debate what to do; Polydamas advises retreat; Hector opposes him; Achaeans take Patroclus's body back to the ships, begin their laments over Patroclus; Thetis visits Hephaestus, requests new armour for Achilles; Hephaestus makes new armour, especially a new shield; Thetis leaves with the armour.]

As the men fought on like a blazing fire raging,
swift-footed Antilochus came to Achilles
with his news. He found Achilles by his beaked ship,
sensing in himself what had already happened,
speaking with a troubled mind to his own great heart:

"Why are long-haired Achaeans once again
retreating to their ships, being beaten back
across the plain in terror? I hope the gods
have not done something that will break my heart.
My mother told me once they'd do that,
when she told me that while I was alive
the best man of the Myrmidons would leave [10]
the sun's light at the hands of Trojans.
So it must be the case that the fine son
of Menoetius is dead, that reckless man.
I told him to return back to the ships,
once he'd saved them from consuming fire,
and not face up to Hector man to man."

As Achilles in his mind and heart was thinking this,
noble Nestor's son approached, shedding warm tears.
He told him the agonizing truth:

"Son of warlike Peleus,
you must hear this dreadful news—something
I wish weren't so—Patroclus lies dead. [20]
Men are fighting now around the body.
He's been stripped. Hector with his gleaming helmet
has the armour."

Antilochus finished speaking.
A black cloud of grief swallowed up Achilles.

With both hands he scooped up soot and dust and poured it
on his head, covering his handsome face with dirt,
covering his sweet-smelling tunic with black ash.
He lay sprawling—his mighty warrior's massive body
collapsed and stretched out in the dust. With his hands,
he tugged at his own hair, disfiguring himself.
The women slaves acquired as battle trophies
by Achilles and Patroclus, hearts overwhelmed
with anguish, began to scream aloud. They rushed outside
and beat their breasts around warlike Achilles.
Then all the women's legs gave way, and they fell down.
Across from them, Antilochus lamented,
eyes full of tears, as he held Achilles by the hand.
Achilles' noble heart moaned aloud. Antilochus
feared he might hurt himself or slit his throat
with his own sword. Achilles gave a huge cry of grief.
His noble mother heard it from the ocean depths
where she was sitting by her ancient father.
She began to wail. Then around her gathered
all the divine daughters of Nereus deep in the sea—
Glauce, Thaleia, Cymodoce, Nesaea,
Speio, Thoe, ox-eyed Halië, Cymothoë,
Actaia, Limnoreia, Melite, Iaera,
Amphithoe, Agave, Doto, Proto,
Pherousa, Dynamene, Dexamene,
Amphinome, Callianeira, Doris, Panope,
lovely Galatea, Nemertes, Apseudes,
Callianassa. Also there were Clymene,
Ianeira, Ianassa, Maera, Orithyia,
Amatheia with her lovely hair, and others,
Nereus' daughters living in the ocean depths.
They filled the glistening cave, beating their breasts.
Thetis led them all in their laments:

"Sister Nereids, listen,
so all of you, hearing what I say,
will understand my heart's enormous sorrow.
Alas, for my unhappy misery,
that to my grief I bore the best of men.
For when I gave birth to a fine strong boy
to be an excellent heroic warrior,
when he'd grown as tall as some young sapling,
for I'd raised him like a lovely orchard tree,
I sent him out in the beaked ships to Ilion,

to war against the Trojans. But now,
I'll never welcome him back home again,
returning to the house of Peleus.
While he's still alive and sees the sunlight,
he lives in sorrow. When I go to him,
I can provide no help. But I shall go
to look on my dear child, to hear what grief
has overtaken him while he remains
detached from all the fighting."

With these words,
Thetis left the cave. Her sisters went with her in tears.
Around them sea waves parted, until they came
to fertile Troy. They emerged, climbing up on shore,
one after another, right where the Myrmidons
had dragged up their ships in close-packed formation
near swift Achilles. Then his noble mother moved
beside him, as he was groaning bitterly.
With a sharp cry, she cradled her son's head, then spoke.
As she grieved, she talked to him—her words had wings:

"My child, why are you crying? What sorrow now
has come into your heart? Speak out. Hide nothing.
Zeus has given you what you begged him to
when you stretched your hands out to him—
all Achaea's sons by their ships' sterns
are hemmed in there, desperate for your help,
suffering a terrible ordeal."

With a heavy groan,
swift-footed Achilles then answered Thetis:

"Yes, Mother,
Olympian Zeus has indeed accomplished
what I asked. But what pleasure's there for me,
when Patroclus, my beloved companion,
has been destroyed, the man I honoured
as my equal, above all my comrades.
I've lost him and the armour, which Hector took,
once he'd killed him, that massive armour,
so wonderful to look at, which the gods
gave as a priceless gift to Peleus
on that day they placed you in the bed
of a mortal man. If only you had stayed

among the eternal maidens of the sea
and Peleus had married a mortal wife.
But now there'll be innumerable sorrows
waiting for your heart, once your child is killed.
You won't be welcoming him back home again.
My own heart has no desire to live on,
to continue living among men,
unless Hector is hit by my spear first,
losing his life and paying me compensation
for killing Menoetius' son, Patroclus."

Through her tears, Thetis then answered Achilles:

"My son, from what you've just been saying,
you're fated to an early death, for your doom
comes quickly as soon as Hector dies."

Swift-footed Achilles answered her with passion:

"Then let me die, since I could not prevent
the death of my companion. He's fallen
far from his homeland. He needed me there
to protect him from destruction. So now,
since I'm not returning to my own dear land,
and for Patroclus was no saving light
or for my many other comrades,
all those killed by godlike Hector while I sat
here beside the ships, a useless burden
on the earth—and I'm unmatched in warfare
by any other Achaean armed in bronze,
although in council other men are better—
so let wars disappear from gods and men
and passionate anger, too, which incites
even the prudent man to that sweet rage,
sweeter than trickling honey in men's throats,
which builds up like smoke inside their chests,
as Agamemnon, king of men, just now,
made me enraged. But we'll let that pass.
For all the pain I feel, I'll suppress the heart
within my chest, as I must. So now I'll go
to meet Hector, killer of the man I loved.
As for my own fate, let it come to me
when Zeus and the other deathless gods
determine. For not even strong Hercules,

the man lord Zeus, son of Cronos, loved the most,
escaped his death. He was destroyed by Fate
and by malicious Hera's anger, too.
And so for me. If a like fate has been set, [120]
then once I'm dead, I'll just lie there. But for now,
let me seize great glory—let me make
so many Trojan and Dardan matrons weep,
and with both hands wipe tears from their soft cheeks,
and set them on to constant lamentation,
so that they'll know I've long refrained from war.
Don't keep me from battle. Though you love me,
you'll not convince me."

Silver-footed Thetis
then said to Achilles:

"My child, what you say is true—
it's no bad thing to protect companions
when they're threatened with complete disaster.
But now the Trojans have your lovely armour, [130]
all your glittering bronze. It's on the shoulders
of Hector with the shining helmet—
he boasts about it. But I do not think
his triumph will last long, since his death
is coming closer. But you must not rejoin
Ares' conflict until with your own eyes
you see me in the morning here again.
I'll return at sunrise, and I'll bring you
lovely armour made by lord Hephaestus."

Saying this, Thetis turned away from her own son
to address her ocean sisters:

"Now you must plunge [140]
into the broad lap of Ocean and go find
the Old Man of the Sea in our father's house.
Tell him everything. I'll go to high Olympus,
to that famous artisan Hephaestus,
to see if he is willing to give my son
some splendid glittering armour."

Thetis spoke.
Her sisters quickly plunged under the waves.
Then the silver-footed goddess Thetis went away

to fetch that lovely armour from Olympus
for her beloved son.

As Thetis' feet carried her
towards Olympus, Achaeans were running back,
with a huge noise, fleeing man-killing Hector,
until they reached their ships beside the Hellespont. [150]
But those well-armed Achaeans could not extricate
Achilles' comrade, dead Patroclus, from the spears,
for they'd been overtaken by Trojan warriors
and chariots once again, with Hector, Priam's son,
as furious as fire. Three times glorious Hector,
from behind, seized the corpse's feet, keen to drag it off,
shouting furiously to his Trojans. Three times,
the two Ajaxes, clothed in their full battle strength,
beat him from the corpse. But Hector kept on coming
without a pause, confident of his fighting power.
Sometimes he charged right at them in the frenzied crowd.
Sometimes he just stood there and gave a mighty yell,
but he never yielded any ground. Just as shepherds [160]
are unable to drive off from their farmyard
a tawny ravenous lion by some carcass—
so the two warrior Ajaxes could not push Hector,
Priam's son, back from that body. And now Hector
would have seized that corpse, winning infinite glory,
if swift Iris with feet like wind had not come down,
speeding from Olympus to the son of Peleus,
with a message that he should arm himself for war.
Hera had sent her, unknown to Zeus and other gods.
Standing by Achilles, Iris spoke—her words had wings:

"Rouse yourself, son of Peleus, most feared of men. [170]
Defend Patroclus. For on his behalf
a deadly conflict rages by the ships—
men are butchering each other, some trying
to protect the dead man's corpse, while others,
the Trojans, charge in to carry it away
to windy Ilion. The one most eager
to haul the body off is glorious Hector,
whose heart is set on hacking off the head
from its soft neck. He'll fix it on a stake
set in the wall. So get up. No more lying here.
Your heart will be disgraced if Patroclus

becomes a plaything for the dogs of Troy—
his mutilated corpse will be your shame." [180]

Swift-footed godlike Achilles then asked her:

"Goddess Iris, which of the gods sent you
with this message to me?"

Swift Iris,
with feet like wind, then said to Achilles:

"Hera sent me, Zeus's glorious wife.
Cronos' son, who sits on high, doesn't know,
nor do any other immortal gods 230
inhabiting snow-capped Olympus."

Swift-footed Achilles then questioned Iris:

"But how can I rejoin that conflict?
Those men have my armour. My dear mother
has told me not to arm myself for war,
not until my own eyes see that she's come back. [190]
She promised to bring me splendid armour
from Hephaestus. I don't know anyone
whose glorious equipment I could use,
with the exception of the shield of Ajax, 240
son of Telamon. But I expect he's out there
with his spear among the front-line warriors
in that conflict over dead Patroclus."

Wind-swift Iris then answered Achilles:

"We know well enough your lovely armour
is in Trojan hands. But you should go now,
just as you are, to the ditch. Show yourself
to Trojans. It may happen that the Trojans,
afraid of you, will pull back from battle,
giving Achaea's exhausted warlike sons 250 [200]
a breathing space. For rests in war are rare."

With these words, swift-footed Iris went away.
Then Achilles, loved by Zeus, moved into action.
Around his powerful shoulders Athena set
her tasselled aegis. Then the lovely goddess
wrapped his head up in a golden cloud, so from him

a fiery light blazed out. Just like those times when smoke
from a city stretches all the way to heaven,
rising in the distance from an island under siege
by an enemy, where men fight all day long
in Ares' hateful war, struggling for their city—
then at sunset, they light fires one by one,
beacons flaming upwards to attract attention
from those on near-by islands, so their ships will come
to save them from destruction—that's how the light
blazed then from Achilles' head right up to heaven.
He strode from the wall, then stood there by the ditch.
But recalling what his mother had said to him,
he did not mingle with Achaeans. As he stood there,
he cried out. From far away, Pallas Athena
added her voice, too, causing great consternation
among the Trojans. As thrilling as a trumpet's note
when it rings clearly, when rapacious enemies
besiege a city—that's how sharp and piercing
Achilles' voice was then. When the Trojans heard it,
that brazen shout Achilles gave, all their hearts
were shaken. Their horses with the lovely manes
turned back the chariots, anticipating trouble
in their hearts. Charioteers were terrified, seeing
the fearful inextinguishable fire blazing
from the head of the great-hearted son of Peleus.
For Athena, goddess with the glittering eyes,
kept it burning. Three times godlike Achilles yelled
across that ditch. Three times Trojans and their allies
were thrown into confusion. At that moment,
twelve of their best men were killed by their own chariots
and their own spears. Achaeans then, with stronger hearts,
pulled Patroclus out of spear range and laid him on a cot.
His dear companions gathered, mourning round him,
Achilles with them, shedding hot tears when he saw
his loyal companion lying on a death bed,
mutilated by sharp bronze. He'd sent him out to war
with chariot and horses, but never welcomed him
at his return.

Then ox-eyed queen Hera
made the unwearied sun, against his will, go down
into the stream of Ocean. So the sun set.
Godlike Achaeans now could pause for some relief
from the destructive killing of impartial war.

For their part, once Trojans drew back from that harsh fight,
they untied swift horses from their chariots and then,
before they thought of food, called for a meeting.
There everyone stayed standing. No one dared sit down,
all terrified because Achilles had appeared,
after his long absence from that savage conflict.
The first to speak was Polydamas, Panthous' son,
a prudent man, the only one who weighed with care [250]
the past and future. He was Hector's comrade,
both born on the same night. As a public speaker,
he was the better of the two, but Hector
far surpassed him with a spear. Bearing in mind
their common good, Polydamas addressed them:

"My friends, consider both sides of this issue.
For my part, I advise us to return
into the city—we should not stay here,
on the plain, waiting for dawn beside the ships.
Our walls are far away. While Achilles
kept up his anger at lord Agamemnon,
Achaeans were easier to fight against.
Personally, I was glad to spend the night
by their swift ships, hoping then we'd capture [260]
those curved vessels. But now I really have
a dreadful fear of Peleus' swift-footed son.
He has a reckless heart—he's not a man
to rest content in the middle of the plain,
where Trojans and Achaeans have a share
of Ares' battle fury. No, he'll fight on
for our city and our women. So let's go back,
return into the city. Trust me when I say
that's how things will go. For now, sacred night
has stopped the swift-footed son of Peleus.
But if tomorrow he moves into action
fully armed and encounters us still here,
we'll recognize him well enough. Anyone
who gets away and makes it back to Ilion [270]
will be a happy man. For dogs and vultures
will eat many Trojans. I don't want to hear
that such events have happened. If we all
follow my advice, although reluctantly,
tonight we'll collect our forces in one group.
Walls, high gates, and doors with fitted planks,
polished and bolted shut, will guard the city.

But in the morning early, we'll arm ourselves,
then take up our positions on the walls.
If Achilles comes from the ships keen to fight
for our walls, then he'll be disappointed.
He'll go back to his ships, once he's worn out
his strong-necked horses with too much running,
scampering around below our city wall.
His heart won't let him force his way inside,
and he'll not lay waste our city, not before
our swift dogs eat him up for dinner."

With a scowl, Hector of the flashing helmet then replied:

"Polydamas, what you say displeases me—
you tell us to run back to the city
and stay inside it. Haven't you already
been cooped up long enough within those walls?
In earlier days, all mortal men would claim
that Priam's city was rich in gold and bronze.
But now those splendid treasures are all gone.
Many goods from our own homes we've sold.
They went to Phrygia or fair Maeonia,
once great Zeus, in anger, turned against us.
But now, when crooked-minded Cronos' son
allows me to win glory by the ships,
hemming the Achaeans in beside the sea,
this is no time, you fool, to say such things
before the people. Not a single Trojan
will take your advice. I won't permit it.
But come, let's all follow now what I suggest.
You must take your dinner at your stations
all through the army, making sure you watch,
with every man awake. Any Trojan
too concerned about his property
should gather it up and give it to the men
for common use. Better that one of us
gets use from it than that Achaeans do.
Tomorrow morning early, right at dawn,
we'll fully arm ourselves with weapons,
then take keen battle to those hollow ships.
If indeed it's true that lord Achilles
is returning to that battle by the ships,
if he wants that, so much the worse for him.
I won't run from him in painful battle,

but stand against him, fighting face to face,
whether great victory goes to him or me.
In war the odds are equal, and the man
who seeks to kill may well be killed himself."

Hector spoke. The Trojans roared out in response. [310]
The fools! Pallas Athena had robbed them of their wits.
They all applauded Hector's disastrous tactics. 390
No one praised Polydamas, who'd advised them well.
Then throughout the army they ate their dinner.

Meanwhile, Achaeans mourned Patroclus all night long
with their elegies. Among them, Peleus' son
began the urgent lamentations, placing
his murderous hands on the chest of his companion,
with frequent heavy groans, like a bearded lion,
when a deer hunter in dense forest steals its cubs—
the lion comes back later, then sick at heart [320]
roams through the many clearings in the forest, 400
tracking the man's footprints, in hopes of finding him,
as bitter anger overwhelms the beast—just like that
Achilles, amid his groans, addressed his Myrmidons:

"Alas, what a useless promise I made then,
the day I tried to cheer Menoetius up
at home, telling him when I'd sacked Ilion,
I'd bring his splendid son back there to him,
in Opoeis, and with his share of trophies.
But Zeus does not bring to fulfillment
all things which men propose. Now both of us 410
share a common fate, to redden the same earth
right here in Troy. Old horseman Peleus [330]
will not be welcoming me at my return
back to his home, nor will my mother Thetis.
For in this place the earth will cover me.
And now, Patroclus, since I'm journeying
under the earth after you, I'll postpone
your burial till I bring here Hector's head,
his armour, too, the man who slaughtered you,
you courageous man. I'll cut the throats 420
of twelve fine Trojan children on your pyre,
in my anger at your killing. Till that time,
you'll lie like this with me by my beaked ships,
and round you Trojan and Dardanian women

will keep lamenting night and day, shedding tears,
the very women we two worked hard to win
with our strength and our long spears, by looting
prosperous cities of mortal men."

After these words, godlike Achilles told his comrades
to place a large tripod on the fire, so they could wash
the blood clots from his comrade's corpse. On the blazing fire,
they set a cauldron with three legs, poured water in it,
then brought split wood to burn below the water.
Fire licked the cauldron's belly and made the water hot.
Once it had boiled inside the shining bronze,
they washed him, rubbed oil thickly over him,
and filled his wounds with ointment nine years old.
Then they placed Patroclus on a bed, covering him
with a fine woollen cloth from head to foot
and a white cloak on the cloth. Then all night long,
the Myrmidons around swift-footed Achilles
mourned Patroclus with their lamentations.

Then Zeus spoke to Hera, his sister and his wife:

"You've got what you wanted, ox-eyed queen Hera.
Swift-footed Achilles you've spurred into action.
From your own womb you must have given birth
to these long-haired Achaeans."

Ox-eyed queen Hera
then replied to Zeus:

"Most dread son of Cronos,
what are you saying? Even a human man,
though mortal and ignorant of what I know,
can achieve what he intends for someone else.
And men say I'm the finest of all goddesses
in a double sense—both by my lineage
and my marriage to the ruler of the gods.
So why should I not bring an evil fortune
on these Trojans when they've made me angry?"

Thus these two conversed with one another then.

Meanwhile, silver-footed Thetis reached Hephaestus' house.
Made of eternal bronze and gleaming like a star,
it stood out among the homes of the immortals.

The crippled god had constructed it himself.
She found him working with his bellows, moving round,
sweating in his eager haste. He was forging
twenty tripods in all, to stand along the walls
of his well-built house. Under the legs of each one
he had fitted golden wheels, so every tripod
might move all on its own into a gathering of the gods
at his command and then return to his own house.
They were wonderful to look at. His work on them
had reached the stage where finely crafted handles
had still not been attached. He was making these,
forging the rivets. As he was working on them
with his great skill, silver-footed goddess Thetis
approached more closely. Noticing her, Charis,
lovely goddess with the splendid veil, came forward—
she was wife to the celebrated crippled god.
Taking Thetis by the hand, she called her name, and said:

"Long-robed Thetis, why visit our house now?
You're a welcome and respected guest, but to this point
you haven't come by very much. Do step inside.
Let me show you our hospitality."

With these words, the goddess led her inside the house.
She asked Thetis to sit in a silver-studded chair,
beautifully finished, with a footstool under it.
Then she called the famous artisan Hephaestus:

"Come here, Hephaestus. Thetis needs to see you."

The celebrated lame god then replied to Charis:

"Here's a fearful honoured goddess in my home,
the one who saved me when I was in pain,
after my great fall, thanks to my mother,
that shameless one, eager to conceal me,
because I was a cripple. At that time,
I would have suffered heartfelt agonies,
if Thetis and Eurynome, daughter
of circling Ocean stream, had not taken me
into their hearts. With those two, for nine years
I made many lovely things—brooches,
spiral bracelets, earrings, necklaces—
inside their hollow cave. The Ocean stream
flowed round me, always with the roar of surf.

No one else knew, neither god nor mortal man.
But Thetis and Eurynome—the ones
who rescued me—they knew.[1] And now Thetis
has come into my home. So I must give her
full recompense—fair-haired Thetis saved my life.
But Charis, show her now our hospitality.
I'll put away my bellows and my tools."

Huge god Hephaestus got up from the anvil block [410]
with laboured breathing. He was lame, but his thin legs
moved quickly under him. He placed his bellows
far from the fire and collected all his work tools,
then stored them in a silver chest. With a sponge,
he wiped his face, both hands, thick neck, and hairy chest.
Then he pulled on a tunic and came limping out,
gripping a sturdy staff. At once he was helped along
by female servants made of gold, who moved to him.
They look like living servant girls, possessing minds,
hearts with intelligence, vocal chords, and strength.
They learned to work from the immortal gods. [420]
These women served to give their master detailed help.
Hephaestus came limping up to Thetis and sat down
in a shining chair. Then, clasping her hand, he spoke:

"Long-robed Thetis, why have you come here,
to our house, an honoured welcome guest?
To this point, you haven't come here often.
But say what's on your mind. My heart tells me
I shall do it, if I can accomplish it,
if it's something that can be carried out."

Thetis answered him in tears:

"O Hephaestus,
is there any goddess on Olympus
who's suffered so much painful sorrow [430]
in her heart to equal the unhappiness
that Zeus, son of Cronos, loads on me
more than any other god? Of all goddesses
living in the sea, he made me subject
to a mortal man, Peleus, son of Aeacus.

[1]In some Greek myths, Hephaestus, child of Hera and Zeus, was born deformed in his legs. As a result Hera threw him away from Mount Olympus. He landed in the Ocean where Thetis and Eurynome, sea goddesses, raised him.

So I had to put up with a man in bed,
though much against my will. Now he lies there,
in his home, worn out by harsh old age.
And I have still more pain. He gave me a son
to bear and raise as an outstanding warrior.
The boy grew up as quickly as a sapling.
Then, when I had reared him like a tree
in a fertile garden, I sent him off
in the beaked ships to fight at Ilion
against the Trojans. I'll never welcome him
returning home to the house of Peleus.
And while he still lives to glimpse the sunlight,
he lives in sorrow. When I visit him,
I cannot help him. Achaea's sons chose for him
as his prize a girl, whom great Agamemnon
seized right out of his arms. In grief for her,
his heart has pined away. Then the Trojans
penned Achaeans in by their ships' sterns,
not letting them come out. The senior men
among the Argives pleaded with my son.
They promised splendid gifts. But he refused,
declining to protect them from disaster.
But then he sent Patroclus to the war,
dressing him in his own armour, providing
a force of many men. They fought all day
around the Scaean Gates, and that very day
would have utterly destroyed the city,
if Apollo had not killed Menoetius' son,
after he'd inflicted bloody carnage.
He killed him at the front, giving Hector
all the glory. That's why I've come here now,
asking at your knees if you'd be willing
to give my son, who is fated to die soon,
a shield, helmet, good leg armour fitted
with ankle clasps, and body armour, too.
His previous equipment was all taken
when Trojans killed his loyal companion.
Now my son lies in the dust, heart filled with pain."

The famous crippled god then answered Thetis:

"Cheer up. Don't let these things afflict your heart.
I wish I could hide him from distressful death,
when his cruel fate arrives, as surely

as I know there'll be fine armour for him—
such splendid armour that it will astound
all the many men who chance to see it."

With these words, Hephaestus left her there, going to start
his bellows. He directed them right at the fire,
then told them to start working. So the bellows,
twenty in all, started blowing on the crucibles,
each one emitting just the right amount of air,
sometimes blowing hard to help when he was busy,
sometimes gently, whatever way Hephaestus wished,
so his work could go ahead. He threw on the fire
enduring bronze and tin, precious gold and silver.
Next, he placed the great anvil on its block, took up
a massive hammer in one hand and in the other his tongs.

The first thing he created was a huge and sturdy shield,
all wonderfully crafted. Around its outer edge,
he fixed a triple rim, glittering in the light,
attaching to it a silver carrying strap.
The shield had five layers. On the outer one,
with his great skill he fashioned many rich designs.
There he hammered out the earth, the heavens, the sea,
the untiring sun, the moon at the full, along with
every constellation which crowns the heavens—
the Pleiades, the Hyades, mighty Orion,
and the Bear, which some people call the Wain,
always circling in the same position, watching Orion,
the only stars that never bathe in Ocean stream.[1]

Then he created two splendid cities of mortal men.
In one, there were feasts and weddings. By the light
of blazing torches, people were leading the brides
out from their homes and through the town to loud music
of the bridal song. There were young lads dancing,
whirling to the constant tunes of flutes and lyres,
while all the women stood beside their doors, staring
in admiration.

Then the people gathered
in the assembly, for a dispute had taken place.
Two men were arguing about blood-money owed

[1]The phrase about not bathing in Ocean's stream refers to the fact that at the latitude of Greece, these stars do not disappear below the horizon.

for a murdered man. One claimed he'd paid in full,
setting out his case before the people, but the other [500]
was refusing any compensation. Both were keen
to receive the judgment from an arbitration.
The crowd there cheered them on, some supporting one,
some the other, while heralds kept the throng controlled.
Meanwhile, elders were sitting there on polished stones
in the sacred circle, holding in their hands
the staffs they'd taken from the clear-voiced heralds.
With those they'd stand up there and render judgment,
each in his turn. In the centre lay two golden talents,
to be awarded to the one among them all
who would deliver the most righteous verdict.

The second city was surrounded by two armies,
soldiers with glittering weapons. They were discussing [510]
two alternatives, each one pleasing some of them—
whether to attack that city and plunder it,
or to accept as payment half of all the goods
contained in that fair town. But those under siege
who disagreed were arming for a secret ambush.
Their dear wives and children stood up on the walls
as a defence, along with those too old to fight.
The rest were leaving, led on by Pallas Athena
and Ares, both made of gold, dressed in golden clothes,
large, beautiful, and armed—as is suitable for gods.
They stood out above the smaller people with them.
When the soldiers reached a spot which seemed all right
for ambush, a place beside a river where the cattle [520]
came to drink, they stopped there, covered in shining bronze.
Two scouts were stationed some distance from that army,
waiting to catch sight of sheep and short-horned cattle.
These soon appeared, followed by two herdsmen
playing their flutes and not anticipating any danger.
But those lying in ambush saw them and rushed out,
quickly cutting off the herds of cattle and fine flocks
of white-fleeced sheep, killing the herdsmen with them.
When the besiegers sitting in their meeting place [530]
heard the great commotion coming from the cattle,
they quickly climbed up behind their prancing horses
and set out. They soon caught up with those attackers.
Then they organized themselves for battle and fought
along the river banks, men hitting one another
with bronze-tipped spears. Strife and Confusion joined the fight,

along with cruel Death, who seized one wounded man
while still alive and then another man without a wound,
while pulling from the fight the feet of one more corpse.
The clothes Death wore around her shoulders were dyed red
with human blood. They even joined the slaughter
as living mortals, fighting there and hauling off
the bodies of dead men which each of them had killed.

On that shield Hephaestus next set a soft and fallow field,
fertile spacious farmland, which had been ploughed three times.
Many labourers were wheeling ploughs across it,
moving back and forth. As they reached the field's edge,
they turned, and a man came up to offer them
a cup of wine as sweet as honey. Then they'd turn back,
down the furrow, eager to move through that deep soil
and reach the field's edge once again. The land behind them
was black, looking as though it had just been ploughed,
though it was made of gold—an amazing piece of work!

Then he pictured on the shield a king's landed estate,
where harvesters were reaping corn, using sharp sickles.
Armfuls of corn were falling on the ground in rows,
one after the other. Binders were tying them up
in sheaves with twisted straw. Three binders stood there.
Behind the reapers, boys were gathering the crop,
bringing it to sheaf-binders, keeping them occupied.
Among them stood the king, a sceptre in his hand,
there by the stubble, saying nothing, but with pleasure
in his heart. Some distance off, under an oak tree,
heralds were setting up a feast, dressing a huge ox
which they'd just killed. Women were sprinkling white barley
on the meat in large amounts for the workers' meal.

Next, Hephaestus placed on that shield a vineyard,
full of grapes made of splendid gold. The grapes were black,
the poles supporting vines throughout were silver.
Around it, he made a ditch of blue enamel,
around that, a fence of tin. A single path led in,
where the grape pickers came and went at harvest time.
Young girls and carefree lads with wicker baskets
were carrying off a crop as sweet as honey.
In the middle of them all, a boy with a clear-toned lyre
played pleasant music, singing the Song of Linos,

in his delicate fine voice. His comrades kept time,
beating the ground behind him, singing and dancing.[1]

Then he set on the shield a herd of straight-horned cattle,
with cows crafted out of gold and tin. They were lowing
as they hurried out from farm to pasture land,
beside a rippling river lined with waving reeds.
The herdsmen walking by the cattle, four of them,
were also made of gold. Nine swift-footed dogs
ran on behind. But there, at the front of the herd,
two fearful lions had seized a bellowing bull. [580]
They were dragging him off, as he roared aloud.
The dogs and young men were chasing after them.
The lions, after ripping open the great ox's hide,
were gorging on its entrails, on its black blood,
as herdsmen kept trying in vain to chase them off,
setting their swift dogs on them. But, fearing the lions,
the dogs kept turning back before they nipped them,
and stood there barking, close by but out of reach.

Then the famous crippled god created there a pasture
in a lovely valley bottom, an open ground
for white-fleeced sheep, sheep folds, roofed huts, and pens.

Next on that shield, the celebrated lame god made [590]
an elaborately crafted dancing floor, like the one
Daedalus created long ago in spacious Cnossus,
for Ariadne with the lovely hair.[2] On that floor,
young men and women whose bride price would require
many cattle were dancing, holding onto one another
by the wrists. The girls wore fine linen dresses,
the men lightly rubbed with oil wore woven tunics.
On their heads the girls had lovely flower garlands.
The men were carrying gold daggers on silver straps.
They turned with such a graceful ease on skilful feet,
just as a potter sits with a wheel between his hands, [600]
testing it, to make sure that it runs smoothly.
Then they would line up and run towards each other.
A large crowd stood around, enjoying the dancing magic,
as in the middle two acrobats led on the dance,
springing, and whirling, and tumbling.

[1]The Song of Linos is a traditional harvest song.

[2]Daedalus was a legendary craftsman of surpassing skill. He created the famous Labyrinth in Crete and, according to this comment, a dancing ground for Ariadne, a princess of Crete.

On that shield, Hephaestus then depicted Ocean,
the mighty river, flowing all around the outer edge.

When he had created that great and sturdy shield,
he fashioned body armour brighter than blazing fire,
a heavy helmet shaped to fit Achilles' temples,
beautiful and finely worked, with a gold crest on top.
Then he made him leg guards of finely hammered tin.

When the famous lame god had made all the armour,
he took it and set it there before Achilles' mother.
Then, like a hawk, she sped down from Olympus,
carrying the gleaming armour of Hephaestus.

BOOK NINETEEN
ACHILLES AND AGAMEMNON

[Thetis brings the divine armour to Achilles; Achilles summons an assembly of Achaeans; Achilles and Agamemnon are reconciled; Agamemnon explains the origin of his folly; Odysseus urges Achilles to eat, Achilles refuses; Agamemnon gets his gifts for Achilles brought to the assembly; Agamemnon swears he has not touched Briseis; Briseis laments over the corpse of Patroclus; the elders continue to mourn Patroclus; Zeus sends Athena to help Achilles deal with his hunger; the troops move out to battle again; Achilles speaks to his horses, who prophesy his death.]

When Dawn in her yellow robe rose from Ocean's stream,
bringing her light to immortal gods and mortal men,
Thetis reached the ships bearing Hephaestus' gifts.
She found her dear son lying beside Patroclus,
crying bitterly. Many of his companions
mourned around him. The noble goddess went to them.
Standing by Achilles, she clasped his hand, then said:

"My son, we must let this man lie here
for all our grief. He's dead once and for all.
It's the gods' will. Now you must accept
these splendid weapons from Hephaestus— [10]
no man has ever had such gorgeous armour
to wear around his shoulders."

With these words,
the goddess set the armour down before Achilles.
The wonderfully crafted metal rang out loudly.
Fear gripped all the Myrmidons. Not one of them
dared look directly at those weapons. They shrank away.
But when Achilles saw them, his anger grew.
His eyes glared underneath his eyelids, like a fire—
a terrifying light. But as his hands went over
the god's priceless gifts, he felt great joy. He gazed at them,
filling his heart with pleasure at the rich designs.
Then he spoke to his mother—his words had wings: [20]

"Mother, this armour the god has given me
is a work fit for the immortals, something
no living human could create. So now,
I'll arm myself for war. In the meantime,
I have a dreadful fear that flies may burrow
into those wounds carved by the slicing bronze
in the body of Menoetius' noble son.

They may breed worms in him, defile his corpse,
now that the life in him is gone. If so,
all his flesh will fester."

Then Thetis,
goddess with the silver feet, answered Achilles:

"My child, don't let such things distress your heart.
I'll make the effort to protect him here [30]
from those cruel swarms of flies which feed
on warriors who've been killed in battle.
Even if he lies here an entire year,
his flesh will stay just as it is or better. 40
But you must summon the Achaean warriors
to assembly, to renounce your anger
with Agamemnon, his people's shepherd.
After that, arm yourself for battle quickly—
clothe yourself in all your fighting strength."

Saying this, Thetis filled him with fearless power.
Then she inserted ambrosia and red nectar
into Patroclus, through his nostrils, so his flesh
would stay uncorrupted.

But Achilles, like a god, [40]
strode down along the seashore, raising fearful shouts, 50
stirring Achaean warriors into action.
So even those who up to now used to remain
with the assembled ships—helmsmen who worked
ships' steering oars and stewards who stayed with the ships
rationing provisions—these men all showed up
for the assembly, because Achilles had appeared
after his long absence from that painful war.
Two associates of the war god Ares came in limping,
the brave offspring of Tydeus and lord Odysseus,
leaning on their spears—their wounds still pained them. 60
They came and sat down at the front of the assembly. [50]
Last to arrive was Agamemnon, king of men,
still suffering from the wound Coön had given him,
Antenor's son, who in deadly conflict stabbed him
with his bronze-tipped spear. Once all Achaeans
were assembled, swift-footed Achilles rose to speak:

"Son of Atreus, has it been good for us,
for you and me, to continue squabbling

in a heart-rending quarrel full of grief
for both of us, over some girl? I wish
she'd been killed by Artemis's arrow
right beside my ships, the day I got her
as my prize, after we destroyed Lyrnessus.
Fewer Achaeans would have sunk their teeth
into this wide earth at enemy hands,
if I'd not been so angry. That's really helped
lord Hector and his Trojans. But Achaeans,
I think, will long recall this argument
you and I have had. Still, though it hurts,
we should let all this pass, repressing hearts
within our chests—we must do that. So now,
I end my anger. It's not appropriate
for me to remain enraged forever.
But come, quickly urge long-haired Achaeans
on to battle, so I may go out once again
to face the Trojans and see if they still wish
to spend the night beside our ships. I think
many of them will be glad to get some rest,
the ones who escape this deadly warfare
and who evade my spear."

Achilles finished speaking.
The well-armed Achaeans then were full of joy
that Peleus' great-hearted son had set aside
his anger. Next, Agamemnon, king of men,
addressed them:

"My friends, Danaan warriors,
companions of the war god Ares, it's good
to listen to a man who's standing up
to speak and not to interrupt him.
That makes things difficult, even for a man
skilled in speaking. When men all shout at once,
how can anyone speak up or listen?
Even a clear-voiced speaker gets upset.
I'm going to address the son of Peleus,
but you other Argives pay attention—
let every one of you mark my words well.
You Achaeans have often criticized
and spoken ill of me. But I'm not to blame.
It's Zeus's fault and Fate—those Furies, too,
who walk in darkness. In our assembly,

they cast a savage blindness on my heart,
that day when on my own I took away
Achilles' prize. But what was I to do? [90]
It is a god who brought all this about.
Zeus's eldest daughter, Ate, blinds all men
with her destructive power. Her feet are soft,
she walks, not on the ground, but on men's heads,
and she brings folly onto humankind,
seducing them at random. Even Zeus,
who they say is the greatest of the gods
and men, was blinded by her, when Hera,
a mere female, with her cunning tactics,
deceived him that very day Alcmene
was to give birth to mighty Hercules,
in Thebes, city with the splendid walls.
Zeus then boasted openly to all the gods, [100]

'Listen to me, you gods and goddesses,
so I can say what the heart inside me bids.
The goddess of childbirth, Eileithyia,
today brings into the sun's light a man
who will rule all those who live around him,
one of the race of men with my blood in them.'

But then that deceitful lady Hera said to Zeus,

'You're not being candid. You don't really mean
what you now say. So come, Olympian,
swear a binding oath for me that the man
who falls out today between a woman's feet [110]
will, in fact, rule those who live around him,
one of the race of men with your blood in them.'

That's what she said. Zeus did not see the trick.
He swore a binding oath in his great blindness.
Hera then left that peak on Mount Olympus.
Darting off, she quickly came to Argos,
in Achaea, where she knew the strong wife
of Sthenelus, Perseus' son, was pregnant
with a son, in her seventh month. This child
Hera induced into the light before its term.
She then delayed Alcmene's childbirth,
getting the Eileithyiae to hold it back.

Then she brought the news to Zeus, Cronos' son, [120]
saying,

'Father Zeus, lord of bright lightning,
I'll tell you my heartfelt news. Just now,
a noble man was born who'll rule the Argives,
Eurystheus, son of Sthenelus, Perseus' son,
of your own lineage. So it's fitting
he should become king of all the Argives.'

When Hera said that, sharp pain seized Zeus
deep in his heart. He seized Ate at once
by the shining hair wound round her head.
His heart was furious. He swore a great oath
that Ate, who blinds everyone, would no more
come to Olympus or to starry heaven. [130]
That said, in one hand he swung her round,
then flung her clear out of the star-filled skies.
She quickly landed among toiling men.
Whenever Zeus saw his dear son Hercules
carrying out menial work in all his labours
for Eurystheus, he'd always groan aloud,
thinking of Ate. That's how I was, too,
when great Hector of the shining helmet
was killing Argives off at the ships' sterns.
I could not forget Ate, who blinded me
when all this started. But since I was blind,
since Zeus robbed me of my wits, I will agree
to make amends, to offer priceless gifts.
But prepare yourself for battle, rouse up
all your other men. As for me, I'm ready
to give every gift which lord Odysseus [140]
promised you in your hut yesterday.
Or, if you prefer, don't turn right now to war.
Though you're keen to go, let my servants fetch
those presents from my ship and bring them here,
so you can see if you approve of them."

Swift-footed Achilles then answered Agamemnon:

"Most glorious son of Atreus, Agamemnon,
king of men, if you wish to give me presents,
as is appropriate, or to withhold them,
that's up to you. Now we must think of war,

and with all speed. We should not be wasting time
in conversation or with such delays.
We have great work to do, so once again [150]
men see Achilles with the front-line warriors,
destroying Trojan ranks with his bronze spear.
Keep this in mind when you confront your man."

Resourceful Odysseus then addressed Achilles:

"Though you're a brave man, god-like Achilles,
don't encourage Achaea's sons to fight
against the Trojans on empty stomachs.
If so, the fight won't last for long if troops
engage right now, once some god infuses strength
into both sides. No. Instruct Achaeans
to have some food and wine by their swift ships. [160]
For they give strength and courage. No soldier
can fight the enemy all day till sunset
without some food. However fierce his heart
may be for battle, his limbs grow heavy
without his knowledge. Once thirst and hunger
overtake him, his knees get tired as he moves.
But the man who's had sufficient food and wine
fights all day long against his enemies
with a courageous heart. His limbs don't tire
until all warriors have left the battle. [170]
So dismiss your men. Tell them to make a meal.
Let Agamemnon, king of men, present his gifts,
so all Achaeans here in our assembly
can see them first hand and delight your heart.
Let him stand up there among the Argives,
swear an oath to you he's never climbed
into that girl's bed to have sex with her,
as is usual, my lord, with men and women.
Let the heart in your own chest be open
to reconciliation. Then, Agamemnon
should offer you a fine and pleasing dinner
in his hut, so there'll be nothing due to you
which remains unsatisfied. As for you, [180]
son of Atreus, you should be more righteous
with others from now on. There's no shame
when a king pays someone compensation,
if the king was the first to lose his temper."

Agamemnon, king of men, answered Odysseus:

"Son of Laertes, I am glad to hear
what you've just said. You've explained this well,
exploring all these matters very fairly.
I'm prepared to swear the oath, as my heart bids,
and, before the gods, I'll not swear falsely.
But let Achilles stay here a little while,
though he desires to fight, and let others
stay gathered here, until the gifts are brought [190]
out of my hut and we can sacrifice
to seal our oaths. To you I assign this task—
select from the entire Achaean force
the five best young men to carry from my ships
all those gifts we promised yesterday
to give Achilles—that includes the woman.
Let Talthybius at once prepare for me
in the middle of this wide Achaean camp
a sacrificial boar to offer up
to Zeus and Helios, god of the sun."

Swift-footed Achilles then replied to Agamemnon:

"Mighty son of Atreus, Agamemnon,
ruler of men, it would be far better [200]
to worry about all this some other time,
when there's a let up in the fight, when the heart
here in my chest is less enraged. For now,
all those killed by Hector, son of Priam,
when Zeus gave him glory, are lying there,
all mangled, and you are urging us to eat!
For my part, I'd lead Achaea's sons to war
right now, unfed, with empty stomachs,
then at sunset make them a great dinner,
when we've avenged our shame. Until that time,
no drink or food will pass my throat, at least, [210]
while my dead comrade lies inside my hut,
mutilated by sharp bronze, with his feet
still pointing at the door, while his companions
mourn there around him. That's why my heart
cannot concern itself with what you've said,
only with killing, blood, men's dying groans."

To this, resourceful Odysseus then replied:

"Achilles, Peleus' son, of all Achaeans
the mightiest by far. You're stronger than me,
more than a little better with your spear,
but I might say I'm far better with advice,
since I'm older and know more. So your heart
should listen now to what I have to say.
In battle men quickly have enough, for there
bronze slices piles of straw onto the ground,
but there's a slender harvest, once Zeus
lifts up his scales, establishing for men
the outcome of the battle. Achaeans
cannot mourn a corpse by eating nothing.
Too many men are dying every day,
one after another. When would anyone
get some relief from fasting? No, the dead
we must bury, then mourn a single day,
hardening our hearts. But those who do survive
grim battle must remember food and drink,
so we can fight our enemies once more,
on and on incessantly, covering our flesh
with bronze which never tires. So let no soldier
hang back, waiting for another call to war.
This is the call, and things will not go well
for anyone left at Achaean ships.
Let's all set off together as one army,
taking cruel war to those horse-taming Trojans."

Odysseus finished. Then he took along with him
splendid Nestor's sons, Meges, son of Phyleus,
Thoas, Meriones, and Lycomedes,
Creon's son, and Melanippus. They went off
to the huts of Agamemnon, Atreus's son.
As soon as they gave out the order, the task was done.
From the hut they took seven tripods, as he'd promised,
twenty gleaming cauldrons and twelve horses.
They quickly led out seven women, all well skilled
in lovely handiwork. Eighth came the fair Briseis.
Odysseus weighed out a sum of ten gold talents.
Then he led them back, with the young Achaean men
carrying the gifts. These they placed in the assembly,
in the middle of them all. Agamemnon stood up.
Talthybius, whose voice was like a god's, was there,
by Agamemnon's side, his hands gripping a boar.
Agamemnon drew out the knife he always wore

by his sword's scabbard. He cut hairs from the boar
to start the ritual. Lifting up his arms,
he prayed to Zeus. Argives all sat in silence,
listening to their king with suitable respect,
as he gazed up to spacious heaven, saying this prayer:

"Let Zeus, the loftiest and finest god,
first witness, then Sun and the Erinyes,
those Furies under the earth who punish [260]
men who've made false oaths—I hereby swear
I've never laid a hand on that girl Briseis, 320
either for sex or any other reason.
In my huts she stayed untouched. If what I say
is not the truth, then let gods punish me
with many painful sorrows, the sort they give
to men who in their oaths blaspheme them."

This said, he cut the boar's throat with the ruthless bronze.
Talthybius swung the body round and threw it
in the vast grey sea, food for fish. Then Achilles,
standing up, addressed war-loving Argives:

"Father Zeus,
you keep afflicting humans with great blindness. 330 [270]
For Atreus' son would never make my heart
so totally enraged here in my chest,
nor would he take that girl away from me,
so arbitrarily against my will,
if Zeus did not somehow desire the deaths
of Argives in large numbers. But now,
you should all eat, so we can start the fight."

Saying this, Achilles quickly ended the assembly.
The men dispersed, each one going off to his own ship.
Great-hearted Myrmidons looked after all the gifts, 340
taking them to godlike Achilles' ship and storing them
inside his huts. They left the women there, as well. [280]
His noble attendants drove the horses to his herd.

Briseis, looking like golden Aphrodite,
then saw Patroclus mutilated by sharp bronze.
With a cry, she threw herself on him, hands tearing
at her breast, her tender neck, her lovely face,
fair as a goddess, lamenting:

"Patroclus,
you who brought the utmost joy to my sad heart,
I left you here alive, when I went off,
taken from these huts. But now, at my return,
I find you dead, you, the people's leader.
Again for me, as always, evil follows evil.
I saw the husband I was given to
by my father and my noble mother killed
by sharp bronze before our city. My brothers,
three of them, whom my own mother bore,
whom I loved, have all met their fatal day.
But when swift Achilles killed my husband,
you wouldn't let me weep. You told me then
you'd make me lord Achilles' wedded wife,
he'd take me in his ships back home to Phthia,
for a marriage feast among the Myrmidons.
You were always gentle. That's the reason
I'll never stop this grieving for your death."

As Briseis said this, she wept. The women joined her
in wailing for Patroclus, although each of them
had her own private sorrows. The Achaean elders
gathered round Achilles, urging him to eat.
But he refused, continuing his laments:

"If any of my dear companions here
wishes to obey me, then I beg you
do not ask me to satisfy my heart
with food or drink when painful sorrow
grips me. I'll remain like this till sunset,
enduring everything."

Achilles finished speaking.
Then he sent away the leaders. But some remained—
both sons of Atreus, lord Odysseus, Nestor,
Idomeneus, and old horseman Phoenix,
each trying to console him in his painful grieving.
But his heart would find no joy until he entered
the bloody mouth of war. Thinking of Patroclus,
he sighed repeatedly, then said:

"Poor man,
most loved of all my comrades, in the past
you used to set out tasty meals right here,

making them well and quickly in my hut,
when we Achaeans were in such a rush
to set out against horse-taming Trojans
in wretched war. Now you lie disfigured,
my heart refuses meat and drink, though both [320]
are in this hut, because I miss you so.
I could suffer nothing worse than this,
not even if I learned my father's died—
he must be shedding gentle tears in Phthia,
missing a son like me, while I stay here
among strange people, fighting Trojans
over Helen, whom I detest, or if I heard
my dear son had died, who's being raised for me
on Scyros, if, in fact, he's still alive,
godlike Neoptolemus.[1] Up to now,
the heart here in my chest hoped I alone
would perish here in Troy, so far from Argos,
where horses breed. You'd return to Phthia, [330]
taking my child in your swift black ship
away from Scyros, show him all my things,
possessions, servants, my high-roofed palace.
For by now Peleus is either dead and gone,
I must assume, or just barely living,
afflicted with hateful old age, waiting
all the time for distressful news of me,
when he finds out that I have perished."

As he spoke, Achilles wept. The elders also mourned,
each one remembering what he had left at home.
As they lamented, the son of Cronos saw them. [340]
Feeling pity for them, Zeus spoke to Athena—
his words had wings:

"My child, here's a man
you seem to be neglecting totally,
a special favourite of yours—Achilles.
Does your heart no longer care for him at all?
There he sits in front of his beaked ships,
mourning his dear companion. Other men
have all gone off to dinner, but he's fasting

[1]Achilles' mother, Thetis, tried to hide him, so that he would not be asked to join the warrior expedition to Troy. She dressed Achilles as a woman and left him with Lycomedes, king of Scyros. Achilles had a affair with Deidamea, a princess of Scyros, and she gave birth to a son, Neoptolemus. After the death of Achilles, Neoptolemus played an important role in the final defeat of Troy.

and won't eat. Go now. Put into his chest
some nectar and beautiful ambrosia,
so hunger won't consume him."

With these words,
Zeus spurred Athena, already eager, into action.
She swooped down through the air, screaming shrilly,
like a broad-winged hawk. Then as Achaeans, with all speed,
armed themselves throughout the camp, she inserted
nectar and beautiful ambrosia in Achilles' chest,
so his limbs would not suffer pangs of hunger.
Then she left for her mighty father's well-built home.

Achaeans then came swarming out from their fast ships.
Just as freezing snowflakes fall thick and fast from Zeus,
driven by the raging sky-born North Wind—that's how
crowds of them streamed out then, pouring from the ships—
brightly gleaming helmets, strong-plated body armour,
ash spears and embossed shields—the glitter of it all
flashed up to heaven. All around, earth chuckled
to see that gleaming bronze. A noise like thunder rose,
drummed by the soldiers' marching feet. Amid them all,
noble Achilles armed himself for battle,
his teeth clenched, eyes blazing with a fiery light,
his heart filled with a sorrow not to be endured.
As he pulled on the divine gifts which Hephaestus
had made for him, he raged against the Trojans.
First, he strapped on his leg armour, beautifully made,
fitted with silver ankle clasps. Then on his chest
he fixed the body armour. Around his shoulders,
he slung his bronze silver-studded sword, then picked up
his huge strong shield which, like the moon, shone everywhere.
Just like the blazing light that sailors glimpse at sea
from a fire burning in some isolated farm,
high in the mountains, as winds blow them further out,
taking them against their will over the fish-filled seas
away from loved ones—that's how Achilles' shield,
so finely crafted, burned out far into the sky.
Then raising the great helmet, he set it on his head.
It glittered like a star, that helmet with its horse-hair plumes,
adorned with the golden hairs Hephaestus had placed
so thickly round the crest. Noble Achilles,
trying out the armour for himself, made sure
it fit him so his splendid limbs could move with ease.

It was like his own set of wings, lifting him up,
this shepherd of his people. Then from its case,
he took his father's spear, heavy, huge, and strong.
No other Achaean could control that spear.
He was the only one with skill enough to wield it.
Made of ash wood from the top of Pelion,
that spear had been given to own his dear father
by Cheiron, so he could kill heroic warriors.

Automedon and Alcinous kept themselves occupied
yoking the horses, tying fine chest straps round them,
setting bits inside their jaws, and aligning reins
back in the well-made chariot. Taking the shining whip
which fit his grip, Automedon jumped in the chariot.
Achilles, fully armed, climbed up beside him,
his armour gleaming like dazzling Hyperion.
Then he called out to those horses of his father,
in a terrifying voice:

"Xanthus, Balius,
you famous children of Podarge, this time
make sure you bring your charioteer back safely
to the Danaan army, once we've had enough
of battle. Don't leave him out there slaughtered,
as you did Patroclus."

From under the yoke,
his swift-footed horse called Xanthus spoke to him,
ducking his head down quickly, so all his mane
streamed down from underneath his shoulder harness
beside the yoke towards the ground. Goddess Hera
gave Xanthus power to speak:

"Mighty Achilles,
on this occasion we will bring you safely back.
But the day you'll die is fast approaching.
We won't be the cause, but some mighty god
and a strong fate. It was not our laziness
or lack of speed which helped the Trojans
strip that armour from Patroclus' shoulders.
A powerful god born to Leto killed him
among those fighting at the battle front,
then gave Hector glory. The two of us
could run as quickly as the West Wind's blasts—

men say they are the fastest thing there is—
your fate still stays the same, to die in war,
killed by a mortal and a god."

Once Xanthus had said this,
the Erinyes removed his voice. Then Achilles,
in a fury, said to his horse:

"Xanthus,
why do you prophesy my death? There is no need. [420]
I know well enough I'm fated to die here,
far from my loving parents. No matter.
I will not stop till I have driven the Trojans
to the limit of what they can endure in war." 510

With these words, he drove his sure-footed horses off,
speeding forward to the front, screaming as he went.

BOOK TWENTY
ACHILLES RETURNS TO BATTLE

[As the armies ready for battle, Zeus summons an assembly of gods, tells them they can join the fight on either side; the gods leave Olympus for the battle; Apollo persuades Aeneas to fight Achilles; Aeneas and Achilles confront each other; Aeneas explains his ancestry; Aeneas and Achilles fight; Poseidon saves Aeneas; Achilles starts his slaughter of Trojans; Hector confronts Achilles; Apollo saves Hector; Achilles continues his slaughter.]

Then, son of Peleus, Achaeans armed themselves
around you, feeding your boundless appetite for war.
On the other side, higher up the sloping plain,
the Trojans did the same. At that very moment,
from the summit of many-ridged Olympus,
Zeus told Themis to summon gods to an assembly.
She raced around, calling them to Zeus's home.
None of the rivers was left out, except Oceanus,
nor any nymph. All those who live in lovely woods,
river springs, and grassy meadows came together
at cloud-gatherer Zeus's home, seating themselves [10]
on porticoes of polished stone, constructed there
by Hephaestus' cunning arts for his father Zeus.
The gods gathered there in Zeus's house. Poseidon
also answered Themis' summons, coming from the sea
to join them. He sat in the middle of them all,
asking about Zeus's purposes:

"Lord of bright lightning,
why have you called gods to this assembly?
Are you concerned for Trojans and Achaeans?
Right now their fight is close to flaring up
into a total war."

Cloud-gatherer Zeus
then said to Poseidon in reply:

"You understand, Earthshaker, [20]
the plans here in my chest, the reasons why
I've summoned you. Yes, I am concerned for them.
Though they are being destroyed, I'll stay here,
sitting on a ridge of Mount Olympus.
From here I'll look on to my heart's content.
But all the rest of you can go away
to join Trojans and Achaeans, helping
either side, as your spirits each dictate.

For if we leave Achilles there alone
to fight the Trojans, they'll not hold out
against the swift-footed son of Peleus,
not even briefly. In earlier days,
if they saw him, their fear would make them shake,
and now his heart's so terribly enraged
for his companion, I fear he may go
beyond what Fate ordains and storm the walls."

With these words, Cronos' son then launched relentless war.
The gods charged off to battle, their hearts divided
in two groups. Hera went to the assembled ships,
with Pallas Athena and Poseidon, who shakes the earth.
Helper Hermes accompanied them as well, the god
with the most cunning mind of all. Hephaestus
also went along with them, exulting in his power.
Though he was lame, his feet moved quickly under him.
Ares with the shining helmet joined the Trojans,
taking with him long-haired Phoebus, archer Artemis,
Leto, Xanthus, and laughter-loving Aphrodite.

As long as the gods were far away from mortal men,
Achaeans won the glory, since Achilles
had come back, after staying away from war so long.
For every Trojan's limbs were seized with trembling fear
when they observed him there, swift son of Peleus
in that blazing armour, like man-killing Ares.
But once Olympians mingled in the crowds of soldiers,
then mighty Strife, who stirs men up in battle,
went into action, while Athena kept on shouting,
sometimes standing by the ditch they dug beyond the wall,
sometimes yelling out beside the roaring sea shore.
On the other side, like a black whirlwind, Ares
kept shouting out his piercing orders to the Trojans,
sometimes from the city heights, sometimes as he raced
along the banks of Simois to Callicolone.[1]
Thus, sacred gods spurred both sides on, urging them
to war, inciting cruel conflict. From on high,
the father of gods and men thundered ominously,
while Poseidon shook the vast earth underneath them
and lofty mountain crests. All the lower slopes of Ida,
with its many springs, trembled, as did the peaks,

[1]Callicolone is a hill near Troy.

the Trojan city, and Achaean ships. Under the earth,
the king of the dead, Aidoneus, was terrified.[1]
He leapt up from his throne afraid and shouting,
frightened that Earthshaker Poseidon would split up
the earth above him and reveal to gods and men
the dark and dreadful habitations of the dead,
which even gods detest, so massive was the shock
when gods collided in that war, with Poseidon
matched against Apollo with his feathered arrows,
glittery eyed Athena going against a mighty god,
Ares Enyalius, and Hera against Artemis,
with her golden arrows, goddess of the noisy hunt,
sister of Apollo, god who shoots from far away.
Strong Helper Hermes was opposed by Leto,
and Hephaestus by that huge and swirling river
the gods call Xanthus, but all men name Scamander.
So the gods went out to battle other gods.

But of all warriors in that fighting crowd, Achilles
was most eager to meet Hector, son of Priam.
His spirit urged him to glut Ares, warrior god
with the bull's hide shield, on Hector's blood, more so
than on the blood of any other man. But Apollo,
who inspires men to fight, sent out Aeneas
to confront the son of Peleus directly.
The god placed great force within him. Making his voice
like Lycaon's, a son of Priam, Apollo,
Zeus's son, taking on that man's shape, spoke out:

> "Aeneas, Trojan counsellor, where are now
> those threats you used to make to Trojan princes,
> as you drank your wine and promised them
> you'd fight Peleus' son, Achilles, man to man?"

Aeneas then said to Apollo in reply:

> "Son of Priam, why are you telling me
> to fight the arrogant son of Peleus,
> when I don't wish to? This isn't the first time
> swift Achilles and I have come to blows.
> Once before he chased me away from Ida
> with his spear—he'd come for our cattle,
> when he destroyed Lyrnessus and Pedasus.

[1]Aidoneus is an alternative name for Hades, god of the underworld.

But then Zeus saved me—he gave me strength
and made my legs run faster. Otherwise,
Athena and Achilles would have killed me.
She went on ahead of him to make things safe.
Then she told him to kill off the Leleges
with his bronze spear, as well as Trojans.
No man can face Achilles in a fight—
some god is constantly beside him, saving him
and making sure his spear flies always straight,
not stopping till it's hit some human flesh.
If some god made sure our fight was equal,
he'd not easily defeat me, even though
he boasted he's completely made of bronze."

Apollo, son of Zeus, then said to Aeneas:

"But, as a warrior, you, too, should pray
to the immortal gods. For people say
that Aphrodite, Zeus's daughter, bore you,
while he comes from a lesser goddess.
Your mother is great Zeus's daughter, but his
a daughter of the Old Man of the Sea.
So go straight at him with your tireless bronze.
Don't let him hold you back with words,
expressing his contempt or making threats."

With these words, Apollo breathed great power then
into that shepherd of his people. Through the front lines
Aeneas strode, armed in gleaming bronze. As he moved,
going after Peleus' son among those crowds of men,
he did not go unnoticed. Seeing Anchises' son,
Hera gathered her companion gods and said:

"Poseidon, Athena, both your hearts
should think about what's going on. Aeneas,
armed in gleaming bronze, is going to meet
the son of Peleus, at Apollo's urging.
So let's work to turn him back at once,
or else one of us should help Achilles,
give him great strength, so that his heart won't flinch.
And then he'll know the gods who love him
are the best of the immortals and those gods
who up to now have guarded Trojans
in this war's battles have only little power,

as feeble as the wind. We've all come here,
down from Olympus, to join this conflict,
so Achilles will not come to any harm
from Trojans, at least not in the fight today.
Later, he'll suffer everything which Fate
spun with her thread for him that very day
his mother bore him. But if Achilles
doesn't learn this from a god who speaks to him, [130]
then he may be fearful if some god appears
against him in the battle. For the gods
are terrifying when they reveal themselves."

Earthshaker Poseidon then answered her:

"Hera,
don't let your rage defeat your common sense.
There's no need. For I have no desire
that gods should fight each other in this battle.
We should move off to one side and sit down
where we can watch, leaving this war to men.
But if Phoebus Apollo or if Ares
begins to fight or holds Achilles back,
not allowing him to go on fighting,
then we'll get in the conflict right away, [140]
join in the battle. Soon enough, I think,
those two will remove themselves from warfare,
returning to Olympus, to the company
of other gods whom our strong hands have conquered."

With these words, the dark-haired god Poseidon led the way
to the remnants of the wall of godlike Hercules,
the high rampart Pallas Athena and the Trojans
had built for him, so he could protect himself
and escape that monster from the sea, when it forced him
to move in from the shore. Poseidon sat there,
beside the other gods, wrapping a concealing cloud
around their shoulders. The other group of gods [150]
sat on the crest of Callicolone, around you,
archer Phoebus, and Ares, who destroys whole cities.
So these gods sat there on either side, making plans,
both groups holding back from fighting painful war.
Sitting high above them, Zeus stayed in control.

The whole plain by now was filled with men and horses,
all in gleaming bronze. The ground shook underfoot,
as men charged each other. Two of the finest men
then came at one another in the middle ground
between the armies, both prepared for combat—
Aeneas, Anchises' son, and godlike Achilles.
Aeneas strode out first, making threatening taunts,
his heavy helmet nodding as he moved around.
Holding his strong shield across his chest, he brandished
his bronze spear. The son of Peleus, from the other side,
charged up against him like a murderous lion
which a whole community is keen to slaughter—
At first, the beast moves on and leaves the group alone,
but when some quick young hunter hits it with a spear,
the lion gathers itself, opens its jaws wide,
foaming at the mouth, as its brave heart roars inside.
Its tail twitches to and fro against its ribs and flanks.
Then it drives itself to fight, charging straight ahead
with furiously glaring eyes to kill someone
or die there in the first attack. That's how Achilles,
driven by his furious proud heart, came on then
against the brave Aeneas. As they approached each other,
coming to close quarters, swift-footed Achilles yelled:

"Aeneas, why have you stepped forward,
standing here so far in front of all your men?
Does your heart prompt you to fight against me
in the hope you'll win Priam's royal honours
among horse-taming Trojans? If you kill me,
that won't make Priam put his regal power
in your hands. For he has his own sons.
Besides, he's healthy, and he is no fool.
Or have the Trojans given you some land
better than all the rest—a fine orchard,
as well as land to plough—yours to keep,
if you kill me? You'll find that hard to do.
My spear has sent you running once before.
Don't you remember? You were alone.
I chased you away from your own cattle.
You scampered off, down Mount Ida's slopes,
and quickly, too. That time we met, you ran
and never once looked back, then hid yourself
inside Lyrnessus. But I destroyed that city—
I attacked it with help from Athena,

as well as Father Zeus, seized their women,
and took away their freedom. You were saved,
thanks to Zeus and other gods. But today,
I don't think he'll save you, as your heart hopes.
So I'm telling you to move back now,
retreat into the crowd. Don't stand against me,
or you'll come up against an evil time.
A man who doesn't face the facts is stupid."

Aeneas then said in response:

"Son of Peleus,
don't try to scare me off with words, as if [200]
I were a child. I, too, know well enough
how to hand out threats and insults. We both know
each other's parents and our ancestry.
We've heard the famous tales of mortal men,
told long ago, though your eyes have not seen
my parents, nor mine yours. People say
you're noble Peleus's son, your mother
fair-haired Thetis, daughter of the sea.
Well, I can claim I'm great Anchises' child,
and Aphrodite is my mother. Today,
one of them will mourn a dear dead son. [210]
For I don't think that you and I will leave
without a fight, once we've exchanged
some childish conversation. But if you wish,
then listen to me, so you'll understand
my lineage well. Many people know it.
First cloud-gatherer Zeus fathered Dardanus,
who built Dardania, for sacred Ilion,
city of mortal men, was not yet built
here in the plain. His people settled there,
by the slopes of Ida with its many springs.
Dardanus, in turn, was father to a son,
king Erichthonius, and he became
the richest of all mortals, possessing [220]
three thousand horses grazing in the fens,
all mares happy with their foals. Then North Wind
fell in love with them as they pastured there.
Taking on the form of a dark stallion,
he copulated with them. They conceived,
delivering twelve foals. When these foals played,
running across the fertile farmland, they'd skim

the highest ears of corn and never break them,
or they'd race across the sea's broad back,
gliding the surface of the breaking waves.
This Erichthonius had a son Tros,
who ruled the Trojans, and Tros then fathered
three outstanding sons—Ilus, Assaracus,
and godlike Ganymede, the handsomest man
among all mortal men, so beautiful,
gods kidnapped him and made him cup bearer
to Zeus himself, so he'd live among immortals.
Ilus had a noble son, Laomedon,
who fathered Priam and Tithonus,
Clytius and warlike Hicataon.
Assaracus fathered his son Capys,
who had Anchises. He is my father.
Priam's son is godlike Hector. That, then,
is my ancestry, the blood I boast of.
But as for courage, well, that's up to Zeus,
who makes it less or greater as he wills,
for he's the mightiest one of all. But come,
let's no longer talk this way, like little boys
standing in the middle of a battle.
Both of us have insults we could utter,
lots of them, so many that a cargo ship
with a hundred oars could not take on the load.
Men's tongues are glib, with various languages—
words can go here and there in all directions,
and the sorts of words one speaks will be
the sorts of words one has to listen to.
But what's the point? Why should the two of us
be squabbling here and fight by trading insults
back and forth, like two irritated women,
who, in some heart-wrenching raging spat,
go in the street to scream at one another
with facts and lies, each one gripped by anger.
I want to fight—your words won't send me off,
not before we've fought it out with bronze,
man to man. So come. Let's start this now
and test each other with our bronze-tipped spears."

Aeneas finished. Then he threw his heavy spear
at Achilles' wondrous, dreadful shield. As it hit,
the spear point made the shield ring out. Peleus' son
held the shield away from him in his big fist,

fearing the long-shadowed spear from brave Aeneas
would easily go through. That was a foolish thought!
His heart and mind were not aware that gifts like that,
splendid presents from the gods to mortal men,
are not so easily defeated, nor do they fail.
So the mighty spear of warrior Aeneas
did not break the shield, stopped by the golden armour,
a present from the god. It drove on through two layers,
but there were still three more, for crippled god Hephaestus
had hammered out five layers, two made of bronze,
two inner ones of tin, with a gold one in between.
The gold one stopped that ash spear from Aeneas.
Then Achilles, in his turn, hurled his long-shadowed spear,
hitting Aeneas's round shield right on the rim,
where bronze and leather backing were the thinnest.
The spear of Pelian ash drove straight through the shield,
which rattled from the blow. Aeneas cowered down,
holding the shield out away from him in terror.
The spear flew high, above his back, then drove itself
into the ground. But it ripped apart two layers
on that protective shield. Having escaped the spear,
Aeneas straightened up, eyes glazed with shock,
frightened that the spear had come so close to him.
Drawing his sword, Achilles launched a frenzied charge
with a blood-curdling scream. Aeneas picked up a rock,
a heavy lift, which no two men now alive could do,
although he managed it with ease all by himself.
With that rock Aeneas would have struck Achilles,
as he charged at him, on his helmet or the shield
which had rescued him from death, and then Achilles
in close combat with his sword would have taken
Aeneas's life, had not the Earthshaker Poseidon
been paying attention. He spoke up immediately,
addressing the immortal gods beside him.

"Here's trouble. I feel sorry for Aeneas,
who'll be going down to Hades quickly,
slain by Peleus' son, because Apollo,
the far shooter, talked him into it, the fool!
Apollo won't protect him from grim death.
But why should an innocent man like him
suffer such misfortune, without doing wrong,
just because of other people's troubles?
With all his gifts, he's bringing pleasure

to the gods who live in spacious heaven.
So come, let's carry him away from death,
in case the son of Cronos grows enraged,
if he's killed by Achilles. For Fate ordains
that he'll escape, so the Dardanian race
will not die out and leave no seed alive.[1]
For the son of Cronos did love Dardanus
above all other children born to him
from mortal women, though he's come to hate
the family of Priam. So now Trojans
will be ruled by powerful Aeneas,
his children's children born in years to come."

Ox-eyed queen Hera then said to Poseidon:

"Earthshaker, in your own heart and mind
you must decide whether to save Aeneas,
or to leave him, for all his nobleness,
to be killed by Peleus' son, Achilles.
We two, Pallas Athena and myself,
have often sworn among immortals
not to rescue Trojans from wretched death,
not even when all Troy is being engulfed
in all-consuming, blazing fire, set off
by Achaea's warrior sons."

Hearing her words,
Earthshaker Poseidon went down into the battle,
among the flying spears and came right to the place
where Aeneas stood with glorious Achilles.
At once he cast a dense mist on Achilles' eyes,
pulled the ash spear of Peleus' son out of the shield
of brave Aeneas and set it at Achilles' feet.
Poseidon then raised Aeneas up, swinging him
far above the ground. Aeneas soared high up,
above the many ranks of warriors and chariots,
flying from Poseidon's hand, and then came down
on the fringes of that battle, where the Caucones
were arming for the fight. Then Earthshaker Poseidon,
coming up beside Aeneas, spoke to him—
his words had wings:

[1]This is the earliest surviving mention of the myth that Aeneas escaped Troy and continued the Trojan race elsewhere, a story that forms the basis of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

"Aeneas,
what god brought on such foolishness in you—
fighting man to man with proud Achilles,
a stronger man and more loved by the gods?
When you run into him, you must move back,
or you'll end up in Hades' house, contravening
what destiny ordains. But when Achilles
has met his fate and died, then you may fight
in full confidence among those at the front,
for of all Achaeans no one else will kill you."

With these words, Poseidon left, once he had explained [340]
these matters to Aeneas. Then he took away
the wondrous mist over Achilles' eyes. He looked out,
testing his eyesight, and spoke to his great heart,
passionately confused:

"What's happening?
My eyes are playing amazing tricks on me.
I see my spear lying here on the ground,
but I don't see the man I threw it at
in my eagerness to kill him. Aeneas
must be really dear to the immortal gods,
though I thought those things he boasted of
were merely idle talk. Well, let him go.
He'll have no heart to try me once again.
He'll be delighted to escape being killed. [350]
Come, I'll give a shout to these Danaans
to fight more Trojans—put them to the test."

Achilles finished. Then he leapt in among the ranks,
calling each man:

"Don't just stand there any more,
you fine Achaeans—don't stay away from Trojans.
Let each of you go up against your man
in full warrior fury. It's hard for me,
though I'm a powerful man, to attack
so many men and battle with them all.
Even deathless gods like Ares and Athena
could not fight them in the jaws of war
in such a conflict and keep on going.
But what I can do with my hands and feet [360]
and my own power, I'll do. I'll not hold back,

but go straight at their lines. I don't think
a Trojan who gets within my spear range
will have reason to feel happy."

With these words,
Achilles urged them on. Then splendid Hector,
calling with a shout, announced that he'd come forward
to confront Achilles.

"You proud-hearted Trojans,
don't be afraid of that son of Peleus.
I, too, can battle anyone with words,
even the immortals. But with a spear,
that's more difficult—they're so much stronger.
Achilles won't accomplish everything
he says he will. Some of it he'll manage, [370]
some he'll leave undone. I'll go against him,
though his blazing hands are like a fire,
his strength like glittering iron."

With these words
he roused them into action. Trojans held their spears up high,
then turned to face Achaeans. Both sides joined battle
in a terrific frenzy. Then Phoebus Apollo,
moving close to Hector, spoke to him:

"Hector,
don't step out to face Achilles openly.
Wait for him in the noisy crowd of men.
Don't let him hit you with his spear or slash you
at close quarters with his sword."

Apollo spoke.
Hector pulled back into the crowd of soldiers,
seized with fear at hearing a god's voice talk to him. [380]
Giving a blood-curdling scream, Achilles leapt
among the Trojans, his heart wrapped in battle fury.
First he killed Iphition, Otrynteus' brave son,
who commanded many men. A Naiad nymph bore him
to Otrynteus, sacker of cities, in Hyde,
a fertile land, below snow-covered Mount Tmolus.
As he charged right at him, godlike Achilles
struck Iphition with his spear squarely in the head,
splitting his skull apart. He fell with a crash.
Godlike Achilles then cried out in triumph:

"Lie there, son of Otrynteus, of all men
the one we fear the most. Here you die.
You were born beside the Gygaean lake,
on your father's land, by the fish-filled Hyllus
and the swirling Hermus rivers."

Achilles triumphed. But down on Iphition's eyes
the darkness fell, and then, in the first attack,
Achaean wheel rims on the chariots ripped him up.
After him, Achilles went for Demoleon,
Antenor's son, a brave defensive fighter,
hitting the bronze cheek armour on his helmet.
But that didn't check the spear—it smashed through,
breaking his skull, splattering all his brains inside.
That stopped his fighting charge. Then Hippodamas
jumped down out of his chariot to flee Achilles.
But Achilles speared him in the back. As he died,
panting his life away, he screamed—just as a bull roars,
when it's pulled around the altar of Poseidon,
lord of Helice, the Earthshaker, who delights
in those young lads who drag the beast—in just that way
Hippodamas bellowed then, as his noble spirit
slipped out from his bones. Then Achilles with his spear
attacked noble Polydorus, son of Priam.
His father would not let Polydorus fight,
for of all his children he was the youngest born,
the one most loved. He was the fastest runner, too.
Now, like a fool, he was showing off his speed,
sprinting through front lines until he lost his life.
As he ran past, swift-footed godlike Achilles
threw his spear into the middle of his back,
where the golden belt clasps joined together
on the overlapping body armour. The spear point,
going straight through, came out his navel. With a scream,
he fell onto his knees. Then black cloud enveloped him.
As he collapsed, his guts spilled out into his hands.

When Hector saw his brother Polydorus there,
down on the ground, collapsed and holding his own entrails,
a mist flowed right across his eyes. He could no longer
bear to keep his distance. He moved against Achilles,
waving his sharp spear, just like a flame. Achilles,
when he saw him, jumped out and roared in triumph:

"He's getting closer—the very man
who scarred my heart more than all other men.
We won't be evading one another
in the battle lanes much longer."

As he said this, Achilles scowled at godlike Hector,
then yelled at him:

"Come closer,
so you can meet your fatal doom more quickly."

Hector of the shining helmet, quite unafraid,
then cried out to Achilles:

"Son of Peleus,
don't try to frighten me with words, as if
I were some child. I, too, know well enough
how to shout out taunting words and insults.
I know you're brave, stronger than me by far.
But these things are in the lap of the gods.
Though I'm the weaker man, I'll take your life,
with one throw of my spear, for in the past
it's proved it's sharp enough."

With these words,
Hector raised his spear and threw it. But Athena,
with the slightest puff of breath, blew it aside,
away from glorious Achilles, turning it back
to godlike Hector. It landed there beside his feet.
Then, with a terrifying shout, Achilles charged,
lusting to kill. But Apollo snatched up Hector,
something a god can do with ease, then hid him
in thick cloud. Swift-footed, godlike Achilles
charged that cloud three times, striking hard each time
with his bronze spear. When for the fourth time
he came on like a god with a terrific shout,
Achilles cried out these winged words to Hector:

"You dog—once more you're evading death for now.
But you've narrowly escaped disaster.
Phoebus Apollo has saved you one more time.
No doubt you always pray to him as you go
out into the sound of thudding spears.
Next time we meet, I'll surely finish you,
if some god is there to assist me, too.

For now I'll fight the others, any man
I chance to meet."

Achilles finished shouting.
Then he struck Dryops with his spear right in the neck.
Dryops fell at Achilles' feet. But he left him there.
Next, Achilles stopped Demouchus, Philetor's son,
a big brave warrior, with a spear thrust in his knee.
Then he hit him with his massive sword, taking his life.
After that, he went at Dardanus and Laogonus,
both sons of Bias, throwing them out of their chariot [460]
onto the ground. He hit one of them with his spear
and slashed the other at close quarters with his sword.

Then Tros, Alastor's son, fell at Achilles' knees,
clutching them, begging him to spare his life,
to capture him alive, instead of killing him,
moved by pity for a man the same age as himself.
What a fool! He did not know there was no way
to change Achilles' mind—he was not a tender man
with a soft heart, but full of fighting rage. With his hands
Tros tried to clutch Achilles' knees, desperate
to plead for mercy, but Achilles' sword struck him
in his liver, which slid out from the wound.
Black blood, pouring from the gash, filled up his lap. [470]
Then darkness veiled his eyes, and his spirit left him.

Next, Achilles moved up to Mulius and with his spear
struck him on the ear. The bronze point, driven in hard,
came out his other ear. Then he hit Echeclus,
Agenor's son, with his hilted sword right on his head.
The blood made the whole blade hot. Then dark death,
his powerful fate, came down across his eyes.
Next, Achilles hit Deucalion—his bronze spear point
struck him in the arm where tendons meet the elbow.
His arm now useless, Deucalion stood there waiting, [480]
staring death right in the face. Achilles hit him
with his sword blade in the neck, slicing off his head.
He knocked the head and the helmet far away.
From Deucalion's spine the marrow spurted out,
as his body lay there, stretched out on the ground.
Next, Achilles, after chasing the noble son of Peires,
Rhigmus, who'd come from fertile Thrace, hit him
with a spear throw in the gut, fixing the bronze

firmly in his belly. Rhigmus fell from his chariot.
His attendant, Areithous, wheeled the horses round,
but Achilles' sharp spear struck him in the back
and threw him from the chariot. The horses bolted.

Just as a terrifying fire rages through deep woods [490]
on a parched mountain, burning dense stands of trees,
as the driving wind blows flames to every spot, 590
that how Achilles, like a god, raged with his spear,
attacking and killing men all through the fight.
The dark earth ran with blood. Just as a man yokes oxen,
big bulls, wide in the shoulder, to grind barley
on a well-built threshing floor, and lowing oxen
quickly flatten all the grain, that how brave Achilles
drove his sure-footed horses to trample on the dead
and on their shields as well. The chariot axle underneath
got sprayed with blood. Blood soaked the chariot rails, [500]
thrown up in gouts from horses' hooves and wheel rims. 600
But Peleus' son pushed on to win more glory,
blood spattered over his all-conquering hands.

BOOK TWENTY-ONE
ACHILLES FIGHTS THE RIVER

[Achilles attacks the Trojans hiding in the river Xanthus (also called Scamander); takes twelve young men alive to sacrifice for Patroclus; Achilles meets Lycaon, who begs for mercy; Achilles replies and then kills Lycaon; Achilles fights and kills Asteropaeus, then slaughters many Paeonian leaders; the river objects to the slaughter; the river rises against Achilles, who appeals to the gods for help; Hera appeals to Hephaestus to fight the river; Hephaestus launches his fire against the flooding river; the river gives up, so Hephaestus withdraws his fire; the gods begin to fight each other; Athena fights Ares and then Aphrodite; Poseidon offers to fight Apollo, who declines; Hera and Artemis fight; Apollo moves into Ilion; Apollo deceives Achilles, enabling many Trojans to reach the city.]

When the Trojans reached the ford across the Xanthus,
lovely swirling river born of immortal Zeus,
Achilles split them in two groups, chasing one
across the plain towards the city, where the previous day
Achaeans had fled in terror, when glorious Hector
had prevailed. Some Trojans fled back there in panic.
Hera sent fog in front of them to slow them down.
But half the Trojans were crammed in along the river,
trapped by its deep currents and its silver eddies.
They fell in there, making a huge commotion.
The noise roared down along the rushing river banks [10]
amplifying the din. Men thrashed around, back and forth,
as they were sucked down in the current screaming.
Just as fire drives flights of locusts to seek refuge
in some river, when the tireless flames attack them
in a sudden onrush and they sink below the water—
that's how, faced with Achilles' attacking charge,
a confused mass of chariots and men filled up
the deep and swirling waters of the river Xanthus.

Then divinely born Achilles left his spear
beside a tamarisk bush and jumped into the stream,
like an inhuman thing, armed only with his sword,
his heart intent on killing. Turning in all directions, [20]
he kept on striking. The men his sword slaughtered
cried out in terror. The water turned blood red.
Just as other fish swim off from a huge dolphin
filling safe corners of some sheltered harbour,
fearful because the beast eats all it captures—
that's how Trojans huddled then, under hanging banks,

all along the stream edge of that murderous river.
When Achilles' arms grew weary from the killing,
he plucked out of the river twelve young men alive,
as blood payment for the killing of Patroclus,
Menoetius' son. He led them up onto dry land,
like stupefied fawns, tied their hands behind them
using belts they wore around their woven tunics, [30]
and gave them to his men to lead back to the ships.
Then he jumped in again, eager to keep killing.

But then Achilles met someone fleeing the river—
Lycaon, a son of Dardanian Priam,
whom he'd captured once before in a night attack,
taking him against his will from his father's orchard.
With his sharp bronze Lycaon had been cutting
young shoots from off a fig tree to make chariot rails.
He had the bad luck to meet godlike Achilles.
That time, Achilles took him in his ship and sold him [40]
in well-built Lemnos, where the son of Jason
had paid the purchase price. From there, Eëtion,
a friend and guest from Imbros, had ransomed Lycaon,
paying a huge sum, then sent him on to Arisbe.
He escaped from there in secret and went home,
back to his father's house. Once he returned from Lemnos,
for eleven days his heart enjoyed his friends.
On the twelfth, some god threw him back again
into Achilles' hands, who was about to ship him,
against Lycaon's wishes, down to dwell with Hades.
When swift-footed, godlike Achilles saw Lycaon
totally unarmed, without his helmet, shield, or spear, [50]
for he'd thrown these on the ground, exhausted
after he'd escaped the river, worn out and sweating
in all his lower limbs, Achilles, much surprised,
spoke to his own courageous heart:

"What's this?
My eyes are witnessing something amazing.
Great-hearted Trojans I've just slaughtered
will rise again, up out of murky darkness,
if this man's escaped death and returned like this,
after I'd sold him off in sacred Lemnos.
The grey sea, which holds many people back
against their will, hasn't seemed to stop him.
But come, let him taste my spear point. I'll see— [60]

and in my heart confirm—if he'll return,
as he's just done, or if life-giving earth,
which keeps even strong men down, will hold him."

That's what Achilles thought, as he stood there waiting.
Lycaon, dazed with fear, approached Achilles,
eager to clasp his knees in supplication,
heart desperate to escape dark fate and evil death.
Godlike Achilles raised his long spear, prepared to strike.
But Lycaon, stooping down, slipped underneath the spear,
then clasped Achilles' knees. Flying above his back,
the spear stuck in the ground, hungry for human flesh. [70]
With one hand, Lycaon grabbed Achilles' knee.
His other clutched the spear, refusing to let go.
He begged for mercy, addressing Achilles
with these winged words:

"By your knees, Achilles,
I beg you to respect me as a suppliant.
Have pity on me. I claim that sacred right,
my lord, because it was at your table
I first ate Demeter's grain the very day
you seized me in that well-built orchard.
You led me far from father and my friends,
then sold me off in sacred Lemnos. For me
you got the value of a hundred oxen,
but I was ransomed for three times that price. [80]
It's now twelve days since I reached Ilion,
after my ordeal. Once more, deadly Fate
has placed me in your hands. I do believe
Father Zeus must hate me, to give me to you
for a second time. My mother, Laothoë,
daughter of old Altes, gave birth to me
to live a shortened life. Altes rules over
war-loving Leleges, in steep Pedasus,
by the river Satnioeis. His daughter
married Priam, who has many other wives.
She had two sons. Now you'll have slaughtered both.
You killed fine Polydorus with those men [90]
fighting at the front, when your sharp spear
sent him to die. Now death comes for me, as well.
I don't expect to escape your hands this time,
since some god has guided me right to them.
But I'll say one more thing—take it to heart—

don't kill me. I'm not from the same womb
as Hector, the man who killed your comrade,
that kind and powerful warrior."

So Lycaon begged for mercy from Achilles.
But the response he got was brutal:

"You fool,
don't offer me a ransom or some plea.
Before Patroclus met his deadly fate, [100]
sparing Trojans pleased my heart much more.
I took many overseas and sold them.
But now not one of them escapes his death,
no one whom god delivers to my hands,
here in front of Ilion, not one—
not a single Trojan, especially none
of Priam's children. So now, my friend,
you too must die. Why be sad about it?
Patroclus died, a better man than you.
And look at me. You see how fine I am,
how tall, how handsome? My father's a fine man,
the mother who gave birth to me a goddess.
Yet over me, as well, hangs Fate—my death. [110]
There'll come a dawn, or noon, or evening,
when some man will take my life in battle—
he'll strike me with his spear or with an arrow
shot from his bowstring."

Achilles finished.
Then Lycaon's knees gave way, his heart collapsed.
He let go of the spear and crouched there, both his hands
stretched out. Achilles pulled out his sharp sword and struck,
hitting him on the collar bone, beside his neck.
The whole two-edged blade sliced into him. Lycaon fell,
lying face down on the earth. His dark blood flowed out
and soaked the ground. Achilles seized him by the foot, [120]
then flung him in the river, shouting out in triumph—
his words had wings:

"Lie there, among the fish.
They'll lick blood from your wound with no respect.
Your mother won't set you on your funeral bed,
lamenting over you. No, Scamander,
the swirling river, will carry you away

to the broad lap of the sea. Many fish
will swim up to the darkly rippled surface
to eat white fat from Lycaon. So die,
all you fleeing Trojans, until we reach
that sacred city Ilion, with me there,
right behind you, fighting and killing you.
Your flowing river with its silver eddies [130]
won't help, for all those bulls you've sacrificed
all these years, all the sure-footed horses
you've thrown alive into its swirling pools.
No matter—you'll suffer an evil fate,
till every one of you has paid in full
for Patroclus' death, for Achaea's dead,
the men you slaughtered by our swift ships,
when I was not among them there."

Achilles' words enraged the heart in river Xanthus,
who wondered how he might stop godlike Achilles
from his slaughter and protect the Trojans from disaster.
Meanwhile, Peleus' son, gripping his long-shadowed spear,
still eager to kill more, charged Asteropaeus, [140]
son of Pelegon, born to the broad river Axius
and Acessamenus' eldest daughter, Periboea.
The deep swirling river had had sex with her.
Achilles went at Asteropaeus, who stood there,
facing him, holding two spears. In his anger
at the slaughter of young soldiers in the battle,
whom Achilles kept butchering along the stream,
showing no pity, Xanthus then put fighting strength
into Asteropaeus. But when the two men
had approached each other, moving close together,
godlike Achilles was the first to speak:

"Who are you that dares to come against me? [150]
Where are you from? Children who confront me
leave their parents full of sorrow."

The glorious son of Pelegon then said in reply:

"Great-hearted son of Peleus, why ask me
my lineage? I come from Paeonia,
a fertile country far from here, leading
Paeonians, men carrying long spears.
It's now eleven days since I came here,

to Ilion. I'm born from Axius,
the wide-streaming river, whose waters
are the loveliest which flow upon this earth.
Axius fathered a famous spear man,
Pelegon, whose son they say I am.
But now, splendid Achilles, let us fight."

In response to that speech from Asteropaeus,
godlike Achilles raised his Pelian ash spear.
But then Asteropaeus, an ambidextrous man,
threw two spears at once. One hit Achilles' shield,
but did not break through. The gold, gift of a god,
had checked it. The other hit Achilles a glancing blow
on his right arm at the elbow. Dark blood flowed out.
But the spear passed over him and struck the ground,
still eager to taste flesh. Then Achilles, in his turn,
threw a straight-flying spear at Asteropaeus,
hoping to kill him. But he missed the man, hitting
the high river bank, driving half of that ash spear
deep in the ground. Drawing the sharp sword by his thigh,
Peleus' son, enraged, went after Asteropaeus,
who was trying to pull the spear Achilles threw
out of the river bank with his huge fist. He failed.
Three times he shifted it in his frantic haste to grab it,
but three times he had to abandon the attempt.
The fourth time his heart was keen to bend and break
the ash spear of Achilles, but before he could,
Achilles himself charged in and took his life
with a sword thrust in the belly by the navel.
His guts fell out onto the ground. As he lay gasping,
darkness veiled his eyes. Jumping on his chest,
Achilles stripped his armour off, boasting aloud:

"Lie there. It's hard to compete with children
of the mighty son of Cronos, even though
you are descended from some river. You claim
your family stems from a broad flowing stream,
but I boast a family coming from great Zeus.
The man who is my father, Peleus,
son of Aeacus, rules many Myrmidons.
Aeacus came from Zeus himself, and Zeus
is stronger than rivers flowing to the sea,
so Zeus's line is stronger than all those
descended from a river. Look beside you—

there's a great stream there, but he can't help you.
For there's no way to battle against Zeus,
son of Cronos. Even lord Achelous
cannot equal him, nor the great power
of deep flowing Oceanus, from whom
all rivers, seas, fountains, and deep wells
derive their water—even Oceanus
is afraid of lighting from great Zeus
and his thunder when it crashes in the skies."

Saying this, he pulled his bronze spear from the river bank. [200]
Achilles left the corpse of Asteropaeus
lying there in the sand, dark water lapping round him.
Fish and eels then went at him, nibbling and chewing off
the fat around his kidneys. Achilles moved away,
attacking the Paeonian charioteers still crouched
beside the flowing river, terrified once they'd seen
their best man butchered in that desperate conflict
on the powerful sword of the son of Peleus.
There Achilles killed Thersilochus, Mydon,
Astypylus, Mnesus, Thrasius, Aenius,
and Ophelestes. Swift Achilles would have killed [210]
still more Paeonians, but the deep-flowing river,
in its anger, taking on a human form, called out,
speaking from a deep swirling pool:

"Achilles,
you may be the most powerful of men,
but you're inflicting too much damage here.
Yes, the gods are always there to help you.
And if Cronos' son is now enabling you
to kill all Trojans, at least drive them off
far from my stream. Carry out your work—
this butchery—out there on the plain.
Now corpses fill my channels, I can't let
my waters flow through anywhere to reach
the glimmering sea. I'm choking on the dead, [220]
while you keep up these harsh atrocities.
Come, you leader of your people, let me be.
I find your actions here astounding."

In reply,
swift-footed Achilles then addressed the river:

"Divinely raised Scamander, it shall be
as you request. But I'll not stop killing
these proud Trojans till I have them cornered
in their city and have tested Hector
in a fight, and he kills me or I kill him."

Saying this, Achilles fell upon the Trojans,
like something superhuman. Then Scamander,
the deep-flowing river, cried out to Apollo:

"What's happening, lord of the silver bow,
child of Zeus? You're not following Zeus's plans. [230]
He clearly told you to assist the Trojans,
to defend them until evening comes,
casting its shadows on the fertile farm land."

The river spoke. Then famous spearman Achilles
jumped from the bank into the middle of the stream.
The river attacked him with a rising flood,
stirring all his waters into seething turmoil,
sweeping up many corpses crowded in the shoals,
men slaughtered by Achilles. Roaring like a bull,
the river hurled these bodies up onto the shore,
preserving in its lovely stream those still alive
by hiding them in deep wide pools. Around Achilles, [240]
huge waves towered threateningly, beating down
his shield. The breaking waters pushed him backwards.
Achilles lost his footing. His hand reached out to grab
a large elm tree, fully grown, but the tree came loose,
roots and all, tearing the whole river bank away.
As it fell in the river, its thick branches blocked
that lovely stream, damming its flow. In terror,
Achilles scrambled up out of the raging waters,
trying on his swift feet to run out to the plain.
But the great god wasn't done. With a dark wave,
he went after godlike Achilles, to prevent
the killing and to rescue Trojans from destruction. [250]
Peleus' son ran off as far as one spear throw,
moving as fast as a black eagle plummets,
the hunting bird which is the strongest and the fastest
of all flying things—that's how Achilles ran.
The bronze armour on his chest was clanging fearfully
as he swerved out from underneath the flooding river,
desperate to escape. But with a tremendous roar,

Scamander's flood rushed on in pursuit behind him.
Just as a man laying out a ditch from a dark spring
to his plants and gardens digs a water channel,
mattock in hand, removing what obstructs the flow,
and the water, as it starts to run, pushes aside [260]
the pebbles, and then, gaining momentum, flows down
and overtakes the man who's guiding it—
that's how the flooding wave kept clutching at Achilles
for all his speed, since gods have much more strength than men.
Every time swift-footed, godlike Achilles
tried stopping to fight back, to see if all the gods
who live in spacious heaven were forcing him to flee,
a tremendous wave from that heaven-fed river
would crash down around his shoulders. He'd jump clear,
heart panicking, but the river kept tugging at his legs [270]
with a strong undertow, washing out the ground
beneath his feet. Then gazing up into the wide sky
the son of Peleus cried out:

"Father Zeus,
why is no god standing by me here,
in this pitiful state, rescuing me
from this river? After this, I can endure
everything. I don't blame any Olympian
as much as I blame my own dear mother,
who led me astray with lies, telling me
I'd die from the swift arrows of Apollo,
under Trojan walls and fully armed.
Now I wish that I'd been killed by Hector,
the best man of those native to this region.
Then a fine man would have done the killing, [280]
another fine man would have been destroyed.
But now it's been ordained that I'm to suffer
an ignoble death, caught by this great river,
like some child in care of pigs, swept away
while trying to cross a torrent in a rain storm."

Achilles spoke. Then Poseidon and Pallas Athena,
coming up quickly, stood in human form beside him.
They joined their hands with his, and with their words
they pledged their help. Poseidon spoke out first:

"Son of Peleus,
don't be so afraid. You need have no fear.

We two come from the gods, here to help you—
me and Pallas Athena, and Zeus approves. [290]
It's not ordained that you're to die here,
killed by some river, which will soon recede,
as you will see. We have advice for you,
if you'll listen. Don't hold back your hands
in murderous warfare till you've cornered
inside the famous walls of Troy those men
now in retreat before you. Once you've taken
Hector's life, return back to the ships.
We are giving you a chance for glory."

With these words, the two gods went away. Achilles,
greatly moved by what the gods had said, set off,
running across the plain, now full of flooding water, [300]
with many lovely weapons of the slaughtered men
floating there among their corpses. As he went,
he raised his legs high, striving against the current.
The broad flowing river could not slow him down,
once Athena had put great power in Achilles.

But Scamander did not hold his fury back,
growing even more enraged at Peleus' son.
He raised himself up in a high-crested wave
and called out with a shout to Simoeis:

"Dear brother,
let's both together counter this man's power,
since he'll soon demolish Priam's city.
Trojans will not stand up to him and fight. [310]
Come quickly. Help me. Fill your streams
with water from your springs. Whip up your torrents.
Then stand in a huge wave, raising a din
with rocks and tree trunks, so we can stop
this violent man, now in a conquering rage,
like some god. I don't think his strength will help him,
or his beauty, or that lovely armour—
that will lie somewhere underneath the flood,
buried in slime. I'll cover him in sand,
with a massive layer of silt on top,
beyond all measurement. I'll hide him there
with so much mud, Achaeans will not know [320]
how to collect his bones. There where he'll lie,

I'll make him a tomb—he won't need a mound
when Achaeans organize his funeral."

Saying this, Scamander crested high against Achilles,
then charged, seething with foam and blood and corpses.
The dark wave of the heaven-fed river rose, towering
above Achilles, about to overwhelm him.
But Hera, afraid for Achilles, cried out, fearing
the great, deep, swirling river would sweep him off.
She called out to Hephaestus, her dear son: [330]

"Rouse yourself,
my crippled child. We think that you're a match
for swirling Xanthus in a fight. Come quickly.
Help Achilles with a giant outburst
of your flames. I'll stir up some winds—
West Wind's harsh sea blasts and white South Wind—
to whip on your destructive fires, so they may burn
dead Trojans and their weapons. You must go
along the river banks, burning trees,
attacking river Xanthus with your flames.
Don't let him slow you down in any way,
not with gentle words or making threats.
Don't check your fury till I tell you to. [340]
I'll give you a shout. Then you can pull back
your inexhaustible fire."

Hera spoke.
Hephaestus then prepared a prodigious blaze.
First it burned up all the plain, incinerating corpses,
the many bodies of men slaughtered by Achilles
scattered everywhere. The entire plain dried up.
The shimmering river waters were held back.
Just as at harvest time North Wind quickly dries
well-watered orchards, to the farmer's great delight,
that's how the whole plain then grew dry, as Hephaestus
burned up the dead. Then he turned his blazing flames
against the river, burning elms, willows, tamarisks, [350]
clover, rushes, sedge, all growing in abundance
along that lovely stream. In the river pools,
eels and fish were much distressed—they jumped everywhere
in that fine river, suffering the fiery blasts
prepared by that resourceful god Hephaestus.

The river, too, was burned. So Xanthus cried out,
calling to the god:

"No god, Hephaestus,
can stand against you. I cannot fight you
when you burn with flames like this. So stop.
End this strife. Godlike Achilles can continue.
Let him drive the Trojans from their city.
What do I care about assisting in this war?" [360]

The river spoke, still burning from the fire,
his lovely waters seething. Just as a cauldron
with hot flames heating it boils inside and melts
the fat from off a well-fed hog, bubbling over,
once dry split wood is set down under it—that's how
the fire burned that lovely stream. Its seething waters
would no longer flow downriver, held up there,
defeated by the power of that fiery blast
made by the skill of god Hephaestus. Then the river,
with a strong appeal to Hera, spoke these winged words:

"Hera, why is your son burning up my stream,
doing it more injury than any other?
I'm not as much to blame as all the rest, [370]
the ones who help the Trojans. If you say so,
I'll stop, if Hephaestus stops as well.
And I'll swear this oath—never again will I
protect a Trojan from his evil death,
not even when all Troy itself is burning,
ablaze with all-consuming fire, started
by Achaea's warlike sons."

White-armed goddess Hera,
as soon as she'd heard this, spoke to Hephaestus,
her dear son:

"Hold off, Hephaestus, splendid child.
It's not right to hurt a deathless god like this, [380]
just for the sake of mortal men."

When Hera spoke,
Hephaestus extinguished his stupendous fire at once.
The river's stream flowed once more in its channel.
When the fighting spirit in Xanthus had been broken,

the two gods fought no longer. Hera had stopped them,
though she was still enraged. But now the other gods
began a heavy conflict and a cruel fight
among themselves. The spirits in their hearts
pushed them in various directions. As they clashed,
with a tremendous din, the wide earth cried out,
and mighty heaven pealed, just like a trumpet.
Sitting on Olympus, Zeus heard the sound—his heart
laughed with delight to see these gods go at it [390]
in mutual conflict. They no longer stood aloof.
Shield-breaker Ares started it, attacking
Athena first with his bronze spear and taunting her:

"You dog fly, why is it you're once again
inciting gods to fight each other,
heart prompted by your own foolhardiness?
Don't you recall the moment you provoked
Diomedes, Tydeus' son, to wound me?
We all saw it—you grabbed his spear yourself
and drove it at me, scratching my fair skin.
Well, now I think you'll pay for all you've done."

Saying this, Ares struck Athena's tasselled aegis, [400]
that fearful aegis which not even Zeus's lightning
can overcome. Bloodstained Ares' long spear struck it.
Drawing back, Athena picked up in her strong hand
a large, black, jagged rock, lying there on the plain.
In earlier ages men had set it there to indicate
the boundary of a field. With this rock Athena
struck raging Ares in the neck. His legs collapsed.
Ares fell. Stretched out he covered seven hundred feet.
His hair was dirtied with the dust. His armour rang.
Pallas Athena laughed, then cried in boastful triumph—
her words had wings:

"You fool, still so ignorant [410]
of how much stronger I can claim to be
than you, when you seek to match my power.
This is the way you'll answer now in full
your mother's vengeful rage. She's angry,
planning nasty things for you, since you left
Achaeans to support the arrogant Trojans."

With these words, she turned her glittering eyes away.
Zeus's daughter Aphrodite then took Ares
and led him off by hand, as he kept groaning—
he found it difficult to get his spirit back.
When white-armed goddess Hera saw Athena,
she spoke, addressing her with these winged words:

"Look there, child of aegis-bearing Zeus,
you tireless one, that dog fly once again
is leading man-killing Ares through the crowd,
away from battle. Go after her."

Once Hera spoke, Athena dashed off in pursuit,
delighted in her heart. Charging Aphrodite,
she struck her in the chest with her powerful fist.
Aphrodite's knees gave way, her heart collapsed.
So both gods lay there, on the all-nourishing earth.
Athena then spoke out winged words of triumph:

"Let all those who assist the Trojans
end up like this in warfare with Achaeans,
with all the fortitude and boldness
Aphrodite showed in helping Ares,
standing up against my fighting power.
We'll then soon end these hostile fights,
once we've destroyed well-peopled Ilion."

As Athena spoke, white-armed goddess Hera smiled.
Then the mighty Earthshaker spoke to Apollo:

"Phoebus, why do we two stand aloof?
That's not right, now that others have begun.
It would be shameful if we both went back
to Olympus, to Zeus's bronze-floored home,
without a fight. Since you're the younger one,
you must begin. It's not fair play if I do,
since I'm your elder and thus I know more.
How foolish you are with your thoughtless heart!
Don't you recall the trouble we two had
around Troy, just the pair of us alone,
with no other gods, that time when Zeus
made us come here to work for a whole year
at a fixed wage for proud king Laomedon?
He was our master and told us what to do.

I built the Trojans a wide and splendid wall
around their city, to make it impregnable.
You, Phoebus, worked with his cattle herds,
taking his shambling bent-horned livestock
through Ida's wooded spurs and valleys.
When the joyful seasons stopped our working there, [450]
that despicable Laomedon robbed us.
He kept our wages and sent us off with threats.
He promised he'd tie up your hands and feet,
then in some distant island sell you as a slave.
He said he'd slice off both our ears with bronze.
We came back really angry in our hearts,
enraged about those promised wages
he'd withheld. That's the man whose people
you're now keen to favour. You don't join us,
so we destroy these arrogant Trojans
once and for all, along with all their children
and their honourable wives as well." [460]

Lord Apollo, who shoots from far, answered Poseidon:

"Earthshaker, you'd never call me prudent,
if I fought with you over human beings—
those pitiful creatures are like the leaves,
now full of blazing life, eating nourishment
the earth provides, then fading into death.
No, let's quickly end our quarrel, leaving
these mortal men to fight amongst themselves."

Saying this, he turned away, thinking it shameful
to fight in battle against his father's brother.
But his sister, forest goddess Artemis, [470]
queen of all wild beasts, was furious with him.
She spoke to him with scorn:

"So, far worker,
you're running off, ceding total victory
to Poseidon, giving him an easy glory.
You fool! Why do you carry such a bow,
as useless as the wind? From now on,
I never want to hear you boasting,
the way you used to among deathless gods,
how you could fight Poseidon face to face."

Artemis spoke. Far-shooting Apollo did not answer.
But Hera, Zeus' honoured wife, was angry.
She went at the archer goddess, insulting her:

"You shameless bitch, you dare stand against me?
You'll find it hard to match my power,
even if you have your bow and Zeus made you
a lion among women, allowing you
to kill whichever one of them you please.
I say it's better to be slaughtering wild beasts,
deer in the mountains, than to fight all out
with those more powerful. Still, if you're keen
to learn about this war, to understand
how much more powerful I am, let's fight,
since you are challenging my strength."

With these words, Hera caught both arms of Artemis
in her left hand. With her right she grabbed the bow,
snatching it and its quiver off her shoulders.
Then she slapped her with those weapons. As she did so,
Hera smiled to see Artemis twist away and squirm.
The swift arrows tumbled out. Artemis ran off,
crying like a pigeon speeding from a hawk,
flying to some hollow cleft among the rocks,
for she's not fated to be caught—that's how Artemis
escaped, in tears, leaving her bow lying there.
Then Hermes, the guide, killer of Argus, spoke out,
addressing Leto:

"I'll not fight you, Leto.
It's dangerous to come to blows with those
married to cloud-gatherer Zeus. So you can tell
immortal gods your great strength conquered me—
and you can even boast about it."

Hermes finished.
Leto then collected the curved bow and arrows,
which had fallen here and there down in the swirling dust.
Then she left, taking her daughter's weapons with her.

Artemis returned then to Olympus, to Zeus's home,
with its bronze floor. The girl sat on her father's lap,
her immortal garments shaking as she wept.

Her father, Cronos' son, holding her to him,
asked her with a gentle laugh:

"My dear child,
which of the heavenly gods has treated you
so nastily, as if you were committing
some evil act in public?"

Then Artemis,
with her beautiful headband, answered Zeus:

"It was your wife who hit me, father,
white-armed Hera. Now, thanks to her,
immortal gods engage in fights and quarrels."

As these two talked together in this fashion,
Phoebus Apollo went to sacred Ilion.
He was concerned about that well-built city wall,
afraid Danaans might breach it that very day,
contravening what Fate ordained. The other gods,
who live forever, went back to Olympus,
some incensed and others relishing their triumph.
They sat down by Zeus, lord of the dark cloud.

Meanwhile, Achilles still kept on killing Trojans,
both soldiers and their sure-footed horses, too.
Just as smoke rises up, reaching spacious heaven,
when a city burns from fires set by wrathful gods—
that's how Achilles brought Trojans death and danger.

Then old Priam stood on that wall built by gods,
observing huge Achilles as he drove the Trojans
ahead of him in total panic, their spirit broken.
With a groan, he left the wall, came down to the ground,
and summoned the well-known sentries at the gates.

"Hold the doors wide open with your hands,
until the fleeing troops come to the city.
For Achilles is coming closer, driving
them in panic. I think disaster looms.
When the men have gathered here inside the wall,
able to get relief, then close the gates,
these tight-fitting doors, once more. I'm afraid
this murderer may jump inside our walls."

Then the men pushed back the bars, opening the gates,
and gave a saving light for those men on the run.

Then Apollo charged out to meet Achilles,
seeking to protect the Trojans from destruction,
as they ran back, straight for the high-walled city, [540]
suffering from thirst and dusty from the plain.
Still in a rage, Achilles chased them with his spear,
his heart filled with strong and unremitting fury,
still eager to win glory. At that moment,
Achaea's sons would have captured Troy's high gates,
if Phoebus Apollo had not intervened,
by stirring up noble, godlike Agenor,
Antenor's son, a powerful warrior. In his heart
Apollo instilled courage and then stood by him,
leaning against the oak tree, covered in thick mist,
so he might ward off the heavy hand of Death.
When Agenor saw Achilles, sacker of cities, [550]
he made a stand, his heart pondering many things,
as he stood there. In his agitation, he spoke out,
addressing his proud heart:

"Here's trouble!
If I rush away before Achilles
where other men are running in their panic,
he'll catch me, then kill me as a coward.
But what if I let Achilles, son of Peleus,
drive them on, then dash away myself
to some other place, distant from the wall,
out in the Trojan plain, until I reach
Ida's spurs, where there's a bush to hide in?
When evening comes, I could wash in the river, [560]
get rid of all the sweat and then go back,
return to Ilion. But why's my fond heart
debating all these options? He might see me,
as I moved off from the city for the plain,
and catch me with a sprint of his swift feet.
I'd no longer have a chance to get away
from death, my fate. The man is really strong,
much more powerful than other men.
What if I go out to stand against him
before the city? My sharp bronze, I think,
can slice up his flesh, too. He's got one life,

no more. And men say that he's a mortal,
although Zeus, Cronos' son, gives him glory."

Saying this, Agenor stood up straight and waited,
the heart within him prepared for war and keen to fight.
Just as a leopard emerges from thick undergrowth,
to face a hunter, with no fear in its heart,
no hint of flight when it hears the baying hounds—
even if the hunter first hits it with his spear,
the wounded beast will not lose its fighting spirit,
until it closes with him or is killed itself—
that's how godlike Agenor, noble Antenor's son,
refused to run before fighting Achilles.
Holding his round shield in front of him, he aimed his spear
directly at Achilles, then shouted out:

"Glorious Achilles, I'm sure you've set your heart
on destroying the city which proud Trojans hold
this very day. What foolishness! Much pain
must still be suffered in that enterprise.
We who live in Troy are men with courage,
and there are lots of us. We'll guard Ilion,
in front of our dear parents, wives, and sons.
Here you'll meet your doom, though as a fighter,
you are so formidable and brave."

Agenor spoke.
Then he threw his sharp spear from his massive hand.
He hit Achilles on the shin, below the knee.
The spear did not miss its man. The armour on his leg,
newly hammered tin, gave out a fearful clang.
But the spear just struck the metal and bounced off,
without going through. The god's gift had protected him.
Then Peleus' son, in turn, went for godlike Agenor.
But Apollo did not let him win the glory there.
He snatched Agenor up, hid him in dense mist,
then sent him quietly away from battle.
After that, he led the son of Peleus astray,
far from Trojan soldiers. The far shooter tricked him,
by standing right before Achilles' feet, looking
exactly like Agenor. Achilles charged off
in pursuit, chasing Apollo out across the plain,
past wheat fields, turning him towards the river,
the deep, swirling Scamander. Apollo raced on,

only a little bit ahead, using his cunning
to trick Achilles with his pace, so he'd think
he could catch up. Meanwhile, the other Trojans
fleeing in confusion, came crowding in the city,
throngs of them, cramming the gates, happy to be there.
They did not dare to wait outside the wall, to check
who made it back and who had perished in the fight.
They streamed into the city in an eager rush,
all whose legs and knees had brought them safely in.

BOOK TWENTY-TWO
THE DEATH OF HECTOR

[The Trojans retreat into the city; Apollo reveals his deception to Achilles; Hector remains outside the gates; Priam and Hecuba appeal to Hector to come inside the walls; Hector debates what to do, then panics and runs away; Achilles chases Hector around Troy; the gods look on; Zeus holds up his golden scales; Athena intervenes to advise Achilles; Athena takes on the form of Deïphobus to get Hector to fight Achilles; Hector and Achilles fight; Hector is killed; the Achaeans mutilate Hector and Achilles dishonors the corpse; Priam and Hecuba see the corpse of Hector being dragged past the city; Andromache reacts to the sight of her dead husband.]

At this point, the Trojans, having fled like deer,
spread out through the city, resting by its sturdy walls,
drying their sweat and taking drink to slake their thirst.
Meanwhile, Achaeans were moving to the walls,
their shields held up against their shoulders. But Hector
was forced by deadly Fate to stay right where he stood
in front of Ilion, outside the Scaean Gate.

Then Phoebus Apollo spoke out to Achilles:

"Son of Peleus, why are you, a mere human,
running so hard in an attempt to catch me,
an immortal god? You're still ignorant,
it seems, of the fact that I'm a god.
You keep coming at me with such anger.
But what about your battle with those Trojans
you put to flight? They're crowding in the city,
while you chase off on a diversion here.
But you will never kill me. I'm not someone
whose fate it is to die."

Swift-footed Achilles,
in a towering fury, then answered Apollo:

"You've tricked me,
god who shoots from far away, deadliest
of all the gods. You've turned me from the wall.
Otherwise, before reaching Ilion,
many men would have sunk their teeth in earth.
You've robbed me of great glory, saving them
with ease, since you don't have to be afraid

of future retribution. I'd make you pay,
if only I were powerful enough."

With these words, Achilles set off towards the city,
his heart full, charging on like a prize-winning horse
pulling a chariot at full speed across the plain
with little effort—that's how fast Achilles ran,
sprinting with his legs and feet.

Meanwhile, old Priam
was the first to catch sight of Achilles, as he dashed
across the plain, blazing like that star which comes
at harvest time—its light shines out more brightly
than any of the countless lights in night's dark sky.
People call this star by the name Orion's Dog.
It's the brightest of the stars, but an unwelcome sign,
for it brings wretched mortals many fevers.
The bronze on Achilles' chest glittered like that star,
as he ran forward. With a cry, old Priam
struck his head with his hand, then, reaching up,
with many groans, he called out, pleading with his son,
who was still standing there before the gates,
firmly resolved to fight Achilles. The old man,
hands outstretched, appealed to Hector's sense of pity:

"Hector, my dear son, don't stand out there alone,
facing that man with no one else to help you,
or you will quickly meet your death, slaughtered
by Peleus' son, who's much more powerful.
Don't be obstinate. If only the gods
would love Achilles just as much as I do,
then dogs and vultures would soon gnaw at him
as he lay there. And then my heart might shed
its dreadful sorrow, for he's taken from me
many valiant sons. Some he's butchered.
Others he's sold in islands far away.
Right now, I can't see two of my young sons,
Polydorus and Lycaon, among those
who've gathered with the Trojans in the city,
both delivered to me from Laothoe,
queen among women. If they're still alive
in the Achaean camp, we'll ransom them,
with bronze and gold we have stored up at home.
For famous ancient Altes gave many gifts

when he gave me his daughter. But if they're dead
and already in that dwelling place of Hades,
that's a sorrow to my heart, their mother's, too,
their parents. But that's a briefer sorrow
for other people, unless you die as well,
slaughtered by Achilles. Come here, my child,
inside the walls, so you can help to save
Trojan men and women. Don't give that man,
that son of Peleus, great glory. He'll take
your own dear life. Have pity on me, too.
Though full of misery, I still can feel.
Father Zeus will kill me with a cruel fate [60]
on the threshold of old age, once I've seen
so many dreadful things—my sons butchered,
my daughters hauled away, their houses ransacked,
their little children tossed down on the ground
in this murderous war, my daughters-in-law
led off captive in hard Achaean hands.
In the end, I'll be ripped by ravenous dogs,
in front of my own doors when some man strikes me
with his sharp bronze or throws his spear in me,
robbing my limbs of life—the same dogs I raised
at home beside my table to guard the doors.
They'll drink my blood, then lie there at the gates, [70]
their hearts gone mad. When a young man dies in war
lying there cut down by sharp bronze, that's all right.
Though dead, he shows us his nobility.
But when the dogs disfigure shamefully
an old man, chewing his grey head, his beard,
his sexual organs, that's the saddest thing
we wretched mortals see."

As the old man spoke,
his hands tugged his grey hair and pulled it from his head.
But he could not sway Hector's heart. Beside Priam,
Hector's mother wept. Then she undid her robe,
and with her hands pushed out her breasts, shedding tears. [80]
She cried out, calling him—her words had wings:

"Hector, my child, respect and pity me.
If I ever gave these breasts to soothe you,
remember that, dear child. Protect yourself
against your enemy inside these walls.
Don't stand out there to face him. Stubborn man,

if he kills you, I'll never lay you out
on your death bed or mourn for you, my child,
my dearest offspring—nor will your fair wife.
Far away from us, beside Achaean ships,
their swift dogs will eat you."

So these two, both crying, spoke to their dear son, [90]
pleading with him incessantly. But Hector's heart
would not budge. He stood awaiting huge Achilles,
who was getting closer. Just as a mountain snake
waits for some man right by its lair, after eating
poison herbs so that a savage anger grips him,
as he coils beside his den with a fearful glare—
that's how Hector's dauntless heart would not retreat.
But then he leaned his bright shield up against the wall
where it jutted out, and, with a groan, spoke up,
addressing his courageous heart:

"What do I do?
If I go through the gates, inside that wall,
Polydamas will be the first to blame me, [100]
for he told me last night to lead the Trojans
back into the city, when many died,
once godlike Achilles rejoined the fight.
But I didn't listen. If I'd done so,
things would have been much better. As it is,
my own foolishness has wiped out our army.
Trojan men will make me feel ashamed—
so will Trojan women in their trailing gowns.
I'm afraid someone inferior to me
may say,

'Hector, trusting his own power,
destroyed his people.'

That's what they'll say.
For me it would be a great deal better
to meet Achilles man to man, kill him,
and go home, or get killed before the city, [110]
dying in glory. But what would happen,
if I set my bossed shield and heavy helmet
to one side, leaning my spear against the wall,
and went out to meet noble Achilles,
just as I am, promising that Helen,

along with all the goods shipped here to Troy
by Alexander in his hollow ships,
the origin of our hostilities,
would be given to the sons of Atreus,
to take away with them—in addition,
to give the Achaeans an equal share
of all this city holds. Then later on,
I'd get Trojan elders to swear an oath
that not a single thing would be concealed,
that all would be divided equally,
every treasure our lovely city owns.
But why's my dear heart having this debate?
If I went out to meet him in that way,
he'd show me no respect. He wouldn't pity me.
Once I'd set aside my armour, he'd kill me
on the spot, unarmed, like some woman.
There's no way I can bargain with him now,
like a boy and girl chatting by some rock
or oak tree, as they flirt with one another.
No, it's better to clash in battle right away.
We'll see which one wins victory from Zeus."

That's what Hector thought as he stood there waiting.
But Achilles was coming closer, like Enyalius,
the warrior god of battle with the shining helmet.
On his right shoulder he waved his dreadful spear
made of Pelian ash. The bronze around him glittered
like a blazing fire or rising sun. At that moment,
as he watched, Hector began to shake in fear.
His courage gone, he could no longer stand there.
Terrified, he started running, leaving the gate.
Peleus' son went after him, sure of his speed on foot.
Just as a mountain falcon, the fastest creature
of all the ones which fly, swoops down easily
on a trembling pigeon as it darts off in fear,
the hawk speeding after it with piercing cries,
heart driving it to seize the prey—in just that way
Achilles in his fury raced ahead. Hector ran
under the walls of Troy, limbs working feverishly.
They ran on past the lookout and the wind-swept fig tree,
some distance from the wall, along the wagon track.
They reached the two fair-flowing well springs
which feed swirling Scamander's stream. From one of them
hot water flows, and out of it steam rises up,

as if there were a fire burning. From the other,
cold water comes, as cold as hail or freezing snow
or melting ice, even in summer. By these springs
stood wide tubs for washing, made of beautiful stone,
where, in peace time, before Achaea's sons arrived,
Trojan wives and lovely daughters used to wash
their brightly coloured clothing. The men raced past there,
one in full flight, the other one pursuing him.
The man running off in front was a brave warrior,
but the man going after him was greater. They ran fast,
for this was no contest over sacrificial beasts,
the usual prizes for a race. They were competing
for horse-taming Hector's life. Just as some horses,
sure-footed, prize-winning creatures, make the turn
around the post and race quickly as they strive to win
some splendid prize—a tripod or a woman
honouring a man that's died—that's how these two men raced,
going three times round Priam's city on their sprinting feet.
All the gods looked on. Among them the first one to speak
was Zeus, father of the gods and men:

"What a sight!
My eyes can see a fine man being pursued
around the walls. How my heart pities Hector,
who's often sacrificed to me, burning
many thighs of oxen on the crests
of Ida with its many spurs and valleys,
on the city heights, as well. And now,
godlike Achilles is pursuing him
on his quick feet round Priam's city. Come,
you gods, think hard and offer your advice—
do we wish to rescue him from death,
or kill him now, for all his bravery,
at the hands of Peleus' son, Achilles?"

Then Athena,
goddess with the glittering eyes, replied to Zeus:

"Father, lord of lightning and dark clouds,
what are you saying? How can you want
to snatch the man back from his wretched death.
He's mortal—his fate doomed him long ago.
Well, do as you wish, but we other gods
will not all approve your actions."

Cloud-gatherer Zeus then answered Athena:

"Cheer up, Tritogeneia, my dear child,
I'm not saying how my heart intends to act.
I want to please you. So you can do
whatever your mind tells you. Don't hold back."

Athena, who was already eager, was spurred on
by Zeus's words. She rushed down from Olympus' peak.

Swift Achilles was still pressing Hector hard
in that relentless chase. Just as in the mountains
a hound startles from its cover some young deer,
then goes after it through glens and valley gorges—
and even if the fawn evades it for a while,
cowering in some thicket, the dog tracks it down,
always running till he finds it—that's how Hector
could not shake off the swift-footed son of Peleus.
Every time he tried to dash for the Dardanian gates
to get underneath the walls, so men on top
could come to his assistance by hurling spears,
Achilles would intercept him and turn him back
towards the plain, always making sure he kept
running a line between Hector and the city.
Like a dream in which a man cannot catch someone
who's running off and the other can't escape,
just as the first man can't catch up—that's how
Achilles, for all his speed, could not reach Hector,
while Hector was unable to evade Achilles.
But how could Hector have escaped death's fatal blow,
if Apollo had not for one last time approached,
to give him strength and make his legs run faster?
Godlike Achilles, with a shake of his head,
prevented his own troops from shooting Hector
with their lethal weapons, in case some other man
hit Hector, robbed him of the glory, and left him
to come too late. But when they ran past those springs
the fourth time, Father Zeus raised his golden scales,
setting there two fatal lots for death's long sorrow,
one for Achilles, one for horse-taming Hector.
Seizing it in the middle, Zeus raised his balance.
Hector's fatal day sank, moving down to Hades.
At once Phoebus Apollo abandoned him.
Then Athena, goddess with the glittering eyes,

came to Peleus' son. Standing close to him, she spoke—
her words had wings:

"Glorious Achilles,
beloved of Zeus, now I hope the two of us
will take great glory to Achaean ships,
by killing Hector, for all his love of war.
Now he can't escape us any longer,
even though Apollo, the far shooter,
suffers every torment, as he grovels
before Father Zeus, who bears the aegis.
Stay still now. Catch your breath. I'll go to Hector
and convince him to turn and stand against you."

Once Athena had said this, Achilles obeyed,
rejoicing in his heart, as he stood there, leaning
on his bronze-tipped ash spear. Athena left him.
She came to Hector in the form of Deïphobus,
with his tireless voice and shape. Standing beside him,
she spoke—her words had wings:

"My brother,
swift Achilles is really harassing you,
with his fast running around Priam's city
in this pursuit. Come, we'll both stand here,
stay put, and beat off his attack."

Then Hector of the shining helmet answered her:

"Deïphobus, in the past you've always been
the brother whom I loved the most by far
of children born to Hecuba and Priam.
I think I now respect you even more,
since you have dared to come outside the wall,
to help me, when you saw me in distress,
while the others all remained inside."

Goddess Athena with her glittering eyes replied:

"Dear brother, my father, my noble mother,
and my comrades begged me repeatedly
to stay there. They all so fear Achilles.
But here inside me my heart felt the pain
of bitter anguish. Now, let's go straight for him.

Let's fight and not hold back our spears,
so we can see if Achilles kills us both,
then takes the bloodstained trophies to the ships,
or whether you'll destroy him on your spear."

With these words, Athena seduced him forward.
When they had approached each other, at close quarters,
great Hector of the shining helmet spoke out first:

"I'll no longer try to run away from you,
son of Peleus, as I did before, going
three times in flight around Priam's great city.
I lacked the courage then to fight with you,
as you attacked. But my heart prompts me now
to stand against you face to face once more,
whether I kill you, or you kill me.
So come here. Let's call on gods to witness,
for they're the best ones to observe our pact,
to supervise what we two agree on.
If Zeus grants me the strength to take your life,
I'll not abuse your corpse in any way.
I'll strip your celebrated armour off,
Achilles, then give the body back again
to the Achaeans. And you'll do the same."

Swift-footed Achilles, with a scowl, replied:

"Hector, don't talk to me of our agreements.
That's idiotic, like a faithful promise
between men and lions. Wolves and lambs
don't share a common heart—they always sense
a mutual hatred for each other.
In just that way, it's not possible for us,
for you and me, to be friends, or, indeed,
for there to be sworn oaths between us,
till one or other of us falls, glutting Ares,
warrior with the bull's hide shield, on blood.
You'd best remember all your fighting skills.
Now you must declare yourself a spearman,
a fearless warrior. You've got no escape.
Soon Pallas Athena will destroy you
on my spear. Right now you'll pay me back,
the full price of those sorrows I went through
when you slaughtered my companions."

With these words, he hefted his long-shadowed spear,
then hurled it. However, anticipating the throw,
splendid Hector saw it coming and evaded it
by crouching down, so the bronze spear flew over him,
then struck the ground. But Pallas Athena grabbed it
and returned it to Achilles, without Hector,
that shepherd of his people, seeing what she had done.
Hector then called out to Peleus' noble son:

"You missed, godlike Achilles. So it seems
you learned nothing from Zeus about my death, [280]
although you said you had. That was just talk.
You were telling lies to make me fear you,
so I might forget my strength and courage.
Well, with your spear you won't be striking me
in my back as I run away in fear.
You'll have to drive it through my charging chest,
as I come right at you, if a god permits.
Now, see if you can cope with my bronze point.
I hope you get this whole spear in your flesh.
This war would then be easier on Trojans
with you dead, for you're their greatest danger."

With these words, Hector balanced his long-shadowed spear,
then threw it. It struck the shield of Peleus' son, [290]
right in the centre. That spear did not miss its mark.
But it bounced some distance off the shield. Hector,
angry that the spear had flown from his hand and missed,
stood dismayed, for he had no substitute ash spear.
So he shouted out, calling to Deïphobus,
who carried a white shield, asking him with a yell
to pass him his long spear. But Deïphobus
was nowhere to be seen. Then Hector in his heart
saw everything so clearly—he said:

"This is it, then.
The gods are summoning me to my death.
I thought warrior Deïphobus was close by.
But he's inside the walls, and Athena
has deceived me. Now evil death is here, [300]
right beside me, not somewhere far away.
There's no escape. For a long time now,
this must have been what Zeus desired,
and Zeus's son, the god who shoots from far,

and all those who willingly gave me help
in earlier days. So now I meet my fate.
Even so, let me not die ingloriously
without a fight, but in some great action
which those men yet to come will hear about."

Hector finished speaking. He pulled out his sharp sword,
that strong and massive weapon hanging on his thigh,
gathered himself, then swooped like some high-flying eagle
plummeting to the plains down through the murky clouds
to seize a tender lamb or cowering rabbit— [310]
that's how Hector charged, brandishing his sharp sword.
Achilles attacked, as well, heart full of savage rage,
covering his chest with that richly decorated shield,
his shining four-ridged helmet nodding on his head,
the golden plumes Hephaestus had set there
shimmering around the crest. Just like that star
which stands out the loveliest among all those
in the heavenly night sky—the star of evening—
that's how the sharp point then glittered on the spear
Achilles hefted in his right hand, intent on [320]
killing noble Hector. He inspected his fine skin,
to see where it was vulnerable to a blow.
But Hector's entire body was protected
by that beautiful armour he had stripped off
powerful Patroclus, once he'd killed him,
except for that opening where the collar bones
separate the neck and shoulders, at the gullet,
where a man's life is most effectively destroyed.
As Hector charged, noble Achilles struck him there,
driving the spear point through his tender neck.
But the heavy bronze on that ash spear did not cut
his windpipe, so he could still address Achilles
and reply to him. Hector fell down in the dust. [330]
Lord Achilles then cried out in triumph:

"Hector,
I suppose you thought you could safely strip
Patroclus, without giving me a thought,
since I was far away. That was foolish!
By our hollow ships he'd left me behind,
a much greater man, to take out my revenge.
I've drained strength from your limbs—now dogs and birds

will tear you into miserable pieces,
while Achaeans are burying Patroclus."

His strength fading, Hector of the shining helmet
answered Achilles:

"By your life, I beg you,
by your knees, your parents—don't let dogs eat me
by Achaean ships. No, you should accept [340]
all the bronze and gold you might desire,
gifts my father and lady mother give you,
if you'll send my body home again, 430
so Trojans and Trojans' wives can bury me,
with all the necessary funeral rites."

Scowling at Hector, swift-footed Achilles then replied:

"Don't whine to me, you dog, about my knees
or parents. I wish I had the heart and strength
to carve you up and eat you raw myself
for what you've done to me. So there's no one
who'll keep the dogs from going at your head,
not even if they bring here and weigh out
a ransom ten or twenty times as much, 440
with promises of more, or if Priam, [350]
son of Dardanus, says he'll pay your weight
in gold. Not even then will your mother
set you on a funeral bed and there lament
the son she bore. Instead, the dogs and birds
will eat you up completely."

Then, as he died,
Hector of the shining helmet said to Achilles:

"I know you well. I recognize in you
what I expected— you'd not be convinced.
For your heart and mind are truly iron. 450
But think of this—I may bring down on you
the anger of the gods that very day
when Paris and Phoebus Apollo,
in spite of all your courage, slaughter you [360]
beside the Scaean Gate."

As Hector spoke,
death's final end slid over him. His life slipped out,
flying off to Hades, mourning his fate to have to leave
such youthful manliness. Over dead Hector,
godlike Achilles then cried out:

"Die there!
As for my own death, I accept it
whenever Zeus and the immortal gods
see fit to bring it to me."

Saying this,
he pulled his bronze spear from the corpse, set it aside,
and stripped the blood-stained armour from the shoulders.
Then the rest of Achaea's sons came running up.
They gazed at Hector's stature, his handsome body.
All the men who came up to the corpse stabbed it,
looking at each other, saying:

"Look here,
it's easier for us to deal with Hector now
than when his fire burned our ships."

With words like this, they came up close and wounded Hector.
When swift-footed godlike Achilles had stripped the corpse,
standing among Achaeans, he spoke these winged words:

"My friends, leaders and rulers of the Argives,
since gods have granted that this man be killed,
who's done much damage, more than all the rest,
let's test these Trojan by attacking them
with armed excursions round their city,
to see what they intend—whether they'll leave
their lofty city now that Hector's dead,
or stay there, still keen to fight without him.
But why's my fond heart discussing this?
By our ships lies a dead man—unwept,
unburied—Patroclus. I'll not forget him,
as long as I remain among the living,
as long as my dear limbs have motion.
If down in Hades men forget their dead,
even there I will remember my companion.
Come, young Achaeans, sing a victory song,
as we're returning to our hollow ships.

We'll take the body. We've won great glory,
killing noble Hector—Trojans prayed to him
in their own city, as if he were a god."

Achilles finished. Then on noble Hector's corpse
he carried out a monstrous act. He cut through
the tendons behind both feet, from heel to ankle,
threaded them with ox-hide thongs, and then tied these
onto his chariot, leaving the head to drag behind.
He climbed up in his chariot, brought on the splendid armour,
then lashed his horses. They sped off eagerly, 500 [400]
dragging Hector. A dust cloud rose above him,
his dark hair spread out round him, and Hector's head,
once so handsome, was covered by the dust, for Zeus
had given him to his enemies to dishonour
in his own native land. So all his head grew dirty.

When she saw her son, his mother pulled her hair,
threw off her shining veil, and began to shriek.
His dear father gave a pitiful groan. Around them,
people were overwhelmed with wailing and laments
throughout the city. It was as if all Ilion 510 [410]
were engulfed in flames, all over the summit
of that towering rock. The people then had trouble
restraining the old man in his frantic grief,
his desperate wish to go through the Dardanian gate.
He begged them all, grovelling in the dirt, calling out,
naming each of them:

"My dear friends,
leave me alone. I know you care for me,
but let me leave the city by myself,
go to the Achaean ships, then beg him,
that ruthless man, that violent monster. 520
He may feel shame in front of comrades.
He may pity my old age. For he, too,
has a father, one just like me, Peleus, [420]
who sired and raised him to butcher Trojans.
On me especially he's loaded sorrow,
more than on any other man. He's killed
so many of my sons, all in their prime.
But, despite that sorrow, I don't grieve
for all of them as much as I do for one,
for Hector. The sharp pain I feel for him 530

will bring me down to the house of Hades.
If only he had died here in my arms,
we could have had our fill of weeping,
of lamentation—me and his mother,
who gave birth to him, to her own sorrow."

As he said this, Priam wept. The townsfolk mourned.
Hecuba led Trojan women in their loud laments: [430]

"My child, how can I live with this misery,
such wretched sorrow, now that you are dead?
You were my pride and joy, night and day,
and in the city, a blessing to us all,
to Trojan men and women in the state,
who received you like a god. To them
you were great glory when you were alive.
Now Death and Fate have overtaken you."

Hecuba spoke through her tears. But so far Hector's wife
knew nothing of all this, for no messenger
had come to tell her clearly that her husband
had remained outside the gates. She was in a room
inside their lofty home, weaving purple fabric [440]
for a double cloak, embroidering flowers on it.
She had told her well-groomed servants in the house
to place a large tripod on the fire, so Hector
could have a hot bath when he came home from battle.
Poor fool! She'd no idea that a long way from that bath,
Athena with the glittering eyes had killed Hector
at Achilles' hands. Then she heard the wailing,
laments coming from the walls. Her limbs began to shake.
The shuttle fell out of her hands onto the floor.
She spoke out once more to her well-groomed housemaids:

"Come here you two and follow me. Let's see [450]
what's happened. For I've just caught the sound
of my husband's noble mother's voice. In my chest,
my heart leapt in my mouth, my lower limbs
are numb. Something disastrous has taken place
to Priam's children. I hope reports like these
never reach my ears, but I'm dreadfully afraid
that godlike Achilles may have cut off
my bold Hector from the city, driving him
into the plain all by himself, then ended

that fearful courage which possessed him.
He's never one to hold back or remain
within the crowd of men—he always moves ahead,
well in front, second to none in fury."

Saying this, she hurried through the house, heart pounding, [460]
like some mad woman, accompanied by servants.
Once she reached the wall crowded with men, she stopped,
stood there, and looked out from the wall. She saw Hector
as he was being dragged past before the city,
with swift horses pulling him ruthlessly away 580
to the Achaeans' hollow ships. At the sight,
black night eclipsed her eyes. She fell back in a faint,
gasping her life away. From her head she threw off
her shining headdress—frontlet, cap, woven headband,
the veil that golden Aphrodite gave her [470]
when Hector of the shining helmet led her
from Eëtion's house as his wife, once he'd paid
an immense price for his bride. Around her
stood her husband's sisters and his brother's wives.
They all helped pick her up, almost dead from shock. 590
When she recovered and her spirit had returned,
she started her lament. In a sobbing voice,
she cried out to the Trojan women:

"Ah, Hector,
how miserable I am. We both seem born
to a single fate, you in Priam's house
in Troy, and I in Eëtion's home
in wooded Thebe. He raised me from childhood, [480]
an ill-fated father and a child who's doomed.
How I wish he'd never fathered me!
Now you go to Hades' house deep underground, 600
abandoning me to bitter sorrow,
widowed in our home. Our son's an infant,
born to wretched parents, you and me.
No good will come to him from you, Hector,
now that you're dead, nor will he help you.
Even if he gets through this dreadful war
with the Achaeans, his life will always be
a constant pain and sorrow. For other men
will take away his lands. The day a child [490]
becomes an orphan all his friends are gone. 610
He cannot hold up his head for anyone,

his cheeks are wet from crying. In his need,
the child goes to his father's comrades,
plucking one man's cloak, another's tunic.
Some pity him and then hold out a cup,
letting him for a moment wet his lips,
without moistening his palate. Another man
whose parents are still living pushes him
out of the feast, hitting him with his fist,
insulting him:

'Go away, just as you are.
You've no father at our feast.'

So, in tears,
the child returns to his widowed mother.
That child is our son Astyanax, who,
in earlier days on his father's knees,
ate only marrow and rich fat from sheep.
When sleep overpowered him and he stopped
his childish play, he'd lie in his own bed,
in his nurse's arms—on a soft couch,
his heart full of happy dreams. But now,
now that he's missing his dear father,
he'll suffer much, our dear son Astyanax,
Lord of the City. Trojans called him this,
because you alone kept their gates safe from harm,
their towering walls. But now by the beaked ships,
far from your parents, wriggling worms will eat you,
once dogs have had their fill of your bare corpse.
In your home are lovely well-made clothes,
produced by women's hands. In a blazing fire
I'll burn them all. They're no use to you,
since you can't wear them. So I'll honour you,
on behalf of Trojan men and women."

Saying this, she wept. The women added their laments.

BOOK TWENTY-THREE
THE FUNERAL GAMES FOR PATROCLUS

[Achilles keeps his troops together to mourn Patroclus; Patroclus's ghost visits Achilles, requesting a burial; Achaeans gather wood and prepare Patroclus's funeral pyre; Achilles cuts the hair dedicated to the river Spercheus; Achilles sacrifices animals and humans on Patroclus's pyre; Achilles gets the help of the winds to get the fire to light under Patroclus; Achilles brings out prizes for the Funeral Games, which then take place in series: the chariot race, boxing, wrestling, foot-racing, armed duelling, throwing a weight, archery, and spear throwing; Achilles awards Agamemnon the prize for the last event without any contest.]

Meanwhile, as Trojans were lamenting in the city,
Achaeans reached their ships beside the Hellespont.
There they scattered, each man going to his own ship.
But Achilles did not let his Myrmidons disband.
He spoke out to his warrior companions:

"Fast-riding Myrmidons, trusty comrades,
let's not loose our sure-footed horses yet,
untying them from their chariots. We must go
with horse and chariot up to Patroclus,
to mourn for him. For that's a dead man's right.
Once we've had our fill of sorrowful tears,
we'll unyoke our horses, then all eat here."

At these words, they all began their group lament,
led by Achilles. Three times around the body
they drove their well-groomed horses, mourning as they went.
Thetis stirred up in them a strong desire to weep.
Their tears made the sands wet, men's armour, too,
for they were mourning the loss of a great warrior,
who made men flee. Peleus' son led their loud lament,
placing his man-killing hands on his comrade's chest:

"Rest in peace, Patroclus, even though
you're in Hades' house, for I'm completing here
all I promised you before—to drag in Hector,
then give him to the dogs to eat up raw,
and cut the throats of twelve young Trojans,
splendid children, on your funeral pyre,
in my rage that you've been slaughtered."

He finished. Then he continued to dishonour
noble Hector, stretching his body out face down
in the dirt, beside the bier of Menoetius' son.
Then each man took off his glittering bronze armour.
They untied their loud-neighing horses and sat down,
thousands of them, by swift-footed Achilles' ship.
He prepared a funeral feast to ease their spirits.
Many sleek oxen bellowed underneath the knife,
as they were butchered. Many sheep, bleating goats,
and white-tusked pigs rich in fat were laid out
to roast over Hephaestus' fires. All around the corpse,
blood ran so thick men scooped it up in cupfuls.

Then Achaean leaders led the swift-footed prince,
son of Peleus, to lord Agamemnon.
They had trouble convincing him to go there—
his heart was still so angry for his comrade.
Reaching Agamemnon's hut, they issued orders
for clear-voiced heralds to heat up a large cauldron,
to see if they could persuade Peleus' son to wash,
to rinse off the spattered blood. In his stubbornness,
he refused to do that, swearing this oath:

"By Zeus,
highest and most excellent of all gods,
it is not right that water touch my head,
until I've laid Patroclus on his fire,
piled up a burial mound, and shaved my hair,
since such grief will never reach my heart
a second time, not while I still remain
among the living. But for the moment,
let's agree to dine, though I hate to eat.
In the morning, Agamemnon, king of men,
you must urge men to gather wood, arrange
all things required for a man who's died,
as he goes below to murky darkness,
so tireless fires can cremate him quickly
and remove him from our sight. Then soldiers
can resume their duties."

Achilles spoke.
They all listened to him and readily agreed.
Men all rushed out, prepared a meal, and dined,
eating to their heart's content and sharing equally.

Once they'd satisfied their need for food and drink,
each man returned to his own hut to get some rest.
But Peleus' son lay moaning loudly on the shore,
beside the crashing sea, with many Myrmidons,
in an open spot, where waves washed up on shore.
When sleep took hold of him and eased his aching heart
by sweetly flowing round him—for his splendid limbs
were tired out from chasing after Hector
by wind-swept Ilion—then poor Patroclus
came to him as a ghost, looking exactly like him
in all respects—in stature, handsome eyes, and voice.
He stood there, above Achilles' head, body covered
with the same clothes he used to wear over his skin.
The ghost spoke to Achilles, saying:

"You're asleep, Achilles.
You've forgotten me. While I was alive,
you never did neglect me. But now I'm dead.
So bury me as quickly as you can.
Then I can pass through the gates of Hades.
The spirits, ghosts of the dead, keep me away.
They don't let me join them past the river.
So I wander aimlessly round Hades' home
by its wide gates. Give me your hand, I beg you,
for I'll never come again from Hades,
once you've given me what's due, my funeral fire.
We'll no more sit together making plans,
separated from our dear companions.
The jaws of dreadful Fate are gaping for me,
ready to consume me—my destiny
from the day that I was born. You, too,
godlike Achilles, you have your own fate,
to die under the walls of wealthy Troy.
I'll say one more thing, one last request,
if you will listen. Achilles, don't lay your bones
apart from mine. Let them remain together,
just as they were when we grew up in your home,
once Menoetius brought me as a youngster
into your land from Opoeis, for I'd done
a dreadful murder on that day I killed
Amphidamas' son, in my foolishness.
I didn't mean to, but I was enraged
over some game of dice. Horseman Peleus
welcomed me into his home, raised me

with love, then made me your attendant. [90]
So let the same container hold our bones,
that gold two-handled jar your mother gave you."

Swift-footed Achilles then said in reply:

"Dear friend, why have you come to me here,
telling me everything I need to do?
I'll carry out all these things for you,
attend to your request. But come closer.
Let's hold each other one short moment more,
enjoying a shared lament together."

Saying this, Achilles reached out with his arms, [100]
but he grasped nothing. The spirit had departed,
going underground like vapour, muttering faintly.
Achilles jumped up in amazement, clapped his hands,
and then spoke out in sorrow:

"How sad!
It seems that even in Hades' house,
some spirit or ghost remains, but our being
is not there at all. For this entire night
the ghost of poor Patroclus stood beside me,
weeping, lamenting, asking me to do things,
in every detail amazingly like him."

Achilles' words stirred the desire to keep mourning
in all of them. When rose-fingered Dawn appeared,
they were still lamenting by that cheerless corpse. [110]

Then mighty Agamemnon sent out men and mules,
from huts in every quarter, to gather wood.
The man who supervised was Meriones,
brave attendant to kind Idomeneus. They set off,
grasping axes to chop wood and well-woven rope.
The mules went on ahead. The men kept going,
up and down the slopes, sometimes tracking sideways,
sometimes doubling back, till they reached Ida's foothills
with their many springs. At once they started working—
cutting high-branched oak trees with their long-edged bronze.
Men worked hard, falling each tree with a mighty crash.
Achaeans then split the trees into convenient lengths, [120]
tied logs behind the mules, whose feet ploughed up the ground

as they strained through thick underbrush towards the plain.
Woodsmen all carried logs as well, under orders
from Meriones, attendant to kind Idomeneus.
Men threw these logs down in a line along the shore,
where Achilles planned a massive burial mound
for Patroclus and himself. When they'd piled up
immense amounts of wood on every side, they sat
all together there and waited. Then Achilles
quickly told war-loving Myrmidons to dress in bronze, [130]
ordering each man to get his horses harnessed
in their chariots. They leapt up to put on armour.
The warriors and charioteers climbed in their chariots
and moved out first. Then came the men on foot
in their thousands. In the middle, his companions
bore Patroclus, whose corpse they covered with the hair
they cut from their own heads and threw onto the body.
Godlike Achilles came behind them, cradling
Patroclus' head and grieving. For he was sending
down to Hades' home a comrade without equal.
When they reached the spot Achilles chose for them,
they set the body down and quickly piled up wood
as he directed. Then swift-footed lord Achilles [140]
thought of something. Standing some distance from the pyre,
he cut a lock of his own fair hair, one he'd grown
as a rich offering to the river Spercheus.
Looking out over the wine-dark sea, he spoke out
in passionate distress:

> "Spercheus, my father Peleus
> promised you that, once I came back home
> to my dear native land, I'd cut my hair
> for you, then make a holy sacrifice,
> offering up fifty uncastrated rams
> to your waters, where you have your own estate
> and fragrant altars. That oath was useless.
> It's what the old man swore, but you failed
> to bring about what he desired. So now,
> since I'll not be returning home again, [150]
> let me give this lock to warrior Patroclus
> to carry with him."

Having said these words,
Achilles placed his hair in the hands of his dear comrade,
stirring up in each of them desire to lament.

Now they would have mourned till sunset, but Achilles
soon got up and said to Agamemnon:

"Son of Atreus,
Achaean troops will listen to your words
more than to anyone. Men can grieve too much.
So dismiss them from the pyre for now.
Tell them to prepare a meal. Those of us
with special cause to mourn will take care of this.
But let the leaders remain here with us." [160]

When Agamemnon, king of men, heard these words,
he quickly sent the troops off to their balanced ships.
The chief mourners stayed behind. They piled up wood,
making a square pyre, each side one hundred feet in length.
On that pyre's highest point they laid out the corpse,
hearts full of sorrow. Then, in front of the pyre,
they flayed and made ready many sturdy sheep
and shambling cattle with twisting horns. From all these,
great-hearted Achilles took the fat, using it
to cover up the corpse from head to foot, piling
skinned carcasses around it. Next, he placed on top
two-handled jars of oil and honey, leaning them [170]
against the bier. Then, crying with grief, Achilles
threw four strong-necked horses quickly on the pyre.
Patroclus had owned nine dogs who ate beside his table.
Slitting the throats of two of them, Achilles
tossed them on the pyre. Then, with his bronze, he butchered
those twelve noble sons of the courageous Trojans,
his feelings grimly set on this atrocity.
After that, he lit the fire to work its iron force
and burn up everything. With a groan he called out,
addressing his companion:

"Rest in peace,
Patroclus, though you're in Hades' house.
For I'm now completing everything [180]
I promised you before. Flames will burn
twelve noble sons of great-hearted Trojans,
all cremated with you. But as for Hector,
Priam's son, I'll not feed him to the fire,
but to the dogs."

Achilles made this threat,
but dogs would not touch Hector. For Aphrodite,
Zeus's daughter, kept them away, day and night.
She covered him with immortal oil of roses,
so Achilles would not wear away his body
by dragging him around. Phoebus Apollo
brought a dark cloud from the sky across the plain,
shadowing the entire place where Hector lay, [190]
to stop Sun's power from shrivelling up the flesh
on limbs and sinews.

But now the pyre of dead Patroclus
would not catch fire. So swift-footed Achilles
thought of something else. Standing away from the pyre,
he prayed to the two winds—Boreas of the north,
Zephyrus of the west—promising fine offerings.
Pouring frequent libations from a golden cup,
he begged them to come quickly to ignite the wood,
so flames might soon incinerate the corpses.
Hearing his prayer, Iris at once took his message
to the winds, who were feasting all together [200]
in blustery West Wind's home. Iris raced up there,
then stood on the stone threshold. Their eyes soon saw her.
They all jumped up, each one inviting her to sit
beside him. Iris declined their invitation,
saying to them:

"I can't sit down. I must return
to Oceanus' stream, back in the land
of Ethiopians, where there's a sacrifice
to the immortals. I'd like to be there
for that sacred feast. But now Achilles
prays that North Wind and loud West Wind will come.
He's promising you splendid offerings
to stir the flames, so they burn up the pyre [210]
where Patroclus lies, whom all Achaea mourns."

After saying this, Iris left. The two winds rose up.
With an astounding roar, driving clouds before them,
they quickly stormed across the sea, whipping up waves
with their howling breath. They came to fertile Troy,
then fell upon that pyre. The fire crackled up
into a prodigious blaze. All night long they howled,
blowing their shrill blasts together on the flames.

And all night long with a two-handled cup in hand
swift Achilles kept drawing wine from a golden bowl
and pouring it upon the earth, soaking the ground
and calling on the spirit of poor Patroclus.
Just as a father mourns his son, when he burns his bones,
his newly married son, whose death brings parents
dreadful sorrow—that's how Achilles kept crying then,
as he burned his companion's bones, dragging himself
round and round the pyre, lamenting endlessly.

But at that hour when the Morning Star appears,
announcing that light is coming to the earth,
the star after which Dawn in her yellow robe
moves out across the sea, by then the fire was dying.
The flames went out. So the winds returned once more,
back to their homes, going across the Thracian Sea,
where a seething storm roared out. Then Peleus' son,
moving away from the smouldering pyre, lay down
exhausted. Sweet Sleep quickly slipped around him.
But then the troops came up with Agamemnon,
all together. The noise they made, as they marched in,
woke up Achilles. Sitting bolt upright, he said:

> "Sons of Atreus and you other leaders
> of Achaean forces, you must first douse
> the smouldering pyre with gleaming wine—
> everything the powerful flames have touched.
> Then we'll collect bones from Patroclus,
> Menoetius' son, separating them with care
> from all the rest. They're easy to distinguish,
> for he lay in the centre of the pyre—
> the others burned some distance from him
> on the edges, the humans and the horses.
> Let's place his bones inside a golden urn,
> in a double layer of fat, until the time
> I myself am hiding there in Hades.
> I'm asking you to build a burial mound,
> nothing excessive—what seems appropriate.
> You Achaeans must build it high and wide,
> but later, once I'm gone, those who still remain
> beside our ships with many oars."

Once Achilles spoke,
they did as the swift-footed son of Peleus wished.

First, they doused the smoking pyre with gleaming wine,
wherever flames had reached or ash was deep.
Weeping, they picked the white bones of their comrade out
and put them in a double layer of fat inside a golden urn.
They placed the urn under soft linen in a hut.
Then they traced out the dimensions of a mound,
using stones to mark its base around the pyre,
and then piled earth on top.

When they'd made the mound,
they started to return. But Achilles checked them,
keeping soldiers there. He asked them to sit down
in a wide group. Then he brought prizes from his ship—
cauldrons, tripods, horses, mules, powerful oxen,
as well as fine-dressed women and grey iron.

First, he set out prizes for swift charioteers—
for the winner, a woman skilled in fine handicrafts
and a tripod with handles holding twenty measures.
For second place he led out a mare six years old,
unbroken and with a mule foal in her womb.
For the man who came in third, he set out a cauldron
untouched by fire, a fine piece which held four measures.
For fourth place he set a prize of two gold talents,
while the fifth-place prize was a two-handled bowl,
not yet put on the fire. Then Achilles stood up
and spoke directly to the Argives:

"Sons of Atreus,
you other well-armed Achaean warriors,
these prizes lie set out here for a contest
among the charioteers. If Achaeans
were now hosting these games for someone else,
then I myself would surely win first prize
and take it to my hut, since, as you know,
my horses are far better than the rest,
for they're immortal, Poseidon's gift
to Peleus, my father, who gave them to me.
But I and my sure-footed horses now
will stand down, for they've lost their charioteer,
a strong, brave man, so kind he'd often pour
soft oil all through their manes, while washing them
in clean water. They stand there mourning him,
manes trailing on the ground. So they won't race.

Their hearts feel too much grief. But you others,
get yourselves prepared all through the camp,
any Achaean who has faith in his own horses
and his well-made chariot."

Once Achilles finished speaking,
swift charioteers rushed into action. First to move,
well before the rest, was Eumelus, king of men,
dear son of Admetus and excellent with horses.
After him came forward mighty Diomedes, [290]
son of Tydeus, driving those yoked horses
from Tros's herd, which he had taken from Aeneas,
though Apollo had snatched away their owner.
After Diomedes came fair-haired Menelaus,
royal son of Atreus, driving a yoked team,
two fast creatures—his own horse Podargus
and Agamemnon's mare Aethe, which Echepolus,
Anchises' son, had given to Agamemnon
as a gift, so he would not have to go with him
to wind-swept Ilion, but could remain at home,
enjoying himself, for Zeus had given him great wealth.
He lived in spacious Sicyon. This was the mare [300]
Menelaus now led up in harness, a racehorse
filled with a desire to run. The fourth contestant,
Antilochus, got his fair-maned horses ready.
He was a noble son of proud king Nestor,
son of Neleus. Swift-footed horses bred at Pylos
pulled his chariot. His father came up to him
to give him practical advice, a wise man speaking
to one who could appreciate another's skill:

"Antilochus, you may still be quite young,
but Zeus and Poseidon have been fond of you.
They've taught you all sorts of things with horses,
so there's no need to issue you instructions.
You understand well how to wheel around
beside the turning post. But your horses
are the slowest in the race, and so I think [310]
you've got some problems here to deal with.
The others horses may be faster runners,
but the drivers are no better skilled than you.
So, dear boy, fix your mind on all that skill,
so those prizes don't elude you. You know,
skill in a woodsman matters more than strength.

It's skill that lets a helmsman steer his course,
guiding his swift ship straight on wine-dark seas.
And it's skill, too, that makes one charioteer
go faster than another. Some racing drivers,
trusting their chariot and horses, drive them
carelessly, moving back and forth, weaving [320]
on the course. They don't control their horses.
But a cunning man, though he's got worse horses,
keeps his eye on that turning point, cutting
the pillar close. Such a man also understands 390
how to urge his horses on, right at the start,
using leather reins. But he keeps control.
His mind does not wander, always watching
the man in front. Now I'll tell you something—
there's a marker, so clear you cannot miss it.
It's a dry stump of oak or pine standing
about six feet high. Rain hasn't rotted it.
On both sides of that stump, two white stones
are firmly fixed against it. At that spot
the race course narrows, but the ground is smooth, 400
so a team can wheel around that stump. [330]
It may be a memorial to some man
long dead, or perhaps men placed it there
to serve as a racing post in earlier times.
Swift-footed lord Achilles has made that stump
his turning point. You need to shave that post,
drive in really close as you wheel around
your chariot and horses. You should lean out
from that well-sprung platform, to your horses' left,
giving the right-hand horse the lash, calling 410
to him with a shout, while with your hands
you let him take the reins. The inside horse
must graze the post, so the well-built wheel hub
seems to scrape the pillar. But be careful—
don't touch the stone, because if you do, [340]
you'll hurt the horses and smash the chariot,
which will delight the others but shame you.
So, dear boy, take care and pay attention.
If you can pass them by as you catch up
right by the turning post, then none of them 420
will reach you with a sudden burst of speed,
much less overtake you, no, not even
if he were driving godlike Arion
behind you, that swift horse of Adrestus,

from heavenly stock, or the very horses
of king Laomedon, the finest ones bred here."

Nestor, Neleus' son, spoke and sat down in his place,
once he'd gone over all the details with his son.
Then Meriones, the fifth contestant in the race,
harnessed his fine-maned horses, and all the racers
climbed in their chariots. They gathered up the lots,
which Achilles shook. The first to tumble out
was for Antilochus, Nestor's son. Mighty Eumelus
was next, then came spearman Menelaus,
son of Atreus. After him, Meriones
drew his place. Last of all, and by far the best,
Tydeus's son drew for his horses' lane.
They took their places in a line. Then Achilles
showed them the turning point far out on the plain.
Beside it he'd placed an umpire, godlike Phoenix,
his father's follower, to observe the racing
and report back truthfully. Then all together,
they raised their whips above their horses, lashed them
with the reins, and shouted words of encouragement
to urge them forward. The horses raced off quickly,
galloping swiftly from the ships. Under their chests
dust came up, hanging there like storm clouds in a whirlwind.
In the rushing air their manes streamed back. The chariots,
at one moment, would skim across the nourishing earth,
then, at another, would bounce high in the air.
Their drivers stood up in the chariots, hearts pounding,
as they strove for victory. Each man shouted out,
calling his horses, as they flew along that dusty plain.
When the swift horses were starting the last stretch,
racing back to the grey sea, their pace grew strained.
Then the drivers each revealed his quality.
The swift-footed horses of Eumelus raced ahead,
followed by Diomedes' team from Tros's breed
not far behind—really close, almost as if they'd charge
right up the back of Eumelus's chariot.
Their breath felt hot on his broad shoulders and his back,
for, as they ran ahead, they leaned right into him.
Now Tydeus's son would have passed Eumelus,
or made the issue doubtful, if Phoebus Apollo,
angry at him, had not struck the shining whip
out of his hand. Then from Diomedes' eyes
tears of rage streamed out, once he saw Eumelus' team

running even faster than before, while his own
were at a disadvantage, running with no whip.
But Athena had observed Apollo as he fouled
the son of Tydeus. She came running at top speed
after that shepherd of his people, then gave back [390]
his whip, putting strength into his horses.
Then, in anger, she went after the son of Admetus.
The goddess snapped his chariot yoke. The horses swerved,
running all around the course. The shaft dropped down
and hit the ground—this threw Eumelus from the chariot
beside the wheel. On his elbows, mouth, and nose
the skin was badly scraped. Above his eyebrows,
his forehead had a bruise. His two eyes filled with tears,
his strong voice failed him. Tydeus' son swerved aside,
then drove his sure-footed horses far ahead,
outdistancing the rest, for Athena had put strength [400]
into his team, to give Diomedes glory.
Behind him came Atreus' son, fair-haired Menelaus.
But then Antilochus called to his father's horses:

"Get going, you two. Push yourselves. Move up now,
as fast as you can go. I'm not asking you
to try to beat those horses up ahead,
the team of that warlike son of Tydeus,
whom Athena has just helped run faster
to give their driver glory. But overtake
those horses of the son of Atreus—
quick now—don't let them get too far ahead.
You don't want to suffer shame from Aethe,
who's just a mare. Why are you falling back,
you strong horses? Let me tell you something [410]
which is sure to happen—if you slack off now
and I win some inferior prize, then Nestor,
his people's shepherd, will stop feeding you.
He'll take out his sharp bronze and kill you both,
here and now. So keep on after them.
Pick up the pace—as fast as you can run!
My task will be to think of something,
devise a way of getting past them there,
where the road narrows. I won't miss my chance."

Antilochus finished. His horses, frightened
by their master's threat, ran faster for a stretch.
Suddenly brave Antilochus saw up ahead

a place where the road was hollowed out and narrow, [420]
with a channel in the ground where winter rains
had backed the water up, washing out some of the road
and making all the ground subside. Menelaus
was coming to this spot, leaving no space at all
for a second chariot to move along beside him.
But Antilochus guided his sure-footed horses
off the track, charging up a little to one side.
Atreus' son, alarmed, shouted at Antilochus:

"Antilochus, you're driving like an idiot!
Pull your horses back! The road's too narrow.
It gets wider soon—you can pass me there!
Watch you don't hit me. You'll make us crash!"

Menelaus shouted, but Antilochus kept going,
moving even faster and laying on the whip, [430]
as if he had not heard. They raced on like this
about as far as a discus flies when tossed
with a shoulder swing by a powerful young man
testing his strength. But then the son of Atreus' team
slowed down and fell behind, reined in deliberately,
in case the sure-footed teams somehow collided
and overturned their well-sprung chariots in the road,
leaving their drivers, for all their eagerness to win,
sprawling in the dust. Then fair-haired Menelaus,
in anger at Antilochus, yelled out:

"Antilochus,
you're more reckless than any man alive!
Damn you! Achaeans were all wrong to think [440]
you were a man with some intelligence.
But even so, you still may not win the prize,
without the need to swear you won it fairly."

Menelaus yelled this, then called out to his horses:

"Don't slow down or stand there sad at heart.
Their feet and limbs will tire before yours do,
for those two horses are no longer young."

Menelaus spoke. Excited by their master's shout,
his horses ran on even faster.

Meanwhile, the Argives,
sitting all together, kept watching for the horses
racing on the dusty plain. The first to spot them [450]
was Idomeneus, leader of the Cretans.
He sat some distance from the crowd, in a higher spot,
a fine lookout. The man in front was still far off, 550
but when he called his horses, Idomeneus
recognized his voice and could see quite clearly
the horse in front—it was all brown, with a mark
as round and white as a full moon on his forehead.
Idomeneus stood up and called out to the Argives:

"My friends, leaders and rulers of Argives,
am I the only one to see those horses,
or can you glimpse them, too? It seems to me
that another team is now in front,
with another charioteer approaching. 560 [460]
Going out, Eumelus' mares were in the lead,
but they must have run into some trouble
out there, somewhere on the plain. I saw them
wheeling round the turning post in front.
Now I can't see them anywhere, though my eyes
keep searching the entire Trojan plain.
Perhaps the charioteer let go the reins
and couldn't guide his chariot round the post
and failed to make the turn. I think he fell
out there somewhere and smashed his chariot. 570
His horses must have panicked in their hearts
and run away. But stand up. Look for yourselves.
I can't see all that clearly, but the man [470]
seems to be of Aetolian descent,
an Argive king, mighty Diomedes,
son of horse-taming Tydeus."

At that point,
swift Ajax, son of Oïleus, mocked Idomeneus
with these insulting words:

"Idomeneus,
why are you always nattering? Those prancing mares
are still far distant, with a lot more ground 580
to race across. And of all the Argives here
you're not the youngest—those eyes in your head
don't have the keenest vision. But for all that,

you still chatter on. You don't need to babble,
when there are better men than you around.
Those same mares as before are out in front,
Eumelus' team, and he's standing there, as well,
holding the reins."

The leader of the Cretans,
furious with Ajax, then replied:

"You're great at insults,
Ajax, but really stupid. In everything,
you're the most useless Argive of them all,
because your mind is dull. Come on then,
let's bet a tripod or a cauldron on it—
which horses are in front—so you'll learn
by having to pay up. As our umpire,
let's have Agamemnon, son of Atreus."

At Idomeneus' words, swift Ajax, son of Oïleus,
jumped up at once, in a rage, ready to answer
with more angry words. At that point, their quarrel
might have got much worse, but Achilles himself
stood up and said:

"No more of this,
Idomeneus and Ajax, no more angry words,
no more insults—that's not appropriate.
You'd both feel angry if another man
behaved this way. So sit down with the group
and watch for horses. It won't be long
before their eagerness to win brings them here.
Then you can both see the Argive horses,
who's in the lead and who's behind."

As Achilles spoke, Tydeus' son came charging in
really close to them. He kept swinging his whip
down from the shoulder, so his horses raced ahead,
raising their hooves up high as they ran the course.
Clouds of dust kept falling on the charioteer,
as his chariot made of gold and tin raced on,
drawn by swift-running horses, who left behind
only a slight trace of wheel rims in the dust,
as the team flew speeding by. Diomedes pulled up
right in the middle of the crowd. Streams of sweat

dripped from the horses' necks and chests onto the ground.
He jumped down from his gleaming chariot, leaning the whip [510]
against the yoke. Strong Sthenelus did not wait for long
to get the prizes—he retrieved them right away,
giving the woman to his proud comrades to lead off
and the two-handled tripod to carry with them.
Then he untied the horses from their harnesses.

Next in came the horses driven by Antilochus,
grandson of Neleus, who just beat Menelaus—
he won by cunning, not by his horses' speed.
But Menelaus was bringing his swift horses in
very close behind. The space between the two
was as far as a horse is from the chariot wheel,
when it strains to pull its master fast across the plain—
its tail ends touch the spinning wheels behind it— [520]
there's not much space between them, as they move
at top speed on the plain—that's about how far
Menelaus lagged behind noble Antilochus.
At first, he'd been about a discus throw behind,
but he was quickly catching up, for the spirit
in Agamemnon's mare, the fair-maned Aethe,
kept getting stronger. Had the course been longer
for both contestants, he'd have surely passed him,
without leaving the result in doubt. The next one in
was Meriones, Idomeneus' brave attendant,
a spear-throw length behind splendid Menelaus.
His horses were the slowest, and he himself [530]
had the least skill at driving in a chariot race.
Last one in was Admetus' son, well behind the rest,
driving his horses in front of him and pulling
his chariot behind. Seeing Eumelus coming in,
swift-footed lord Achilles felt sorry for him.
Standing among Argives, he spoke—his words had wings:

> "The best man brings up his sure-footed horses
> in last place. Come, let's give him a prize,
> as seems fitting—the award for second place.
> Let Diomedes take the first-place prize."

Achilles spoke. They all agreed with his suggestion.
So now he would have given Eumelus the mare, [540]
as Achaeans had agreed, but Antilochus,

great-hearted Nestor's son, stood up to claim his right.
Addressing Achilles, son of Peleus, he said:

"Achilles, I'll be angry with you,
if you carry out what you've proposed.
For you want to rob me of my prize,
claiming that his chariot and swift horses
ran into trouble—as he did himself,
though he's an excellent charioteer.
But he should have prayed to the immortals—
in the race he would not have finished last.
If you're feeling sorry for Eumelus,
if he's someone your heart is fond of,
in your hut there's lots of gold. You've got bronze,
sheep, women slaves, and sure-footed horses.
Why not take some of that and then give him
an even greater prize sometime later on?
Or do it now. Achaeans will applaud you.
But I won't give up the mare. If someone
wants her, let him try doing battle with me,
hand to hand."

Antilochus finished speaking.
Swift-footed, god-like Achilles smiled, delighted
with Antilochus, who was a close companion.
In reply, he spoke these winged words:

"Antilochus,
if you're telling me to give Eumelus
some other prize inside my huts, I'll do it.
I'll give him the breastplate I took away
from Asteropaeus. It's made of bronze,
with a casting of bright tin around it.
For Eumelus it will have great value."

After saying this, Achilles ordered Automedon,
his close companion, to fetch the breastplate from the hut.
He went and brought it back and gave it to Eumelus,
who was delighted to receive the armour.
But then Menelaus stood up before them all.
His heart was bitter with unremitting anger
against Antilochus. A herald put the sceptre
in Menelaus' hand, then shouted out for silence
among the Argives. God-like Menelaus spoke:

"Antilochus, you used to have good sense,
before all this. Now look at what you've done.
You've brought my skills here into disrepute,
fouling my horses when you hurled your team
in front of me out there, that team of yours
which is far inferior to mine. Come now,
you leaders and rulers of the Argives,
judge between the two of us—and fairly,
so Achaeans armed in bronze will never say,

'Menelaus beat Antilochus with lies,
when he received that mare. Though his horses
were much slower, he used his influence,
his rank and power.'

In fact, I myself
will judge the case, and no Danaan,
I claim, will find fault with me in any way,
for justice will be done. Antilochus,
come here, my lord, and, as our customs state,
stand there before your chariot and horses,
holding that thin whip you used before.
With your hand on your horses, swear an oath,
by the god who surrounds and shakes the earth,
that you did not mean to block my chariot
with some trick."

Antilochus, a prudent man, replied:

"Don't let me offend you, king Menelaus.
I'm a younger man than you—you're my senior
and my better. You know how a young man
can do foolish things. His mind works quickly,
but his judgment's suspect. So be patient
in your heart. That mare I was awarded
I freely give you. And if you requested
something greater from my own possessions,
I'd want to give it to you right away,
rather than lose your good will, my lord,
forever and offend against the gods."

The son of great-hearted Nestor finished speaking.
He led out the horse, then placed it in the hands
of Menelaus, whose heart melted like the dew

on ripening ears of corn, when fields are bristling
with the crop—that's how, Menelaus, your heart [600]
softened in your chest. He spoke to Antilochus—
his words had wings:

"Now, indeed, Antilochus,
I'll give up my anger with you. Before now,
you haven't been too reckless or a fool. 740
This time your youth overcame your judgement.
In future, you shouldn't try to do such tricks
against your betters. Another Achaean
would not have won me over quite so fast.
But you've worked very hard, endured a lot—
you, your noble father, and your brother—
in my cause. So I'll agree to your request.
What's more, though she's mine, I'll give you the mare, [610]
so all these people here will recognize
my heart's not arrogant or unyielding." 750

Saying this, Menelaus gave the mare to Noëmon,
a comrade of Antilochus, to lead away.
Menelaus carried off the shining cauldron.
Meriones then collected the two talents
for his fourth-place finish. But the prize for fifth place,
the two-handled jar, went unclaimed. So Achilles
awarded it to Nestor. Carrying the prize
into the crowd of Argives, he stood beside him.
Then Achilles said:

"Take this now, old man.
Let it be your treasure, in memory 760
of Patroclus' burial. For you'll see him [620]
no more among the Argives. This prize
I'm giving you without a contest.
For you won't be competing as a boxer,
or in wrestling, or the spear throw.
Nor will you be running in the foot race.
For old age now has you in its cruel grip."

With these words, Achilles placed the jar in Nestor's hands.
He was happy to accept it. Then Nestor spoke,
saying these winged words to Achilles: 770

"Indeed, my son, you've made a valid point.
For my limbs and feet are no longer firm,
my friend. Nor do I find it as easy
to extend my arms out from my shoulders,
as I did before. Would that I were young,
my strength as firm, as it was that day
Epeians buried lord Amarynceus
at Bouprasium. His sons awarded prizes
in honour of their king. No man could match me,
none of the Epeians, my own Pylians,
nor any of the brave Aetolians.
In boxing I defeated Clytomedes,
Enops' son, in wrestling Ancaeus,
from Pleuron, who fought against me.
In the footrace, I outran Iphicles,
who was outstanding, and in the spear throw,
I beat Phyleus and Polydorus.
I was beaten only in the chariot race
by the two sons of Actor. They pushed ahead,
for there were two of them, both really keen
to win, because they'd set the greatest prize
for that particular race. They were two twins.
One always held the reins—he was the driver.
The other used the whip. That's the man I was,
back then, but now let younger men compete
in events like these. For I must follow
the dictates of a cruel old age these days,
though as a warrior I once excelled.
But come, you must continue with these games
to honour your companion. As for this gift,
I accept it gladly. It delights my heart
that you think of me always as your friend.
You don't forget the honours due to me
among Achaeans. May the gods grant you,
as a reward for that, your heart's desires."

Nestor finished. Once he'd heard all of Nestor's story,
Peleus' son moved through the large Achaean crowd.
Then he set out prizes for the painful contest—
the boxing. To the group he led out a sturdy mule,
an unbroken female, six years old, the hardest
to break in. For the loser, he put out a cup,
one with two handles. Then Achilles, standing up,
addressed the Argives:

"Son of Atreus,
all you other well-armed Achaeans,
for these prizes here we need two good men,
the best there are, to put up their fists and box.
The one to whom Apollo gives endurance
and Achaeans all acknowledge winner,
let him then take this mule back to his hut.
The beaten man gets this two-handled cup."

Achilles' words at once stirred into action
a strong, brave man, well skilled in boxing—Epeius,
son of Panopeus. Putting his hand on the mule,
Epeius said:

"Let whoever's going to get
the two-handled cup step forward. For I say this—
no Achaean will beat me with his fists
and take this mule. I claim I'm the winner.
I may not be the best in battle. So what?
A man can't be well skilled in everything.
But I'll say this—and what I say will happen—
I'll break apart the skin and crush the bones
of the man who fights me. Those close to him
had better stay here in a single group
to help him off, once my fists have thrashed him."

Epeius' words reduced them all to silence.
The only one to stand up to oppose him
was godlike Euryalus, son of Mecisteus,
son of Talaus. He had once come to Thebes,
for the funeral games of fallen Oedipus.
There he'd triumphed against all the sons of Cadmus.
Famous spearman Diomedes helped him prepare,
encouraging Euryalus with his words—
he really wanted him to win the contest.
First, he set the loin cloth on him, then gave him
leather thongs, fine hide cut from a farmyard ox.
When the two men had laced up their hands, they strode
into the middle of the group. Raising their arms,
their powerful fists, they went at one another.
Their hands exchanged some heavy punches, landing
with painful crunches on their jaws. From their limbs
sweat ran down everywhere. Then Euryalus feinted,
but godlike Epeius moved and punched his cheek bone.

Euryalus could not keep his feet for long.
His splendid limbs collapsed there on the spot—
as a fish jumps through the rippling surface water
in a forceful North Wind breeze near a weed-filled shore,
before a black wave hides it—that how Euryalus
jerked up as he was hit. But great-hearted Epeius
grabbed him and set him on his feet. Around him,
his close comrades gathered. They led him through the crowd
spitting gobs of blood, dragging his feet behind him,
with his head tilted to one side. They took him off,
set him down with them, still semi-conscious,
then went themselves to collect the two-handled cup.

For the Danaans, Peleus' son then set out [700]
a display of prizes for the third contest,
the hard-fought wrestling match. The winning prize
was a huge tripod to place above a fire,
whose value among themselves Achaeans set
at twelve oxen. Into the middle of the crowd
he then brought out the loser's prize, a woman
skilled in every kind of work, worth four oxen.
Standing up among the Argives, Achilles said:

"Step up now the two who'll try this contest."

At these words, great Telamonian Ajax got up,
as did Odysseus, the crafty master of deceit.
They strapped on their belts and strode out to the crowd, [710]
then, with their powerful hands gripped each other's elbows—
locked together like rafters on some lofty house,
fitted by skilled craftsmen to keep out blasts of wind.
Their backs cracked as their strong hands applied the pressure.
Streams of sweat poured down, and red blood welts appeared
across their ribs and shoulders, as both contestants
kept up their struggle to prevail and get the prize,
that well-made tripod. But it was impossible
for Odysseus to trip up Ajax or throw him down,
or for Ajax to do the same thing to Odysseus, [720]
for Odysseus' strength prevented him from that.
But when well-armed Achaeans started to get bored,
great Telamonian Ajax said to Odysseus:

"Divinely born son of Laertes,
resourceful Odysseus—try lifting me,

or I'll try lifting you. And we'll let Zeus
decide the outcome."

Saying this, Ajax tried a lift.
But Odysseus did not forget his various tricks.
He kicked Ajax behind the knee, taking out his leg.
Ajax toppled backward, with Odysseus falling
on his chest. The spectators got excited then.
Next resilient, godlike Odysseus tried a lift.
He managed to move Ajax off the ground a bit, [730]
but couldn't lift him. Then Ajax hooked him
with his leg around the knee, so the two men fell
close together on the ground, covered both in dust.
Now they would have jumped up to wrestle a third fall,
but Achilles himself came up and held them back.

"You two need not continue wrestling.
Don't let the pain exhaust you. For both of you
are winners. You must take equal prizes.
Once you leave, other Achaeans can compete."

Hearing these words, both men agreed. The two of them
cleaned their bodies of the dust and put on tunics.

After that, Peleus' son quickly set out other prizes [740]
for the footrace—a finely crafted silver mixing bowl,
holding six measures. It was very beautiful,
the loveliest object in the world by far.
Sidonian experts in skilled handicrafts who made it
had shaped it well. Then Phoenician men had brought it
over the dark sea, unpacked it in the harbour,
and given it as a gift to Thoas, as ransom
for Lycaon, Priam's son, paid by Euneus,
son of Jason, to warrior Patroclus. This bowl
Achilles set out as a prize to honour his companion,
a trophy for the man who in the footrace
proved he was the fastest. As prize for second place, [750]
he led out a huge ox, rich in fat. For third place,
he offered half a talent. Then Achilles stood up
and announced to the Achaeans:

"Up all those of you
who want to make the effort for this prize."

At that, swift Oïlean Ajax jumped up at once.
Next came resourceful Odysseus and Nestor's son
Antilochus, who, of all the young men there,
could run the fastest. These men stood in line,
as Achilles pointed out the turning post—
the race course was the distance there and back.
The son of Oïleus quickly raced in front,
with godlike Odysseus really close behind,
as close as the weaving bar comes to the breast [760]
of a well-dressed woman when she deftly pulls it
in her hands to pass the weaving spool through thread,
keeping the rod against her chest—that's how close
Odysseus ran behind, his feet hitting Ajax's footprints
before the dust could settle there. Godlike Odysseus
ran so close, his breath touched the back of Ajax's head.
All the Achaeans were cheering on Odysseus,
as he strove to win the race, yelling at him
to push his energy right to the limit.
While they were running the last section of the course,
Odysseus in his heart prayed to Athena,
goddess with the glittering eyes:

"Hear me, goddess! [770]
Be good to me. Help me. Speed up my feet."

Odysseus prayed, and Pallas Athena heard him.
She made his legs, feet, and upper arms feel lighter.
Then, as they were about to sprint in for the prize,
Ajax slipped in mid stride—for Athena fouled him—
right where the bellowing cattle had dropped their dung
as they were slaughtered, the ones which swift Achilles
had killed in honour of Patroclus. So Ajax
finished with his mouth and nostrils full of dung,
as resilient Odysseus raced on ahead,
came in first, and won the prize. Ajax got the ox.
He stood there, hands on the horn of that farmyard beast, [780]
spitting out cow dung, and then said to the Argives:

"So the goddess played tricks with my feet—
the one that always helps Odysseus out,
taking care of him, just like a mother."

Ajax spoke.
They all had a good laugh at him. Antilochus

took the prize for coming last. He smiled, then said,
as he spoke to the Argives:

"Friends, I'll tell you this,
something you already know—immortal gods
still honour older men, even today.
Ajax is just a little older than myself,
but Odysseus comes from another time,
an older generation. But his greater age,
so people say, is green. Thus it's difficult
for Achaeans to beat him in a race—
all except Achilles."

Antilochus finished speaking.
He had acknowledged the swift-footed son of Peleus,
so Achilles answered him and said:

"Antilochus,
you've not paid that tribute here for nothing.
I'll add a gold half-talent to your prize."

With these words, Achilles handed him the gold.
Antilochus was very pleased to get it.

Next, the son of Peleus brought to the gathering
a long-shadowed spear. He set it down, and with it
a shield and helmet. It was Sarpedon's armour,
which Patroclus had taken from him. Standing there,
Achilles then said to the Argives:

"We're calling for two men,
two of the best, to battle for these prizes,
clothed in armour, wielding their sharp bronze,
testing each other here before this crowd.
Whichever man hits the other's fair skin first,
under the armour, drawing his dark blood,
will get from me this silver-studded sword,
a lovely one from Thrace, which I seized
from Asteropaeus. Both men will take
this armour here, sharing it in common.
And in my hut we'll get a banquet ready
for both of them."

Achilles finished.
Then great Telamonian Ajax moved out front,
and strong Diomedes, son of Tydeus, got up.
On each side of the crowd they armed themselves,
then both strode to the middle, prepared to fight,
both glaring fearfully. All Achaeans were then gripped
with anxious expectation. Once the two men
approached each other at close quarters, they attacked,
charging three times, three times going at it hand to hand.
Ajax struck through the even circle of the shield
of his opponent, but did not touch his flesh.
The breastplate kept his body guarded from the spear.
Tydeus' son was trying to aim his gleaming spear point [820]
over the huge shield, to get Ajax in the neck.
But then Achaeans, in their fear for Ajax,
called for a halt and an award of equal prizes.
So Achilles gave the great sword to Diomedes—
the scabbard and the well-cut strap as well.

Then Peleus' son put out a lump of rough-cast iron,
which, in earlier days, Eëtion had used for throwing.
Godlike, swift-footed Achilles had slaughtered him,
then taken his iron and all his other goods
away in his swift ship. Achilles then stood up, [830]
and addressed the Argives:

"Step up all those
who want to try this competition.
Whoever wins this iron can use it
to serve his needs for five successive years,
even though his rich fields are far away.
His herders and his ploughman will not need
to travel to the town through lack of iron.
This will give them all that they require."

Achilles spoke. Then up came Polypoetes,
a strong fighter, and godlike Leonteus,
a powerful man, then Telamonian Ajax,
and godlike Epeius. They stood there in a line.
Godlike Epeius gripped the weight, swung it round,
then threw. The Achaeans all laughed at the result. [840]
The second one to throw was Leonteus,
offshoot of Ares. Great Ajax, son of Telamon,
was third to throw. His strong hand tossed the weight,

hurling it beyond the marks of all the others.
But then that strong warrior Polypoetes
picked up the weight and threw it even further
than all those in the contest, by the same distance
a herdsman throws his staff, so it flies spinning
in among his cattle herd. The crowd all shouted.
Then the comrades of strong Polypoetes stood up
and carried off their king's prize to the hollow ships.

Next, Achilles set out the prizes for the archers, [850]
things made of blackened iron—ten double axes
and ten with single blades. Then he set up,
far off in the sands, the mast of a dark-prowed ship.
Attached to it with a slender cord, he placed
a quivering dove with the cord tied to its foot.
He then told contestants to shoot the dove.

"The man who hits it,
that quivering dove, can carry off
all these double axes. He can take them home.
If he misses the bird and hits the cord,
he'll be less successful, but he'll take as prize
these single-bladed axes."

Achilles finished speaking.
Powerful lord Teucer then got up, and Meriones, [860]
courageous attendant to lord Idomeneus.
They took lots and shook them in a helmet made of bronze.
Teucer's lot gave him first attempt. He loosed an arrow,
a powerful shot, but he had made no promise
to Apollo that he'd give a splendid offering
of new born lambs. So he failed to hit the bird—
Apollo would not give him that. But he hit the cord
tethering the bird near its foot and cut it.
The keen arrow sliced right through. The dove escaped,
flying up into the sky, chord dangling down
towards the ground. Achaeans then all cheered the shot.
But Meriones quickly snatched the bow from Teucer. [870]
He'd been holding an arrow ready for some time,
as Teucer aimed. He offered up a rapid prayer
to Apollo, the far shooter, promising
he'd make a splendid sacrifice of new-born lambs.
He saw the trembling dove high up, under the clouds.
As she circled there, he shot her through the middle,

under the wing. The arrow passed straight through, falling
back to earth again. It struck by Meriones' foot.
The dove fluttered to the mast of the dark-prowed ship,
her head hung down, her wings drooped, as life [880]
fled quickly from her limbs. She fell from the mast
a long way to the ground. The crowd looked on amazed.
So Meriones carried off ten double axes,
while Teucer took back to his hollow ships
the single-bladed ones.

Then Peleus' son
brought out a long-shadowed spear and set it down
before the gathering and a brand new cauldron,
not yet touched by fire, with a floral pattern on it.
Its value was one ox. Then warriors got up
for the spear-throw competition—the son of Atreus,
wide-ruling Agamemnon, and Meriones,
courageous attendant to lord Idomeneus.
But then swift-footed, godlike Achilles spoke:

"Son of Atreus, [890]
we know how you surpass all others,
how in the spear throw you're much stronger,
better than anyone. So take this prize,
as you go to your hollow ships. Let's give
the spear to warrior Meriones, if your heart
is pleased with that. It's what I'd like to do."

Achilles spoke. Agamemnon, king of men, agreed.
The warrior king gave the spear to Meriones,
then handed his own prize, the lovely cauldron,
over to Talthybius, his herald.

Book Twenty-Four
Achilles and Priam

[Achilles continues to mourn and to dishonour Hector's corpse; the gods debate his action; Zeus resolves to deal with the problem; Iris goes off to fetch Thetis; Zeus instructs Thetis to visit Achilles; Thetis tells Achilles Zeus's instructions; Achilles agrees to give up Hector's body for ransom; Iris visits Priam, telling him to go to the Achaean ships; Hecuba objects to the trip; Priam insults his sons, then collects the ransom and leaves with Idaios, the herald; Zeus sends Priam an omen and tells Hermes to guide Priam to Achilles; Hermes meets Priam on the road; Hermes takes Priam to the Achaean camp; Priam meets Achilles; Achilles agrees to give back Hector; Achilles and Priam have dinner; Priam sleeps overnight outside Achilles hut; Priam and Idaios return to Troy with Hector's body; the women lament over Hector; the Trojans bury Hector.]

Once the funeral gathering broke up, the men dispersed,
each one going to his own ship, concerned to eat
and then enjoy sweet sleep. But Achilles kept on weeping,
remembering his dear companion. All-conquering Sleep
could not overcome him, as he tossed and turned,
longing for manly, courageous, strong Patroclus,
thinking of all he'd done with him, all the pain
they'd suffered, as they'd gone through wars with other men
and with the perilous sea. As he kept remembering,
he cried heavy tears, sometimes lying on his side, 10
sometimes on his back or on his face. Then he'd get up, [10]
to wander in distress, back and forth along the shore.
He'd see Dawn's approach across the sea and beaches,
then he'd harness his fast horses to their chariot,
tie on Hector and drag him behind, driving
three times around the tomb of Menoetius' dead son.
Then in his hut he'd rest again, leaving Hector
stretched out, face down in the dust. But Apollo,
feeling pity for Hector, though he was dead,
guarded his skin from any lacerations, 20
covering his whole body with the golden aegis, [20]
so as Achilles dragged him, he did not tear his skin.
Still Achilles kept dishonouring godlike Hector.
Then the blessed gods, looking on, pitied Hector.
So they urged keen-eyed Hermes, killer of Argus,
to steal the corpse, an idea that pleased them all,
except for Hera, Poseidon, and Athena,
the girl with glittering eyes, who kept up the hatred
they'd felt when they first started to loathe Ilion,

Priam and his people, for Alexander's folly—
he'd been contemptuous of those goddesses,
when they were visiting his sheep-fold, choosing
the one who volunteered to serve his dangerous lust.[1]

But after the twelfth dawn had come since Hector's death,
Phoebus Apollo spoke out to the immortals:

"You gods are cruel and vindictive.
Did Hector never sacrifice to you,
burning thighs of perfect bulls and goats?
And can't you now rouse yourself to save him,
though he's a corpse, for his wife, his mother,
and his child to look at, and for Priam, too,
his father, and the people, who'd burn him
with all speed and give him burial rites?
No, you want to help ruthless Achilles,
whose heart has no restraint. In that chest
his mind cannot be changed. Like some lion,
he thinks savage thoughts, a beast which follows
only its own power, its own proud heart,
as it goes out against men's flocks, seeking
a feast of cattle—that's how Achilles
destroys compassion. And in his heart
there's no sense of shame, which can help a man
or harm him. No doubt, a man can suffer loss
of someone even closer than a friend—
a brother born from the same mother
or even a son. He pays his tribute
with his tears and his laments—then stops.
For Fates have put in men resilient hearts.
But this man here, once he took Hector's life,
ties him behind his chariot, then drags him
around his dear companion's burial mound.
He's done nothing to help or honour him.
He should take care he doesn't anger us.
Though he's a fine man, in this rage of his
he's harming senseless dust."

[1]This is a reference to the famous Judgment of Paris, in which he was asked to select a goddess to receive a golden apple inscribed "for the fairest woman." Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite all claimed the apple, and each offered Paris a bribe (Hera said she would make Paris a supreme political ruler, Athena said she would give him wisdom, and Aphrodite said she would give him the most beautiful mortal woman). Paris, then a shepherd on Mount Ida, awarded the apple to Aphrodite. The whole affair was initiated by Eris, goddess of strife, and became the long-term cause of the Trojan War.

Then Hera,
angry at Apollo, replied:

"Lord of the silver bow,
yes, indeed, what you say may well be true,
if you gods give Hector and Achilles
equal worth. But Hector is a mortal man,
suckled at a woman's breast, while Achilles
is the child of a goddess I raised myself. [60]
I brought her up and gave her to Peleus
to be his wife, a man dear to the hearts
of the immortal gods. All of you were there,
when they got married. You, too, were with us
at the banquet, you friend of evil men,
clutching your lyre, as slippery as ever."

Cloud gatherer Zeus then answered Hera, saying:

"Hera, don't get so angry with the gods.
These two will not both share equal honours.
Still, of all mortal men in Ilion,
Hector was the favourite of the gods.
At least that's what he was to me.
He never failed to offer me fine gifts.
At their communal feasts, my own altar
never went without the proper offerings, [70]
libations and sacrificial smoke,
as is our right. But we'll not let this corpse,
brave Hector's body, be taken secretly.
Achilles would for certain learn of it,
since his mother sees him all the time,
both day and night. But one of the gods
should tell Thetis to come here before me,
so I can put a useful plan to her,
how Achilles can get gifts from Priam
and then give Hector back to him."

Once Zeus had spoken, storm-swift Iris rushed away,
bearing Zeus's message. Half way between Samos
and rocky Imbros she plunged into the sea.
As waters roared above her, she sank way down, [80]
just as a plummet sinks when fastened to a lure,
one fashioned out of horn from some farmyard ox

to bring death to hungry fish. She met Thetis
sitting in a hollow cave with other sea gods
thronging there around her. In the middle of them all,
Thetis was lamenting the fate of her fine son,
who would die in fertile Troy, far from his home.
Standing right beside her, swift-footed Iris spoke:

"Rouse yourself, Thetis. Zeus, whose thoughts
endure forever, is calling for you."

Silver-footed Thetis then said in reply:

"Why is that mighty god now summoning me? [90]
I'm ashamed to associate with immortals,
my heart holds such immeasurable grief.
But I'll go. And no matter what he says,
his words will not be wasted."

Saying this,
Thetis, queen of goddesses, took a dark veil,
the blackest of her garments, then set off on her way.
Swift Iris, with feet like wind, went on ahead.
The surging sea parted round the two of them.
When they emerged on shore, they raced on up to heaven.
They found the wide-seeing son of Cronos in the midst
of all the other blessed gods, who live forever.
Once Athena had made room for her, Thetis sat [100]
with Father Zeus. Hera placed a gold cup in her hand,
with words of welcome. She drank, then handed back the cup.
The father of the gods and men spoke first:

"You've come here to Olympus, goddess Thetis,
though you're grieving, with endless sorrows
in your heart. I know that. But even so,
I'll tell you the reason why I've called you here.
For nine days immortals have been quarrelling
about Achilles, sacker of cities,
and Hector's corpse. They keep urging Hermes,
keen-eyed killer of Argus, to steal the body. [110]
But I want to give honour to Achilles,
maintain my respect for you in future,
and keep our friendship. So you must leave quickly.
Go to the army. Tell your son what I say.
Tell him the gods are annoyed at him,

that of all immortals I'm especially angry,
because, in his heartfelt fury, he keeps
Hector at his beaked ships, won't give him back.
Through fear of me, he may hand Hector over.
I'll also send Iris to great-hearted Priam,
telling him to go to the Achaean ships,
to beg for his dear son, bearing presents
for Achilles to delight his heart."

Silver-footed Thetis did not disagree with Zeus.
She went speeding from Olympus' peak to her son's hut.
She found him there, still mourning endlessly.
Around him, his close companions were all busy,
in a hurry to get their morning meal prepared.
Inside the hut they'd butchered a large woolly sheep.
His noble mother sat close by him, caressed him
with her hand, then spoke to him, saying:

"My son,
how long will you consume your heart with tears,
with this grieving, not thinking about food
or going to bed. To have sex with a woman
would do you good. I won't see you still alive
much longer—for at this moment, Death,
your powerful fate, is standing close at hand.
But quickly, listen to me. For I'm here
as messenger from Zeus. He told me this—
the gods are angry with you. Zeus himself
is the angriest of all immortals,
because, in your heartfelt fury, you keep
Hector by your beaked ships, won't return him.
So come, now. Give him back, and for that corpse
accept a ransom."

Swift-footed Achilles
then replied to Thetis, saying:
"So be it.
Whoever brings the ransom, let that man
have the corpse, if that's what the Olympian
in his own heart truly desires."

Thus, among the assembled ships, mother and son
spoke many winged words to each other.

Meanwhile, Cronos' son urged Iris to be off
to sacred Ilion:

"You must go right away,
swift Iris. Leave your home here on Olympus.
Take this message to great-hearted Priam,
inside Ilion—tell him he must visit
Achaean ships to ransom his dear son,
taking gifts to please Achilles' heart.
He must go alone. No other Trojan man
is to accompany him. One herald,
an older man, can make the journey with him,
to drive the mules and sturdy wagon [150]
and bring back to the city the body
of the godlike man Achilles killed.
He must not think of death or be afraid.
A fitting escort will accompany him—
Hermes, killer of Argus—as a guide,
until he brings him to Achilles.
Once he's led him to Achilles' hut,
that man will not kill him—he'll restrain
all other men. For he's not stupid,
blind, or disrespectful of the gods.
He'll spare a suppliant, treat him kindly."

Zeus spoke. Storm-footed Iris rushed off with the message.
Reaching Priam's house, she found him weeping there [160]
and mourning. His sons were sitting with their father
inside the courtyard, wetting garments with their tears.
The old man sat with them, cloak tightly wrapped around him.
Both his head and neck were covered with the dung
he'd grovelled in and grabbed up by the handful.
His daughters and sons' wives were crying through the house,
thinking of many noble warriors who'd been killed
at Achaean hands. Zeus's messenger approached.
Standing beside Priam, she spoke in a soft voice,
but nonetheless his limbs began to tremble. [170]

"Let your heart be brave, Priam, son of Dardanus.
Don't be afraid. I've not come with news
of any harm to you, but to do good.
I am a messenger to you from Zeus—
he may be far off, but he looks out for you,
cares very much, and feels pity for you.

The Olympian is telling you to ransom
godlike Hector. Take presents to Achilles,
fine things his heart will find delightful.
You must go alone. No other Trojan man
is to go along with you. A herald,
an older man, may make the journey with you,
to drive the mules and sturdy wagon
and bring back to the city the body
of the godlike man Achilles killed.
You must not think of death or be afraid.
A proper escort will accompany you—
Hermes, killer of Argus—to guide you,
until he brings you to Achilles.
Once he's led you to Achilles' hut,
that man will not kill you—he'll restrain
all other men. For he's not stupid,
blind, or disrespectful of the gods.
He'll spare a suppliant, treat him kindly."

With these words, swift-footed Iris went away.
Priam told his sons to prepare a sturdy mule cart
and lash on a wicker box. Then he went in person
down to the sweet-smelling vaulted storage chamber
lined with cedar, which held many of his treasures.
He summoned Hecuba, his wife, then said:

"My lady,
a messenger has come to me from Zeus,
instructing me to ransom our dear son.
I'm to go to the Achaean ships, taking
gifts for Achilles to delight his heart.
So come, tell me what you feel about this.
My own heart and spirit are urging me,
in a strange and fearful way, to go there,
to the ships and wide Achaean camp."

At Priam's words, his wife cried out. Then she replied:

"Where's your mind gone, that wisdom you once had,
for which in earlier days you were well known
among your subjects and with strangers, too?
How can you want to visit the Achaean ships,
to go alone, before the eyes of the man
who's killed so many of your noble sons?

You've an iron heart. If he captures you,
once he sees you, that man's so savage,
so unreliable, he'll show no pity.
He'll not respect you. No, let's mourn here,
in our home, sitting far away from Hector.
That's what mighty Fate spun out for him
when he was born, when I gave birth to him— [210]
that swift-running dogs would devour him
far from his parents beside that powerful man.
How I wish I could rip out that man's heart,
then eat it. That would be some satisfaction
for my son, who was not playing the coward
when he killed him. No, he was standing there,
defending deep-breasted Trojan women
and Trojan men, not thinking of his safety
or running off in flight."

The old man,
godlike Priam, then said in response to Hecuba:

"I want to go. Don't try to stop me.
Don't be a bird of ill omen in our house.
You won't convince me. If some other man, [220]
some earthly mortal, had told me this,
a prophet who interprets sacrifices
or some priest, we'd think it false, reject it.
But this time I heard the goddess for myself.
I stared her in the face. So I will go.
Her message won't be wasted. If I'm fated
to die by the bronze-clad Achaeans' ships,
that's what I wish. Let Achilles kill me,
once I've embraced my son and satisfied
my desire to mourn."

Priam finished speaking.
Then he threw open fine lids on the storage chests.
From there he took twelve lovely robes, twelve single cloaks, [230]
as many blankets, white coverlets, and tunics.
He brought gold, weighing out a total of ten talents,
then two gleaming tripods, four cauldrons, and a cup,
a splendid one given to him by men of Thrace,
when he'd gone there as an envoy, a fine treasure.
Even this cup the old man did not leave at home—
he was so eager to pay ransom for his son.

Then Priam chased the Trojans from his courtyard,
shaming them with angry words:

"Go away,
you wretches! You ought to be ashamed.
Have you nothing to cry about back home,
so you come here tormenting me like this?
Isn't it enough that Zeus, Cronos' son,
gives me this grief, that I must lose my son,
the best one of them all? Well, you'll soon find out.
Now he's been killed, it will be easier
for Achaeans to kill you, too. As for me,
may I go down to Hades' home, before I see
this city plundered and destroyed."

With these words, Priam went at the people with his staff,
lashing out. They moved off, beyond the old man's rage.
Then he began shouting at his sons, cursing them—
Helenus, Paris, noble Agathon, Pammon,
Antiphonus, Polites, skilled in war shouts,
Deïphobus, Hippothous, and proud Dios.
To these nine, the old man yelled his orders.

"Hurry up, you useless children, my shame.
I wish you'd all been killed instead of Hector
by those swift ships—the entire bunch of you!
My life's so miserable and empty.
I fathered sons, the best in spacious Troy.
I don't think a single one of them is left—
not Mestor, or horseman Troilus, or Hector,
that god among men. He didn't seem to be
the child of any mortal man, but of a god.
Ares destroyed all those sons of mine.
The ones still left here are disgraceful—
liars, prancing masters of the dance floor,
who steal lambs and goats from their own people.
Will you not prepare a wagon for me—
and quickly? Put all those items in it,
so we can start out on our way."

Priam finished.
The sons, shaken by their father's torrent of abuse,
brought out the sturdy, well-made wagon, a new one.

They lashed the wicker basket on it, then took down
from its peg a box-wood yoke to fit a team of mules,
furnished with guiding rings and with a knob on top.
They brought out with the yoke the lashing for it, [270]
a strap five metres long. They placed the yoke with care
across the polished pole at its front end, then set
the rope's eye on the peg and bound it up securely
with three twists round the knob. They lashed it to the pole,
twisting the end below the hook. Next, they brought out 340
from the storeroom and stowed in the well-polished cart
the huge ransom to be paid for Hector's head. The mules
they then put into harness, underneath the yoke,
strong-footed beasts, a splendid gift which Mysians
once gave Priam. Then to Priam's chariot they yoked up
the team the old man kept for his own personal use,
taking care of them in his own gleaming stables. [280]
While harnessing these animals went on this way
in the lofty courtyard for Priam and his herald,
two men with wisdom in their hearts, Hecuba approached. 350
She came up to them with her heart in great distress.
In her right hand she held out in a golden cup
some honey wine, so the men could pour libations
before setting out. Standing there beside their horses,
she addressed them, saying:

"Take this wine.
Pour a libation out to Father Zeus,
and pray that you'll come home again,
back from your enemies, since your heart
urges you against my will to those swift ships.
So pray to Cronos' son, lord of dark clouds 360 [290]
and god of Ida, who sees the land of Troy,
and ask him to send a bird of omen,
that fast messenger which is to him
the favourite of all birds, the mightiest.
Let that bird appear over to your right,
so, once you witness it with your own eyes,
you can have faith, as you go to the ships
of those fast-riding Argives. But should Zeus,
who sees far and wide, not send that messenger,
I'd not urge you or advise you go there, 370
to Achaean ships, for all your eagerness."

Godlike Priam then said in reply to Hecuba:

"Wife, I'll not disregard what you advise.
It's good to extend one's hand to Zeus,
if he's inclined to pity."

Priam spoke.
Then the old man ordered his servant woman
to pour pure water on his hands. She came out,
bringing with her a basin and a water jug.
Priam washed his hands. Taking the cup from his wife,
he prayed, standing in the middle of the courtyard.
Gazing up to heaven, he poured out some wine,
then spoke aloud, saying:

"Father Zeus,
lord of Ida, most glorious and great,
grant that when I come to Achilles' hut,
I'll be welcomed kindly and with pity.
Send me a bird as omen, a swift messenger,
the one that is your favourite, the strongest.
Let it appear to my right overhead,
so, once I witness it with my own eyes,
I can have faith as I go to those ships
of the fast-riding Danaans."

So Priam prayed.
Counsellor Zeus heard him. At once he sent an eagle,
of all flying things the surest omen, a dark one,
which people call black eagle, with wings as wide
as doors on some rich man's vaulted store house,
one fitted well with bolts—that's how wide this eagle
spread its wings on either side, appearing on the right,
speeding across the city. When they saw that bird,
they all rejoiced. Hearts in their chests felt great relief.
The old man, in a hurry, climbed in his chariot,
then drove out through the gate and echoing courtyard.
In front the mules drew on the four-wheeled wagon,
led by wise Idaios. The horses came behind.
The old man kept laying on the whip, urging them
swiftly through the city. All his family followed him
in tears, as if Priam were going off to his death.
When they'd passed the gate and reached the plain,
his sons and sons-in-law turned back to Ilion.

But as those two men came out into the plain,
they did not go unobserved by wide-seeing Zeus.
Looking down on that old man, Zeus pitied him.
At once he spoke to Hermes, his dear son:

"Hermes, since your favourite task by far
is acting in a friendly way to men
and listening to any man you like,
go down there. Guide Priam to Achaeans,
to their hollow ships, so no one sees him,
so no Danaan even is aware of him,
until he comes to the son of Peleus."

Hermes the Guide, killer of Argus, hearing Zeus,
did not disobey. At once he laced up on his feet [340]
his lovely sandals, immortal golden shoes
which carry him across the seas and boundless earth
as fast as winds can blow. With him he took the rod
which puts to sleep the eyes of any man he wishes
or wakes up others who are slumbering.
With this rod in hand, mighty Hermes flew away.
He quickly came to Troy and to the Hellespont.
There he walked on in the form of a young prince
with his first hair on his lip, looking that age
when charms of youth are at their loveliest.
When the two men had passed the burial mound of Ilus,
they reined in the mules and horses, stopping there [350]
beside the river for a drink. For by this time
darkness had come down over the earth. Looking round,
the herald saw Hermes drawing near. He said to Priam:

"Be careful, son of Dardanus. At this point,
we need to think with prudence. I see a man,
and it seems we may be cut to pieces soon.
Come, let's go in your chariot, or at least
clasp him by the knees and beg for mercy.
He may feel pity for us."

Idaios spoke.
The old man's mind was very troubled.
He was dreadfully afraid. On his bent limbs,
the hairs stood out, and he stayed there in a daze. [360]

But Hermes the Helper came up by himself,
took the old man's hand, then asked him questions:

"Father, where are you going with these horses
and these mules through this immortal night,
when other living men are fast asleep?
Are you not afraid of those Achaeans,
hostile, fury-breathing, ruthless soldiers—
they're not far off. If one of them should see you
bearing all this treasure in the swift black night,
what would you do then? You're not that young.
Your escort here is elderly, too old
to defend himself against someone
who wants to start a fight. But as for me, [370]
I'll not harm you. In fact, I will protect you
from other men, because in you I see
my own dear father."

Old godlike Priam
then said to Hermes in reply:

"My dear child,
Things are indeed just as you say. But some god
holds his hand over me, to send me here
a traveller like you who comes to meet us,
an auspicious sign, with your handsome shape
and your fine common sense. Those parents of yours
who gave birth to you are surely fortunate."

Messenger Hermes, killer of Argus, then said:

"Old man, what you say is very true.
But come now, tell me—and tell me truly— [380]
are you sending so much treasure out
for foreign people to keep safe for you,
or are you leaving sacred Ilion
in fear, now that the finest man's been killed,
your own son, who never was reluctant
in any battles with Achaeans."

Old godlike Priam spoke again to Hermes:

"Who are you, good sir? Who are your parents?
You speak so fairly of my doomed son's fate."

Hermes the Guide, killer of Argus, then replied:

"You want to test me, old man, by asking me
of godlike Hector. My eyes have seen him
many times in fights where men win glory.
And when he drove the Argives to their ships,
killing and butchering them with his sharp bronze,
we stood there astonished. For Achilles,
still in a furious rage with Agamemnon,
would not let us fight. I attend on him.
The same ship brought us here. I'm a soldier,
one of the Myrmidons. My father's Polyctor,
a man of substance, about as old as you.
He has six other sons—I'm the seventh.
By casting lots with them I was selected
to sail here. I've come now from our ships
here to the plain. At dawn bright-eyed Achaeans
will organize for battle round the city.
They're restless, just sitting idly there.
And it's impossible for Achaea's kings
to keep in check their eagerness for war."

Old godlike Priam then said to Hermes:

"If you, indeed, do serve with Achilles,
son of Peleus, then tell me the whole truth—
is my son still beside the ships, or has Achilles
already carved his body limb from limb
and thrown him to the dogs to eat?"

Hermes the Guide, killer of Argus, answered:

"Old man, birds and dogs have not yet fed on him.
He's lying still beside Achilles' ship,
among the huts, the same as when he died.
For twelve days he's lain there, but his flesh
has not decayed. Worms are not eating him,
as they do with men who die in battle.
Each dawn, Achilles drags him ruthlessly
around his dear companion's burial mound,
but that does not lacerate the corpse.
It would amaze you, if you went in person,
to see how he lies there as fresh as dew,

with all blood washed away, no stain on him.
All the wounds he got have closed completely,
and many people stuck their bronze in him.
But that's how blessed gods care for your son,
though he's a corpse. For their hearts loved him."

At these words, the old man felt joy. He replied:

"My son, it's good to pay immortal gods
what's due to them. It's certainly the case,
as true as that my son was once alive,
he never once neglected in our home
the gods who hold Olympus. That's the reason
they now remember him for what he did,
even his dead body after death. Come now,
take this lovely goblet as my gift to you.
Protect me. Be my guide with the gods' help,
until I reach the hut of Peleus' son."

Messenger Hermes, killer of Argus, answered Priam:

"You're testing me, old man, because I'm younger.
You won't convince me when you ask me
to take your gift without Achilles' knowledge.
My heart fears that man, but I respect him
too much to rob him, in case something bad
comes to me later. But I'll be your guide—
even all the way to famous Argos—
attending to your every need on a swift ship
or else on foot. No man will fight against you
because he's thinks too little of your guide."

With these words, Hermes jumped up in the chariot
behind the horses, quickly grabbing reins and whip.
He breathed great strength into those mules and horses.
When they reached the ditch and towers round the ships,
the sentries there were starting to prepare their meal.
Hermes, killer of Argus, poured sleep on all of them,
then opened up the gates at once, pulling back the bars.
He led in Priam with the wagon load of priceless gifts.
They then reached the lofty hut of Peleus' son,
which Myrmidons had built there for their king, cutting
pine beams for it, then roofing it with downy reeds
gathered from the meadows. They'd built around it

a large courtyard for their king, strongly fenced with stakes.
A single beam of pine kept the gate securely closed.
It needed three Achaeans to push it into place,
and three to draw that great bolt from the door,
three of the rest of the Achaeans, for Achilles
could push it into place alone. Helper Hermes
opened the gate himself for old man Priam,
then brought in those splendid gifts for swift Achilles.
He climbed down from the chariot and said:

"Old man,
I am Hermes, an immortal god. I've come, [460]
because my father sent me as your guide.
But I'll go back now. I won't approach
within sight of Achilles. There'd be anger
if an immortal god greeted mortal men
face to face. But you should go inside,
appeal to him in his father's name,
his mother with her lovely hair, his child,
so you may stir his heart."

With these words,
Hermes went on his way, back to high Olympus.
Priam then climbed from his chariot to the ground.
He left Idaios there to tend the mules and horses. [470]
The old man went directly in the hut
where Achilles, dear to Zeus, usually sat.
He found Achilles there, with only two companions,
sitting some distance from him—warrior Automedon
and Alcimus, offshoot of the war god Ares—
busy attending him. He'd just completed dinner.
He'd had food and drink, but the table was still there.
The men did not see great Priam as he entered.
He came up to Achilles, then with his fingers
clasped his knees and kissed his hands, those dreadful hands,
man-killers, which had slain so many of his sons.
Just as sheer folly grips a man who in his own land [480]
kills someone, then runs off to a land of strangers,
to the home of some rich man, so those who see him
are seized with wonder—that's how Achilles then
looked on godlike Priam in astonishment.
The others were amazed. They gazed at one another.
Then Priam made his plea, entreating:

"Godlike Achilles,
remember your own father, who's as old as me,
on the painful threshold of old age.
It may well be that those who live around him
are harassing him, and no one's there
to save him from ruin and destruction.
But when he hears you're still alive,
his heart feels joy, for every day he hopes
he'll see his dear son come back home from Troy.
But I'm completely doomed to misery,
for I fathered the best sons in spacious Troy,
yet I say now not one of them remains.
I had fifty when Achaea's sons arrived—
nineteen born from the same mother's womb,
others the women of the palace bore me.
Angry Ares drained the life of most of them.
But I had one left, guardian of our city,
protector of its people. You've just killed him,
as he was fighting for his native country.
I mean Hector. For his sake I've come here,
to Achaea's ships, to win him back from you.
And I've brought a ransom beyond counting.
So Achilles, show deference to the gods
and pity for myself, remembering
your own father. Of the two old men,
I'm more pitiful, because I have endured
what no living mortal on this earth has borne—
I've lifted up to my own lips and kissed
the hands of the man who killed my son."

Priam finished. His words roused in Achilles
a desire to weep for his own father. Taking Priam's hand,
he gently moved him back. So the two men there
both remembered warriors who'd been slaughtered.
Priam, lying at Achilles' feet, wept aloud
for man-killing Hector, and Achilles also wept
for his own father and once more for Patroclus.
The sound of their lamenting filled the house.
When godlike Achilles had had enough of weeping,
when the need to mourn had left his heart and limbs,
he stood up quickly from his seat, then with his hand
helped the old man to his feet, feeling pity
for that grey head and beard. Then Achilles spoke—
his words had wings:

"You unhappy man,
your heart's had to endure so many evils.
How could you dare come to Achaea's ships,
and come alone, to rest your eyes on me,
when I've killed so many noble sons of yours?
You must have a heart of iron. But come now,
sit on this chair. Though we're both feeling pain,
we'll let our grief lie quiet on our hearts.
For there's no benefit in frigid tears.
That's the way the gods have spun the threads
for wretched mortal men, so they live in pain,
though gods themselves live on without a care.
On Zeus's floor stand two jars which hold his gifts—
one has disastrous things, the other blessings.
When thunder-loving Zeus hands out a mixture,
that man will, at some point, meet with evil,
then, some other time, with good. When Zeus's gift
comes only from the jar containing evil,
he makes the man despised. A wicked frenzy
drives him all over sacred earth—he wanders
without honour from the gods or mortal men.
Consider Peleus. The gods gave him gifts,
splendid presents, right from birth. In wealth,
in his possessions, he surpassed all men.
And he was king over the Myrmidons.
Though he was a mortal, the gods gave him
a goddess for a wife. But even to him
the gods gave evil, too, for in his palace
there sprang up no line of princely children.
He had one son, doomed to an early death.
I'll not look after him as he grows old,
since I'm a long way from my native land,
sitting here in Troy, bringing pain to you
and to your children. Think of yourself, old man.
We hear that you were fortunate in former times.
In all the lands from Lesbos to the south,
where Macar ruled, and east to Phrygia,
to the boundless Hellespont, in all these lands,
old man, they say that you surpassed all men
for wealth and children. But from the time
you got disaster from the heavenly gods,
man-killing battles round your city
have never ceased. You must endure it all,

without a constant weeping in your heart.
You achieve nothing by grieving for your son.
You won't bring him to life again, not before
you'll have to suffer yet another evil."

Old godlike Priam then answered Achilles:

"Don't make me sit down on a chair, my lord,
while Hector lies uncared for in your huts.
But quickly give him back, so my own eyes
can see him. And take the enormous ransom
we've brought here for you. May it give you joy.
And may you get back to your native land,
since you've now let me live to see the sunlight."

With an angry look, swift-footed Achilles snapped at Priam:

"Old man, don't provoke me. I myself intend
to give you Hector. Zeus sent me here
a messenger, the mother who bore me,
a daughter of the Old Man of the Sea.
And in my heart, Priam, I recognize—
it's no secret to me—that some god
led you here to the swift Achaean ships.
No matter how young and strong, no living man
would dare to make the trip to our encampment.
He could not evade the sentries or push back
our door bolts—that would not be easy.
So don't agitate my grieving heart still more,
or I might not spare even you, old man,
though you're a suppliant here in my hut.
I could transgress what Zeus has ordered."

Achilles spoke. The old man, afraid, obeyed him.
Then Peleus' son sprang to the door, like a lion.
Not alone—his two attendants went out with him,
warrior Automedon and Alcimus, whom he honoured
the most of his companions after dead Patroclus.
They freed the mules and horses from their harnesses,
led in the herald, the old man's crier, sat him on a stool.
Then from the polished wagon they brought in
that priceless ransom for Hector's head, leaving there
two cloaks and a thickly woven tunic, so Achilles
could wrap up the corpse before he gave it back

for Priam to take home. Achilles then called out,
ordering his servant women to wash the body,
and then anoint it, after moving it away,
so Priam would not see his son, then, heart-stricken,
be unable to contain his anger at the sight.
Achilles' own spirit might then get so aroused
he could kill Priam, disobeying Zeus's orders.
Servants washed the corpse, anointed it with oil,
and put a lovely cloak and tunic round it.
Achilles himself lifted it and placed it on a bier.
Then together he and his companions set it [590]
on the polished wagon. Achilles, with a groan,
called to his dear companion:

"O Patroclus,
don't be angry with me, if you learn,
even in Hades' house, that I gave back
godlike Hector to his dear father.
He's brought to me a fitting ransom.
I'll be giving you your full share of it,
as is appropriate."

Godlike Achilles spoke,
then went back once more into the hut and sat
on the richly decorated chair he had left
by the opposite wall. Then he spoke to Priam:

"Old man, your son has been given back,
as you requested. He's lying on a bier. [600]
You'll see him for yourself at daybreak,
when you take him. We should think of eating.
Even fair-haired Niobe remembered food,
with twelve of her own children murdered in her home,
her six young daughters and her six strong sons.
Apollo was so enraged at Niobe,
with his silver bow he killed the sons. The daughters
Artemis the Archer slaughtered, for Niobe
had compared herself to lovely Leto,
saying the goddess only had two children,
while she had given birth to many. Even so,
though only two, those gods killed all her children.
For nine days they lay in their own blood— [610]
there was no one there to give them burial.
Cronos' son had turned the people all to stone.

The tenth day, the gods in heaven buried them.
That's when, worn out with weeping, Niobe
had thoughts of food. And now, somewhere in the rocks
in Sipylus, among the lonely mountains,
where, men say, goddess nymphs lie down to sleep,
the ones that dance beside the Achelous,
there Niobe, though turned to stone, still broods,
thinking of the pain the gods have given her.
But come, royal old man, let's think of food.
Later you can lament for your dear son,
when you have taken him to Ilion, [620]
where you'll shed many tears for him."

Swift Achilles finished. Then, jumping up, he killed
a white-fleeced sheep. His companions skinned it,
then prepared the meat, slicing it skilfully
and putting it on spits. They cooked it carefully,
then pulled spits from the pieces. Taking bread,
Automedon set it in fine baskets on the table.
Achilles served the meat. Then their hands went to it,
taking the food prepared and set beside them.
When they'd satisfied their need for food and drink,
then Priam, son of Dardanus, looked at Achilles,
wondering at his size and beauty, like gazing [630]
face to face upon a god. Achilles looked at Priam,
marvelling at his royal appearance and the words he heard.
Once they'd had their fill of looking at each other,
the first to speak was the old man, godlike Priam:

"My lord, show me my bed now with all speed,
so we may lie down and enjoy sweet sleep.
For since your hands took my son's life away,
my eyelids have not closed my eyes, not once.
I always weep, brooding on my sorrows,
my endless grief. I grovel in the dung [640]
inside my closed-in courtyard. Now I've eaten,
tasted meat, and let myself drink gleaming wine.
Before this, I'd eat nothing."

Priam spoke.
Achilles told his comrades and the servants
to set beds out on his portico, laying on them
fine purple rugs with blankets spread on top,
placing above them wool-lined cloaks for clothing.

Women slaves went from the hall with torches.
Right away they spread out two beds, working quickly.
Then swift-footed Achilles spoke to Priam,
in a joking tone:

"Sleep here outside, my dear old man,
in case some Achaean counsellor arrives.
They always come to see me to make plans,
as is our custom. If one of them saw you
on this pitch black night, he might run off
to tell Agamemnon, his people's shepherd.
Then giving back the corpse might be delayed.
But come, tell me—and speak truthfully—
how many days do you require to bury
godlike Hector, so I can stop that long
and keep the troops in check?"

Old godlike Priam
then said in answer to Achilles:

"If you're willing
for me to give lord Hector a full burial,
then, Achilles, as a personal favour,
there is something you could do for me.
You know how we're restricted to our city.
It's a long way to the mountains to get wood.
Besides, the Trojans are especially fearful.
We'll mourn Hector for nine days in our home.
On the tenth day we'll have his funeral.
Then there'll be a banquet for the people.
On the eleventh, we'll make his burial mound.
The twelfth day, if we must, we'll go to war."

Swift-footed Achilles then said to Priam:

"All right, old Priam, things will be arranged
as you request. I'll suspend the fighting
for the length of time you've asked for."

As he said this, Achilles took the old man's wrist
on his right hand, in case his heart was fearful.
So by that house on the porch they lay down to sleep,
Priam and his herald, both men of wisdom.

Achilles slept in a corner of his well-built hut,
with lovely Briseis stretched out there beside him.
Meanwhile, other gods and warrior charioteers,
all conquered by sweet sleep, slept the whole night through.

But slumber did not grip the Helper Hermes,
as he considered in his heart what he might do
to guide king Priam from the ships in secret, [680]
without the strong guard at the gate observing. 840
So standing above Priam's head, he said to him:

"Old man, you're not expecting any harm,
as you sleep like this among your enemies,
since Achilles spared your life. Your dear son
is ransomed for that huge amount you paid.
But if Agamemnon, son of Atreus,
or all Achaeans learn that you are here,
those sons you've left behind will have to pay
a ransom three times greater for your life."

Hermes spoke. At his words, the old man grew afraid. 850
He woke up the herald. Hermes harnessed mules and horses, [690]
then guided them himself quickly through the camp,
attracting no attention. But when they reached the ford
across the swirling river Xanthus, immortal Zeus's child,
Hermes left them and returned to high Olympus.

As Dawn spread her yellow robes over all the earth,
the two men drove their horses inside the city,
weeping and groaning. The mules pulled in the corpse.
No one noticed them, no man, no well-dressed woman,
except Cassandra, a girl as beautiful 860
as golden Aphrodite. She'd climbed up Pergamus. [700]
She saw her father standing in his chariot,
together with his herald, the town crier.
In the mule cart she saw the corpse lying on the bier.
With a scream, Cassandra cried out to all the city:

"See, men and women of Troy, come and see—
look on Hector, if, while he was still alive,
you would rejoice when he came back from war,
for he was a great joy to all our city
and its people."

At Cassandra's shout
no man or woman was left unaffected.
There in the city all were overcome with grief
beyond anyone's control. Close to the gates,
they met Priam bringing home the body.
First Hector's dear wife and his noble mother,
tearing their hair, ran to the sturdy wagon,
trying to touch Hector's head. People crowded round,
all weeping. They would have stayed there by the gates,
shedding tears for Hector the entire day
until the sun went down, but from the chariot
the old man cried out to the crowd:

"Make way there—
let the mules get through. There'll be time enough,
once I've got him home, for everyone to weep."

At Priam's words, the crowd moved back, making room.
The wagon pushed on through. Once they got him home,
inside their great house, they laid him on a corded bed,
then placed singers there beside him, to lead their songs.
They sang a mournful funeral dirge. Then the women
began their wailing, led by white-armed Andromache,
who held in her arms the head of man-killing Hector.

"My husband—you've lost your life so young,
leaving me a widow in our home,
with our son still an infant, the child
born to you and me in our wretchedness.
I don't think he'll grow up to adulthood.
Before that, our city will all be destroyed.
For you, who kept watch over for us, are dead.
You used to protect our city, keeping
its noble wives and little children safe.
Now, soon enough, they'll all be carried off
in hollow ships. I'll be there among them.
And you, my child, you'll follow with me,
to some place where you'll be put to work
at menial tasks, slaving for a cruel master.
Or else some Achaean man will grab your arm
and throw you from the wall—a dreadful death—
in his anger that Hector killed his brother,
or his father, or his son. For Hector's hands
made great numbers of Achaeans sink their teeth

into the broad earth. In wretched warfare,
your father was not gentle. So in our city
they now weep for him. O Hector, what sorrow,
what untold grief you've laid upon your parents.
What painful sorrows will remain for me,
especially for me. As you were dying,
you did not reach your hand out from the bed,
or give me some final words of wisdom,
something I could remember always,
night and day, as I continue my lament."

Andromache said this in tears. The women all wailed with her.
Then Hecuba took her turn in leading their laments:

"Hector, dearest by far of all my children,
loved by the gods, as well, when you were living.
Now, at your death, they still take care of you.
When swift Achilles took my other sons,
he'd ship them off across the boundless seas,
to Samos, or Imbros, or foggy Lemnos.
When his long-edged bronze took away your life,
he dragged you many times around the mound
for his comrade Patroclus, whom you killed.
Yet even so, he could not revive him.
Now you lie here in our house, fresh as dew,
like someone whom Apollo of the silver bow
has just come to and killed with gentle arrows."

As she spoke, Hecuba wept. She stirred them on
to endless lamentation. Helen was the third
to lead those women in their wailing:

"Hector—of all my husband's brothers,
you're by far the dearest to my heart.
My husband is godlike Alexander,
who brought me here to Troy. I wish I'd died
before that happened! This is the twentieth year
since I went away and left my native land,
but I've never heard a nasty word from you
or an abusive speech. In fact, if anyone
ever spoke rudely to me in the house—
one of your brothers or sisters, some brother's
well-dressed wife, or your mother—for your father
always was so kind, as if he were my own—

you'd speak out, persuading them to stop,
using your gentleness, your soothing words.
Now I weep for you and for my wretched self,
so sick at heart, for there's no one else
in spacious Troy who's kind to me and friendly.
They all look at me and shudder with disgust."

Helen spoke in tears. The huge crowd joined in their lament.
Then old Priam addressed his people:

"You Trojans,
you must fetch some wood here to the city.
Don't let your hearts fear any ambush,
some crafty Achaean trick. For Achilles,
when he sent me back from the hollow ships, [780]
gave me his word they would not harm us
until the twelfth day dawns."

Priam finished.
The people hitched up mules and oxen to their wagons
and then gathered before the city with all speed.
For nine days they brought in wood, an immense amount.
When the tenth dawn came, they brought brave Hector out,
then, all in tears, laid his corpse on top the funeral pyre.
They set it alight. When rose-fingered Dawn came up,
they gathered around that pyre of glorious Hector.
Once they'd all assembled there together, [790]
first they doused the pyre with gleaming wine, every part
that fire's strength had touched. His brothers and comrades
collected Hector's ash-white bones, as they mourned him—
heavy tears running down their cheeks—and placed them
in a golden urn, wrapped in soft purple cloth.
They quickly set the urn down in a shallow grave,
covered it with large stones set close together,
then hurried to pile up the mound, posting sentries
on every side, in case well-armed Achaeans
attacked too soon. Once they'd piled up the mound,
they went back in, gathered together for a splendid feast,
all in due order, in Priam's house, king raised by Zeus.
And thus they buried Hector, tamer of horses

GLOSSARY AND INDEX FOR HOMER'S ILIAD

Note that the line references in this index are to the translation by Ian Johnston. If you are looking for the numbers in the Greek text, then check the Johnston translation (above) which provides the lineation for the English and Greek texts.

PRELIMINARY NOTE

Characters in Homer's text are commonly identified either by a single name (e.g., Hector) or by the name of their father (e.g., son of Priam) or by both (e.g., Hector, son of Priam). This index includes the names of the fathers used in this way but does not include line references to the father's name in a patronymic identification of a character, unless the lines include some information about the father. Nor is there any reference given for phrases which provide casual references to people and places but which provide no information about them (e.g. "companion of war god Ares").

Several characters share the same name in the *Iliad*. However, with the exception of the two warriors called Ajax and the occasional ambiguity with the name Argos, such repetition is not particularly important, although it can get confusing for someone following the text closely (e.g., the various rivers, people, and horses called Xanthus). Sometimes a place or person may have two different names (other than the patronym): the only important cases of this duplication are Achaeans/Argives/Danaans, Paris/Alexander, Troy/Ilion, and Xanthus/Scamander.

As in common practice, with many of these names a dieresis indicates the separation of consecutive vowels in the pronunciation. For example Coön is pronounced to rhyme with "go on" not with "soon."

Those names in capital letters in the list below represent the major characters and places in the *Iliad* or minor characters who are mentioned repeatedly. Thus, anyone seeking a shorter index might edit the following list to include only those names.

Finally, the identification of each character limits itself to information in the *Iliad* and does not include material from other stories.

Abantes: people from Euboea (island near Athens), fighting with the Achaeans: in catalogue of ships (2.614).

Abarbarea: a nymph: mother of Aesepus and Pedasus (Trojan warriors); sex with Bucolion (6.25 ff).

Abas: a son of Eurydamas, a Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.170).

Abii: a tribe from the north of Hellas: Zeus looks away from battle to their land (13.8).

Ableros: Trojan warrior: killed by Antilochus (6.36).

Abydos: city near Troy, on the Hellespont: in the Trojan display of forces (2.917); home of Phaenops (17.712).

Acamas (1): son of Antenor, Trojan warrior: in display of Trojan forces (2.905); helps prepare troops for battle (11.62); one of the leaders in the assault on the wall (12.104); kills Promachus, boasts aloud, withdraws (14.553); killed by Meriones (16.400).

Acamas (2): son of Eussorus, leader of the Thracians: in Trojan display of forces (2.925); Ares takes on his form (5.548); killed by Telamonian Ajax (6.109).

Acessamenus: father of Periboea (mother of Asteropaeus, Trojan warrior) (21.170).

Achaea: mainland Greece.

ACHAEANS: collective name for the forces from Hellas under Agamemnon, used interchangeably with the term Argives or Danaans: want Agamemnon to accept the ransom for Chryseis (1.26); purify themselves in the sea, sacrifice to Apollo (1.348); part of Achilles's forces (2.757); abandon Philoctetes on Lemnos (2.795); compared to fire of Typhoeus as they move out in formation (2.858); march out in formation (3.7); keep trying to hit Hector (3.88); Priam mentions their numbers (3.199); pray that the truce will hold (3.333, 355); sense the gods will break the truce (4.98); move to battle in silence (4.494); start to push Trojans back (5.41); stand their ground against the Trojans (5.617); move back under attack by Hector (5.805); silent in face of Hector's challenge (7.106); pray for Ajax's lot to fall out, pray to Zeus (7.211 ff); go out to collect the dead and firewood (7.492); build a wall from the funeral pyre (7.508); eat and drink after collecting corpses, barter for wine (7.543); move out against the Trojans (8.61); pinned down in the ditch (8.247); respond to Zeus' favourable omen (8.294); retreat through their ditch (8.392); in the grip of panic (9.2); hold council meeting at night (10.236); respond to Strife's call (11.12); break through the Trojan ranks (11.97); future fate of their defensive wall (12.3); hemmed in at the ships (12.39); rallied by Poseidon (13.46); adopt close formation to stand against Trojans (13.151); in flight after the breaching of the wall (14.15); Zeus foretells the future of the war (15.74 ff); men sent back to ships, best men stay to fight (15.359); routed by Apollo with the aegis (15.379); forced behind the wall again (15.406); fighting from the decks of their ships (15.457); hold back Trojans from the ships, but driven back by Hector (15.721 ff); strip Sarpedon (16.771); put into panic by Apollo (17.149); defend Patroclus' body with help from Zeus (17.346); defensive formation over Patroclus' body (17.451); encourage each other over Patroclus' body (17.518); Zeus makes them run back (17.723); run back to ships (18.184); finally get Patroclus back (18.287); mourn Patroclus (18.393); move out to attack (19.433); mutilate Hector's body (22.471);

collect wood and build a funeral pyre for Patroclus (23.133 ff); douse Patroclus' funeral fire, build a mound (23.300); call a halt to the fight between Ajax and Diomedes (23.1012).

Achelous (1): the name of a river in northern Greece: mentioned by Achilles (21.233).

Achelous (2): river in Asia Minor: in region where Nioble still broods (24.764).

ACHILLES: hero of the *Iliad*, leader of the Myrmidons (part of Achaean army), son of Peleus and Thetis: summons an assembly, speaks to Achaeans (1.58 ff); offers to protect Calchas (1.89); quarrel with Agamemnon (1.130 ff); Agamemnon proposes him as possible leader of expedition to take back Chryseis (1.159); first threatens to return home (1.185); debates whether he should kill Agamemnon, advised by Athena not to (1.205 ff); concedes Briseis but threatens Agamemnon if he tries taking anything else (1.324); orders Patroclus to hand over Briseis (1.372); prays to his mother for help, she responds (1.388 ff); tells Thetis of his anger and desire for revenge (1.404 ff); tells story of Thetis' saving Zeus from other gods (1.439); sits isolated from the rest (1.543); hates Thersites (2.254); insulted by Thersites (2.283); handsomest of the Achaeans (2.748); in catalogue of ships (2.758); story of capture of Briseis (2.761); finest of Achaeans, excellence of his horses (2.845); story of his slaughter of Andromache's family (6.505); position of his ship (8.261); Nestor proposes Agamemnon make him an offer (9.127); visited by Achaean delegation seeking to persuade him to return (9.228); his lyre seized from Eëtion's city (9.228); entertains Achaean delegation, listens to the offer (9.240 ff); rejects Agamemnon's offer, listing his accomplishments, says he's going home (9.383 ff); recounts his fate (9.516); special relationship to Phoenix (9.551 ff); says he'll think about re-entering war when Trojans burn the ships (9.821); sleeps with Diomede (9.840); captured Isus and Antiphus (11.114); notices Nestor leaving the battle, sends Patroclus to find out what's happening (11.673); criticized by Nestor (11.740); in Peleus' house when Menoetius gives Patroclus instructions (11.888); Peleus gave him instructions (11.903); Idomeneus describes his speed (13.394); Zeus foretells his future (15.76); asks Patroclus why he's crying, gives him permission to re-enter the battle, with instructions (16.5 ff); sees burning ships, sends Patroclus to battle, helps organize the soldiers (16.154); his spear (16.171); organization of his forces (16.201); addresses the Myrmidons (16.235); his special cup, prays to Zeus (16.264 ff); helmet dirtied (16.921); Hector puts on his armour (17.251); ignorant of Patroclus' death (17.504); his horses lament Patroclus (17.531); Zeus refuses to let Hector have his horses (17.555); worried about Patroclus, hears the news from Antilochus, reaction (18.2 ff); talks to Thetis, regrets his life, accepts his fate, resolves to return to battle (18.94 ff); urged into action by Iris, complains about lack of armour (18.205); given aegis and power by Athena, shows himself at the ditch, cries out, confuses Trojans (18.253); mourns Patroclus, promises revenge (18.394); receives divine armour from Thetis (19.4 ff); calls assembly, renounces his anger with Agamemnon (19.49 ff); wants to resume war immediately, refuses to eat (19.182 ff); receives gifts from Agamemnon, Briseis returned (19.300 ff); lament over Patroclus (19.382 ff); given strength by Athena, puts on the divine armour (19.430 ff); gets in his chariot, talks with his horses (19.477); back in battle (20.51); eager to kill Hector (20.88); story of an early encounter with Aeneas (20.105); attacked by Aeneas, reminds

him of previous encounter, Aeneas is saved by Poseidon who puts mist in Achilles' eyes (20.190 ff); his eyesight restored, rallies Achaeans (20.405 ff); attacks Trojans, kills Iphition, Demoleon, Hipodamas, Polydorus (20.457); fights with Hector, who is saved by Apollo (20.505 ff); kills Dryops, Demuchus, Laogonus, Dardanus, Tros, Mulius, Echeclus, Deucalion, Rhigmus, Areithous (20.546 ff); image of him in his chariot (20.591 ff); splits Trojans into two groups, kills Trojans in the river Xanthus, captures twelve young Trojans to sacrifice (21.3 ff); meets Lycaon, refuses to spare him, previous encounter with Lycaon, kills Lycaon (21.39 ff); challenges, fights, and kills Asteropaeus (21.177 ff); boasts of his lineage (21.220 ff); attacks Paeonian charioteers, kills Thersilochus, Mydon, Astypylus, Mnesus, Thrasius, Aenius, Ophelestes (21.244); attacked by the river Scamander, almost drowns, tries to run, appeals to Zeus (21.284 ff); fights Agenor, deceived by Apollo (21.710 ff); Apollo reveals the deception, upbraids Apollo (22.18); his appearance as he moves against Troy (22.33); chases Hector around Troy (22.174 ff); refuses Hector's negotiations, fights and kills him (22.324); strips Hector's armour, tells soldiers to sing a victory song, dishonours Hector's corpse by dragging it behind his chariot (22.474 ff); laments over Patroclus (23.4); dishonours Hector's body (23.28); goes to Agamemnon, refuses to eat or wash (23.40); visited by ghost of Patroclus (23.75); organizes the pyre for Patroclus, cuts hair, prays to river Spercheus, slaughters animals and captured Trojans on the pyre (23.153 ff); prays to the winds to help burn Patroclus' pyre (23.231); goes to sleep, but woken by Agamemnon (23.276); tells Achaeans to separate the bones from the pyre, gives instructions for his own tomb (23.282); organizes the funeral games, first the chariot race (23.309); explains the chariot course, sets an umpire (23.438); prevents fight between Lesser Ajax and Idomeneus (23.600); proposes special prize for Eumelus, challenged by Antilochus, agrees on a different prize (23.651); gives special prize to Nestor (23.756); sets up prizes for boxing (23.807); sets out prizes for wrestling match (23.865); sets out prizes for the footrace (23.912); gives Antilochus an additional prize (23.978); sets out prizes for the hand to hand fighting (23.983); sets out prizes for throwing irofn (23.1016); sets out prizes for archery contest (23.1046); sets out prize for spear throwing, award it to Agamemnon without a contest (23.1087); continues to mourn Patroclus and dishonour Hector's body (24.3 ff); urged by Thetis to accept a ransom for Hector's body, agrees (24.155 ff); description of his hut's defences (24.554); meets Priam in his hut, weeps for their losses (24.587 ff); orders women to wash Hector's body (24.720); shares a meal with Priam (24.771 ff); agrees to give Priam time to bury Hector properly (24.825); sleeps with Briseis beside him (24.833).

Acrisius: father of Danaë (a woman loved by Zeus).

Actaia: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.50).

Actor (1): son of Azeus, father of Astyoche: mentioned (2.589).

Actor (2): alleged father of Cteatus and Eurytus, grandfather of Amphimachus: father of two men who beat Nestor in the chariot race (23.789).

Actor (3): father of Menoetius, grandfather of Patroclus.

Actor (4): father of Echecles.

Adamas: Trojan warrior, son of Asius: moves up with Asius against the wall (12.147); attacks Antilochus (13.669); killed by Meriones (13.678).

Admetus: son of Pheres, father of Eumelus (an Achaean warrior). (2.787); his fine horses (2.839).

Adresteia: town north of Troy: in display of Trojan forces (2.910).

Adrestus (1): king of Sicyon: in catalogue of ships (2.648); father of Aegialeia (5.490); his fine race horse Arion (23.423).

Adrestus (2): Trojan warrior, son of Merops, leader of troops from the Troad: in list of Trojan forces (2.912), killed by Diomedes (11.375).

Adrestus (3): Trojan warrior: captured alive by Menelaus, pleads for ransom, killed by Agamemnon (6.43 ff).

Adrestus (4): Trojan warrior, killed by Patroclus (16.808).

Aeacus: father of Peleus, grandfather of Achilles, son of Zeus: Achilles boasts of him as an ancestor (21.226).

Aegae: in Achaea, location of Poseidon's underwater palace (13.24).

Aegeus: father of Theseus, mentioned by Nestor (1.294).

Aegialeia: daughter of Adrestus, wife of Diomedes: (5.490).

Aegialus: town in Paphlagonia: in display of Trojan forces (2.937).

Aegilips: region of Ithaca: in catalogue of ships (2.709).

Aegina: island off the Argolid: in the catalogue of ships (2.639).

Aegium: town ruled by Agamemnon: in the catalogue of ships (2.650).

AENEAS: major Trojan warrior, leader of Dardanians, son of Anchises and Aphrodite: in Trojan display of forces (2.900); summons Pandarus to shoot Diomedes (5.190); proposes that he and Pandarus challenge Diomedes (5.255); makes a stand over Pandarus' body, fights Diomedes, hiht by a rock, rescued by Aphrodite (5.353 ff); restored to full strength

by Apollo, Leto, and Artemis (5.528); returns to battle (5.607); kills Crethon, Orsilochus (5.640); withdraws when faced by Menelaus and Antilochus (5.669); preparing troops for battle (11.60); one of the leaders in the assault on the wall (12.102); resentment of Priam (13.550); approached by Deïphobus to fight Idomeneus, goes to fight Idomeneus (13.554 ff); calls out for assistance (13.589); battles over body of Alcathous (13.602 ff); throws spear at Idomeneus, misses (13.604); kills Aphareus (13.647); helps defend wounded Hector (14.497); kills Medon and Iasus (15.392); fights Meriones, taunts him (16.707); Apollo rouses him to fight, he rallies the troops, kills Leocritus (17.412 ff); goes after the horses of Achilles with Hector (17.599 ff); withdraws (17.654); pursues Achaeans taking away Patroclus (17.914); urged by Apollo in the form of Lycaon to fight Achilles (20.92); earlier encounter with Achilles (20.105); moves against Achilles (20.135); attacks Achilles, tells his ancestry, fights, is rescued by Poseidon (20.190 ff); told by Poseidon not to fight Achilles (20.394).

Aenius: Trojan warrior from Paeonia: killed by Achilles (21.250).

Aenus: town in Thrace.

Aeolus: father of Sisyphus.

Aepea: city ruled by Agamemnon: offered to Achilles (9.186).

Aepytus: man whose tomb is an important site in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.682).

Aesepus (1): river flowing near Troy from Mt. Ida to the sea: (2.908); stirred up by Apollo and Poseidon to destroy the wall (12.22).

Aesepus (2): son of Bucolion and Abarbarea: killed by Euryalus (6.30).

Aesyetes: father of Alcathous: his tomb as lookout (2.870); father of Alcathous (Trojan warrior) (13.515).

Aesymnus: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.343).

Aethe: a mare owned by Agamemnon: one of Menelaus' horses in the chariot race (23.354); strength in the race (23.640).

Aethrae: daughter of Pittheus, a servant attending on Helen: goes with her to the walls of Troy (3.158).

Aetolians: those living in Aetolia, an area of north-central Greece, part of the Achaean forces: in catalogue of ships (2.714); their old fight with the Curetes over Calydon (9.662 ff).

Agacles: father of Epeigeus (Achaean warrior).

Agamede: daughter of Augeias, wife of Mulius: knowledge of medicine (11.848).

AGAMEMNON: king of Mycenae, son of Atreus, leader of Achaean forces, brother of Menelaus, commonly called "wide ruling," "mighty": dishonours Apollo's priest (1.12 ff); responds in anger to Calchas (1.109 ff); quarrel with Achilles (1.141 ff); proposes expedition to return Chryseis (1.154); acknowledges justness of Nestor's advice (1.316); organizes expedition to return Chryseis (1.344); visited by evil Dream sent by Zeus (2.17 ff); responds to Dream by getting dressed, organizing a council meeting (2.48 ff); reports dream to council, proposes a false order to return home (2.65); history of his royal staff (2.117 ff); speaks to troops, proposing a return home (2.128); insulted by Thersites (2.256); praises Nestor's advice, admits his error with Achilles (2.438); sacrifices an ox to Zeus (2.476); prays for success (2.484); orders a general parade of all the troops (2.515); Zeus makes him stand out in the army (2.555); in catalogue of ships (2.651); provides ships for Arcadians (2.688); calms Achaean troops (3.90); sends heralds for sacrificial animals (3.132); Priam and Helen discuss him (3.181 ff); prepares a sacrifice and makes a prayer for both armies (3.298 ff); proclaims Menelaus' victory over Paris, demands payment (3.512); reacts to Menelaus' wound from Pandarus (4.173 ff); orders Talthybius to fetch Machaon to heal Menelaus (4.225); rallies troops as Trojans advance (4.261 ff); talks to Idomeneus (4.300); sees Ajaxes and Nestor getting ready for battle, praises them (4.322 ff); meets Menestheus and Odysseus, upbraids Odysseus (4.383 ff); upbraids Diomedes and Sthenelus (4.429); kills Odius (5.42); rallies his troops, kills Deicoon (5.623); kills Elatos (6.38); tells Menelaus to show no mercy, kills Adrestus (6.61); repeated attempts to scale the walls (6.531); quiets down the troops (7.65); persuades Menelaus not to fight Hector (7.123); volunteers to fight Hector (7.196); sacrifices to Zeus, holds a feast to honour Ajax (7.367); tells Idaios that Achaeans reject Paris' offer to return all property (7.475); receives wine from Euneus (7.548); afraid of omens from Zeus (8.88); Hera gives him plan to rally the troops, he does so, praying to Zeus (8.252 ff); returns quickly to battle (8.307); praises Teucer (8.326); fearful in the night, summons counselors, proposes going home (9.9); makes an offer to win Achilles back (9.136 ff); greets embassy returning from Achilles (9.847); has trouble sleeping, goes to find Nestor (10.3 ff); meets Menelaus, instructs him what to do (10.38); visits Nestor (10.88); tells Diomedes to pick a companion for merit not rank (10.276); description of his armour (11.16 ff); kills Bienor, Oileus, Isus, Antiphus, Hippolochus, Peisander (11.99 ff); pursues Trojans almost to city (11.173 ff); kills Iphidamas and Coön (11.252 ff); is wounded and withdraws from battle (11.289 ff); walking with the wounded leaders, talks to Nestor, proposes organizing ships for a retreat (14.32 ff); arranges his troops (14.447); goes to assembly called by Achilles, is reconciled with him, blames Ate (19.62 ff); gives gifts to Achilles, returns Briseis, prays to Zeus (19.300 ff); stays with Achilles to mourn over Patroclus (19.378); sends out men to gather wood for Patroclus' pyre (23.133); dismisses the troops from the pyre, stays to mourn (23.194); wakes Achilles (23.279); receives prize for spear throwing from Achilles without a contest (23.1093).

Agapenor: son of Ancaeus, leader of Arcadian troops (part of Achaean forces): in catalogue of ships (2.686).

Agasthenes: son of Augeas, father of Polyxenus (a leader of Epeians).

Agastrophus: son of Paeon, Trojan warrior: wounded and killed by Diomedes (11.384).

Agathon: son of Priam: cursed by Priam (24.310).

Agave: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.51).

Agelaus (1): son of Phradmon, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (8.301).

Agelaus (2): Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.343).

Agenor: son of Antenor, father of Echeclus, Trojan warrior: kills Elephenor (4.542); helps prepare troops for battle (11.61); one of the leaders in the attack on the wall (12.96); Aeneas calls him for assistance (13.591); helps wounded Helenus (13.711); helps defend wounded Hector (14.497); kills Clonius (15.401); incited by Apollo to fight Achilles, debates his options, fights Achilles, rescued by Apollo (21.658).

Aglaea: mother of Nireus, son of her and Charopus (2.746).

Agrius: son of Portheus (14.141).

Aidoneus: god, king of the dead (also called Hades): frightened by the earthquakes (20.72).

Aigaion: monster with a hundred hands (also called Briareos): summoned by Thetis to save Zeus (1.446).

Aipy: town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.669).

Aisyme: town in Thrace: home of Kastianeira (8.356).

Aithices: inhabitants of a region of Thessaly: centaurs beaten there (2.817).

Aithos: one of Hector's horses (8.213).

AJAX (1): son of Telamon, leader of forces from Salamis, greatest Achaean warrior after Achilles, known as the Great Ajax or the Greater Ajax:: Agamemnon threatens to take his prize (1.151); Agamemnon proposes him as possible leader of expedition to take back Chryseis (1.158); summoned to sacrifice by Agamemnon (2.479); in catalogue of ships (2.634); pre-eminence among the Achaeans (2.844); discussed by Priam and Helen (3.247);

preparing for battle, praised by Agamemnon (4.323); kills Simoeisius (4.549); rouses the Danaans (5.614); kills Amphion, driven away from the body (5.717); kills Acamas (6.6); repeated attempts to scale the walls (6.531); volunteers to fight Hector (7.198); his lot selected to fight Hector, he gets ready and fights (7.216 ff); description of his shield (7.259); agrees to end duel with Hector, gives Hector a belt (7.331 ff); honoured at Agamemnon's feast (7.374); afraid of omens from Zeus (8.88); position of his ship (8.260); returns quickly to battle (8.308); protects Teucer in battle (8.313); protects wounded Teucer (8.386); proposed as delegate to visit Achilles (9.207); visits Achilles with the Achaean delegation (9.222 ff); speech in the embassy to Achilles (9.786); volunteers for spy mission (10.270); goes to help wounded Odysseus (11.534); kills Doryclus, Pandocus, Lysander, Pyrasus, Pylantes (11.552); Zeus makes him afraid, he withdraws slowly (11.615); rallies Achaeans by the wall (12.283); asked to help Menestheus, moves to do so (12.385); kills Epicles (12.416); moves to attack Sarpedon (12.441 ff); encouraged by Poseidon as Calchas, given power (13.49); responds to Poseidon's visit (13.87); pushes Hector back (13.233 ff); carries back body of Imbrius (13.242); Idomeneus reports his strength as a fighter (13.388); fights alongside Oïlean Ajax (13.837); challenges Hector (13.956); hit by spear from Hector, not hurt, hits Hector with a rock (14.470 ff); kills Archelochus, boasts aloud (14.537); kills Hyrtius (14.596); collects the best men to fight Hector (15.359); Hector attacks him at the ships (15.486); kills Caletor (15.490); reacts to death of Lycophron (15.510); tells Teucer to get a spear (15.553); rallies the Achaeans (15.589); stirs up Achaeans (15.657); fights with a pike on the ships' decks (15.782 ff); forced back by spears, rallies Achaeans, wounds twelve men (15.840 ff); losing ground, getting tired fighting at the ships (16.127); spear cut by Hector, backs off (16.140); tries to kill Hector (16.417); stirred up by Patroclus (16.646); Menelaus urges him to fight over Patroclus (17.146 ff); moves up to protect Patroclus' body (17.164 ff); kills Trojans over Patroclus body, tells Menelaus to call for help (17.304 ff); rallies troops fighting over Patroclus, kills Hippothous (17.362 ff); kills Phorcys (17.399); organizes troops for defence of Patroclus (17.454); Automedon shouts to him for help (17.626); forces Hector to withdraw (17.651); prays to Zeus to help Achaeans (17.764 ff); recovers Patroclus' body with Menelaus and Meriones and Oïlean Ajax (17.872 ff); beats Hector off Patroclus' body (18.194); enters the wrestling match with Odysseus (23.875); enters contest in hand to hand fighting, fights Diomedes (23.999); enters iron-throwing contest (23.1031).

AJAX (2): son of Oïleus, leader of Locrian troops, the "swift" or "lesser" Ajax: summoned to sacrifice by Agamemnon (2.479); in the catalogue of ships (2.602); preparing for battle, praised by Agamemnon (4.323); rouses the Danaans (5.614); repeated attempts to scale the walls (6.531); volunteers to fight Hector (7.198); afraid of omens from Zeus (8.88); returns quickly to battle (8.308); rallies Achaeans by the wall (12.283); asked to help Menestheus (12.385); encouraged by Poseidon in the form of Calchas, gives him power (13.49); recognizes Poseidon as a god (13.74); carries back body of Imbrius (13.242); cuts off Imbrius' head (13.247); fights beside Telamonian Ajax (13.836); first into battle after Hector withdraws, wounds Satnius (14.516); does the most killing because of his speed (14.607); kills Cleobulus (16.386); stirred up by Patroclus (16.646); runs to help Telamonian Ajax and Menelaus (17.332); Automedon shouts to him for help (17.626);

forces Hector to withdraw (17.651); helps recover Patroclus' body (17.872 ff); beats Hector off Patroclus' body (18.194); mocks Idomeneus during chariot race (23.577); enters the footrace, tripped by Athena, loses to Odysseus (23.929 ff); complains about Athena's helping Odysseus (23.961).

Alalcomenae: epithet associated with Athena (4.9).

Alastor (1): one of the Achaean warrior leaders serving under Nestor: receives his orders (4.346); helps wounded Teucer (8.388); helps take Hypsenor from the battle (13.509).

Alastor (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (5.784).

Alastor (3): father of Tros (a Trojan warrior).

Alcandrus: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (5.785).

Alcathous: son of Aesyetes and Hippodamia, Trojan warrior: one of the leaders of the assault on the wall (12.97); killed by Idomeneus (13.514).

Alcestis: daughter of Pelias, mother of Eumelus. (2.787).

Alcimedon: son of Laerces, Achaean warrior, leader of one contingent of Myrmidons (16.233); joins Automedon in Achilles' chariot (17.579 ff); gets instructions from Automedon (17.617).

Alcimus: Achaean warrior, attendant on Achilles (perhaps the same as Alcimedon): helps prepare Achilles' chariot (19.472); helps unload the ransom for Hector (24.712).

Alcmaon: son of Thestor, Achaean warrior: killed by Sarpedon (12.434).

Alcmene: a woman loved by Zeus, mother of Hercules (14.384); birth of Hercules (19.121).

Alcyone: what her parents called Cleopatra (9.707).

Alectryon: father of Leitus (Achaean warrior).

Alegenor: father of Promachus (Trojan warrior).

Alesium: a town of the Epeians (in northern Peloponnese): in catalogue of ships (2.694); Alesium Hill: place with Pylians turned back from chasing Epeians (11.869).

Alexander: another name for Paris.

Aloëus: father of Otus and Ephialtes.

Alope: town in Pelasgian Argos: in catalogue of ships (2.755).

Alos: town in Pelasgian Argos: in catalogue of ships (2.754).

Alpheius: river in the Peloponnese: father of Orsilochus: near Thryoessa (11.811); site of battle between Epeians and Pylians (11.831); father of Orsilochus (5.644).

Altes: father of Laothoe, grandfather of Lycaon, ruler of the Leleges: gave rich dowry with Laothoe (22.65).

Althaea: mother of Meleager (9.697); begs the gods to kill her son (9.713).

Alybe: town of the Halizoni: where men mine silver (2.939).

Amarynces: father of Diores (a leader of Epeians); Nestor's achievements at his funeral games (23.777).

Amatheia: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.57).

Amazons: female warriors: in Phrygia (3.206); massacred by Bellerophon (6.239).

Amisodarus: father of Atymnius and Maris: reared the Chimera (16.384).

Amopaon: son of Polyaimon, Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.323)

Amphiclus: Trojan warrior: killed by Meges (16.368).

Amphidamas (1): man from Cythera: receives cap from Autocylus, gives it to Molus (10.317).

Amphidamas (2): father of man killed by Patroclus long ago (23.105).

Amphigenea: town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.670).

Amphimachus (1): leader of Epeians, part of the Achaean contingent, son of Cteatus: in catalogue of ships (2.697); killed by Hector (13.227).

Amphimachus (2): son of Nomion, leader of the Carians (Trojan allies): in the Trojan display of forces: (2.954).

Amphinome: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.53).

Amphion: leader of Epeians (Achaean warrior): (13.826).

Amphius (1): son of Selagus, Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (5.717).

Amphius (2): Trojan warrior, son of Merops, leader of troops from the Troad: in list of Trojan forces (2.912); killed by Diomedes (11.375).

Amphithoe: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.51).

Amphitryon: mortal father of Hercules.

Amphoterus: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.484).

Amydon: town of the Paeonians (in north-eastern Greece): in Trojan display of forces (2.930); (16.341).

Amyclae: town of Lacedaemon, ruled by Menelaus: in the catalogue of ships (2.660).

Amyntor: son of Ormenus, father of Phoenix (Achaean warrior): Autolycos stole his cap (10.315).

Ancaeus (1): father of Agapenor, an Achaean leader.

Ancaeus (2): an opponent defeated in wrestling by Nestor (23.783).

Anchialus: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (5.713).

Anchises (1): father of Aeneas (a Trojan warrior): had sex with Aphrodite (2.901); gets his mares pregnant from horses of Tros (5.318); conceives Aeneas with Aphrodite (5.370); his family tree (20.286).

Anchises (2): father of Echepolus (Achaean warrior).

Andraemon: father of Thoas (leader of Aetolians): home in Pleuron (13.263).

ANDROMACHE: wife of Hector, daughter of Eëtion: not at home when Hector visits (6.454); meets Hector by the Scaean Gate (6.480); tells the story of the slaughter of her family by Achilles (6.504); returns home (6.604); feeding Hector's horses (8.216); learns news of Hector's death (22.546 ff); predicts her son's fate (22.602); goes to meet Priam returning with Hector, laments over Hector (24.875).

Anemorea: town in Phocis (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.596).

Antea: wife of Proetus: hostility to Bellerophon (6.199)

ANTENOR: senior Trojan councilor, father of Archilochus, Acamas, Helicaon, Iphidamas, Laodocus, Pedaios, Polybus, Agenor, Laodamas, Demoleon, and Coön: at the Scaean Gates with Priam, comments on Helen (3.159); story of his welcoming Odysseus,

description of Menelaus' and Odysseus' speaking (3.222); goes with Priam to the armies (3.293); returns with Priam (3.350); advises Trojans to give back Helen (7.404).

Anthedon: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.584).

Antheia: city ruled by Agamemnon: offered to Achilles (9.185).

Anthemion: father of Simoeisius (Trojan warrior).

ANTILOCHUS: son of Nestor: kills Echepolus (4.529); moves up to help Menelaus (5.661); kills Mydon (5.680); kills Ableros (6.36); encouraged by Poseidon in the form of Calchas (13.106); kills Asius' charioteer (13.482 ff); stands over Hypsenor's body (13.505); kills Thoön (13.652); protected by Poseidon (13.662); strips armour from Phalces and Mermerus (14.600); Menelaus urges him to jump out in battle, kills Melanippus (15.665); withdraws when Hector appears (15.684); kills Atymnius (16.372); position in the battle (17.477); told by Menelaus to inform Achilles of Patroclus' death, sets off (17.830); comes to Achilles, tells him of Patroclus' death, worried about suicide (18.2 ff); helps fetch gifts for Achilles (19.295); enters chariot race, gets advice from Nestor (23.362); in the chariot race, fouls Menelaus (23.486 ff); comes second in chariot race, defends his right to the prize (23.627); challenged by Menelaus for foul, concedes, surrenders prize, gets it back (23.693); enters the footrace, comes in last (23.930); pays tribute to Odysseus, gets additional prize (23.967).

Antimachus: father of Hippolochus and Peisander: advised Trojans to kill Menelaus (11.153).

Antiphates: Trojan warrior: killed by Leonteus (12.198).

Antiphonus: son of Priam: cursed by Priam (24.311).

Antiphus (1): son of Thessalus, grandson of Hercules, leader of men from many Aegean Islands (part of Achaean army): in catalogue of ships (2.751).

Antiphus (2): son of Talaemenes and Gygaea, leader of Meonians (allies of the Trojans): in Trojan display of forces (2.947).

Antiphus (3): son of Priam: kills Leucus (4.567); killed by Agamemnon (11.110).

Antrum: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.770).

Apaesus: town to the north of Troy: in Trojan display of forces (2.910).

Aphareus: son of Caletor, Achaean warrior: leads out sentinels (9.102); Idomeneus calls him for assistance (13.575); killed by Aeneas (13.647).

APHRODITE: divine daughter of Zeus and Hera, goddess of erotic love: mother of Aeneas (2.901); rescues Paris from Menelaus in their duel (3.407); tells Helen to visit Paris, threatens Helen (3.427 ff); rescues Aeneas from Diomedes (5.367); wounded by Diomedes, asks Ares for his horses, leaves the battle (5.390 ff); complains to her mother, who heals her wound (5.442); Hera summons her, asks her for a love charm, she agrees (14.224 ff); Zeus tells Hera to summon him (15.66); leaves Olympus to help the Trojans (20.49); leads wounded Ares from the battle, attacked by Athena, collapses (21.500 ff); protects Hector's corpse (23.223).

Apisaon (1): son of Phausius, Trojan warrior: killed by Eurypylus (11.651).

Apisaon (2); son of Hippasus, Trojan warrior: killed by Lycomedes (17.444).

APOLLO: divine son of Zeus and Leto, supports Trojans in the war: sends plague to Achaean army (1.10); hears Chryses, comes to kill Achaeans (1.147); Achaeans sacrifice to him (1.350); hears prayer of Chryses (1.512); enjoys the hymns to him (1.530); sends favorable winds (1.534); plays music for the gods (1.678); bred Admetus' horses (2.842); taught Pandarus archery (2.909); rallies the Trojans (4.586); catches Aeneas when Aphrodite drops him (5.406); warns Diomedes not to attack him (5.521); restores Aeneas' power (5.528); makes a copy of Aeneas (5.533); calls on Ares to check Diomedes (5.538); instructs Ares to save the Trojans (5.601); sends Aeneas back to the fighting (5.604); meets Athena, agrees to postpone battle for the day (7.22 ff); observes troops perched in a tree with Athena (7.67); restores Hector (7.319); built wall around Troy for Laomedon (7.528); wealth of his shrine in Pytho (9.510); took away Marpissa (9.710); wakes Hippocoon to alert him to the slaughter of Thracians (10.617); gave Hector a helmet (11.401); destroys Achaean wall in future (12.18 ff); told by Hera to go to Zeus (15.173); Zeus instructs him to restore wounded Hector (15.266); goes to Hector, restores his strength (15.285); leads the Trojans, holding the aegis (15.365); knocks down the wall, builds causeway over the ditch (15.420); saves Polydamas (15.614); answers Glaucus' prayer for restored strength (16.614); Zeus tells him to take Sarpedon's body, he does so (16.775 ff); drives Patroclus from the walls of Troy (16.815 ff); tells Hector to return to battle (in the form of Asius) (16.834); attacks Patroclus (16.914 ff); urges Hector against Menelaus in the form of Mentes (17.89); rouses Aeneas to fight in the shape of Periphas (17.411 ff); encourages Hector in the form of Phaenops (17.708); leaves Olympus to help the Trojans (20.48); balances Poseidon in battle (20.79); urges Aeneas to fight Achilles (in the form of Lycaon), gives him strength (20.92 ff); sits with other gods on Callicolone (20.184); tells Hector not to fight Achilles directly (20.449); saves Hector from Achilles (20.530); river Scamander calls out to him to stop Achilles (21.275); declines Poseidon's invitation to fight (21.556); returns to Troy (21.622); goes out to meet Achilles, incites Agenor to fight Achilles (21.649); rescues Agenor from Achilles by deceiving Achilles as Agenor (21.717); reveals his deception to Achilles (22.8); puts power into Hector's running (22.253); abandons Hector (22.265); protects Hector's corpse (23.227); hinders Diomedes in the chariot race (23.464); protects Hector's body from lacerations (24.18); appeals to gods to do something for Hector's body, criticizes Achilles' behaviour (24.35); his slaughter of Niobe's sons (24.749).

Apseudes: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.54).

Araethyrea: town ruled by Agamemnon: in catalogue of ships (2.647).

Arcadia: region in central Peloponnese: in catalogue of ships (2.681).

Arcadians: inhabitants of Arcadia: their battle with Pylians (7.157).

Archelochus: son of Antenor, Trojan warrior: in the display of forces (2.904); one of the leaders for assault on the wall (12.103); killed by Telamonian Ajax (14.540).

Arcesilaus: one of the Boeotian leaders: in the Achaean force (2.570); killed by Hector (15.389).

Archeptolemos: son of Iphitus, Trojan warrior: Hector makes him his charioteer (8.147); killed by Teucer (8.363).

Areilycus (1): father of Prothoënor (Achaean warrior).

Areilycus (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.362).

Areithous (1): father of Menesthius (Achaean warrior): called the Mace-man, killed by Lycurgus (7.163).

Areithous (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.585).

Arene: town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.668); site of battle with Epeians (11.827).

ARES: son of Zeus, Olympian god of war (especially the destructive aspects): urges Trojans onto battle (4.511); led from battle by Athena (5.33); giives his horses to Aphrodite (5.429); his suffering at the hands of Otus and Ephialtes (5.454); challenged by Apollo to check Diomedes, goes into battle, rallies the Trojans in form of Acamas (5.538 ff); helps Trojans by concealing them in darkness (5.599); stirs war spirit in Menelaus (planning his death) (5.660); leads the Trojans, helps Hector (5.696); Hera seeks permission from Zeus to chase Ares from battle (5.864); attacked by Diomedes and Athena, wounded, and retires from battle (5.963 ff); appeals to Zeus (5.994 ff); killed Isander (6.260); on Olympus, unaware that son has been killed (13.626); Hera tells him his son's been killed, angry, restrained by Athena (15.134 ff); on Achilles' shield (18.640); leaves Olympus to help the Trojans (20.47); encourages Trojans in battle (20.61); sits with other gods on Callicolone (20.184); attacks Athena, is wounded by her (21.471).

Aretaon: Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (6.36).

Aretus: Trojan warrior: goes with Aeneas and Hector to fight Automedon (17.611); killed by Automedon (17.637).

Argeas: father of Polymelus (Trojan warrior).

Argissa: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.810).

ARGIVES: see Achaeans.

Argolid: area in the north-west Peloponnese.

Argos (1): town in northern Peloponnese ruled by Diomedes: Hera's special love for Argos (4.63).

Argos (2): a large area ruled by Agamemnon.

Argos (3): a general term for the homeland of Achaeans generally (i.e., mainland Greece and Peloponnese): Zeus takes Hercules back there (15.35).

Argos (4): region in north-east Greece, part of the kingdom of Peleus (sometimes called Pelasgian Argos): in catalogue of ships (2.754).

Argus: monster killed by Hermes (who is commonly called "the killer of Argus").

Ariadne: daughter of Minos: a dancing floor constructed for her (18.724).

Arimi: people living in the region where the monster Typhoeus lies underground (2.861).

Arion: a horse belonging to Adrestus (23.423).

Arisbas: father of Leocritus (Achaean warrior).

Arisbe: town on the Hellespont, north of Troy: in the Trojan display of forces (2.918); home of Axylus (6.15); home of Asius (12.101); Lycaon sent there by Eëtion (21.50).

Arne: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.582); home of Menesthius (7.9).

Arsinous: father of Hecamede.

ARTEMIS: goddess, daughter of Zeus and Hera, sister of Apollo: taught Scamandrius to shoot (5.56); helps to restore Aeneas (5.530); killed Laodamia (6.262); killed Andromache's mother (6.522); incites Aetolians and Curetes to fight (9.667); invoked by Achilles (19.71); leaves Olympus to help the Trojans (20.48); opposed by Hera in battle

(20.81); angry with Apollo for not fighting Poseidon, beaten by Hera (21.566); seeks consolation from Zeus (21.609); her slaughter of Niobe's daughters (24.750).

Asaeus: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.341).

Ascalaphus: human son of Ares, Achaean warrior, leader of Minyans: in catalogue of ships (2.587); leads out the sentinels (9.101); Idomeneus calls him for assistance (13.575); killed by Deïphobus (13.623).

Ascania: region in Phrygia: in Trojan display of forces (2.946); reinforcements from there (13.939).

Ascanius: Trojan warrior: goes with Hector and others to centre of the battle (13.938).

Asclepius: father of Podaleirus and Machaon.

Asine: town in the Argolid: in the catalogue of ships (2.638).

Asius (1): son of Hyrtacus, leader of troops from Troad (part of Trojan forces): in Trojan display troops (2.918); one of the leaders in the assault on the wall (12.99); refuses to follow tactics of Polydamas (12.115); killed by Idomeneus (12.122 ff); vexation with Zeus (12.170).

Asius (2): Trojan warrior: challenges Idomeneus, is killed (13.467).

Asius (3): Trojan warrior, brother of Hecuba, Hector's uncle: Apollo takes on his form (16.835).

Asopus: river in Boeotia: (4.448).

Aspledon: city of the Minyans: in catalogue of ships (2.586).

Assaracus: son of Tros, father of Capys (father of Anchises): his family line (20.277).

Asterius: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.807).

Asteropaeus: alleged son of Pelagon, son of the river Axius and Periboea, Trojan warrior: one of the leaders of the assault on the wall (12.107); encouraged by Hector (17.280); best of the Paeonians (17.448); tries to assault the Achaeans (17.449); his family line, fights Achilles and is killed (21.168 ff); his breastplate given as consolation prize in the chariot race (23.686); his sword offered as a prize in the hand to hand combat (23.991).

Astyalus: Trojan warrior: killed by Polypoetes (6.34).

Astyanax: son of Hector and Andromache, an infant, also called Scamandrius: Hector meets him and Andromache at the Scaean Gate: (6.487); afraid of his father in armour (6.572); Andromache predicts his fate (22.602).

Astynous (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.164).

Astynous (2): son of Protiaon, Trojan warrior: takes horses for Polydamas (15.534).

Astyoche: mother of Ialmenus and Ascalaphus (Achaean warriors), sons of Ares: her seduction mentioned (2.589).

Astyocheia: mother of Tlepolemus (with Hercules): (2.732).

Astypylus: Trojan warrior from Paeonia: killed by Achilles (21.250).

Ate: divine daughter of Zeus, responsible for human and divine folly: Agamemnon blames her, tells how she deceived Zeus (19.113 ff); thrown out of Olympus (19.156).

ATHENA: goddess daughter of Zeus, strong supporter of the Achaeans, commonly called "glittery eyed": intervenes to stop Achilles killing Agamemnon (1.212); story of her attempt to tie up Zeus (1.443); sent by Hera to restore order to Argives, does so through Odysseus (2.181 ff); moves with aegis through the Achaean forces (2.520); angry with Zeus (4.25); instructed to break truce, goes to persuade Pandarus to kill Menelaus, in the shape of Laodocus (4.88 ff); saves Menelaus from Pandarus' arrow (4.152); helps Tydeus win against the Cadmeans (4.457); urges Achaeans on to battle (4.511); rallies the Achaeans (4.595); gives special fighting power to Diomedes (5.1 ff); persuades Ares to leave the war (5.32); special love for Phereclus (5.68); hears Diomedes' prayer for strength, instructs him not to fight with gods except Aphrodite (5.139); teases Aphrodite in front of Zeus (5.499); agrees to go with Hera to see Zeus in Hera's chariot, puts on robe of Zeus (5.826); Zeus tells her to chase Ares from the battle (5.874); rouses Diomedes to fight Ares (5.907); serves as Diomedes' charioteer, helps him fight Ares (5.957); puts on Hades' helmet to make herself invisible (5.967); returns to Olympus (5.1038); Hector tells his mother to sacrifice to her (6.338); women of Troy pray to her, refuses their prayer (6.377); moves down to help the Achaeans, meets Apollo, agrees to postpone battle for the day (7.19 ff); observes the combat perched in a tree with Apollo (7.67); responds to Zeus' threats to punish gods who intervene in the war (7.35); talks to Hera, suggests they visit the battle (8.415); puts on the robe of Zeus, goes with Hera to visit battlefield (8.447); turned back by Iris (8.479 ff); sends omen to Odysseus and Diomedes (10.325); gives Diomedes strength to catch Dolon (10.436); tells Diomedes to return (10.608); acknowledges Agamemnon with peal of thunder (11.45); saves Odysseus from a spear throw (11.495); brings message to the Pylians (11.816); turned Pylians back (11.870); stops Ares from going to battle (15.148 ff); planning Hector's death (15.715); removes mist for Achaean troops (15.776); stirs Achaeans to fight over Patroclus, encourages Menelaus in the form of Phoenix (17.666 ff); gives Achilles the aegis, joins his shout (18.254 ff); robs Trojans of

their wits (18.389); on shield of Achilles (18.639); told by Zeus to give strength to Achilles, does so (19.415 ff); leaves Olympus to help Achaeans (20.42); encourages Achaeans in battle (20.58); opposed by Enyalius (20.80); helped Achilles against Aeneas, told him to kill the Leleges (20.112); told by Hera to help Achaean, goes with her and Poseidon to sit on the wall (20.139 ff); blows Hector's spear away from Achilles (20.535); stands by Achilles in the river (21.344); attacked by Ares, wounds him with a rock, Aphrodite leads him away (21.471 ff); urged by Hera to attack Aphrodite, does so (21.503); objects to Zeus' suggestion that Hector might be spared, goes to intervene (22.218); tells Achilles how she will trick Hector (22.266); assumes shape of Deiphobus, persuades Hector to stop running, tricks Hector (22.281); helps Diomedes, makes Eumelus' chariot crash in the race (23.470 ff); objects to gods' plans to have Hermes steal Hector's body (24.27); makes room for Thetis before Zeus (24.124)

Athens: town in Attica: in catalogue of ships (2.623).

Athos: promontory in northern Greece: Hera passes there on the way to visit Sleep (14.275).

Atreus: king of Argos, son of Pelops, father of Agamemnon and Menelaus (known as the "sons of Atreus"): receives royal staff from Pelops, passes it on to his brother Thyestes (2.122).

Atymnius (1): father of Mydon (Trojan warrior).

Atymnius (2): son of Amisodarus, Trojan warrior: killed by Antilochus (16.373).

Augeiae (1): town in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.609).

Augeiae (2): town in Lacedaemon, ruled by Menelaus: in catalogue of ships (2.659);

Augeias: king of Elis, father of Agamede, Agasthenes, grandfather of Polyxenus (leader of Epeians): keeps Neleus' horses (11.795); father in law of Mulius (11.847).

Aulis: place in Boeotia where the Achaean fleet assembled for the Trojan expedition: mentioned by Odysseus (3.356); in catalogue of ships (2.572).

Autolycus: stole cap from Amyntor (10.314).

AUTOMEDON: son of Diores, Achaean warrior: prepares Patroclus' chariot and horses (16.175); clears tangle of Patroclus' horses (16.551); tries to rouse Achilles horses (17.535); fights from a chariot without a weapon, brings on Alcimedon, attacked by Hector (17.569 ff); prays to Zeus, receives strength, calls for help to the Ajaxes (17.614 ff); kills Aretus (17.635); evades Hector's spear (17.645); strips armour, boasts aloud (17.657); helps prepare

Achilles' chariot (19.472); deals with Priam's cart and bring in the ransom (24.712); sets out bread for Achilles and Priam (24.776).

Autonous (1): Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.341).

Autonous (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.809).

Autophonus: father of Polyphontes.

Axius: river in Paeonia (in north-eastern Greece), also the river god: in Trojan list of forces (2.930); (16.341); father of Asteropaeus (with Periboea) (21.169).

Axylus: son of Teuthranus, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (6.14).

Azeus: father of Actor.

Balius: one of Achilles' horses (16.180; 19.480).

Bathycles: son of Chalcon, Achaean warrior: killed by Glaucus (16.691).

Batieia: a mound in the plain in front of Troy (also called tomb of Myrine): (2.894).

Bear: constellation (also called the Wain): depicted on Achilles's shield (18.604).

Bellerophon: son of Glaucus: his story told by descendant Glaucus (his grandson) (6.193).

Bessa: town in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.608).

Bias (1): an Achaean warrior leader serving with Nestor: receives his orders (4.347).

Bias (2): Achaean warrior, one of the leaders of Athenians: fighting against Hector (13.824).

Bias (3): father of Laogonus and Dardanus (Trojan warriors).

Bienor: Trojan warrior: killed by Agamemnon (11.99).

Boagrius: river in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.610).

Boebea: name of a lake and town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.784).

Boeotia: region of central Greece whose men are part of Achaean forces: in catalogue of ships (2.570, 2.601); Boeotians fighting against Hector (13.817).

Boreas: the north wind: Achilles prays to it, Iris delivers the prayer, the wind answers the request (23.234 ff).

Borus (1): father of Phaestus (a Trojan warrior).

Borus (2): son of Perieres, husband of Polydora, passes as father of Menesthius (16.210).

Boucolion: son of Laomedon, father of Pedasus and Aesepus (Trojan warriors): sex with Abarbarea (6.28).

Boucolus: father of Sphelus.

Boudeum: original home of Epeigeus (Achaean warrior).

Bouprasium: region in Epeia, in northern Peloponnese: in catalogue of ships (2.692); Pylians chase Epeians there (11.867); site of the funeral games for Amarynceus, Nestor's achievements there (23.778).

Briareos: see Aigaion.

BRISEIS: daughter of Briseus, captive awarded to Achilles: Agememnon threatens to take her away (1.201); heralds fetch her from Achilles (1.369 ff); story of her capture by Achilles (2.761); (9.128); Agamemnon offers to return her, swears he hasn't had sex with her (9.158); Achilles wishes she'd been killed (19.70); returned to Achilles, Agamemnon swears he has not had sex with her (19.303 ff); laments over the corpse of Patroclus (19.344); sleeps with Achilles (24.834).

Briseus: father of Briseis.

Bryseae: town in Lacedaemon, ruled by Menelaus: in catalogue of ships (2.659).

Cadmeians: citizens of Thebes in Boeotia: Tydeus visits them and competes against them, they try to ambush him (4.451 ff); Tydeus beats them with Athena's help (5.919).

Cadmus: king of Thebes: his sons beaten at the funeral games of Oedipus (23.840).

Caeneus: father of Coronus, grandfather of Leonteus (an Achaean warrior): mentioned by Nestor as an old comrade (1.291).

CALCHAS: son of Thestor, priest and interpreter of omens for Achaean army: responds to Achilles in assembly (1.73 ff); interprets Apollo's anger (1.98); abused by Agamemnon (1.110); Odysseus tells of C.'s original prophecy about how long the war would last (2.350); Poseidon takes on his form to rally Achaeans (13.48).

Calesius: Trojan warrior:killed by Diomedes (6.21).

Caletor (1): father of Aphareus (Achaean warrior).

Caletor (2): son of Clytius, Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (15.491).

Calianassa: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.55).

Callianeira: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.53).

Calliarus: town in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.608).

Callicolone: a hill near Troy: Ares moves along there encouraging Trojans (20.64); gods supporting Trojan gather there (20.183).

Calydnian Islands: islands in the Aegean Sea: in catalogue of ships (2.751).

Calydon: town in Aetolia: in catalogue of ships (2.716); site of battle between Aetolians and Curetes, home of Meleager (9.662 ff); home of Andraemon (13.263); home of Portheus (14.141).

Cameirus: town in Rhodes: in catalogue of ships (2.731).

Capaneus: father of Sthenelus (Achaean warrior).

Capys: son of Assaracus, father of Anchises (father of Aeneas): his family (20.285).

Cardamyle: city ruled by Agamemnon: offered to Achilles (9.184).

Caresus: river from Mount Ida to the sea: stirred up by Apollo or Poseidon to destroy the wall (12.21).

Carians: inhabitants of Caria (a region of Asia Minor), allies of the Trojans: in display of Trojan forces (2.951); (4.166); camped beside the sea (10.512).

Carystus: town in Euboea: in catalogue of ships (2.217).

Cassandra: daughter of Priam, wife of Orthryoneus: (13.442); sees Priam and Idaios arrive, calls out to the city (24.860).

Castianeira: mother of Gorgythion (son of Priam).

Castor: brother of Helen, Achaean warrior: already dead at home (3.261).

Casus: island in the Aegean Sea: in catalogue of ships (2.750).

Caucones: people of Asia Minor, Trojan allies: encamped by the sea: (10.513); preparing to fight (20.391).

Caystrios: river in Asia Minor: (2.536).

Cebriones: bastard son of Priam: advises Hector to attack Ajax (11.588); one of the leaders in the attack on the wall (12.95); goes with Hector and others to the centre of the battle (13.936); goes into battle with Hector, killed by Patroclus, fight over his body (16.848 ff).

Celadon: river on the borders of Pylos (7.159).

Centaurs: wild creatures, half human, half horse, living on Mt. Pelion: beaten away from Pelion by Peirithoös (1.298, 2.816).

Ceos: father of Troezenus, grandfather of Euphemus (Trojan ally).

Cephallenians: troops in Odysseus's contingent (part of Achaean army): in catalogue of ships (2.707).

Cephisia: lake in Boeotia (5.816).

Cephissus: river in Phocis: in catalogue of ships (2.597).

Cerinthus: town in Euboea: in catalogue of ships (2.616).

Chalcis (1): town in Euboea: in catalogue of ships (2.616).

Chalcis (2): town in Aetolia: in catalogue of ships (2.716).

Chalcodon: father of Elephenor (an Achaean warrior) in catalogue of ships (2.613).

Chalcon: father of Bathycles (Achaean warrior).

Charis: goddess, wife of Hephaestus: meets Thetis, welcomes her (18.474).

Charops: son of Hippasus, brother of Socus, Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.485).

Charopus: father of Nireus (Achaean warrior).

Chersidamas: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.481).

Chimera: legendary monster: killed by Bellerophon (6.230); raised by Amisodarus (16.385).

Chiron: a centaur: gave medicines to Asclepius (4.256); gave spear to Peleus (16.174; 19.471).

Chromius (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (5.784).

Chromius (2): one of the leaders of troops from Pylos: receives orders from Nestor (4.346).

Chromius (3): son of Priam: killed by Diomedes (5.184).

Chromius (4): Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.322).

Chromius (5): Trojan warrior: goes with Aeneas and Hector to attack Automedon (17.610); withdraws (17.654).

Chromis: Trojan ally, leader of Mysians: in Trojan display of forces (2.940).

Chroraius: Trojan warrior: encouraged by Hector (17.281).

Chryse: town near Troy, home of the priest Chryses: (1.40); (1.107); (1.119); (1.506).

Chryseis: daughter of Chryses, captured by Achaeans: Apollo's anger that she's not ransomed (1.15); Calchas says she must be given back (1.104); Agamemnon refuses to give her back (1.119); Agamemnon proposes expedition for her return (1.154); led on board ship for return (1.345); Achilles tells story of her capture (1.409); taken to Chryse, reunited with her father (1.481 ff).

Chryses: priest of Apollo, father of Chryseis: insulted by Agamemnon (1.12 ff); prays to Apollo for revenge (1.38); reunited with his daughter, prays to Apollo to lift the plague from Achaeans (1.490 ff.); sacrifices to Apollo (1.513).

Chrysothemis: daughter of Agamemnon (9.175).

Cicones: Trojan allies from Thrace: in Trojan display of forces (2.928).

Cilicians: people ruled by Eëtion: (6.484).

Cilla: town near Troy: (1.40); (1.506).

Cinyras: man in Cyprus: gave breast plate to Agamemnon (11.21).

Cisseus: father of Theano: raised Iphidamas, tries to stop Iphidamas going to war (11.255).

Cleitus: son of Peisenor, Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (15.521).

Cleobulus: Trojan warrior: killed by Oïlean Ajax (16.386).

Cleonae: town ruled by Agamemnon: in catalogue of ships (2.647).

Cleopatra: daughter of Maripessa and Ides, wife of Meleager (9.699); begs Meleager to defend the city (9.744).

Clonius: one of the Boeotian leaders in the Achaean force; in catalogue of ships (2.571); killed by Agenor (15.401).

Clymene (1): one of Helen's attendants: goes with her to the walls of Troy (3.158).

Clymene (2): a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.55).

Clytaemnestra: wife of Agamemnon: Agamemnon mentions her (1.121).

Clytius (1): son of Laomedon, brother of Priam, senior Trojan statesman: with Priam at the Scaean Gates, observes Helen (3.162); father of Caletor (15.491); his family tree (20.284).

Clytius (2): father of Dolops (Trojan warrior).

Clytomedes: son of Enops: defeated in boxing by Nestor (23.782).

Cnossus: large city in Crete: in catalogue of ships (2.721); labyrinth there (18.723).

Coeranus (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (5.784).

Coeranus (2): Achaean warrior: saves Idomeneus, killed by Hector (17.744).

Confusion: deity: depicted on Achilles' shield (18.659).

Coön: eldest son of Antenor, Trojan warrior: attacks Agamemnon, wounds him, is killed (11.284).

Copae: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.578)

Copreus: father of Periphetes (Achaean warrior): took messages to Hercules (15.744).

Corinth: city on the isthmus dividing mainland Greece and the Peloponnese, part of Agamemnon's kingdom, also called Ephyre: in catalogue of ships (2.646).

Coronea: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.579).

Coronus: son of Caeneus, father of Leonteus (an Achaean warrior).

Cos: island in the Aegean Sea: in catalogue of ships (2.750); Hercules ended up there (15.34).

Cranae: island where Paris took Helen after abducting her from Sparta: (3.501).

Crapathus: island in the Aegean Sea: in catalogue of ships (2.750).

Creon: father of Lycomedes (Achaean warrior).

Cretans: inhabitants of the island of Crete, led by Idomeneus: in catalogue of ships (2.720).

Crethon: son of Diocles, Achaean warrior: killed by Aeneas (5.640).

Croesmus: Trojan warrior: killed by Meges (15.616).

Cromna: town in Paphlagonia: in display of Trojan forces (2.937).

Crisa: town in Phocis (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.595).

Crocylea: region of Ithaca: in catalogue of ships (2.708).

Cronos: father of Zeus and Hera, husband of Rhea: imprisoned in Tartarus (8.563); forced underground by Zeus (14.244); his three sons (15.223).

Cteatus: alleged son of Actor, son of Poseidon, father of Amphimachus (leader of Epeians, part of Achaean contingent).

Curetes: people living in Aetolia: their battle with Aetolians over Calydon (9.662).

Cyllene: mountain in Arcadia (in central Peloponnese): in catalogue of ships (2.681); home of Otus (15.610).

Cymodoce: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.48).

Cymothoë: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.49).

Cynus: town in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.607).

Cyparisseis: town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.669).

Cyparissus: town in Phocis: in catalogue of ships (2.594).

Cyphus: town in northern Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.822).

Cythera: place of origin of Amphidamas; original home of Lycophron (15.504).

Cytorus: town in Paphlagonia: in display of Trojan forces (2.935).

Daedalus: architect of labyrinth at Cnossus (18.723).

Daitor: Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.322).

Damasus: Trojan warrior: killed by Polypoetes (12.190).

Damastor: father of Trojan warrior Tlepolemus.

DANAANS: see Achaeans.

Danaë: daughter of Acrisius: mother of Perseus after sex with Zeus (14.379).

Dardanians: people from around Troy, led by Aeneas.

Dardans (Dardanians): a group of Trojan people led by Aeneas (sometimes used almost interchangeably with the term Trojans): in Trojan display of forces (2.900); fated to survive (20.362).

Dardanus (1): son of Zeus, founder of Dardania (Trojan settlement before Troy); father of Erichthonius: his story told by Aenaes (20.257 ff); especially loved by Zeus (20.364).

Dardanus (2): son of Bias, Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.551).

Dares: Trojan priest of Hephaestus, father of Phegeus and Ideus: (5.10).

Daulis: town in Phocis (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.595).

Dawn: goddess: (1.532); (2.56); (8.1); sleeps beside Tithonus (11.1); (19.1); (23.131); appears just after the morning star (23.270); (24.856).

Death (1): brother of Sleep: deals with Sarpedon's body (16.794).

Death (2): goddess: depicted on Achilles' shield (18.660).

Deïcoön: son of Pergasus, Trojan warrior: killed by Agamemnon (5.631).

Deïochus: Achaean warrior: killed by Paris (15.402).

Deïopites: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.479).

DEÏPHOBUS: son of Priam, Trojan warrior: one of the leaders for the assault on the wall (12.97); steps forward to challenge Achaeans, struck by Meriones, withdraws (13.182 ff); challenges Idomeneus, kills Hypsenor (13.488); seeks out Aeneas to fight Idomeneus (13.546 ff); Aeneas calls to him for assistance (13.591); throws spear at Idomeneus, hits Ascalaphus (13.621); strips helmet from Ascalaphus, wounded by Meriones in the arm, withdraws from battle (13.633 ff); Athena takes on his shape to trick Hector (22.281); cursed by Priam (24.312).

Deïpylus: companion of Sthenelus, Achaean warrior: takes horses of Aeneas back to the camp (5.384).

Deïpyrus: Achaean warrior: leads out sentinels (9.102); encouraged by Poseidon in the form of Calchas (13.105); Idomeneus calls to him for assistance (13.576); killed by Helenus (13.687).

Deisenor: Trojan warrior: encouraged by Hector (17.280).

Demeter: goddess of grain and food generally: her shrine (2.769); Zeus' love for her (14.388); Lycaon appeals to her name (21.89).

Democoön: illegitimate son of Priam: killed by Odysseus (4.577).

Demoleon: son of Antenor, Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.475).

Demouchus: son of Philetor, Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.548).

Deucalion (1): father of Idomeneus, son of Minos: (13.541).

Deucalion (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.573).

Dexamene: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.52).

Dexios: father of Iphinous (Achaean warrior).

Diocles: son of Orsilochus, father of Crethon and Orsilochus (Achaean warriors).

Diomede: daughter of Phrobas: captured by Achilles from Lesbos, sleeps with him (9.840).

DIOMEDES: son of Tydeus, king of Argos, a younger (but major) warrior with Achaeans: summoned to sacrifice by Agamemnon (2.480); in catalogue of ships (2.640); upbraided by Agamemnon before the battle (4.434); advises Sthenelus to be quiet (4.480); receives special fighting power from Athena (5.1); kills Phegeus, almost kills Ideus (5.19 ff); active in the battle (5.96); hit with arrow from Pandarus (5.111); tells Sthenelus to pull out the

arrow, prays for strength, has strength restored (5.123 ff); kills Astynous, Hyperion, Abus, Polyidus, Xanthus, Thoon, Echemmon, Chromius (5.164 ff); refuses to draw back from battle, plans to get Aeneas' horses (5.297); challenges, fights, and kills Pandarus (5.340); hits Aeneas with a rock (5.359); goes to fight Aphrodite, wounds her (5.390 ff); challenges Apollo in the battle (5.513 ff); rouses the Danaans (5.614); sees Ares helping Trojans, comments (5.700); roused by Athena to fight Ares (5.907 ff); kills Axylus (6.14); challenges Glaucus, hears his story, trades armour (6.146 ff); attacks on the walls (6.532); volunteers to fight Hector (7.197); tells Achaeans to reject Paris' offer to return all property (7.469); comes to the aid of Nestor (8.103 ff); calls Odysseus (8.105); boasts of horses he took from Aeneas (8.122); charges Hector (8.134); kills Enopeus (8.137); Zeus sends lightning bolt to stop him (8.153); reluctant to withdraw, advised by Nestor, debates his options (8.167 ff); his armour made by Hephaestus (8.226); first to rejoin battle (8.297); repudiates Agamemnon's suggestion that they return, says he'll stay (9.36); urges Achaeans to fight without Achilles (9.877); woken up by Nestor and Odysseus, visits the sentries (10.182 ff); volunteers for spy mission, chooses Odysseus to go with him (10.260 ff); arms for night raid (10.303); leaves on night raid, gets omen from Athena, prays for success (10.322 ff); chases and catches Dolon (10.416 ff); kills Dolon (10.546); slaughters twelve sleeping Thracian soldiers (10.563 ff); told by Athena to return (10.608); washes himself (10.683); responds to Odysseus call to stand up against Hector (11.359); kills Thymbraeus, two sons of Merops, Agastrophus (11.364 ff); sees Hector attacking, hits him with a spear, calls to Hector (11.392); hit by an arrow from Paris, shouts to him, retires from battle (11.430 ff); walking with the wounded leaders (14.32); tells of his father's bravery, proposes the wounded leaders show themselves in the battle (14.133); helps organize the troops (14.447); goes to assembly called by Achilles (19.59); volunteers for chariot race (23.347); Apollo strikes his whip away, but Athena helps him win (23.463); comes first in chariot race (23.610); enters the hand to hand fighting contest, fights Ajax (23.1000).

Dione: goddess mother of Aphrodite: consoles and heals wounded Aphrodite (5.437); tells of gods who have been injured by human beings (5.449).

Dionysus: divine son of Zeus and Semele: abused by Lycurgus (6.162); son of Zeus and Semele (14.386).

Diores (1): son of Amarynces, a leader of Epeians (part of Achaean forces): in catalogue of ships (2.699): killed by Peirous (4.598).

Diores (2): father of Automedon (an Achaean warrior).

Dios: son of Priam: cursed by Priam (24.312).

Dium: town in Euboea: in catalogue of ships (2.617).

Dodona: town in north west Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.824).

Dolon: son of Eumedes, Trojan warrior: volunteers for spy mission to the ships (10.376 ff); runs away from Diomedes and Odysseus, is caught, provides information, is killed by Diomedes (10.417 ff).

Dolopes: people given to Phoenix to rule by Peleus (9.605).

Dolopion: priest of Scamander, father of Hypsenor (Trojan warrior).

Dolops (1): son of Clytius, Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.342).

Dolops (2): son of Lampus, Trojan warrior: charges Meges, killed by Menelaus (15.618).

Doris: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.53).

Dorium: town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.670).

Doryclus: bastard son of Priam, Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (11.552).

Doto: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.51).

Doulichion: island off the west coast of mainland Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.701).

Dracius: a leader of Epeians, Achaean warrior: fighting against Hector by the ships (13.826).

Dream(s): evil dream sent by Zeus to Agamemnon (2.5); Dream visits Agamemnon (2.19).

Dresus: Trojan warrior: killed by Euryalus (6.23).

Dryas (1): a Lapith: mentioned as an old comrade by Nestor (1.290).

Dryas (2): father of Lycurgus.

Dryops: Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.546).

Dymas: father of Hecuba and Asius.

Dynamene: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.52).

EARTHSHAKER: common epithet for Poseidon.

Echecles: son of Actor: marries Polymele, looks after Eudorus (16.225).

Echeclus (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.809).

Echeclus (2): son of Agenor, Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.569).

Echemmon: son of Priam, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.184).

Echepolus (1): son of Thalysius, Trojan warrior: killed by Antilochus (4.530).

Echepolus (2): son of Anchises: gave mare to Agamemnon so as to avoid coming to Troy (23.354).

Echinean Islands: islands off west coast of mainland Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.701).

Echius (1): father of Mecisteus (Achaean warrior).

Echius (2): Achaean warrior: killed by Polites (15.400).

Echius (3): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.485).

Eëriboea: step mother of Otus and Ephialtes: tells Hermes of Ares' imprisonment (5.460).

Eëtion (1): father of Andromache, king of Cilices in Thebe: mentioned by Achilles (1.405); dowry for his daughter Andromache (6.481); killed by Achilles (6.487); (9.230); where Achilles captured one of his horses (16.186).

Eëtion (2): father of Podes (a Trojan warrior).

Eëtion (3): friend of Priam in Imbros: ransomed Lycaon from Lemnos (21.48).

Eileithyia: goddess of birth pains and labour pangs: (11.308); (16.223); at birth of Hercules and Eurystheus, held back by Hera (19.127 ff).

Eilesion: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.575).

Eionae: town in the Argolid: in catalogue of ships (2.638).

Eioneus (1): Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (7.11).

Eioneus (2): father of Rhesus.

Elasus: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.811).

Elatus: Trojan warrior: killed by Agamemnon (6.38).

Eleans: people inhabiting the Peloponnese: Nestor tells of their war with Pylians (11.759 ff).

Eleon: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.276).

Elephenor: son of Chalcodon, commander of the Abantes, part of Achaean forces: in catalogue of ships (2.613); killed by Agenor (4.537).

Elis: region in Epeia, in northern Peloponnese: in catalogue of ships (2.692, 702); home of Itymoneus (11.762); debt owed to Neleus (11.792).

Elone: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.810).

Emathia: Hera goes there on the way to visit Sleep (14.272).

Enetae: town in Paphlagonia: in display of Trojan forces (2.935).

Enienes: inhabitants of a region in northern Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.823).

Eniopeus: son of Thebaios, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (8.138).

Enispe: town in Arcadia (in central Peloponnese): in catalogue of ships (2.684).

Ennomus (1): leader of the Mysians, Trojan warrior, an interpreter of omens: in Trojan display of forces (2.940); death from Achilles mentioned (2.942); encouraged by Hector (17.281).

Ennomus (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.481).

Enope: city ruled by Agamemnon: offered to Achilles (9.184).

Enops (1): father of Satnius and Thestor (Trojan warriors).

Enops (2): father of Clytomedes.

Enyalius: name associated with Ares: stands opposed to Athena in battle (20.81).

Enyeus: king of Scyros (9.843).

Epaltes: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.484).

Epeians: part of the Achaean contingent, inhabitants of northern Peloponnese: in catalogue of ships (2.696); conflict with the Pylians (11.805 ff); fighting Hector by the ships (13.818).

Epeigeus: son of Agacles, Achaean warrior : his story, killed by Hector (16.666).

Epeius: son of Panopeus: enters the boxing contest and wins (23.822 ff); enters the iron-throwing contest (23.1032).

Ephialtes: son of Aloëus, a monster: imprisoned Ares (5.455).

Ephyra (1): a town in north-west Greece: (2.733); Phyleus brought armour from there (15.624).

Ephyra (2): alternate name for Corinth: home of Sisyphus (6.190): Ephyrians fighting against Phlegyans (13.366).

Ephyrians: people in Thessaly (13.366).

Epicles: Lycian warrior, part of Trojan forces: killed by Telamonian Ajax (12.416).

Epidaurus: town in the Argolid: in the catalogue of ships (2.639).

Epistor: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.810).

Epistrophus (1): son of Iphitus, Achaean warrior, leader of Phoceans: in catalogue of ships (2.592).

Epistrophus (2): son of Euenus, killed by Achilles at capture of Lyrnessus (2.764).

Epistrophus (3): leader of the Halizoni, allies of Trojans: in Trojan display of forces (2.938).

Epytos: father of Periphas (Trojan herald).

Erebus: the darkeness associated with Hades: Hercules goes to fetch Hades' hound (8.427); Maris and Atymnius go there (16.382).

Erechtheus: legendary king of Athens: his birth and treatment by Athena (2.6.24).

Eretria: town in Euboea: in catalogue of ships (2.616).

Ereuthalion: a warrior killed by Nestor when he was young: (4.375); steps out as champion of Arcadians, killed by Nestor (7.160 ff).

Erichthonius: son of Dardanus, father of Tros: his story told by Aeneas (20.263).

Erinyes: (see Furies)

Eriopis: wife of Oïleus, step mother of Medon (15.396).

Erithini: town in Paphlagonia: in Trojan display of forces (2.937).

Erylaus: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.479).

Erymas (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Idomeneus (16.403).

Erymas (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.484).

Erythrae: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.575).

Eteocles: king of Thebes: (4.453).

Eteonus: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.573).

Ethiopians: news of Zeus' visit to them (1.472).

Euaemon: father of Eurypylus.

Euboea: large island close to mainland of Greece on the east: in the catalogue of ships (2.612, 615).

Euchenor: son of Polyidus, Achaean warrior: comes to Troy knowing his fate, killed by Paris (13.791).

Eudorus: bastard son of Polymele and Hermes: leader of a contingent of Myrmidons, his family and upbringing (16.213).

Euenus (1): son of Selepius, father of Mynes and Epistrophus (Trojan warriors).

Euenus(2): father of Marpissa.

Euippus: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.486).

Eumedes: father of Dolon (Trojan warrior).

Eumelus: son of Admetus and Alcestis, leader of Thessalian troops (part of Achaean army): in catalogue of ships (2.786); his father's horses the best among Achaeans (2.840); volunteers for chariot race (23.345); leading in chariot race, Athena makes him crash (23.457 ff); last in the race (23.648).

Euneus: son of Jason and Hypsipyle: sends wine to Agamemnon and Menelaus (7.545); paid ransom for Lycaon (23.920).

Euphemus: son of Troezenus, leader of Ciconian troops (Trojan allies): in display of Trojan forces (2.927).

Euphetes: guest of Phyleus, gave him armour (15.626).

Euphorbus: son of Panthous, Trojan warrior: his skills as a soldier, wounds Patroclus (16.936); calls to Menelaus, is killed by him (17.11).

Euryalus: a senior leader of the troops from the Argolid, son of Mecisteus, an Achaean warrior: in catalogue of ships (2.643); kills Dresus, Opheltius, Aesepus and Pedasus (6.23); enters the boxing contest, his triumph at the funeral games of Oedipus (23.837); knocked almost unconscious (23.853).

Eurybates: one of the Achaean heralds: sent by Agamemnon to collect Briseis from Achilles (1.360 ff); picks up Odysseus' cloak (2.215); proposed for delegation to visit Achilles (9.209).

Eurydamas: Trojan priest, father of Abus and Polyidus (Trojan warriors): (5.171).

Eurymedon: son of Ptolemaeus, Achaean warror, attandant on Agamemnon: holds back Agamemnon's horses (4.265); takes Nestor's horses (8.131); unharnesses Nestor's horses (11.698).

Eurynome: divine daughter of Oceanus: helped Hephaestus (18.502).

Eurypylus (1): king of Cos (2.750).

EURYPYLUS (2): son of Euaemon, leader of troops from parts of Thessaly (in Achaean army): in catalogue of ships (2.808); kills Hypsenor (5.86); kills Melanthus (6.42); volunteers to fight Hector (7.201); returns quickly to battle (8.311); stands by Telamonian Ajax, kills Apisaon (11.648); wounded by an arrow from Paris, withdraws, calling out to Achaeans (11.657); meets Patroclus, assisted to his hut (11.937); tells Patroclus the Achaeans are doomed (11.951); Patroclus leaves him (15.460).

Eurystheus: king of Mycenae: gave Hercules his labours (8.423); Copreus delivered his messages (15.755); his birth part of a trick Hera played on Zeus (19.140 ff).

Eurytus (1): king of Oechalia, in Thessaly (2.802).

Eurytus (2): son of Actor, father of Thalpius, a leader of Epeian forces.

Eussorus: father of Acamas (Trojan warrior).

Eutresis: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.578).

Exadios: mentioned by Nestor as an old comrade (1.294).

Fate: Agamemnon blames fate for the quarrel (19.107); ordains the survival of Aeneas (20.361).

Fear: goddess: accompanies Ares and Athena into battle (4.513); on the aegis (5.845).

Flight: god: told to get Ares' horses ready (15.143).

Folly: daughter of Zeus, deluder of gods and men: followed by Prayers (9.630) (see also Ate).

Furies: goddesses of revenge within the family, also called Erinyes: invoked by Amyntor against his son Phoenix (9.571); listen to prayers of Althea to kill her son (9.719); Agamemnon blames them for the quarrel (19.107); Agamemnon invokes them to swear he has not had sex with Briseis (19.317); take away the speaking voice of Achilles' horse (19.504).

Galatea: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.54).

Ganymede: son of Tros: taken into heaven to be Zeus' cup bearer (5.316); kidnapped by the gods (20.278).

Gargaros: peak on Mount Ida: site of Zeus' temple: Zeus goes there (7.55); Hera seduces Zeus there (14.345 ff).

Glaphyrae: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.785).

Glauce: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.48).

GLAUCUS: son of Hippolochus, leader of Lycians (Trojan allies): in Trojan display of forces (2.960); moves out to fight Diomedes, tells story of his family (6.146 ff); Zeus steals his wits (6.298); kills Iphinous (7.13); one of the leaders in the assault on the wall (12.107); told of the warrior ethic by Sarpedon (12.332); wounded by Teucer (12.425); helps defend wounded Hector (14.498); hears Sarpedon's dying words, prays to Apollo for restored strength, Apollo answers, rallies Lycians, urges Hector to avenge Sarpedon (16.572 ff); kills Bathycles (16.691); urges Hector to fight harder to avenge Sarpedon (17.188); encouraged by Hector (17.289).

Glaucus (2): son of Sisyphus, father of Bellerophon (6.193).

Glisas: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.580).

Gonoessa: town ruled by Agamemnon: in the catalogue of ships (2.649).

Gorgon: monster: depicted on the aegis (5.845); on Agamemnon's shield (11.36).

Gorgythion: son of Priam and Castianeira, a Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.353).

Gortyn: city in Crete: in catalogue of ships (2.721).

Graces: goddesses: gave Aphrodite her robe (5.400).

Graea: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.574).

Granicus: river flowing from Mount Ida to the sea: stirred up by Poseidon and Apollo to destroy the wall (12.21).

Guneus: leader of troops from Cyphus (part of Achaean army): in catalogue of ships (2.822).

Gygaea: a water nymph: mother of Mesthles and Ascanius (allies of the Trojans).

Gygean Lake: lake in Asia Minor: birth region of Iphition (20.469).

Gyrtius: father of Hyrtius (Trojan warrior).

Gyrtone: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.810).

Hades: brother of Zeus and Poseidon, god of the dead: wounded by Hercules (5.467); visited by Hercules (8.426); his unrelenting nature (9.193); Althea begs him to kill Meleager (9.717); division of power with his brothers (15.223).

Haemon (1): one of Achaean warrior leaders serving under Nestor: receives his orders (4.327).

Haemon (2): father of Maeon (Theban warrior).

Haemon (3): father of Laerces, grandfather of Alcimedon (Achaean warrior).

Haliartus: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.579).

Halië: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.49).

Halius: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (5.785).

Halizoni: Trojan allies: in display of Trojan forces (2.938).

Harma: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.275).

Harmon: father of Tecton, grandfather of Phereclus (a Trojan warrior).

Harpalion: son of Pylamenes, Trojan warrior: fights Menelaus, killed by Meriones (13.767).

Hebe: goddess who acts as cupbearer to the gods: pours wine (4.2); gets Hera's chariot ready (5.829).

Hecamede: daughter of Arsinous, given to Nestor after Achilles' sack of Tenedos: attends on Nestor and Machaon (11.702).

HECTOR: leader of Trojan forces, son of Priam and Hecuba, often called "Hector of the shining helmet," "man-killing Hector": mentioned by Achilles (1.267); responds to Iris' message from Zeus (2.888); in Trojan march past (2.896); criticizes Paris (3.37); speaks to Trojans and Achaeans about Paris-Menelaus duel (3.95); sends to the city for sacrificial animals (3.130); measures the ground for the duel (3.352); spurred to action by Sarpedon's complaint (5.585); moves against Achaeans with help of Ares (5.694); kills Menesthes, Anchialus (5.713); rallies Trojans, helps save Sarpedon (5.786); kills Teuthras, Orestes, Trechus, Oenomaus, Helenus, Oresbius (5.809); advised by Helenus to go into the city, agrees (6.89 ff); visits Troy, meets Hecuba, tells her to sacrifice with the women (6.302 ff); would like Paris to die (6.354); goes to Paris' house, talks to Paris and Helen (6.387 ff); looks for his wife at home, talks to servant (6.452 ff); meets Andromache by the Scaean Gate, talks to her, holds his son (6.480 ff); prayer over his son (6.580); rejoined by Paris, returns to battle (6.634, 7.1); kills Eioneus (7.11); Helenus proposes Hector issue challenge to Achaeans, does so (7.51 ff); accepts Ajax's taunts, fights him (7.276); agrees to end duel with Ajax , gives Hector a shield (7.335 ff); threatens Nestor (8.101); mocks Diomedes' withdrawal (8.183); urges the Trojans on, speaks to his horses (8.197 ff); pins Achaeans down in the ditch (8.249); moves against Teucer, wounds him (8.368 ff); drives Achaean back to the ditch (8.393); Zeus tells the gods his plans for him (8.549); summons Trojan assembly in the plain, instructs the army (8.576); proposes a spy mission to the ships (10.357); organizes Trojans for battle (11.59 ff); pulled back from battle by Zeus (11.186); receives message from Zeus about when to fight (11.224); sees Agamemnon leaving, rallies Trojans, kills Asaeus, Antonous, Opites, Dolops, Opheltius, Agelaus, Aesymnus, Orus, Hipponous (11.323); attacks Diomedes and Odysseus, hit by Diomedes, recovers (11.390 ff); fighting on the left (11.561); advised by Cebriones to attack Telamonian Ajax, moves but stays away from Ajax (11.588 ff); hems Achaeans by their ships (12.40 ff); gets advice to withdraw from Polydamas, rejects it (12.62); with troops in perplexity by the ditch (12.204); rejects Polydamas' advice to withdraw (12.246); rallies troops to attack the wall, smashes the gate with a rock, jumps inside the wall (12.483 ff); leading Trojans to seize the ships (13.43); held back by close formation of Achaeans, rallies his troops (13.170); kills Amphimachus (13.227); attacks Achaeans by ships (13.810); gets advice from Polydamas to use the best men (13.861); upbraids Paris (13.907); leads Trojan attack, challenged by Telamonian Ajax (13.949 ff); hits Ajax with spear but doesn't hurt him, hit by rock thrown by Ajax, pulled back from the fighting (14.470 ff); observed by Zeus (15.9); Zeus foretells his future (15.71); Zeus tells Apollo to restore his strength, Apollo does so (15.266 ff); leads Trojans into battle (15.364); kills Stichius and Archesilaus (15.389); urges Trojans inside

the wall (15.408); attacks Ajax at the ships (15.486); calls Trojan to stand over Clytius, kills Lycophron (15.494 ff); saved by Zeus (breaking Teucer's bow string) (15.541); rallies the Trojans after Zeus breaks Teucer's bow (15.568); kills Schedius (15.607); criticizes Melanippus (15.640); moves up against Antilochus (15.683); Zeus drives him against the ships (15.705 ff); kills Periphetes (15.743); attacks Ajax on the ships (15.799); grabs stern of Protesilaus' ship, yells for fire (15.815 ff); cuts Ajax's spear, tosses fire on the ships (16.140); realizes Trojans are being beaten from the ships, withdraws (16.421); Glaucus urges him to avenge Sarpedon (16.624); kills Epeigeus (16.672); fighting over Sarpedon's body, moves back (16.685); Zeus takes his courage, he withdraws (16.763); advised by Apollo to return to battle (16.830 ff); attacks Patroclus, fights over Cebriones (16.879 ff); kills Patroclus, gloats over the body, mouthing Achilles' words, response to Patroclus' warnings (16.949 ff); Apollo urges him to fight Menelaus, he does so (17.89 ff); strips armour from Patroclus, withdraws from the body (17.155 ff); responds to Glaucus' criticisms (17.228); puts on Achilles' armour (17.243 ff); Zeus fills him with strength (17.256 ff); encourages his troops, call on the allies to justify the expense of maintaining them (17.278 ff); Zeus refuses him Achilles' horses (17.546); sees Achilles horses, attacks with Aeneas (17.598); throws spear at Automedon, misses, withdraws (17.645); encouraged by Apollo (17.709); wounds Leitus (17.733); hit but not hurt by spear from Idomeneus (17.738); kills Coeranus (17.744); pursues Achaeans taking Patroclus back (17.915); fights again for Patroclus (18.185 ff); criticizes Polydamas for his advice to withdraw to the city (18.352); his family tree (20.287); announces his intention to seek out Achilles (20.435); Apollo tells him not to fight Achilles openly (20.449); confronts Achilles, saved by Apollo (20.502 ff); isolated outside Troy (22.5); debates his options outside Troy (22.113); begins to tremble, runs away (22.170); tricked by Athena (as Deïphobus), fights Achilles, is killed (22.281 ff); body mutilated by Achaeans (22.471); body dragged behind Achilles' chariot (22.494); mentioned by Priam (24.320); body washed by Achilles' servant women (24.727); his funeral rites (24.964 ff).

HECUBA: wife of Priam, mother of Hector (and others): meets Hector, gets instructions to sacrifice (6.315); prays to Athena with Trojan women (6.377); sees Hector isolated outside the wall, begs him to come inside (22.99); lament at sight of dead Hector (22.506 ff); opposes Priam's proposed trip to Achilles (24.249); tells Priam to make an offering to Zeus before setting out (24.350); comes out to meet Priam with Hector's body, laments over Hector (24.875).

HELEN: mortal child of Zeus, wife of Menelaus and later of Paris (Alexander): mentioned by Hera (2.187); mentioned in catalogue of ships (2.667); visited by Iris in form of Laodice, while she is weaving (3.135); Helen visits the walls of Troy, talks to Priam (3.153 ff); observed by Trojan elders (3.168); looks for her brothers (3.260); forced by Aphrodite to go home to Paris (3.434 ff); returns home to Paris, talks to him (3.468 ff); at home with Paris, speaks to Hector (6.396 ff); Antenor proposes giving her back (7.404); Achilles detests her (19.397); laments over Hector's body (24.936).

Helenus (1): son of Oenops, an Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (5.813).

HELENUS (2): son of Priam, reader of omens for Trojans: advises Hector on strategy (6.89); proposes that Hector issue a challenge to Achaeans (7.51); one of the leaders of the assault on the wall (12.97); kills Deïpyrus (13.687); attacked by Menelaus, is wounded (13.692); cursed by Priam (24.310).

Helicaon: Trojan warrior, son of Antenor, husband of Laodice (a daughter of Priam): (3.137).

Helice: town ruled by Agamemnon: in catalogue of ships (2.651); site of worship of Poseidon (20.485).

Hellas: region of Thessaly ruled by Peleus (Achilles' father): in catalogue of ships (2.756).

Hellenes: inhabitants of Hellas: in catalogue of ships (2.757).

Hellespont: narrow stretch of water between Thrace and the Troad (separating Europe from Asia): (2.926).

Helos (1): town in Lacedaemon, ruled by Menelaus: in catalogue of ships (2.660).

Helos (2): town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.670).

Helios: god of the sun: (14.408); Agamemnon invokes him to swear he has not had sex with Briseis (19.317).

HEPHAESTUS: divine son of Zeus and Hera, artisan god, crippled in his legs: intervenes to avoid quarrel between Zeus and Hera (1.641 ff); tells story of being thrown from heaven (1.663); serves wine to the gods (1.670); history of the royal staff he made (2.117); saves Ideus from death (5.26); maker of Diomedes' armour (8.226); made Hera's bedroom (14.201); summons Aphrodite to get love charms (14.224); ambidextrous (14.285); gave Zeus the aegis (15.368); yells at Achaeans, shakes the aegis, putting them to flight (15.379); Thetis visits him to get new weapons for Achilles, his workshop and his robot inventions (18.458 ff); story of how Thetis helped him (18.487); prepares materials and makes the shield (18.583 ff); leaves Olympus to help Achaeans (20.44); opposed by Xanthus in battle (20.85); made five layers on the shield (20.323); Hera appeals to him to help Achilles against the river, he prepares a great fire (21.397); Hera tells him to stop the fire, he does so (21.453).

Heptaporus: river flowing from Mount Ida to the sea: stirred up by Poseidon and Apollo to destroy the wall (12.21).

HERA: divine wife and sister of Zeus, daughter of Cronos, frequently called "white armed" or "ox eyed": puts idea of assembly into Achilles (1.59); sends Athena to check Achilles' anger (1.214); story of her attempt to tie Zeus up (1.443); Zeus complains about her

attitude (1.578); attacks Zeus for favouring Thetis (1.597 ff); sleeps beside Zeus (1.686); part of evil Dream's message (2.15, 2.37); sends Athena to restore order to the Argives (2.181); challenges Zeus' plans (4.27 ff); lists cities she loves best (4.62); demands respect from Zeus (4.70 ff); suggests a break in the truce (4.78); wounded by Hercules (5.463); teases Aphrodite in front of Zeus (5.499); Hera persuades Athena to go to war, description of her chariot (5.818 ff); drives her chariot to meet Zeus on Olympus, asks his permission to fight Ares (5.859); goes with Athena to battle, rallies the Argives in form of Stentor (5.880 ff); Zeus blames her for Ares' wound (5.1021); returns to Olympus (5.1038); anger at Hector's boasting, proposes to Poseidon that they act to help Achaeans (8.229); puts plan to rally the troops in Agamemnon's head (8.252); pities Achaeans in retreat, speaks to Athena (8.406); harnesses her chariot to visit the battle (8.444); turned back by Iris (8.479 ff); complains to Zeus (8.540); acknowledges Agamemnon with a peal of thunder (11.45); decides to deceive Zeus, prepares herself (14.185); gets love charm from Aphrodite, tells story of visiting Oceanus (14.224 ff); goes to Pieria, Emathia, Athos, Lemnos, meets Sleep, asks him to put Zeus to sleep, promises him a bride (14.271); swears on all the gods to keep promise to Sleep (14.330); seduces Zeus on Mount Ida (14.345 ff); criticized by Zeus, reminded of her earlier punishment, told the future of the war (15.15 ff); leaves Ida for Olympus, talks to the gods, tells Iris and Apollo to go to Zeus (15.96 ff); tells Zeus Sarpedon must die (16.515); sends Iris to rouse Achilles (18.208); sends the sun down against its will (18.294); conversation with Zeus about Achilles' return (18.443 ff); tricks Zeus over Hercules and Eurystheus (19.119 ff); gives Achilles horse power to speak (19.489); leaves Olympus to help the Achaeans (20.41); opposes Artemis (20.81); tells Athena and Poseidon to help Achilles, goes with them to sit on the wall (20.138); refuses Poseidon's request to help Aeneas (20.370); appeals to Hephaestus to help Achilles against the river (21.395); Scamander appeals to her to call off Hephaestus, she does so (21.442); urges Athena to attack Aphrodite (21.503); attacks Artemis (21.577); opposes gods' plans to have Hermes steal Hector's body (23.27); defends Achilles against Apollo's accusations (24.65); welcomes Thetis to Olympus (24.125).

HERCULES: son of Zeus and Alcmene, legendary Greek hero, father of Tlepolemus: story of his capture of Astyocheia (2.733); grandfather of Pheidippus and Antiphus (2.752); wounded Hera with an arrow (5.463); wounded Hades (5.467); praised by his son Tlepolemos (5.742); helped by Athena (8.422); killed men of Pylos (11.782); Sleep tells of how Zeus reacted to mistreatment of him (14.296); his mother loved by Zeus (14.385); Zeus' pain at his mistreatment (15.31); destined for death (18.146); trick played on him at his birth by Hera (19.122 ff); built wall for Poseidon (20.176).

HERMES: divine son of Zeus, called "killer of Argus": receives royal staff from Zeus, passes it on to Pelops (2.119); rescued Ares (5.460); love for Phorbas (14.571); had sex with Polymele, fathered Eudorus (16.215); leaves Olympus to help the Achaeans (20.43); opposes Leto in battle (20.84); declines to fight with Leto (21.600); gods urge him to steal Hector's body (24.25); instructed by Zeus to guide Priam to Achilles, sets off to meet Priam (24.412 ff); meets Priam and Idaios, reassures them (24.446); takes over Priam's

chariot, takes him to Achilles hut, putting guards to sleep (24.546); reveals his identity to Priam (24.566); wakes Priam up to take him back to Troy, leaves him (24.837).

Hermione: town in the Argolid: in catalogue of ships (2.637).

Hermus: river in Maeonia, birthplace of Iphition (20.471).

Hicetaon: son of Laomedon, brother of Priam, senior Trojan counselor: with Priam at Scaean Gates, observes Helen (3.162); father of Melanippus (15.641); his family tree (20.284).

Hippasus (1): father of Charops and Socus, Trojan warriors.

Hippasus (2): father of Hypsenor.

Hippasus (3): father of Apisaon (Trojan warrior).

Hippemolgi: distant tribe: Zeus looks away from battle at them (13.6).

Hippocoön: Thracian counselor, Trojan ally: woken up by Apollo, sees the dead Thracians (10.621).

Hippodamas: Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.480).

Hippodamus: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.381).

Hippodameia: mother of Polypoetes (an Achaean warrior).

Hippodamia: daughter of Anchises, wife of Alcathous (Trojan warrior).

Hippolochus (1): son of Bellerophon (6.254): father of Glaucus (6.264).

Hippolochus (2): son of Antimachus, Trojan warrior: killed by Agamemnon (11.134 ff).

Hippomachus: son of Antimachus, Trojan warrior: killed by Leonteus (12.196).

Hipponous: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.343).

Hippothous (1): son of Lethous, leader of troops from Pelasgia (part of Trojan army): in Trojan display of forces (2.922); encouraged by Hector (17.281); killed by Telamonian Ajax (17.372).

Hippothous (2): son of Priam: cursed by Priam (24.312).

Hippotion (1): father of Morus (Trojan warrior).

Hippotion (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Meriones (14.601).

Hire: city ruled by Agamemnon: offered to Achilles (9.184).

Histiaea: town in Euboea: in catalogue of ships (2.616).

Hyades: heavenly constellation: depicted on Achilles' shield (18.603).

Hyampolis: town in Phocis (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.596).

Hyde: birthplace of Iphition (Trojan warrior).

Hyle: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.576); home of Oresbius (5.814); home of Tychius (7.262).

Hyllus: river in Asia Minor near birthplace of Iphition (20.470).

Hypeirochus (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.381).

Hypeirochus (2): father of Itymoneus.

Hypeiron: Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.165).

Hyperea: site of a spring in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.806); (6.558).

Hyperenor: son of Panthous, Trojan warrior: killed by Menelaus (14.603); mentioned by Menelaus (17.30).

Hyperesia: town ruled by Agamemnon: in catalogue of ships (2.649).

Hyperion: god of the sun: doesn't reach Tartarus (8.564).

Hypsenor (1): son of Dolopion, Trojan warrior: killed by Eurypylus (5.86).

Hypsenor (2): son of Hippasus, Achaean warrior: killed by Deïphobus (13.495).

Hyperenor: Trojan warrior: killed by Menelaus (14.603).

Hypsipyle: mother of Euneus.

Hyria: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.572).

Hyrmine: town in Epeia, in northern Peloponnese: in catalogue of ships (2.693).

Hyrtacus: father of Asius (Trojan warrior).

Hyrtius: son of Gyrtius, leader of Mysians (Trojan allies): killed by Telamonian Ajax (14.598).

Iaera: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.50).

Ialmenus: Achaean warrior, leader of Minyans, son of Ares: in catalogue of ships (2.587); leads out the sentinels (9.101).

Ialysus: town in Rhodes: in catalogue of ships (2.730).

Iamenus: Trojan warriot: moves up with Asius against the wall (12.146); killed by Leonteus (12.201).

Ianassa: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.56).

Ianeira: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.56).

Iapetus: one of the Titans imprisoned in Tartarus by Zeus: (8.562).

Iardanus: river in the Peloponnese (6.159).

Iasus: son of Sphelus, one of the Athenian leaders: killed by Aeneas (15.392).

Icaria: island in the Aegean Sea.

IDA: mountain near Troy: where Aphrodite and Achises made love (2.902); Zeus moves there from Olympus (7.48); Zeus observes Hera and Athena from there (8.463); Isus and Antiphus captured there by Achilles (11.117); Hera comes there to deceive Zeus (14.335); Hera seduces Zeus there (14.345 ff); Hera leaves for Olympus (15.97); Achilles chased Aeneas from there (20.107); Achaeans go there to collect wood (23.140).

IDAIOS (1): Trojan herald: speaks to Priam about Paris-Menelaus duel (3.274); stops the duel between Hector and Ajax (7.323); goes to Achaeans with Paris' offer to return all property (7.457); reports back to Trojans (7.485); sees Hermes, speaks to Priam (24.436); gets back to Troy with Priam (24.857).

Idaios (2): Trojan warrior, son of Dares: confronts Diomedes, saved by Hephaestus (5.13 ff).

Ides: father of Cleopatra (wife of Meleager): fought Apollo for Marpessa (9.702).

IDOMENEUS: son of Deucalion, leader of Cretan forces, a major senior commander in the Achaean forces: Agamemnon proposes him as a leader of expedition to send back Chryseis (1.158); summoned to sacrifice by Agamemnon (2.479); in catalogue of ships

(2.720); observed by Helen and Priam (3.253); praised by Agamemnon (4.300); kills Phaestus (5.48); attacks on the walls (6.532); volunteers to fight Hector (7.200); afraid at omens from Zeus (8.87); returns quickly to battle (8.309); position in battle (11.564); tells Nestor to take Machaon away from battle (11.575); kills Asius (12.122 ff); meets Poseidon in form of Thoas (13.255 ff); meets Meriones, gives him a spear (13.299 ff); indicates to Meriones where they should rejoin the battle (13.376); kills Orthryoneus, mocks him (13.439 ff); fights and kills Asius (13.471), kills Alcathous, triumphs over him with an account of his lineage (13.513 ff); challenged by Aeneas, calls out for help (13.563); battles over the body of Alcathous (13.602); kills Oenomaus (13.608), losing strength in the fight (13.615); collects best men to fight Hector (15.359); kills Erymas (16.403); comes up to help Telamonian Ajax and Menelaus over Patroclus' body (17.335); hits Hector but doesn't hurt him (17.739); returns to the ships (17.761); stays with Achilles to mourn over Patroclus (19.379); watching chariot race, mocked by Lesser Ajax (23.548).

Ilion: another name for Troy.

Ilioneus: son of Phorbas: killed by Peneleus (14.570).

Ilus: son of Erichthonius, father of Laomedon: his tomb as a landmark outside Troy (11.190); Paris hides behind the tomb (11.423); his family (20.277).

Imbrasus: father of Peirous (Trojan warrior).

Imbrius: son of Mentor, husband of Medesicate: killed by Teucer (13.199).

Imbros: island in the Aegean Sea: (13.34); Hera goes past there on the way to deceive Zeus (14.334).

Iolcus: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.785).

Ionians: people of Ionia: fight against Hector by the ships (13.817).

Ipheus: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.486).

Iphicles: son of Phylaces, father of Protesilaus and Podarcus (Achaean warriors).

Iphiclus: opponent defeated in a footrace by Nestor (23.785).

Iphianessa: daughter of Agamemnon (9.176).

Iphidamas: son of Antenor, Trojan warrior challenges Agamemnon and is killed (11.252 ff).

Iphinous: son of Dexius, Achaean warrior: killed by Glaucus (7.15).

Iphis: woman from Scyros: captured by Achilles, sleeps with Patroclus (9.842).

Iphition: son of Otrynteus and a Naiad nymph: killed by Achilles (20.459).

Iphitus (1): father of Schedius and Epistrophus (Achaean warriors).

Iphitus (2): father of Arkheptolemos (a Trojan warrior).

IRIS: divine messenger of the gods: sent by Zeus to Trojans to get them to organize themselves, speaks to Priam (2.864 ff); visits Helen in form of Laodice (3.135); drives Ares' horses taking Aphrodite back to Olympus (5.431); Zeus sends her to intercept Hera and Athena (8.463 ff); takes message from Zeus to Hector (11.211); Zeus tells Hera to summon her (15.66); Hera tells her to go to Zeus on Ida, she does so, Zeus tell her to take message to Poseidon (15.173 ff); goes to Poseidon, persuades him to leave the battle (15.201 ff); sent by Hera to rouse Achilles (18.205); delivers Achilles' prayer to the winds (23.239); leaves Olympus to summon Thetis to Zeus, returns with her (24.97 ff); instructed by Zeus to visit Priam and tell him to visit Achilles (24.177); reaches Troy, speaks to Priam, leaves (24.199).

Isander: son of Bellerophon (6.254); killed by Ares (6.260).

Isus: bastard son of Priam, Trojan warrior: killed by Agamemnon (11.110).

Ithaemenes: father of Sthenelaus (Trojan warrior).

Ithaca: island off west coast of Greece, home of Odysseus: in catalogue of ships (2.707).

Ithome: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.801).

Iton: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.769).

Itymoneus: son of Hypeirochus, from Elis: killed by Nestor (11.761).

Ixion: husband of a woman loved by Zeus (14.378).

Jason: father of Euneos.

Laäs: town in Lacedaemon, ruled by Menelaus: in catalogue of ships (2.660).

Lacedaemon: area ruled by Menelaus (in south Peloponnese): in catalogue of ships (2.657).

Laerces: son of Haemon, father of Alcimedon (Achaean warrior).

Laertes: father of Odysseus: mentioned by Athena (2.202).

Lampos: one of Hector's horses (8.214).

Lampus: son of Laomedon, senior Trojan statesman: with Priam at the Scaean Gates, observing Helen: (3.162); father of Dolops (Trojan warrior) (15.620).

Laodamas: son of Antenor, Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (15.608).

Laodamia: daughter of Bellerophon, mother of Sarpedon: has sex with Zeus (6.253); killed by Artemis (6.262).

Laodice (1): daughter of Priam, wife of Helicaon: Iris takes on her form to visit Helen (3.135); most beautiful of Hecuba's daughters, meets Hector (6.316).

Laodice (2): daughter of Agamemnon (9.176).

Laodocus (1): son of Antenor, Trojan warrior: Athena assumes his shape (4.103).

Laodocus (2): Achaean warrior: takes armour from Antilochus (17.852).

Laogonus (1): son of Onetor, Trojan warrior: killed by Meriones (16.703).

Laogonus (2): son of Bias, Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.551).

Laomedon: father of Priam, Lampus, Tithonus, Clytius, Hicataon: Anchises gets foals from his herd (5.320); Hercules visits him for his horses (5.745); Apollo and Poseidon built a wall for him (7.529); his family (20.282); harsh treatment of Apollo and Poseidon (21.536).

Laothoë: mother of Lycaon and Polydorus, daughter of Altes, wife of Priam: Lycaon speaks of her to Achilles (21.99).

Lapith: inhabitants of a region of Thessaly: two Lapith spearmen outside the wall (12.134).

Larissa: town near Troy: in Trojan display of forces (2.923); home of Hippothous (17.387).

Leïtus: son of Alectryon, one of the Boeotian leaders in the Achaean force; in the catalogue of ships (2.570); kills Phylacus (6.41); encouraged by Poseidon in the form of Calchas (13.104); wounded by Hector (17.734).

Leleges: inhabitants of a region in northern Asia Minor, Trojan allies: encamped by the sea (10.513); Athena told Achilles to kill them (20.114); ruled by Altes (21.101).

Lemnos: island in the north-eastern Aegean Sea: Hephaestus lands there (1.667); Philoctetes abandoned there (2.792); source of wine for Achaeans (7.544); Achaean troops there (8.270); Hera goes there to meet Sleep (14.276); Hera leaves there to deceive Zeus (14.334); Achilles sold Lycaon there (21.46).

Leocritus: son of Arisbas, Achaean warrior: killed by Aeneas (17.440).

Leonteus: con of Coronus, grandson of Caeneus, leader of troops from parts of Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.819); defense of the Achaean wall (12.136); kills Hippomachus, Menon, Iamenus, Orestes (12.195 ff); enters iron-throwing contest (23.1030).

Lesbos: island in the Aegean: Agamemnon offers Achilles women from there (9.154); home of Diomede (9.840).

Lethus: son of Teutamus, father of Hippothous and Pylaeus (Trojan warriors).

Leto: goddess mother of Apollo and Artemis: (1.10); (1.39); helps to restore Aeneas (5.530); Zeus' love for her (14.388); leaves Olympus to help the Trojans (20.59); opposed by Hermes in battle (20.84); Hermes refuses to fight with her, she takes Artemis weapons (21.601); Niobe's boast that she was better than Leto (24.752).

Leucus: Achaean warrior, companion of Odysseus: killed by Antiphus (4.569).

Licymnius: uncle of Hercules, killed by Tlepolemus (2.738).

Lilaea: town in Phocis (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.598).

Limnoreia: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.50).

Lindus: city in Rhodes: in catalogue of ships (2.730).

Locrians: men from Locris in central Greece, part of the Achaean contingent: in the catalogue of ships (2.602); fight against Hector (13.818); position at the back of the battle (13.847).

Lycaon (1): father of Pandarus (Trojan warrior): advice to Pandarus (5.225 ff).

Lycaon (2): son of Priam, Trojan warrior: Apollo takes on his form (20.96); meets Achilles, begs for his life, previous encounter with Achilles, killed by Achilles (21.39 ff); silver bowl given as his ransom (23.920).

Lycastus: town in Crete: in catalogue of ships (2.722).

LYCIA/LYCIANS: region of Asia Minor whose troops are allied with the Trojans: Bellerophon sent there (6.212); Lycians' position in the plain (10.515); attitude of Lycians to their leaders (12.335); start to climb the wall (12.411); troops rallied by Sarpedon, attack the wall (12.451 ff); withdraw from Sarpedon's body (16.766); Sarpedon's body taken to Lycia by Sleep and Death (16.796).

Lycon: Trojan warrior: killed by Peneleus (16.391).

Lycomedes: son of Creon, Achaean warrior: leads out sentinels (9.103); his companion killed, kills Apisaon (17.441); helps fetch gifts for Achilles (19.296).

Lycophontes: Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.322).

Lycophron: son of Mastor, Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (15.503).

Lyctus: city in Crete: in catalogue of ships (2.721).

Lycurgus (1): son of Dryas: story of his treatment of Dionysus, and his punishment from Zeus (6.159).

Lycurgus (2): killer of Areithous (7.168).

Lyrnessus: city captured by Achilles, where he took Briseis captive (2.762); (20.109); story of Achilles' capture of the city (20.229).

Lysander: Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (11.554).

Macar: king of islands south of Lesbos (24.674).

Machaon: son of Asclepius, leader of troops from parts of Thessaly, a healer: in catalogue of ships (2.804); ordered by Talthybius to heal Menelaus, does so (4.236 ff); hit with an arrow from Paris, taken from battle by Nestor (11.569 ff); with Nestor drinking wine (14.2).

Maeander: river in Caria (in Asia Minor): in Trojan display of forces (2.953).

Maemalus: father of Peisander (Achaean warrior).

Maeon: son of Haemon: Cadmean leader in ambush against Tydeus (4.461).

Maeonia: region of Asia Minor south of Troy: (3.447); (4.166); position of Maeonian charioteers in Trojan encampment (10.518).

Maeonians: inhabitants of a region of Asia Minor, Trojan allies: in display of Trojan forces (2.947).

Maera: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.56).

Magnetes: inhabitants of Magnesia in northern Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.832).

Mantinea: town in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.685).

Maris: son of Araisodarus, Trojan warrior: attacks Antilochus, killed by Thrasymedes (16.374).

Marpessa: daugher of Euenus, mother of Cleopatra (wife of Meleager) (9.701); shares fate of the halcyon from Apollo (9.708).

Mases: town in the Argolid: in catalogue of ships (2.639).

Mastor: father of Lycophron (Achaean warrior).

Mecisteus (1): son of Talaus and father of Euryalus.

Mecisteus (2): son of Echius, Achaean warrior: takes Hypsenor back to the ships (13.509); killed by Polydamas (15.399).

Medeon: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.577).

Medesicate: bastard daughter of Priam, wife of Imbrius (Trojan warrior): (13.202).

Medon (1): Achaean warrior, bastard son of Oïleus and Rhene, leader of troops from parts of Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.798); fighting against Hector by the ships, details of his past (13.827); killed by Aeneas, details of his past (15.392 ff).

Medon (2): Trojan warrior: encouraged by Hector (17.279).

Megas: father of Perimus (Trojan warrior).

Meges: son of Phyleus, leader of troops from Doulichium (part of Aeachan army): in catalogue of ships (2.703); kills Pedaeus (5.78); fighting against Hector (13.825); collects the best troops to fight Hector (15.360); attacks Polydamas, kills Croesmus, fights Dolops (15.612 ff); kills Amphiclus (16.367); helps fetch gifts for Achilles (19.295).

Melanippus (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.323).

Melanippus (2): son of Hicataon, Trojan warrior: criticized by Hector (15.641); killed by Antilochus (15.675).

Melanippus (3): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.810).

Melanippus (4): Achaean warrior: helps to fetch presents for Achilles (19.297).

Melanthus: Trojan warrior: killed by Eurypylus (6.42).

Meleager: son of Oeneus and Althaea: (2.718); his story told by Phoenix (9.660 ff).

Meliboea: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.789).

Melite: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.50).

Melus: son of Portheus (14.141).

MENELAUS: son of Atreus, brother of Agamemnon, first husband of Helen of Troy, king of Sparta, major figure in Achaean leadership: mentioned by Achillels (1.175); goes to Agamemnon's sacrifice of an ox (2.481); in catalogue of ships (2.662); responds to Paris' challenge (3.19); speaks to Trojans and Achaeans about his duel with Paris (3.108); his earlier visit to Troy, style of speaking (3.224 ff); fights Paris, but is thwarted by Aphrodite who rescues Paris (3.375 ff); prays to Zeus for help (3.388) and speaks to Zeus of his disappointment in him (3.405); looks for Paris (3.506); hit by an arrow from Pandarus, saved by Athena (4.151); description of his wound (4.163); reassures Agamemnon about his wound (4.216); kills Scamandrius (5.54); moves up seeking to kill Aeneas, drags off corpses (5.657); kills Pylaemenes (5.675); captures Adrestus alive, told by Agamemnon to show no mercy (6.43 ff); repeated attempts to scale the walls (6.531); attempts to shame Achaeans who refuse Hector's challenge, volunteers to fight Hector (7.108); receives wine from Euneus (7.548); returns quickly to battle (8.307); has trouble sleeping, visits Agamemnon (10.28); volunteers for spy mission (10.272); asks Ajax to go with him to help wounded Odysseus, they do so (11.524 ff); takes Odysseus from the battle (11.549); attacks Helenus, wounds him (13.692); fights and kills Peisander, gloats over the body (13.715 ff); kills Hyperenor (14.603); kills Dolops (15.636); urges Antilochus to jump out in battle (15.665); kills Thoas (16.365); stands over Patroclus, fights and kills Euphorbus (17.1 ff); Apollo urges Hector against him (17.89); in doubt, withdraws before Hector (17.112 ff); urges Ajax to stand over Patroclus (17.146 ff); stands with Ajax over Patroclus' body (17.176); calls our for help for him and Ajax (17.318); encouraged to fight by Athena (in the form of Phoenix) (17.676); kills Podes (17.703); talks to Ajax about Achaeans' peril (17.764 ff); sent by Ajax to find Antilochus (17.793 ff); instructs Meriones and Ajaxes, leaves Patroclus, instructs Antilochus to tell Achilles of Patroclus' death (17.800 ff); returns to Patroclus, with Ajax and Meriones recovers Patroclus' body, retreat to ships (17.860 ff); stays with Achilles to mourn over Patroclus (19.378); enters chariot race (23.351); fouled by Antilochus during the race (23.509 ff); comes in a close third (23.630); challenges Antilochus, gets concession, gives prize back (23.693 ff).

Menesthes: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (5.713).

Menestheus: son of Peteos, leader of Athenian soldiers (fighting with the Achaeans): in catalogue of ships (2.629); upbraided by Agamemnon as he prepares for battle (4.383); asks for help to repel Sarpedon's attack, tells Thoötes to ask Ajaxes for help (12.359 ff); helps carry body of Amphimachus (13.240); fighting Hector by the ships (13.823).

Menesthius (1): son of Areithous and Phylomedusa, Achaean warrior: killed by Paris (7.10).

Menesthius (2): son of Sperchius, leader of contingent of Myrmidons (16.205).

Menoetius: son of Actor, father of Patroclus: orders to Patroclus when leaving Phthia (11.881 ff); Achilles indicates he's still alive (16.16); story of his arrival in Phthia long ago (23.103).

Menon: Trojan warrior: killed by Leonteus (12.201).

Mentes: leader of the Cicones, Trojan warrior: Apollo takes on his form (17.91).

Mentor: father of Imbrius (Trojan warrior).

MERIONES: son of Molus, attendant on Idomeneus, part of Cretan contingent in Achaean forces: in catalogue of ships (2.726); preparing for battle (4.297); kills Phereclus (5.66); volunteers to fight Hector (7.200); returns quickly to battle (8.310); leads out the sentinels (9.102); goes to council meeting (10.234); volunteers for spy mission (10.271); helps Odysseus arm for night raid (10.308); encouraged by Poseidon in form of Calchas (13.106); hits Deïphobus, spear shatters, withdraws to get another spear (13.185); meets Idomeneus by the huts, gets a spear (13.297 ff); asks Idomeneus where to rejoin the battle (13.370); Idomeneus calls to him for help (13.576); wounds Deïphobus in the arm (13.634); kills Adamas (13.677); kills Harpalion (13.776); kills Morus and Hippotion (14.601); collects the best troops to fight Hector (15.360); kills Acamas (16.399); kills Laogonus (16.702); fights Aeneas, boasts aloud, reprimanded by Patroclus (16.709 ff); comes up to help Telamonian Ajax and Menealus over Patroclus' body (17.335); speaks to Idomeneus, saves Coeranus' horses (17.756); given instructions by Menelaus (17.813); helps recover Patroclus' body (17.874 ff); helps fetch gifts for Achilles (19.296); supervises collection of wood for Patroclus' pyre (23.135); enters chariot race (23.429); comes in fourth in the chariot race (23.644); enters the archery contest and wins (23.1058); enters spear-throwing contest (23.1091).

Mermerus: Trojan warrior: armour stripped by Antilochus (14.600).

Merops: father of Adrestus and Amphius (Trojan warriors): orders his sons away from war (2.913); (11.375).

Messe: town in Lacedaemon ruled by Menelaus: in catalogue of ships (2.658).

Messeis: a spring in Greece (6.559).

Mesthles: son of Talaemenes and Gygaea, leader of Meonians (Trojan allies): in Trojan display of forces (2.947); encouraged by Hector (17.279).

Mestor: son of Priam: cursed by Priam: his death mentioned by Priam (24.320).

Methone: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.789).

Midea: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.583).

Miletus (1): city in Crete: in catalogue of ships (2.721).

Miletus (2): city in Asia Minor: in display of Trojan forces: (2.952).

Minos: king of Crete: son of Zeus, father of Deucalion (13.540); son of Zeus (14.383).

Minyeïus: river in Peloponnese: site of battle between Pylians and Epeians (11.826).

Mnesus: Trojan warrior from Paeonia: killed by Achilles (21.250).

Molion: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.366).

Molines: two sons of Poseidon, grandsons of Actor: fought against Nestor (11.808, 860).

Molus: father of Meriones (Achaean warrior): receives cap from Amphidamas, gives it to Meriones (10.319).

Morus: son of Hippotion, Trojan warrior: goes with Hector and other into the centre of the battle (13.938); killed by Meriones (14.601).

Mulius (1): son in law of Augeias, Epeian warrior: killed by Nestor (11.846).

Mulius (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.811).

Mulius (3): Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.567).

MUSES: goddess daughters of Zeus; single muse invoked at start of poem (1.1); sing for the gods (1.678); invoked for help in the catalogue or ships (2.559); their punishment of Thamyris (2.671); asked to name the best of the Achaeans (2.837); invoked to tell of the killings (14.593); invoked to tell who tossed fire on the ships (16.138).

Mycale: mountain in Caria, in Asia Minor: in Trojan display of forces (2.953).

Mycalessus: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.574).

Mycenae: city in the Argolid ruled by Agamemnon: in the catalogue of ships (2.646); Hera's special love for Mycenae (4.63); home of Periphetes (15.744).

Mydon (1): son of Atymnius, Trojan warrior: killed by Antilochus (5.680).

Mydon (2): Trojan warrior from Paeonia: killed by Achilles (21.249).

Mygdon: leader of Phrygians (3.203).

Mynes: son of Euenus, ruler of Lyrnessus, a city captured by Achilles: (2.764).

Myrine: see Batieia.

MYRMIDONS: troops from Thessaly under command of Achilles: (1.199); in catalogue of ships (2.757); activities while out of the war (2.851); preparing to re-enter the battle (16.189); organizing of soldiers (16.201); addressed by Achilles (16.235); led into battle by Patroclus (16.307 ff); prepare Patroclus' corpse, mourn with Achilles (18.429); lament with Achilles over Patroclus (23.4).

Myrsinus: town in Epeia, in northern Peloponnese: in catalogue of ships (2.693).

Mysians: Trojan allies: position in the army (10.515); Zeus looks back at their land (13.4); leader killed (14.599); presented mules to Priam (24.345).

Nastes: son of Nomion, leader of the Carians (Trojan allies): in Trojan display of forces. (2.951); brings gold to the war, killed by Achilles (2.954).

Naubolus: father of Iphitus (2.593).

Neleus: father of Nestor: takes his share of plunder (11.789).

Nemertes: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.54).

Neoptolemus: son of Achilles: being raised on Scyros (19.400).

Nereus: sea god, father of the Nereids, including Thetis.

Neritum: mountain in Ithaca: in catalogue of ships (2.708).

Nesaea: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.48).

NESTOR: king of Pylos, senior warrior among Achaeans, called "the Geranian horseman": advises Agamemnon and Achilles not to fight (1.280 ff); council meeting by his ships (2.63); responds to Agamemnon's proposal of a false order to return (2.93); speaks to

troops about their lack of wisdom, proposes a general muster of troops by regiments (2.396); summoned to sacrifice by Agamemnon (2.479); proposes a general parade of all the troops (2.508); his skill in tactics (2.632); prepares his troops for battle, gives instructions on tactics, talks to Agamemnon (4.343); tells the Argives to stop collecting loot (6.79); shames Achaeans who refuse to accept Hector's challenge (7.144); instructs Achaean to draw lots (7.205); advises Achaeans to bury the dead and build a wall (7.377); trapped with a wounded horse, rescued by Diomedes (8.89); charges Hector with Diomedes (8.134); terrified by Zeus' lightning bolt, tells Diomedes to turn back, advises Diomedes that retreat is acceptable (8.158); value of his shield (8.221); praises Diomedes, proposes they eat, then suggests an offer to Achilles (9.62); proposes the delegation to visit Achilles (9.199); visited by Agamemnon at night (10.88); criticizes Menelaus (10.136); wakes up Odysseus and Diomedes (10.164 ff); visits sentries, praises them (10.217); goes to council meeting, proposes spy mission (10.232); hears Odysseus and Diomedes returning, welcomes them (10.636 ff); position in battle (11.564); Idomeneus tells him to take Machaon from battle, he does so (11.575); reaches his hut (11.697); description of his cup (11.711); talks to Patroclus (11.726); criticizes Achilles, tells story of his youthful achievements (11.739 ff); killed Itymoneus (11.761); killed Mulius (11.846); reminds Patroclus what his father told him (11.880 ff); asks Patroclus to speak to Achilles about returning to battle (11.913); drinking wine with Machaon, goes to observe the progress of the battle (14.1); meets the wounded leaders, talks to Agamemnon (14.30 ff); prays to Zeus to help Achaeans (15.436); appeals to men's sense of shame (15.767); order to his sons (17.482); stays with Achilles to mourn over Patroclus (19.378); gives Antilochus advice in the chariot race (23.365); receives special prize from Achilles, thanks Achilles, reminds them of his past deeds (23.757).

Night: goddess: saved Sleep from Zeus' anger (14.307).

Niobe: her story told by Achilles (24.746).

Nireus: son of Charopus and Aglaea, leader of men from Syme (part of Achaean army): in catalgoue of ships (2.745).

Nisa: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.583).

Nisyrus: island in the Aegean Sea: in catalogue of ships (2.749).

Noëmon (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (5.785).

Noëmon (2): Achaean warrior, companion of Antilochus: receives mare from Menelaus (23.751).

Nomion: father of Nastes and Amphimachus (Trojan warriors).

North Wind: a god: revives Sarpedon (5.803); (9.5); (14.463); blew Hercules off course (15.31); copulates with horses of Erichthonius (20.266).

Nysa: mountain associated with Dionysus (6.163).

Ocalea: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.577).

Oceanus (Ocean): god of the river surrounding the earth: 2.246; Hera tells story of proposed visit to him (14.240, 356); depicted on the shield of Achilles (18.738); left out of assembly of gods (20.8); mentioned by Achilles (21.235).

Ochesius: father of Periphas (an Achaean warrior).

Odius (1): leader of the Halizoni, allies of the Trojans: in Trojan display of forces (2.938); killed by Agamemnon (5.42).

Odius (2): an Achaean herald: proposed for delegation to Achilles (9.208).

ODYSSEUS: son of Laertes, father of Telemachus, king of Ithaca, major warrior for the Achaean forces, commonly called "resilient" and "resourceful" and "cunning": Agamemnon threatens to take his prize (1.151); Agamemnon proposes him as possible leader of expedition to take back Cryseis (1.158); ships on as leader for expedition to take back Chryseis (1.346); sails to Chryse with Chryseis, hands her over to Chryses, sacrifices to gods (1.481 ff); returns to the army (1.532); Athena urges him to restore order to the Argives, he does so (2.201 ff); deals with Thersites (2.288); speaks to the assembly about the need to wait out the prophecy (2.327 ff); summoned to sacrifice by Agamemnon (2.480); in catalogue of ships (2.706); described by Priam, Helen, and Antenor (3.210 ff); receives Priam before both before the battle, replies (4.385); kills Democoon (4.573); moves against Lycians, kills Cocranus, Alastor, Chromius, Alcandrus, Halius, Noemon, Prytanis (5.776); kills Pidytes (6.35); volunteers to fight Hector (7.202); called by Diomedes to help Nestor, but doesn't hear, returns to ships (8.106); position of his ship (8.258); proposed as delegate to visit Achilles (9.208); visits Achilles with the delegation (9.222 ff); tells Achilles Agamemnon's offer (9.272); reports Achilles' response to Agamemnon (9.852); woken up by Nestor, arms himself, goes with Nestor to wake Diomedes (10.166 ff); volunteers for spy mission, Diomedes chooses him (10.273 ff); arms for night raid, description and history of his cap (10.308); leaves on night raid, gets omen from Athena, prays for success (10.322); sees Dolon, catches and interrogates him (10.406 ff); offers prayers and spoils to Athena (10.551); slaughters Thracians, steals their horses (10.563); reports success to Nestor (10.662); washes himself (1fo.683); calls to Diomedes to stand with him against Hector (11.353); kills Molion, Hippodamus, Hyperochus (11.366 ff); stands over wounded Diomedes (11.452); left alone, wonders what to do (11.457); wounds Deïopites, kills Thoön, Eunomos, Chrsidamas, Charops, Socus, triumphs over Socus (11.479 ff); wounded by Socus, calls to Ajax for help, retires from the battle (11.493 ff); present when Menoetius gives orders to Patroclus (11.883); assemblies and court held by

his ship (11.935); walking with the wounded leaders (14.32); criticizes Agamemnon for proposing organizing the ships for withdrawal (14.98); helps organze troops (14.447); goes to assembly called by Achilles (19.59); tries to get Achilles to think of eating before returning to battle (19.193 ff); fetches gifts for Achilles (19.294); stays with Achilles to mourn over Patroclus (19.378); enters wrestling match against Greater Ajax (23.876); enters the footrace, prays to Athena, gets her aid, wins race (23.930 ff).

Oechalia: city in Thessaly: (2.673, 801).

Oedipus: his funeral games (23.839).

Oeneus: king of Calydon, son of Portheus, father of Meleager and Tydeus, grandfather of Diomedes: in catalogue of ships (2.717); entertained Bellerophon (6.276); offends Artemis (9.668); son of Portheus, father of Tydeus (14.142).

Oenomaus (1): Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (5.812).

Oenomaus (2): Trojan warrior: moves up with Asius to assault the wall (12.148); killed by Idomeneus (13.608).

Oenops: father of Helenus (an Achaean warrior).

Oetylus: town in Lacedaemon, ruled by Menelaus: in catalogue of ships (2.661).

Oïleus (1): father of the Lesser or Oïlean Ajax, father of Medon (a bastard).

Oileus (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Agamemnon (11.100).

Old Man of the Sea: father of Thetis (divine mother of Achilles)

Olene: a large rock in Elis: in catalogue of ships (2.694); Pylians chase Epeians there (11.868).

Olenus: a town in Aetolia: in catalogue of ships (2.715).

Olizon: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.790).

Oloösson: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.811).

OLYMPUS: mountain where the major gods (the Olympians) live: left common to the three major gods (15.231).

Onchestus: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.581).

Onetor: father of Laogonus (Trojan warrior): priest of Zeus at Ida (16.703).

Ophelestes (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.321).

Ophelestes (2): Trojan warrior from Paeonia: killed by Achilles (21.251).

Opheltius (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Euryalus (6.23).

Opheltius (2): Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.342).

Opites: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.341).

Opoeis: place where Menoetius and Patroclus came from (23.103).

Orchomenus (1): city in central Greece.

Orchomenus (2): city in Acadia.

Orestes (1): Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (5.811).

Orestes (2): son of Agamemnon (9.172).

Orestes (3): Trojan warrior, moves up with Asius against the wall (12.145); killed by Leonteus (12.201).

Orion: a heavenly constellation: depicted on Achilles' shield (18.603).

Orithyia: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.56).

Ormenius: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.806).

Ormenus (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.321).

Ormenus (2): father of Amyntor.

Ormenus (3): Trojan warrior: killed by Polypoetes (12.194).

Ormeus: father of Amyntor, grandfather of Phoenix.

Orneae: town ruled by Agamemnon: in catalogue of ships (2.647).

Orsilochus (1): son of Diocles, Achaean warrior: killed by Aeneas (5.641).

Orsilochus (2): son of river Alpheus, father of Diocles. (3) Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (8.321).

Orthaeus: Trojan warrior: goes with Hector and others to the centre of the battle (13.937).

Orthe: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.810).

Orthryoneus: warrior from Cabesus, husband of Cassandra: killed by Idomeneus: (13.439 ff).

Orus: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (11.343).

Otreus: leader of Phrygians: (3.203).

Otrynteus: father of Iphition (Trojan warrior): lives in Hyde (20.461).

Otus (1): son of Aloeus, a monster: imprisoned Ares (5.454).

Otus (2): Achaean warrior from Cyllene: killed by Polydamas (15.610).

Oucalegaon: a Trojan elder: sitting with Priam and the Scaean Gates, comment on Helen (3.159).

Ouranos: divine father of Cronos.

Paeëon: god of healing: cures Hades of a wound (5.475); told to cure Ares, does so (5.1031).

Paeon: father of Agastrophus (Trojan warrior).

Paeonia: region in northern Greece: in Trojan display of forces (2.929); Paeonians encamped beside the sea (10.512); run off when their leader is killed (16.343); home of Apisaon (17.447); home of Asteropaeus (21.185).

Pallas: see Athena.

Palmys: Trojan warrior: goes with Hector and others to centre of the battle (13.938).

Pammon: son of Priam: cursed by Priam (24.310).

PANDARUS: son of Lycaon, leader of troops from Zeleia (part of Trojan forces): in Trojan display of forces (2.908); Athena persuade him to break the truce by firing at Menelaus (4.105 ff); description of his bow (4.124); hits Diomedes with an arrow (5.107 ff); challenged by Aeneas to shoot Diomedes, tells story of his coming to Troy (5.192 ff); agrees to challenge Diomedes with Aeneas (5.269); challenges and fights Diomedes and is killed (5.349 ff).

Pandion: Achaean warrior: goes to help Menestheus (12.408).

Pandocus: Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (11.553).

Panic: depicted on the aegis (5.845); grips Achaeans (9.2); on Agamemnon's shield (11.38).

Panope: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.53).

Panopeus (1): town in Phocis (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.595); home of Schedius (17.395).

Panopeus (2): father of Epeius (Achaean warrior).

Panthous: a Trojan senior statesman: with Priam at the Scaean Gates, observes Helen (3.161); father of Polydamas (15.522); father of Euphorbus (16.937).

Paphlagonians: Trojan allies: in display of Trojan forces (2.933); take Harpalion away from battle (13.782).

PARIS: son of Priam and Hecuba, brother of Hector, abductor of Helen from Menelaus: steps forward as Trojan champion (3.15); answers Hector's criticisms, offers to fight Menelaus (3.63); prepares for duel, fights, is rescued by Aphrodite (363 ff); conversation with Helen, goes to bed with her (3.477 ff); polishing his weapons at home, talks to Hector (6.393); goes to rejoin Hector, returns to battle (6.611, 7.1); kills Menesthius (7.8); rejects Antenor's proposal to give back Helen, offers to return the property (7.414); kills Nestor's horse (8.95); hits Diomedes with an arrow, shouts in triumph (11.420 ff); hits Machaon with an arrow (11.568); hits Eurypylus in the leg with an arrow (11.655); one of the leaders in the attack on the wall (12.95); Aeneas calls to him to assistance (13.591); angry at death of Harpalion, kills Euchenor (13.787); upbraided by Hector, defends himself, advances in battle (13.907); kills Deïochus (15.402); his contempt for Hera and Athena in the Judgment of Paris (24.31); cursed by Priam (24.310).

Parrhasia: town in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.686).

Parthenius: river in Paphlagonia: in display of Trojan forces (2.936).

Pasithea: one of the Graces: Hera promises her to Sleep as a bride (14.328).

PATROCLUS: son of Menoetius, an Achaean warrior, special comrade of Achilles: returns from assembly with Achilles (1.342); hands Briseis over to Agamemnon's heralds (1.381); listens to Achilles' singing (9.233); helps to entertain the Achaean delegation to Achilles (9.246 ff); sleeps with Iphis (9.841); sent by Achilles to get information about the battle (11.676); reaches Nestor's hut, talks to him (11.725 ff); responds to Nestor's request to talk to Achilles, leaves Nestor's hut, meets Eurypylus, assists him to his hut (11.931 ff); cuts arrow from Eurypylus' thigh (11.978); Zeus foretells his future (15.77); stays with Eurypylus but leaves when he hears Trojans by the ships (15.460 ff); goes to Achilles, criticizes his

heartlessness, asking to return to battle (16.2); puts on Achilles' armour, gets Automedon to prepare the chariot (16.160 ff); goes into battle, rallies his troops, kills Pyraechmes, drives Trojans from the ships (16.317 ff); kills Areilycus (16.361); pursues Trojans from the ships, kills Tronous, Thestor, Eryles, Erymas, Amphoterus, Epaltes, Tlepolemus, Echius, Pyris, Ipheus, Euippus, Polymelus (16.433 ff); goes against Sarpedon, kills Thrasymedes and Sarpedon (16.500 ff); rallies troops, urges Ajaxes to fight (16.645); fights over Sarpedon's body, kills Sthenelaus (16.678); reprimands Meriones for boasting (16.738); takes Sarpedon's armour (16.773); rallies the troops, Zeus gives him desire to fight (16.797); kills Adrestus, Autonous, Echeclus, Perimus, Epistor, Melanippus, Elasus, Mulius, Pylantes (16.806 ff); driven back from walls of Troy by Apollo (16.813 ff); attacked by Hector, kills Cebriones (16.858); fights Hector over Cebriones' body (16.875 ff); kills twenty-seven Trojans (16.910); attacked by Apollo, speared by Euphorbus, killed by Hector (16.910 ff); dying words a warning to Hector (16.978); fighting over his body (17.1 ff); dressing his corpse (18.429); Briseis laments over his corpse (19.344); his ghost visits Achilles demanding burial, requesting a common burial site with Achilles, gives details of his past (23.75).

Pedaeum: home of Imbrius.

Pedaeus: bastard son of Antenor: killed by Meges (5.78).

Pedasus (1): son of Bucolion and Abarbarea, Trojan warrior: killed by Euryalus (6.31).

Pedasus (2): town near Troy: home of Elatos (6.39); Achilles' capture of it (20.109), ruled by Altes (21.102).

Pedasus (3): city ruled by Agamemnon: offered to Achilles (9.186).

Pedasus (4): one of Achilles' horses (16.184): hit by Sarpedon's spear (16.545).

Peiraus: father of Ptolemaeus.

Peires: father of Rhigmus (Trojan warrior).

Peirithoös: father of Polypoetes (Achaean warrior): mentioned as an old colleague by Nestor (1.290); war on the centaurs (2.815); son of Zeus and the wife of Ixion (14.378).

Peirous: son of Imbrasus, leader of Thracians, part of Achaean forces: kills Diores (4.598); killed by Thoas (4.608).

Peisander (1): son of Antimachus, Trojan warrior: killed by Agamemnon (11.135 ff).

Peisander (2): Trojan warior: killed by Menelaus (13.715 ff).

Peisander (3): son of Maemalus, Achaean warrior, one of the commanders of the Myrmidons (16.230).

Peisenor: father of Cleitus (Trojan warrior).

Pelagon: alleged father of Asteropaeus (21.169).

Pelasgia: region near Troy: in the Trojan display of forces (2.922); Pelasgians encamped by the sea (10.514).

Pelegon (1): one of the Achaean warrior leaders serving under Nestor: receives his orders (4.346).

Pelegon (2): Trojan warrior, attendant on Sarpedon: removes the spear from Sarpedon's thigh (5.800)

PELEUS: father of Achilles: Nestor invokes his name to shame Achaeans (7.146); Odyssues reminds Achilles of his instructions (9.311); special instructions to Phoenix (9.548); receives Phoenix into his house (9.600); sacrificing in his house (11.889); gave instructions to Achilles going off to war (11.903); Achilles indicates he's still alive (16.17); took in Epeigeus as a suppliant (16.670); received armour from the gods, gave it to Achilles (17.252); given horses by the gods (17.549); very old or perhaps dead (19.407); welcomed Patroclus into his home (23.107); his good and bad fortune (24.559).

Pelias: father of Alcestis (mother of Eumeleus). (2.788).

Pelion: mountain in mainland Greece: home of the centaurs (2.816, 833); source of wood for Achilles' spear (16.173).

Pellene: town ruled by Agamemnon: in catalogue of ships (2.650).

Pelops: father of Atreus, grandfather of Agamemnon and Menelaus: receives royal staff from Hermes, passes it on to his son Atreus (2.121).

Peneleus: leader of the Boeotians (part of Achaean forces), in catalogue of ships (2.570); encouraged by Poseidon in the form of Calchas (13.105); kills Ilioneus (14.569); kills Lyco (16.391); wounded by Polydamas (17.728).

Peneus: river in northern Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.826, 833).

Peraebians: inhabitants of a region in north-west Greece: in catalogue of ships (2.823).

Percote: town north of Troy: in Trojan display of forces (2.912, 917); home of Pidytes (6.35); Iphidamas left his ships there (11.261); home Merops (11.375); Melanippus grazes cattle there (15.642).

Perea: place where Apollo bred horses of Admetus (2.842).

Pergamus: the high citadel of Troy: Apollo watches the battle from it (4.586); Apollo takes Aeneas there to restore him (5.529); Cassandra climbs there to observe (24.861).

Pergasus: father of Deicoön (Trojan warrior).

Periboea: daughter of Acessamenus, mother of Asteropaeus: had sex with the river Axius (21.170).

Perieres: father of Borus.

Perimedes: father of Schedius (Achaean warrior).

Perimus: son of Megas, Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.809).

Periphas (1): son of Ochesius, Achaean warrior: killed and stripped by Ares (5.964).

Periphas (2): son of Epytos, Trojan herald: Apollo takes his form (17.412).

Periphetes (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (14.602).

Periphetes (2): son of Copreus, Achaean warrior from Mycenae: killed by Hector (15.744).

Persephone: divine wife of Hades: punishes Phoenix (9.574); Althea begs her to kill Meleager (9.718).

Perseus: son of Zeus and Danaë (14.381).

Peteon: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.576).

Peteos: father of Menestheus, leader of Athenians (2.629).

Phaenops (1): father of Xanthus and Thoön (Trojan warriors): loses his heirs (5.176).

Phaenops (2): father of Phorcys (Trojan warrior).

Phaenops (3): son of Asius, Trojan warrior: Apollo takes on his form (17.710).

Phaestus (1): town in Crete: in catalogue of ships (2.722).

Phaestus (2): son of Borus, a Maeonian fighting with the Trojans: killed by Idomeneus (5.48).

Phalces: Trojan warrior: goes with Hector and others to centre of the battle (13.937); armour stripped by Antilochus (14.600).

Pharis: town in Peloponnese.

Phausius: father of Apisaon (Trojan warrior).

Phegeus: son of Dares, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.12 ff).

Pheia: town in the Peloponnese: site of fight between Pylians and Arcadians (7.158).

Pheidas: Achaean warrior: fighting against Hector (13.824).

Pheidippus: son of Thessalus, grandson of Hercules, leader of troops from many Aegean Islands: in catalogue of ships (2.751).

Pheneus: town in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.683).

Pherae (1): city in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.784).

Pherae (2): city in southern Peloponnese: offered to Achilles (9.185).

Phereclus: son of Tecton, Trojan warrior: killed by Meriones (5.66); made ships for Paris (5.69).

Pheres: father of Admetus.

Pherousa: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.52).

Philetor: father of Demuchus (a Trojan warrior).

Philoctetes: leader of troops from parts of Thessaly: left on Lemnos before reaching Troy (2.790).

Phlegyans: fighting against Ephyreans (13.366).

Phocis: territory of Phoceans (part of the Achaean contingent), in central Greece: Phoceans in the catalogue of ships (2.592).

PHOEBUS: see Apollo.

PHOENIX: son of Amyntor, old companion and tutor of Achilles, Achaean warrior: proposed as delegate to Achilles (9.206); visits Achilles with the Achaean delegation (9.222 ff); Achilles proposes he spend the night with him (9.535); responds to Achilles, tells of their special relationship, his family strife, story of Meleager (9.541 ff); stays with Achilles (9.837); leader of a contingent of Myrmidons (16.233); Athena takes on his form (17.677); stays with Achilles to mourn over Patroclus (19.379); set as umpire in the chariot race (23.440).

Phoenix (2): father of woman loved by Zeus (14.383).

Phorbas (1): father of Diomede (9.840).

Phorbas (2): father of Ilioneus (Trojan warrior): rich man, loved by Hermes (14.570).

Phorcys: son of Phaenops, leader of Phrygians (Trojan allies): in Trojan display of forces (2.945); encouraged by Hector (17.281); killed by Telamonian Ajax (17.399).

Phradmon: father of Agelaos (Trojan warrior).

Phrontis: mother of Hyperenor and Euphorbus, wife of Panthous.

Phrygia: region of Asia Minor inhabited by Phrygians, allies of the Trojans: in Trojan display of forces (2.945); Priam's visit there (3.200); (3.447); Phrygians' position in the Trojan encampment (10.516); home of Asius (16.838).

PHTHIA: region in south Thessaly (in northern Greece), home of Achilles and his father Peleus: (1.170); Achilles threatens to return there (1.186); in catalogue of ships (2.755); Achilles indicates an intention to return there (9.454); Phthians fight against Hector by the ships (13.818).

Phthires: region in Caria in Asia Minor: in Trojan display of forces (2.952).

Phylace: town in Thessaly. In catalogue of ships (2.768); home of Medon (13.829),(15.394).

Phylaces (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Leitus (6.41).

Phylaces (2): father of Iphicles.

Phyleus: father of Meges (leader of troops from Doulichium): anger at his father (2.704); his armour saves his son (15.624); one of Nestor's old opponents, beaten in the spear throw (23.787).

Phylomedusa: mother of Menesthius (an Achaean warrior).

Phylus: father of Polymele.

Pidytes: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (6.35).

Pieria: Hera goes there on the way to Sleep (14.272).

Pittheus: father of Aethrae, one of Helen's attendants: (3.157).

Pityeia: town to the north of Troy: in Trojan display of forces (2.910).

Placus: mountain by Thebe, city near Troy: (6.483).

Plataea: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.580).

Pleiades: a heavenly constellation: depicted on Achilles' shield (18.603).

Pleuron: town in Aetolia: in catalogue of ships (2.715); home of Andraemon (13.263); home of Portheus (14.140); home of Ancaeus (23.784).

Podaleirus: son of Asclepius, brother of Machaon, leader of troops from parts of Thessaly (part of Achaean army): in catalogue of ships: (2.804).

Podarchus: son of Iphicles, leader of Thessalians, brother of Protesilaus: in catalogue of ships (2.778); fighting against Hector by the ships (13.827).

Podarge: a harpy, mother of Achilles' horses (16.181; 19.481).

Podargos: one of Hector's horses (8.213).

Podargus: one of Menelaus' horses (23.353).

Podes: son of Eëtion, Trojan warrior: killed by Menelaus (17.700).

Polites: son of Priam: Iris takes on his form (2.868); his excellence in running (2.870); helps Deïphobus away from the battle (13.640); kills Echius (15.400); cursed by Priam (24.311).

Pollux: brother of Helen: already dead at home (3.261).

Polyaimon: father of Amopaon (Trojan warrior).

Polybus: son of Antentor, Trojan warrior: preparing troops for battle (11.61).

Polydora: daughter of Peleus: has sex with the river Sperchius, mother of Menesthius (16.207).

Polydorus (1): son of Priam and Laothoe, brother of Lycaon: Lycaon tells of his death at hands of Achilles (21.106).

Polydorus (2): one of Nestor's old opponents, beaten by him in the spear throw (23.787).

POLYDAMAS: son of Panthous, Trojan warrior: preparing for battle (11.59); advises Hector on tactics to assault the ditch (12.61); one of the leaders in the attack on the wall (12.92); with troops in perplexity by the ditch (12.204); advice to Hector to withdraw in face of Zeus' omen (12.220); advises Hector to attack with best men (13.861); goes with Hector and others to the centre of the fight (13.936); rallies around wounded Hector (14.497); kills Prothoënor, boasts about it (14.523 ff); stops horses of dead Cleitus (15.531); kills Mecistus (15.399); kills Otus (15.610); attacked by Meges, saved by Apollo (15.611); wounds Peneleus (17.731); advises returning to the city, warns what happens if Achilles returns to fight, criticized by Hector (18.305 ff).

Polydorus: son of Priam: killed by Achilles (20.488).

Polyidus: son of Eurydamas, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.170).

Polymele: mother of Eudorus (Achaean warrior): (16.214); sex with Hermes (16.215).

Polymelus: son of Argeas, Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.486).

Polyneices: leader of an expedition against Thebes: visit to Mycenae with Tydeus to raise troops (4.441).

Polyphemus: mentioned as an old comrade by Nestor (1.294).

Polyphetes: Trojan warrior: goes with Hector and others to the centre of the battle (13.937).

Polyphontes: son of Autophonus: leader of Cadmeans in their ambush against Tydeus (4.462).

Polypoetes: son of Peirithoös and Hippodameia, leader of troops from parts of Thessaly (part of Achaean forces): in catalogue of ships (2.812); kills Astyalus (6.34); defends the Achaean wall (12.135); kills Damaeus, Pylon, Ormenus (12.189); enters the iron-throwing contest, wins first prize (23.1029).

Polyxenus: son of Agasthenes, grandson of Augeas, a leader of Epeians (part of Achaean army): in catalogue of ships (2.700).

Portheus: great-grandfather of Diomedes: his family (14.140).

POSEIDON: major Olympian god, brother of Zeus, commonly called "Earthshaker" or "Encircler of the Earth": story of his attempt to tie Zeus up (1.443); his sacred grove at Onchestus mentioned (2.582); objects to the Achaeans building the wall (7.518); upbraids Hera for her suggestion that they intervene in the war (8.241); unyokes Zeus' horses (8.512); saved the two Molines (11.862); destroys Achaean wall in future (12.18 ff); Poseidon moves down to battle, first visiting his palace in the sea (13.12 ff); rallies Achaean in the form of Calchas (13.46 ff); encourages Teucer, Leïtus, Peneleous, Thoas, Deïpyrus, Meriones, Antilochus (13.103); rouses Achaeans (13.251); meets Idomeneus in form of Thoas (13.255); at cross purposes with Zeus,, works in secret (13.418); puts a spell on Alcathous (13.522); walks among the Achaeans, talks to Agamemnon in the form of an old man (14.163); lets out a roar, encouraging Achaeans (14.177); told by Sleep that Zeus is not awake, rouses Achaeans, leads them into battle (14.420 ff); Zeus sends Iris with order for him to leave the battle (15.187 ff); complains about Zeus, indicates the division of power in heaven (15.219); leaves the battle (15.263); asks Zeus his purposes in an assembly (20.14); leaves Olympus to help Achaeans (20.42); shakes the earth in the battle (20.69); balances Apollo in battle (20.78); talks with Hera about helping Achilles, takes them to sit on the wall built for him earlier (20.139 ff); saves Aeneas from Achilles, puts mist on Achilles eyes (20.346 ff); tells Aeneas not to fight Achilles (20.392); removes mist from Achilles eyes (20.405); his delight in sacrifice (20.485); pledges help to Achilles trapped by the river (21.344); tries to get Apollo to attack him, tells story of their hired labour for Laomedon (21.523 ff); objects to gods' plans to have Hermes steal Hector's body (24.27).

Practius: town to the north of Troy: in Trojan display of forces (2.917).

Prayers: daughters of Zeus: walk behind Folly (9.628).

PRIAM: king of Troy, husband of Hecuba, father of Hector and numerous others: mentioned by Hera (2.189); talks to Helen about Achaean troops (3.175 ff); advised by Idaios to administer oaths, goes out to the armies (3.276 ff); speaks to both armies and returns (3.341); description of his palace (6.307); tells Trojans he's send Paris' offer to return the goods to Agamemnon (7.427); orders Trojans not to lament while collecting the dead (7.499); honours Imbrius (13.205); promises Cassandra to Orthryoneus (13.446); his family tree (20.283); told Polydorus not to fight (20.490); observes Achilles, instructs gatekeepers (21.634); observes Hector isolated outside the wall, begs him to come inside (22.32); predicts his fate (22.77); reaction to sight of dead Hector (22.508 ff); lamenting in Troy, visited by Iris with instructions from Zeus (24.200); gives instructions to sons to prepare a cart, speaks to Hecuba about his trip (24.236 ff); picks out material for ransom to take to Achilles (24.287); chases Trojans from his courtyard, curses his sons (24.295); takes Hecuba's advice about making an offering to Zeus, prays to Zeus (24.372); afraid at meeting Hermes, talks to him (24.443 ff); enters Achilles' hut, pleads for the return of Hector (24.579 ff); his good and bad fortune (24.671); shares a meal with Achilles (24.771); asks Achilles for time to mourn Hector, collect wood (24.812); sleeps on Achilles' porch, woken up by Hermes (24.831); gets back to Troy (24.857); instructs Trojans to collect wood for Hector's pyre (24.957).

Proetus: ancient king of Argos: hostility to Bellerophon (6.196).

Promachus: a Boeotian warrior with Achaean forces: killed by Acamas (14.555).

Pronous: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.464).

Protesilaus: leader of troops from Thessaly (part of Achaean forces): killed while landing at Troy before anyone else (2.771).

Prothoënor: son of Areilycus, one of the Boeotian leaders in the Achaean force: in the catalogue of ships (2.571); killed by Polydamas (14.525).

Prothoön: Trojan warrior: killed by Teucer (14.602).

Prothous: son of Teuthredon, leader of the Magnetes (part of Achaean forces): in catalogue of ships (2.832).

Protiaon: father of Astynous (Trojan warrior).

Proto: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.51).

Prytanis: Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (5.785).

Pteleum (1): town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.670).

Pteleum (2): town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.771).

Ptolemaeus: father of Eurymedon (aide to Agamemnon) (4.265).

Pylaemenes: leader of Paphlagonian troops (part of Trojan forces): in display of Trojan forces (2.932); killed by Menelaus (5.675).

Pylaeus: son of Lethus, leader of troops from regions near Troy (part of Trojan army): in Trojan display of forces (2.923).

Pylantes (1): Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (11.554).

Pylantes (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.811).

Pylene: town in Aetolia: in catalogue of ships (2.715).

Pylians: residents of Pylos: fight with the Arcadians (7.156); Nestor tells story of their war with Eleans (11.759 ff); given power by Zeus (11.864).

Pylon: Trojan warrior: killed by Polypoetes (12.194).

Pylos: area in south Peloponnese, and central city in that area, ruled by Nestor: (1.278); in catalogue of ships (2.668); region of cities offered to Achilles (9.187); Nestor drove cattle there (11.773).

Pyraechmes: leader of troops from Paeonia (Trojan allies): in Trojan display of forces (2.929); killed by Patroclus (16.340).

Pyrasus (1) town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.768).

Pyrasus (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (11.554).

Pyris: Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.486).

Pytho: town in Phocis (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.595); wealth of Apollo's shrine there (9.510).

Rhadamanthus: son of Zeus (14.384).

Rhea: goddess, wife of Cronos: gave Hera to Oceanus and Tethys (14.243); her three sons with Cronos (15.224).

Rhene: mother of Medon (illegitimate son of Oïleus).

Rhesus (1): king of a Thracian contingent, Trojan allies: quality of his horses and armour, position in the camp (10.522); sleeping in the middle of his troops (10.567); killed by Diomedes (10.592).

Rhesus (2): river flowing from Mount Ida to the sea: stirred into action by Poseidon and Apollo (12.20).

Rhigmus: son of Peires, Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.582).

Rhipe:¨town in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.684).

Rhodes: large island in eastern Mediterranean: in catalogue of ships (2.729).

Rhodius: river from Mount Ida to the sea: stirred up by Poseidon and Apollo to destroy the wall (12.21).

Rhytium: town in Crete: in catalogue of ships (2.722).

Rumour: messenger from Zeus (2.109).

Salamis: island off mainland Greece, home of Telamonian Ajax.

Samos (1): island off west coast of mainland Greece, ruled by Odysseus: in catalogue of ships (2.709).

Samos (2): island in northern Aegean Sea.

Samothrace: island in the Aegean Sea: Poseidon's view point on the battle (13.12).

Sangarius: river in Phyrgia: (3.204); home of Asius (16.837).

SARPEDON: son of Zeus and Laaodamia, leader of the Lycians, Trojan allies: in Trojan display of forces: (2.960); complains of Hector's treatment of allies (5.558); challenged by Tlepolemos, kills him (5.733 ff); wounded in the thigh (5.767); appeals to Hector (5.788); has spear removed (5.800); story of his birth (6.255); leads allies in assault on the wall (12.106); stirred to action by Zeus (12.315); speech to Glaucus on the warrior ethic (12.332); upset at wounding of Glaucus, keeps fighting, kills Alcmaon, pulls down a section of the parapet (12.431 ff); hit by an arrow from Teucer, withdraws, calls to his Lycians (12.441); helps defend wounded Hector (14.498); Zeus foretells his death (15.82); rallies Lycians against Patroclus, goes against him, gods decide he must die, fights, hits one of Patroclus' horses, and dies (16.489 ff); dying words to Glaucus (16.571 ff); struggle over his body (16.657 ff); condition of his body in the fight (16.744); body taken by Apollo, given to Sleep and Death, put in Lycia (16.790 ff); his armour set up as prize for hand to hand fighting (23.985).

Satnioeis: river near Troy (14.520); home of Altes (21.103).

Satnius: son of Enops and a Naiad nymph, Trojan warrior: killed by Oïlean Ajax (14.517).

SCAEN GATES: the major gates through the Trojan walls: Helen visits the gates (3.158); Priam and Antenor go through them to armies (3.294); Hector meets Andromache and Astyanax there (6.479); limit of Hector's activity before Achilles' withdrawal (9.339); Trojans rally there (11.194); Apollo advises Hector there (16.831).

SCAMANDER: river outside Troy (also called the Xanthus), son of Zeus: (8.657); stirred up by Poseidon and Apollo to destroy the wall (12.22); wounded Hector stops there (14.507). See Xanthus.

Scamandrius (1): son of Strophius, Trojan warrior: killed by Menelaus (5.54).

Scamandrius (2): see Astyanax.

Scandia: home of Amphidamas (10.318).

Scarphe: town in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.608).

Schedius (1): son of Perimedes, Achaean warrior, commander of Phoceans: in catalogue of ships (2.592); killed by Hector (15.607).

Schedius (2): son of Iphitus, Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (17.393).

Schoenus: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.573).

Scolus: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.573).

Scyros: island in the Aegean: Achilles son being raised there (19.399).

Seasons: goddesses who look after the gates of Olympus: (5.855); (8.459); unyoke Hera's horses (8.505).

Selagus: father of Amphius (Trojan warrior).

Selepius: king of Lyrnessus, father of Euneus, grandfather of Mynes and Epistrophus.

Selleïs (1): river in north-west Greece: (2.734).

Selleïs (2): river north of Troy: in Trojan display of forces (2.921); home of Asius (12.101).

Selli: priests of Zeus at Dodona (16.279).

Semele: a woman loved by Zeus, mother of Dionysus (14.386).

Sesamus: town in Paphlagonia: in display of Trojan forces: (2.935).

Sestos: town on the north side of the Hellespont: in Trojan display of forces (2.917).

Sicyon: town ruled by Agamemnon: in catalogue of ships (2.648); home of Echepolus (23.359).

Sidon: city in Phoenicia: store of goods from Sidon in Troy (6.366).

Simoeis: river near Troy: provides ambrosia for Hera's horses (5.889); stirred up by Poseidon and Apollo to destroy the wall (12.22); Ares moves along there encouraging Trojans (20.64); Scamander appeals to him for help against Achilles (21.371).

Simoeisius: son of Anthemion, Trojan warrior: killed by Telamonian Ajax (4.549 ff).

Sipylus: mountain area where Niobe still exists (24.762).

Sisyphus: son of Aeolus, father Glaucus: lived in Ephyra (6.191).

Sleep: god, brother of death: Hera visits him on Lemnos, offers him a bride, he agrees to put Zeus to sleep (14.277 ff); goes to Ida, sits in a tree as a bird (14.335 ff); returns to the army to tell Poseidon Zeus is sleeping (14.419); deals with Sarpedon's body (16.794).

Sminthean: epithet of Apollo: (1.41).

Socus: son of Hippasus, Trojan warrior: challenges Odysseus, fights him, is killed (11.486).

Solymi: tribe in Lycia: attacked by Bellerophon (6.237).

South Wind: (2.470); (3.9).

Sparta: city in Lacedaemon, home of Menelaus and (originally) Helen: in catalogue of ships (2.658): Hera's special love for Sparta (3.63).

Speio: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.49).

Spercheus: river, father of Menesthius, after copulating with Polydora (16.206); Achilles prays to the river (23.170).

Sphelus: son of Bucolus, father of Iasus.

Stentor: Achaean warrior, famous for his loud voice: Hera takes on his shape (5.896).

Sthenelaus: son of Ithaemenes, Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.682).

STHENELUS (1): son of Capaneus, one of leaders of troops from the Argolid, special comrade of Diomedes: in catalogue of ships (2.641); upbraided by Agamemnon before battle, replies to Agamemnon (4.434 ff); pulls arrow from Diomedes (5.127); advises Diomedes to draw back (5.285); captures Aeneas' horses (5.377); removed from chariot by Athena (5.956); takes Nestor's horses (8.130); Diomedes says he'll stay with him if the army returns (9.57); collects Diomedes' prize in chariot race (23.622).

Sthenelus (2): son of Perseus, father of Eurystheus (19.152).

Stichius: Achaean warrior: carries off Amphimachus (13.241); fighting against Hector (13.824); killed by Hector (15.389).

Stratie: town in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.684).

STRIFE: goddess active in war, sister of Ares: accompanies Ares and Athena into battle (4.513); active on the battle field (5.612); leads Trojans, helping Hector (5.696); depicted on the aegis (5.845); sent by Zeus to Achaean ships, stands by Odysseus' ship, lets out a yell (11.3 ff); pleased at the killing (11.77); depicted on Achilles' shield (18.659); in action in the battle (20.57).

Strophius: father of Scamandrius (a Trojan warrior).

Stymphelus: town in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.685).

Styra: town in Euboea: in catalogue of ships (2.617).

Styx: special underground river on which gods swear their oaths: Titaressus a branch of the Styx (2.830); (8.429).

Syme: island in the Aegean Sea.

Talaemenes: father of Mesthles and Antiphus (allies of the Trojans).

Talaus: father of Mecisteus and grandfather of Euryalus.

TALTHYBIUS: one of the Achaean heralds: sent by Agamemnon to collect Briseis (1.356 ff); sent by Agamemnon to fetch sacrifical animals (3.132); ordered by Agamemnon to fetch Machaon to heal Menelaus, does so (4.226 ff); helps Agamemnon at a sacrifice (19.327); takes a cauldron from Agamemnon (23.1103).

Tarne: city in Maeonia.

Tarphe: town in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.609).

Tartarus: deep pit below the earth: Zeus threatens to send disobedient gods there (8.15); Iapetus and Cronos live there (8.565); Hera swears by gods there (14.331).

Tecton: son of Harmon, father of Phereclus (Trojan warrior).

Tegea: town in Arcadia: in catalogue of ships (2.685).

Telamon: father of the Greater Ajax and Teucer, both important Achaean warriors: father who cared for Teucer (8.331).

Telemachus: son of Odysseus: mentioned by Odysseus (2.307).

Tenedos: island a short distance off the coast from Troy: (1.41); (1.507); sacked by Achilles (11.704); (13.34).

Tereia: mountain to the north of Troy: in display of Trojan forces (2.911).

Terror: son of Ares, divine presence active in battle: accompanies Ares and Athena into battle (4.513); depicted on Agamemnon's shield (11.38); (13.362); told to get Ares' horses ready (15.143).

Tethys: wife of Oceanus: raised Hera (14.242, 357).

TEUCER: bastard son of Telamon, an Achaean warrior: kills Aretaon (6.36); returns to battle, kills Orsilochos, Ormenus, Ophelestes, Daitor, Chromius, Lycophontes, Amopaon, Melanippus, praised by Agamemnon (8.312 ff); complains how hard Hector is to hit (8.341); kills Gorgythion (8.353); kills Arkheptolemos (8.363); wounded by Hector (8.380); goes with Telamonian Ajax to help Menestheus (12.407); wounds Glaucus with an arrow (12.425); moves to attack Sarpedon, hits him with an arrow (12.441 ff); encouraged by Poseidon as Calchas (13.104); kills Imbrius (13.198 ff); kills Prothoön and Periphetes (14.602); collects the best troops to fight Hector (15.359); kills Cleitus (15.519); Zeus breaks his bow string, he complains to Ajax (15.541 ff); enters the archery contest (23.1058).

Teutamus: father of Lethus, grandfather of Hippothous and Pylaeus (Trojan warriors).

Teuthranus: father of Axylus.

Teuthras: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (5.811).

Teuthredon: father of Prothous (Achaean warrior).

Thaleia: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.48).

Thalpius: son of Eurytus, descendant of Actor, a leader of Epeians, part of the Achaean forces: in catalogue of ships (2.697).

Thalysius: father of Echepolus (Trojan warrior).

Thamyris: singer from Thrace: punishment by the Muses (2.671).

Thaumachia: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.789).

Theano: daughter of Cisseus, wife of Antenor: raises a bastard son, Pedaeus, as her own (5.79); priestess of Athena in Troy (6.374); mother of Iphidamas (11.254).

Thebaios: father of Eniopeus (Trojan warrior).

Thebe: city near Troy: Achilles tells story of its capture (1.405); captured by Achilles (2.763).

Thebes: (1) city in Boeotia: proposed expedition against it by Polyneices and Tydeus (4.442); Sthenelus boasts of its capture (4.475); Tydeus visit to Thebes (5.918); Tydeus died there (6.282); birthplace of Hercules (19.123). Lower Thebes: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.581).

Thebes (2): city in Egypt: its wealth (9.477).

Themis: goddess: hands Hera her cup, talks to her (15.106); asked by Zeus to call gods to assembly (20.6).

Thersilochus: Trojan warrior from Paeonia: encouraged by Hector (17.280); killed by Achilles (21.249).

Thersites: a common Achaean soldier: insults Agamemnon and is beaten by Odysseus (2.247 ff).

Theseus, son of Aegeus, mentioned by Nestor as an old comrade (1.294).

Thespeia: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.574).

Thessalus: father of Pheidippus and Antiphus (leaders of troops from Aegean Islands).

Thestor (1): father of the prophet Calchas (1.74).

Thestor (2): father of the Achaean warrior Alcmaon.

Thestor (3): son of Enops, Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.467).

THETIS: divine sea nymph, mother of Achilles, daughter of the old man of the sea: responds to Achilles' prayer for help, visits him (1.396 ff); story of her saving Zeus from other gods (1.439); laments Achilles' fate, offers to seek Zeus help for him (1.460); visits Zeus, ask for help for Achilles (1.551 ff); Athena complains about Zeus' favour to her (8.431); told Achilles his fate (9.516); took in Epeigeus as a suppliant (16.670); doesn't tell Achilles of Patroclus' death (17.511); hears Achilles' cry of grief, leads the lament in the sea (18.44 ff); goes to Achilles (18.79); promises to get armour for Achilles, sends her sisters away, goes to Olympus (18.158 ff); visits Hephaestus to get weapons for Achilles (18.458 ff); helped Hephaestus (18.502); tells Hephaestus Achilles' story, asks for new weapons (18.529); leaves Olympus with armour for Achilles (18.747); gives Achilles the divine armour (19.3 ff); tells Achilles to renounce his anger (19.41); meets Iris who summons her to Zeus, goes to Olympus, hear Zeus' solution to problem of Hector's body (24.103); receives instructions from Zeus, visits Achilles, tells him to accept a ransom (24.128).

Thisbe: town in Boeotia: in catalogue of ships (2.578).

Thoas: (1) son of Andraemon, leader of Aetolians (part of Achaean army): in catalogue of ships (2.714); kills Peirous ; volunteers to fight Hector (7.201); encouraged by Poseidon in form of Calchas (13.105); Poseidon takes on his form (13.262); sees restored Hector, proposes the best men remain in battle and the rest go back to the ships (15.336); helps fetch gifts for Achilles (19.296).

Thoas (2): king of Lemnos: (14.276); received gift of a fine silver bowl (23.919).

Thoas (3): Trojan warrior: killed by Menelaus (16.365).

Thoë: a Nereid (daughter of Nereus): laments with her sisters (18.49).

Thoön (1): son of Phaenops, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.174).

Thoön (2): Trojan warrior: killed by Odysseus (11.481).

Thoön (3): Trojan warrior: comes up with Asius to assault the wall (12.146); killed by Antilochus (13.652).

Thoötes: Achaean herald: asked by Menestheus to get help from Ajaxes, does so (12.371).

Thrace: region north of the Hellespont: home of Iphidamas (11.253); (13.365); Hera goes over there on the way to visit Sleep (14.274).

Thracians: inhabitants of Thrace, allies of the Trojans: in Trojan display of forces (2.925); new arrivals in the camp (10.521).

Thrasius: Trojan warrior from Paeonia: killed by Achilles (21.250).

Thrasymedes: (1) son of Nestor, Achaean warrior: leads out the sentinels (9.100); attends council meeting (10.234); volunteers for spy mission (10.271); gives Diomedes a sword (10.303); Nestor takes his shield (14.11); kills Maris (16.377); position in the battle (17.477); sent by Menelaus to help (17.860); helps fetch gifts for Achilles (19.295).

Thrasymelus: Trojan warrior, companion of Sarpedon: killed by Patroclus (16.542).

Thronion: town in Locris (in central Greece): in catalogue of ships (2.259).

Thryoessa: city in war between Pylians and Epeians (11.810).

Thryum: town ruled by Nestor: in catalogue of ships (2.668).

Thyestes: brother of Atreus, thus uncle of Agamemnon and Menelaus, not a character in the Iliad: receives royal staff from Atreus, passes it on to Agamemnon (2.123).

Thymbraeus: Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (11.364).

Thymbre: town near Troy: (10.514).

Thymoetes: senior Trojan statesman: with Priam at the Scaean Gates, observing Helen (3.161).

Timolus: mountain in Asia Minor, near Hyde (20.462).

Tiryns: city in the Argolid: in catalogue of ships (2.637).

Titans: gods imprisoned by Zeus in Tartarus (14.331).

Titanus: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.807).

Titaressus: river in north-western Greece, a branch of the river Styx: special quality of its waters (2.825).

Tithonus: lover of Dawn (11.1); son of Laomedon (20.283).

Tlepolemus (1): son of Hercules and Astyocheia, leader of troops from Rhodes, part of Achaean army: in catalogue of ships (2.728); story of his murder of Licymnius (2.731); challenges Sarpedon, fights, and dies (5.733 ff).

Tlepolemus (2): son of Damastor, Trojan warrior: killed by Patroclus (16.485).

Tmolus: mountain in Meonia: in Trojan display of forces (2.950).

Trachis: town in Pelasgian Argos: in catalogue of ships (2.755).

Trechus: Achaean warrior: killed by Hector (5.812).

Tricca: town in Thessaly: in catalogue of ships (2.801).

Tritogeneia: a name associated with Athena.

Troezene: town in the Argolid: in the catalogue of ships (2.638).

Troezenus: father of Euphemus (Trojan ally), son of Ceos.

Troilus: son of Priam: mentioned by Priam (24.320).

TROJANS: inhabitants of Troy (thus separate from their allies): march out in formation (3.2); pray that the truce will hold (3.333, 355); their hatred for Paris (3.510); sense the gods will break the truce (4.98); move to battle in a confusion of languages (4.506); rallied by

Ares (5.549); go out to collect their dead (7.490); move out against Achaeans (8.63); given renewed force by Zeus (8.391); prepare a feast and sacrifice in the plain (8.639); Dolon reveals their arrangement in camp (10.499); pushed back to city by Agamemnon (11.173 ff); advanced against Odysseus (11.471); organize themselves to attack the wall (12.89); charge the Achaeans by the wall (12.110); attempts to undermine the wall (12.274); following Hector to attack the ships (13.42); advance against Achaeans inside the wall (13.160); charge Achaeans en masse (13.401); attack Achaeans in close formation (13.946); retreat from the ships (15.1); Zeus foretells the future of the war (15.74 ff); attack Achaeans (15.364); fight their way to the ships (15.453); attack the ships (15.693); driven back from the ships (16.346); response to Sarpedon's death (16.638); charge Ajax guarding the body of Patroclus (17.301); charge Achaeans again over body of Patroclus (17.339); encourage each other over Patroclus' body (17.526); terrifed by Achilles shout (18.275); hold assembly to decide what to do (18.299 ff); reject Polydamas' advice (18.388); escape Achilles into the city (21.729); reaction to sight of dead Hector (22.508); rush out to see Priam returning with Hector (24.873); collect wood for Hector's pyre, give him funeral rites (24.964).

Tros (1): son of Alastor, Trojan warrior: killed by Achilles (20.555).

Tros (2): son of Erichthonius, father of Ilus, Assaracus, Ganymede, earlier king of Troy, ancestor of Priam, father of Ganymede: quality of his horses giiven as payment from Zeus for Ganymede (5.314); his story told by Aeneas (20.275).

Tychius: maker of Ajax's shield (7.261).

Tydeus: father of Diomedes: story of his achievements (4.436); achieves retold by Athena (5.913); killed at Thebes (6.282); Diomedes invokes him in prayer to Athena (10.339); Diomedes speaks of him (14.138 ff).

Typhoeus: fabulous monster held captive underground by Zeus: Achaean army compared to T. (2.861).

Wain: a constellation of stars (also called the Bear): depicted on Achilles' shield (18.604).

West Wind: (2.173); whips up the sea (9.5); conceived Achilles' horses with Podarge (16.182); Iris delivers a message to the winds at his home (23.241).

Xanthus (1): one of Hector's horses (8.213).

Xanthus (2): son of Phaenops, Trojan warrior: killed by Diomedes (5.174).

Xanthus (3): river in Lycia (Asia Minor): in Trojan display of forces (2.961); Bellerophon goes there (6.220); near Sarpedon's estates (12.338).

XANTHUS (4): river outside Troy, also called the Scamander, also the god of the river: leaves Olympus to help the Trojans (20.49); opposes Hephaestus in battle (20.86); Achilles kills men in the river (21.20 ff); river gets angry at Achilles' slaughter of Trojans (21.164 ff); calls to Achilles to stop the slaughter (21.252); cries out to Apollo about Achilles' conduct (21.275); attacks Achilles (21.284); calls to his brother to help against Achilles (21.371); burned by Hephaestus, agrees to stop fighting Achilles, appeals to Hera (21.427 ff); springs feeding the river (22.184).

Xanthus (5): one of Achilles horses (16.180); talks to Achilles (19.486).

Zacynthus: island off west coast of Greece, part of area ruled by Odysseus: in catalogue of ships (2.709).

Zeleia: town close to Troy on lower slopes of Mt. Ida: in Trojan display of forces (2.906).

Zephyrus: the west wind: Achilles prays to it for help, Iris delivers his message, he complies (23.235 ff). See West Wind.

ZEUS: most powerful of the gods, common called "the son of Cronos," "cloud gatherer," "lord of the lightning bolt," "aegis bearing," brother and husband of Hera, father of numerous gods: mentioned in the invocation (1.6); Agamemnon claims a special relationship with Z. (1.194); story of Zeus' being saved by Thetis from other gods (1.439); returns from Ethiopians, visited by Thetis, agrees to grant her request to help Achilles (1.549 ff); threatens Hera if she keeps pestering him (1.627); goes to sleep with Hera beside him (1.685); worried about how to deal with Thetis' request, sends Dream to Agamemnon (2.1 ff); receives royal staff from Hephaestus, passes it on to Hermes (2.118); Agamemnon blames Zeus for their lack of success (2.130); Odysseus tells of his serpent omen eating birds and being turned to stone (2.362 ff); omens when Achaeans set out to sea (2.415); refuses Agamemnon's prayer (2.494); special favours for people of Rhodes (2.743); sends Iris to organize Trojans (2.865); declines sacrifice of Achaeans and Trojans for a truce (3.340); in assembly of gods, provokes Hera (4.2 ff); agrees to break truce, instructs Athena to see to it (4.83); tells Aphrodite to stay away from battle (5.508); tells Athena to chase Ares from the battle (5.874); appealed to by wounded Ares, chastises him, blaming Hera (5.994 ff); steals Glaucus' wits (6.298); answers Poseidon's objection about Achaean wall (7.530); plots bad things for troops (7.555); tells gods not to intervene in the war, boasts of his strength (8.4); responds to Athena, leaves Olympus for Ida (7.44 ff); holds up his golden scales, result favours the Trojans, sends thunderclap (8.77); sends a lightning bolt to stop Diomedes (8.153); peals thunder three times to stop Diomedes (8.195); gives glory to Hector (8.250); pities Agamemnon, sends bird omen to the Achaeans (8.287); puts renewed force into Trojans (8.391); Athena complains about his favours to Thetis (8.430); angry and Zeus and Hera, sends Iris to stop their visit to the battle (8.463 ff); returns to Olympus from Ida (8.510); reveals his plan to glorify Hector and Achilles (8.549); Agamemnon complains of his deceit (9.19); punishes Phoenix (9.574); sends Strife to Achaean ships (11.3); send down rain of blood (11.54); gazes at the battle (11.85); pulls

Hector back (11.186); goes to Ida, send Iris with order for Hector (11.208 ff); looks from Ida onto battle, makes the contest equal (11.382); makes Telamonian Ajax afraid (11.615); put power into Pylians (11.864); helps to destroy Achaean wall in future (12.27); desires to give Hector glory (12.181); omen sent to soldiers (12.209); Zeus sends winds from Ida to disorient Achaeans (12.270); stirs Sarpedon to action (12.315); gives glory to Hector (12.482); turns away from the battles (13.3); at cross purposes with Poseidon (13.418); reaction to being deceived by Sleep over Hercules (14.292); seduced by Hera on Mount Ida (14.345 ff); list of his various sexual encounters (14.377); wakes up on Ida, sees wounded Hector, berates Hera, reminds her of her earlier punishment, tells her the future of the war (15.4 ff); sends Iris with orders for Poseidon to leave the battle, boasts of his strength (15.186 ff); division of power in his family (15.224); instructs Apollo to restore wounded Hector (15.266); hears Nestor's prayer, sends a thunder clap (15.446); breaks Teucer's bow string (15.541); strengths Trojans, weakens Achaeans (15.694); neutralizing Ajax's strength (16.147); hears Achilles' prayer (16.298); pities Sarpedon, agrees he must die, sends blood rain (16.504); spreads darkness over the battle (16.661); ponders options, takes Hector's courage (16.750 ff); tells Apollo to take Sarpedon's body to Lycia (16.775); gives Patroclus desire to fight (16.802); gives Hector Patroclus' (Achilles') helmet (16.927); responsible for a warrior's courage (17.227); observes Hector putting on Achilles' armour, fits armour to Hector, fills him with strength (17.256); helps Achaeans defend Patroclus' body (17.348); makes battle over Patroclus destructive (17.502); pities Achilles' horses in mourning for Patroclus, refuses to let Hector have them, gives horses strength (17.546 ff); shakes aegis, peals thunder, awarding victory to Trojans (17.723); responds to Ajax's prayer, removes mist from Achaeans (17.790); conversation with Hera about Achilles' return (18.443); Agamemnon blames him for quarrel (19.107); once deceived by Ate (19.117 ff); threw Ate from Olympus (19.156); Agamemnon prays to him, swears he has not had sex with Briseis (19.315); pities Achilles, tells Athena to give him strength (19.414); asks Themis to call assembly of gods, lets gods join the war (20.6 ff); thunders in the battle (20.67); once rescued Aeneas from Achilles (20.110); his love for Dardanus and hatred for Priam (20.364); Achilles appeals to him for help to escape the river Scamander (21.327); laughs to see the gods fighting amongst themselves (21.467); consoles Artemis after Hera beats her (21.610); watches Achilles chasing Hector, considers sparing Hector, sends Athena to intervene (22.206); raises his scales, determining Hector's fate (22.260); refuses to permit Hermes to steal the body of Hector, sets up a compromise, calls for someone to summon Thetis (24.78); instructs Thetis to tell Achilles to compromise over Hector's body (24.127); instructs Iris to visit Priam, tell him to go to Achilles to get Hector (24.177); hears Priam's prayer, sends an omen, instructs Hermes to guide Priam (24.392 ff); description of his two jars of gifts (24.650); turned people to stone (24.758).

LIST OF THE DEATHS

The following is a chronological list of the killings in the Iliad in which the participants are named. The list includes only those who die during the course of this particular part of the war and thus omits those deaths from the past which are described or referred to in some of the characters' accounts of their past exploits (e.g., Nestor's various triumphs) or earlier in the war (e.g., Protesilaus).

The line numbers refer to the on-line translation by Ian Johnston. The symbols A and T designate the character as a member of the Achaean or Trojan forces.

Antilochus (A) kills Echepolus (T) (spear in the head) (4.529)
Agenor (T) kills Elephenor (A) (spear in the side) (4.543)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Simoeisius (T) (speared in the nipple) (4.549)
Antiphus (T) kills Leucus (A) (speared in the groin) (4.569)
Odysseus (A) kills Democoön (T) (spear through the head) (4.579)
Peirous (T) kills Diores (A) (hit with a rock, then speared in the gut) (4.598)
Thoas (A) kills Peirous (T) (spear in the chest, sword in the gut) (4.608)
Diomedes (A) kills Phegeus (T) (spear in the chest) (5.19)
Agamemnon (A) kills Odius (T) (spear in the back) (5.42)I
domeneus (A) kills Phaestus (spear in the shoulder) (5.48)
Menelaus (A) kills Scamandrius (spear in the back) (5.54)
Meriones (A) kills Phereclus (T) (spear in the buttock) (5.66)
Meges (A) kills Pedaeus (A) (spear in the neck) (5.78)
Eurypylus (A) kills Hypsenor (T) (arm cut off) (5.86)
Diomedes (A) kills Astynous (T) (spear in the chest) (5.164)
Diomedes (A) kills Hypeiron (T) (sword in the collar bone) (5.165)
Diomedes (A) kills Abas (T) (5.170)
Diomedes (A) kills Polyidus (T) (5.170)
Diomedes (A) kills Xanthus (T) (5.174)
Diomedes (A) kills Thoon (T) (5.174)
Diomedes (A) kills Echemmon (T) (5.182)
Diomedes (A) kills Chromius (T) (5.182)
Diomedes (A) kills Pandarus (T) (spear in the nose) (5.346)
Agamemnon (A) kills Deicoon (T), spear in the stomach (5.630)
Aeneas (T) kills Crethon (A)
Aeneas (T) kills Orsilochus (A)
Menelaus (A) kills Pylaemenes (T), spear in the collar bone (5.675)
Antilochus (A) kills Mydon (T), sword in the head, stomped by his horses (5.680)
Hector (T) kills Menesthes (A) (5.714)
Hector (T) kills Anchialus (A) (5.714)
Telamonian Ajax kills Amphius (T), spear in the gut (5.717)
Sarpedon (T) kills Tlepolemus (A), spear in the neck (5.764)
Odysseus (A) kills Coeranus (T) (5.783)

Odysseus (A) kills Alastor (T) (5.783)
Odysseus (A) kills Chromius (T) (5.783)
Odysseus (A) kills Alcandrus (T) (5.784)
Odysseus (A) kills Halius (T) (5.784)
Odysseus (A) kills Noemon (T) (5.784)
Odysseus (A) kills Prytanis (T) (5.784)
Hector (T) kills Teuthras (A) (5.811)
Hector (T) kills Orestes (A) (5.811)
Hector (T) kills Trechus (A) (5.812)
Hector (T) kills Oenomaus (A) (5.812)
Hector (T) kills Helenus (A) (5.813)
Hector (T) kills Oresbius (A) (5.813)
Ares kills Periphas (A) (5.970)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Acamas (T), spear in the head (6.9)
Diomedes (A) kills Axylus (T) (6.14)
Diomedes (A) kills Calesius (T) (6.20)
Euryalus (A) kills Dresus (T) (6.23)
Euryalus (A) kills Opheltius (T) (6.23)
Euryalus (A) kills Aesepus (T) (6.24)
Euryalus (A) kills Pedasus (T) (6.24)
Polypoetes (A) kills Astyalus (T) (6.33)
Odysseus (A) kills Pidytes (T), with his spear (6.34)
Teucer (A) kills Aretaon (T) (6.35)
Antilochus (A) kills Ableros (T), with his spear (6.35)
Agamemnon (A) kills Elatus (T) (6.38)
Leitus (A) kills Phylacus (T) (6.41)
Eurypylus (A) kills Melanthius (6.42)
Agamemnon (A) kills Adrestus (T), spear in the side (6.76)
Paris (T) kills Menesthius (A) (7.8)
Hector (T) kills Eioneus (A), spear in the neck (7.11)
Glaucus (T) kills Iphinous (A), spear in the shoulder (7.13)
Diomedes (A) kills Eniopeus (T), spear in the chest (8.138)
Diomedes (A) kills Agelaos (T), spear in the back (8.300)
Teucer (A) kills Orsilochos (T), with an arrow (8.321)
Teucer (A) kills Ormenus (T), with an arrow (8.321)
Teucer (A) kills Ophelestes (T), with an arrow (8.321)
Teucer (A) kills Daitor (T), with an arrow (8.322)
Teucer (A) kills Chromius (T), with an arrow (8.322)
Teucer (A) kills Lycophontes (T), with an arrrow (8.322)
Teucer (A) kills Amopaon (T), with an arrow (8.323)
Teucer (A) kills Melanippus (T), with an arrow (8.323)
Teucer (A) kills Gorgythion (T), with an arrow (8.353)
Teucer (A) kills Archeptolemos (T), with an arrow (8.363)
Diomedes (A) kills Dolon (T), sword across the neck (10.546)

Diomedes (A) kills twelve sleeping Thracian soldiers (10.579) (includes Rhesus)
Agamemnon (A) kills Bienor (T) (11.99)
Agamemnon (A) kills Oileus (T), spear in the head, (11.103)
Agamemnon (A) kills Isus (T), spear in the chest (11.109)
Agamemnon (A) kills Antiphus (T), sword in the head (11.120)
Agamemnon (A) kills Peisander (T), spear in the chest (11.160)
Agamemnon (A) kills Hippolochus (T), sword cuts off his head (11.165)
Agamemnon (A) kills Iphidamas T), sword in the neck (11.270)
Agamemnon (A) kills Coön (T), spear in the side (11.295)
Hector (T) kills Asaeus (A) (11.341)
Hector (T) kills Autonous (A) (11.341)
Hector (T) kills Opites (A) (11.341)
Hector (T) kills Dolops (A) (11.342)
Hector (T) kills Opheltius (A) (11.324)
Hector (T) kills Agelaus (A) (11.325)
Hector (T) kills Aesymnus (A) (11.325)
Hector (T) kills Orus (A) (11.343)
Hector (T) kills Hipponous (A) (11.325)
Diomedes (A) kills Thymbraeus (T), spear in the chest (11.364)
Odysseus (A) kills Molion (T) (11.366)
Diomedes (A) kills two sons of Merops (Adrestus and Amphius) (T) (11.375)
Odysseus (A) kills Hippodamas (T) (11.381)
Odysseus (A) kills Hypeirochus (T) (11.381)
Diomedes (A) kills Agastrophus (T), spear in the hip (11.384)
Paris (T) wounds Diomedes (A), arrow in the foot (11.430)
Odysseus (A) kills Deïopites (T) (11.479)
Odysseus (A) kills Thoön (T) (11.481)
Odysseus (A) kills Ennomus (A) (11.481)
Odysseus (A) kills Chersidamas (T), spear in the groin (11.481)
Odyssues (A) kills Charops (T) (11.485)
Odysseus (A) kills Socus (T), spear in the back (11.506)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Doryclus (T) (11.552)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Pandocus (T) (11.553)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Lysander (T) (11.554)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Pyrasus (T) (11.554)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Pylartes (T) (11.554)
Eurypylus (A) kills Apisaon (T), spear in the liver (11.650)
Polypoetes (A) kills Damasus (T), spear through the cheek (12.190);
Polypoetes (A) kills Pylon (T) (12.194)
Polypoetes (A) kills Ormenus (T) (12.194)
Leonteus (A) kills Hippomachus, spear in the stomach (12.196)
Leonteus (A) kills Antiphates (T), struck with a sword (12.198)
Leonteus (A) kills Menon (T) (12.201)
Leonteus (A) kills Iamenus (T) (12.201)

Leonteus (A) kills Orestes (T) (12.201)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Epicles (T), rock in the skull (12.416)
Sarpedon (T) kills Alcmaon (A), spear in the body (12.434)
Teucer (A) kills Imbrius (T), spear in the ear (13.198)
Hector (T) kills Amphimachus (A), spear in the chest (13.227)
Idomeneus (A) kills Othryoneus (T), spear in the gut, (13.439 ff)
Idomeneus (A) kills Asius (T), spear in the neck (13.472)
Antilochus (A) kills Asius' charioteer, spear in the gut (13.482)
Deïphobus (T) kills Hypsenor (A), spear in the liver (13.488) (wounded?)
Idomeneus (A) kills Alcathous (T), spear in the chest (13.514 ff)
Idomeneus (A) kills Oenomaus (T), spear in the stomach (13.608)
Deïphobus (T) kills Ascalaphus (A), spear in the shoulder (13.621)
Meriones (A) wounds Deïphobus (T) spear in the arm (13.634)
Aeneas (T) kills Aphareus (A), spear in the throat (13.647)
Antilochus (A) kills Thoön (A), spear in the back) (13.652).
Meriones (A) kills Adamas (T), spear in the testicles (13.677).
Helenus (T) kills Deïpyrus (A), sword on the head (13.687)
Menelaus (A) kills Peisander (T), sword in the head (13.731)
Meriones (A) kills Harpalion (T), arrow in the buttock (13.776)
Paris (T) kills Euchenor (A), arrow in the jaw (13.800)
Oïlean Ajax (A) kills Satnius (T), spear in the side (14.517)
Polydamas (T) kills Prothoënor (A), spear in the shoulder (14.525)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Archelochus, spear in the neck (14.540)
Acamas (T) kills Promachus (A), spear (14.555)
Peneleus (A) kills Ilioneus (T), spear in the eye (14.570)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Hyrtius (14.597)
Meriones (A) kills Morys (14.601)
Meriones (A) kills Hippotion (14.601)
Teucer (A) kills Prothoön (T) (14.602)
Teucer (A) kills Periphetes (T) (14.602)
Menelaus (A) kills Hyperenor (T), spear through the side (14.603)
Antilochus (A) kills Phalces (T) (14.600)
Antilochus (A) kills Mermerus (T) (14.600)
Hector (T) kills Stichius (A) (15.389)
Hector (T) kills Arcesilaus (A) (15.389)
Aeneas (T) kills Medon (A) (15.392)
Aeneas (T) kills Iasus (A) (15.392)
Polydamas (T) kills Mecisteus (A) (15.399)
Polites (T) kills Echius (A) (15.400)
Agenor (T) kills Clonius (15.401)
Paris (T) kills Deïochus (A), spear through the back (15.402)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Caletor (T), spear in the chest (15.491)
Hector (T) kills Lycophron (A) spear in the head (15.503)
Teucer (A) kills Cleitus (A), arrow in the back of the neck (15.521)

Hector (T) kills Schedius (A) (15.607)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Laodamas (T) (15.608)
Polydamas (T) kills Otus (A) (15.610)
Meges (A) kills Croesmus (T), spear in the chest (15.616)
Menelaus (A) kills Dolops (T), speared in the back (15.636)
Antilochus (A) kills Melanippus (T), spear in the chest (15.675)
Hector (T) kills Periphetes (A), spear in the chest (15.744)
Patroclus (A) kills Pyraechmes (T), spear in the shoulder (16.339)
Patroclus (A) kills Areilycus (T), spear in the thigh (16.361)
Menelaus (A) kills Thoas (T), spear in the chest (16.365)
Meges (A) kills Amphiclus (T), spear in the leg (16.367)
Antilochus (A) kills Atymnius (T), spear in the side (16.372)
Thrasymedes (A) kills Maris (T), spear in the shoulder (16.377)
Oïlean Ajax (A) kills Cleobulus (T), sword in the neck (16.386)
Peneleus (A) kills Lyco (A), sword in the neck (16.395)
Meriones (A) kills Acamas (T), spear in the shoulder (16.399)
Idomeneus (A) kills Erymas (T), spear in the mouth (16.403)
Patroclus (A) kills Pronous (T), spear in the chest (16.464)
Patroclus (A) kills Thestor (T), spear in the head (16.477)
Patroclus (A) kills Erylaus (T), rock on the head (16.479)
Patroclus (A) kills Erymas (T) (16.484)
Patroclus (A) kills Amphoterus (T) (16.484)
Patroclus (A) kills Epaltes (T) (16.484)
Patroclus (A) kills Tlepolemus (T) (16.485)
Patroclus (A) kills Echius (T) (16.485)
Patroclus (A) kills Pyris (T) (16.486)
Patroclus (A) kills Ipheus (T) (16.486)
Patroclus (A) kills Euippus (T) (16.486)
Patroclus (A) kills Polymelus (T) (16.486)
Patroclus (A) kills Thrasymedes (T), spear in the gut (16.542)
Patroclus (A) kills Sarpedon (T), spear in the chest (16.559)
Hector (T) kills Epeigeus (A), rock on the head (16.666)
Patroclus (A) kills Sthenelaus (T), rock on the head (16.682)
Glaucus (T) kills Bathycles (A), spear in the chest (16.691)
Meriones (A) kills Laogonus (T), spear in the jaw (16.702)
Patroclus (A) kills Adrestus (T) (16.808)
Patroclus (A) kills Autonous (T) (16.809)
Patroclus (A) kills Echeclus (T) (16.809)
Patroclus (A) kills Perimus (T) (16.809)
Patroclus (A) kills Epistor (T) (16.810)
Patroclus (A) kills Melanippus (T) (16.810)
Patroclus (A) kills Elasus (T) (16.811)
Patroclus (A) kills Mulius (T) (16.811)
Patroclus (A) kills Pylartes (T) (16.811)

Patroclus (A) kills Cebriones (T), rock in the head (16.859)
Patroculs (A) kills twenty-seven anonymous Trojans (16.913)
Hector (T) kills Patroclus (A) (16.993)
Menelaus (A) kills Euphorbus (T), spear in the throat (17.60)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Hippothous (T), spear in the head (17.377)
Hector (T) kills Schedius (A), spear in the collar (17.393)
Telamonian Ajax (A) kills Phorcys (T), spear in the gut (17.399)
Aeneas (T) kills Leocritus (A), (17.439)
Lycomedes (A) kills Apisaon (T) (17.443)
Automedon (A) kills Aretus (T), spear in the gut (17.636)
Menelaus (T) kills Podes (T), spear in the stomach (17.704)
Hector (T) kills Coeranus (A), spear in the head (17.744)
Achilles (A) kills Iphition (T), spear in the head (20.463)
Achilles (A) kills Demoleon (T), spear in the head (20.476)
Achilles (A) kills Hippodamas (T), spear in the back (20.480)
Achilles (A) kills Polydorus (T), spear in the back (20.488)
Achilles (A) kills Dryops (T), spear in the knee, sword thrust (20.546)
Achilles (A) kills Demouchos (T) spear thrust (20.548).
Achilles (A) kills Laogonus (T), spear thrust (20.551)
Achilles (A) kills Dardanus (T), sword thrust (20.551)
Achilles (A) kills Tros (T), sword in the liver (20.555)
Achilles (A) kills Mulius (T), spear in the head (20.567)
Achilles (A) kills Echeclus (T), sword on the head (20.569)
Achilles (A) kills Deucalion (T), sword in the neck (20.573)
Achilles (A) kills Rhigmus (T), spear in the gut (20.581)
Achilles (A) kills Areithous (T), spear in the back (20.586)
Achilles (A) kills Lycaon (T), sword in the neck (21.138)
Achilles (A) kills Asteropaeus (T), sword in the stomach (21.215)
Achilles (A) kills Thersilochus (T) (21.249)
Achilles (A) kills Mydon (T) (21.249)
Achilles (A) kills Astypylus (T) (21.250)
Achilles (A) kills Mnesus (T) (21.250)
Achilles (A) kills Thrasius (T) (21.250)
Achilles (A) kills Aenius (T) (21.250)
Achilles (A) kills Ophelestes (T) (21.251)
Achilles (A) kills Hector (T), spear through the throat (22.410)

SPEAKERS AND SPEECHES IN HOMER'S ILIAD

The following is an alphabetical list of all the speakers in Homer's *Iliad*, together with a short description of each speech (location, subject matter, number of lines). This count is based upon Ian Johnston's translation of the *Iliad*; hence, the length of the speeches is somewhat longer than in the original Greek and will differ a little from a count of other translations. In reckoning the length of each speech, I have considered partial lines equivalent to complete lines.

Note that when a god takes on the form of a mortal and speaks to someone, the speech is assigned to the god, not to the mortal character.

ACAMAS
14.558-566: boasts to the Achaeans after killing Promachus. (9)

ACHAEAN TROOPS:
1.27: shout to release Chryseis (1);
2.321-327: approve of how Odysseus has silenced Thersites (7);
3.334-339: pray to Zeus that the oaths will be kept (6);
3.356-360: pray to Zeus before the single combat between Menelaus and Paris (5);
4.98-100: respond to the appearance of Athena on the battlefield (3);
7.212-214: pray to Zeus that the draw will pick the right warrior to face Hector (3);
7.240-244: pray to Zeus that Ajax will be successful against Hector (5);
17.519-525: tell each other to keep fighting over Patroclus' corpse (7);
22.468-470: talk to each other as they stab Hector's corpse (3).

ACHILLES
1.62-72: suggests the Achaeans consult a prophet about Apollo's anger (11);
1.90-96: agrees to protect Calchas from Agamemnon, if he interprets Apollo's anger (7);
1.131-140: tells Agamemnon they can't give him a new prize now (10);
1.163-188: loses his temper with Agamemnon, says he'll go home (26);
1.219-223: asks Athena why she's come down to the Achaean meeting (5);
1.235-238: tells Athena he'll obey her instructions to curb his temper (4);
1.245-269: insults Agamemnon, tells them he'll withdraw from the war (25);
1.326-339: tells Agamemnon he will kill if they try to take anything else (14);
1.370-381: welcomes Talthybius and Eurybates, tells Patroclus to hand over Briseis. (12);
1.390-396: prays to Thetis for respect from Zeus (7);
1.405-459: tells Thetis what has happened, asks her to intervene with Zeus (55);
9.240-243: welcomes the Achaean leaders who have come from Agamemnon (4);
9.247-250: tells Patroclus to prepare wine for the Achaean leaders (4);
9.384-538: rejects Agamemnon's offer of gifts, says he'll return home (155);
9.766-782: rejects Phoenix's plea to return to battle, tells him stay overnight (17);
9.815-829: responds to the greater Ajax, says he may return (15);
11.685-695: asks Patroclus to find out the name of a wounded man (11);

16.7-24: asks Patroclus why he's crying (18);
16.62-125: tells Patroclus he can go to war, sets conditions (64);
16.154-159: tells Patroclus to go the war, now that the ships are burning (6);
16.238-252: gives a speech to his Myrmidons before they go off the war (15);
16.278-298: prays to Zeus that Patroclus will come safely back from the war (21);
18.6-18: states his worries about what's happened to Patroclus (13);
18.95-116: laments the death of Patroclus, says he has no desire to continue living (22);
18.122-158: speaks to Thetis of his resolve to go back to the fight and then die (37);
18.225-226: asks Iris which god sent her to him (2);
18.233-243: complains to Iris that he has no armour (11);
18.404-428: addresses the Myrmidons, talks about the funeral of Patroclus (25);
19.24-33: acknowledges to Thetis how fine the divine armour is (10);
19.67-90: speaks to Agamemnon and the Achaeans about an end to his anger (24);
19.183-192: tells Agamemnon they should resume the fighting as soon as possible (10);
19.248-266: tells Agamemnon he won't eat until after the fighting (19);
19.329-337: tells Achaeans to eat so that they can start the fighting (19);
19.371-376: tells the Achaeans not to ask him to eat (6);
19.383-411: laments over Patroclus (29);
19.480-485: speaks to his horses about bringing him back safely (6);
19.505-510: replies to his horse (6);
20.211-238: taunts Aeneas on the battlefield, reminding him of their earlier encounter (28);
20.408-419: wonders what's happening to his eyesight and where Aeneas has gone (12);
20.421-434: calls out to his men to fight (14);
20.467-471: boasts aloud and taunts Iphition after killing him (5);
20.508-511: yells when he sees Hector moving up against him (4);
20.513-514: shouts out to Hector to come closer so he can kill him (2);
20.537-545: shouts out to Hector when Hector escapes him on the battlefield (9);
21.62-73: expresses his surprise at seeing Lycaon by the river (12);
21.116-135: answers Lycaon, refuses to spare his life (20);
21.144-163: taunts the corpse of Lycaon as he throws it in the river (20);
21.180-182: asks Asteropaeus who he is (3);
21.220-239: taunts the corpse of Asteropaeus (10);
21.269-273: tells Scamander he'll stop killing men in the river (5);
21.327-343: complains to Zeus about being attacked by the river (17);
22.19-27: expresses his anger to Apollo for tricking him (9);
22.325-341: rejects Hector's attempt to negotiate terms of their fight (17);
22.415-423: shouts in triumph after spearing Hector in the throat (9);
22.424-446: tells dying Hector that he will not respect his corpse (23);
22.459-462: shouts at dead Hector that he will accept his own death (4);
22.474-493: talks to the troops after killing Hector (20);
23.6-12: tells his Myrmidons to go with the horses to mourn Patroclus (7);
23.21-27: laments over Patroclus's corpse (7);
23.48-63: refuses to wash until Patroclus is buried, tells men to eat (16);
23.113-118: asks the ghost of Patroclus to remain (6);

23.123-129: wonders about the ghost of Patroclus (7);
23.172-183: offers up a hair of his head for Patroclus (12);
23.187-193: tells Agamemnon to dismiss the men from the pyre (7);
23.215-222: speaks to Patroclus's corpse, saying he's done everything he promised (8);
23.282-299: tells Agamemnon to arrange to douse the fire and collect Patroclus's bones (18);
23.324-343: invites the Achaean leaders to compete in a chariot race (20);
23.601-609: tells Idomeneus and Oïlean Ajax not to continue quarrelling (9);
23.653-656: proposes giving Eumelus the second prize (4);
23.682-688: tells Antilochus that he will give Eumelus a different prize (7);
23.759-767: offers Nestor a prize in the funeral games (9);
23.813-820: invites competitors to step out for the boxing (8);
23.874: invites competitors for the wrestling contest (1);
23.906-909: tells Ajax and Odysseus they can stop their wrestling contest (4);
23.927-928: invites competitors for the footrace (2);
23.978-980: says he'll give Antilochus an extra prize for a compliment (3);
23.987-998: invite competitors for the armed combat (2);
23.1021-1028: invites competitors for the iron throwing contest (8);
23.1052-1057: sets out prizes for the archery competition (6);
23.1094-1099: offers Agamemnon a prize without a contest (6);
24.171-174: tells Thetis he'll give Hector's body back (4);
24.638-684: talks to Priam of Zeus's two jars (47);
24.694-708: tells Priam not to irritate him (15);
24.732-738: apologizes to Patroclus for returning Hector (7);
24.742-770: tells Priam Hector has been given back, recounts the story of Niobe (29);
24.802-812: asks Priam how many days he needs to bury Hector (11);
24.826-828: agrees to suspend the fighting for Hector's burial (3).

ADRESTUS
6.53-57: begs Menelaus to spare his life and ransom him (5).

AENEAS
5.194-205: tells Pandarus to shoot an arrow at Diomedes (12);
5.256-268: invites Pandarus to join him in an attack on Diomedes (13);
16.716-718: taunts Meriones on the battlefield (3);
17.427-436: shouts out to Hector to attack the Achaeans with him (10);
20.103-122: tells Apollo (in the form of Lycaon), of his encounter with Achilles (20);
20.239-310: tells Achilles his lineage before they begin fighting (72).

AGAMEMNON
1.28-35: refuses to return Chryseis (8);
1.113-129: agrees to return Chryseis but demands another prize (17);
1.142-161: says he'll take someone else's prize, since Chryseis is to be returned (20);
1.190-204: tells Achilles he'll take Briseis (15);

1.318-324: asks Nestor why they should let Achilles say such insulting things (7);
1.357-361: instructs Talthybius and Eurybates to collect Briseis from Achilles (5);
2.65-91: tells Achaeans about his dream; proposes his scheme to order the men home (27);
2.128-164: tells the army they're going home, since the expedition has failed (17);
2.440-468: responds favourably to Nestor's suggestion for a group display (29);
2.485-494: prays on behalf the army for success in the coming battles (10);
3.91-92: yells at the army to settle down and listen to Hector's proposal (2);
3.307-326: prays to Zeus that the armies will respect each other's oaths (20);
3.513-517: tells the Trojan army to give compensation (5);
4.181-215: tells of his distress, now that Menelaus has been hit by Pandarus's arrow (35);
4.222-224: tells Menelaus that healers must inspect his wound (3);
4.226-231: orders Talthybius to fetch Machaon to inspect Menelaus's wound (6);
4.273-279: encourages Argive troops to fight (7);
4.282-291: tries to shame soldiers holding back from the battle (10);
4.301-311: encourages Idomeneus before the fight (11);
4.334-342: compliments the two Ajaxes as they get ready for battle (9);
4.365-371: praises Nestor for his fighting spirit, wishes he were younger (7);
4.396-408: chides Menestheus and Odysseus for not moving into battle (13);
4.420-427: apologizes to Odysseus for criticising him (8);
4.433-469: rebukes Diomedes and Sthenelus for not moving into battle (37);
5.625-629: encourages the troops, telling them to recall their honour (5);
6.63-72: criticises Menelaus for wanting to spare Adrestus, tells him to kill all Trojans (10);
7.126-140: talks Menelaus out of accepting Hector's challenge for single combat (15);
7.476-483: informs Idaios that they reject Paris' offer but accept the truce (8);
8.266-285: chastises the Argives for not standing up to Hector, prays to Zeus for help (20);
8.328-340: congratulates Teucer on his archery, promises him a reward (13);
9.18-33: tells the counsellors they should go back, since they're not going to succeed (16);
9.137-198: lists the presents he's prepared to give Achilles if he will return to battle (62);
9.848-852: asks Odysseus how Achilles responded to his offer of gifts (5);
10.48-70: tells Menelaus they need advice, sends him to summon Ajax and Idomeneus (23);
10.77-85: instructs Menelaus where to stay so the leaders can meet (9);
10.102-121: identifies himself to Nestor, suggests they walk to the sentries (20);
10.144-154: defends Menelaus to Nestor (who has just criticized him) (11);
10.277-285: tells Diomedes he should choose someone to go with him (9);
11.153-159: denies mercy to the sons of Antimachus (7);
11.314-317: shouts to the troops to guard the ships (4);
14.47-58: greets Nestor at the ships, tells him how worried he is (12);
14.75-98: proposes to leaders that they get the ships ready to leave for home (24);
14.128-134: accepts Odysseus's criticism of him, asks if anyone has a plan (7);
19.94-181: speaks to the Achaeans about how he was deluded by Ate (88);
19.229-246: tells Odysseus to select the men to fetch the presents for Achilles (18);
19.316-325: swears an oath he has not touched Briseis (10).

AGENOR
21.665-687: wonders about what to do when confronted by Achilles (23);
21.700-708: challenges Achilles before they fight (9).

AJAX (Greater)
7.227-237: accepts the lot to fight Hector, tells the Achaeans to pray for success (11).
7.268-275: speaks to Hector before their single combat (8);
7.332-334: tells Idaios to ask Hector if he wants to stop fighting (3);
9.787-813: urges Achilles to think of his comrades (27);
12.289-299: with Oïlean Ajax encourages the troops not to run back to the ships (11);
12.401-405: tells Oïlean Ajax to stay where he is, while he goes to help Menestheus (5);
13.88-92: tells Oïlean Ajax that he feels the power Poseidon has just given him (5);
13.948-961: challenges Hector in the middle of the fighting (14);
14.546-552: shouts in triumph to Polydamas after killing Archelochus (7);
15.510-516: tells Teucer that Lycophron has been killed, asks him where his bow is (7).
15.554-561: tells Teucer to forget about his bow and to get a spear (8);
15.590-605: shouts encouragement to the Achaean troops (16);
15.658-661: shouts out encouragement to the troops, tells to remember shame (4);
15.846-858: shouts to the troops that there's no way out, they have to fight (13);
17.307-317: tells Menelaus to shout out to Achaean leaders to defend Patroclus's corpse (11);
17.767-789: tells Menelaus their situation is desperate, as they defend Patroclus's corpse (13);
17.794-799: tells Menelaus to find Antilochus and send him to Achilles (6);
17.873-881: suggests to Menelaus that he and Meriones lift Patroclus's corpse (9);
23.891-894: tells Odysseus to try lifting him (4).

AJAX (Oïlean or Lesser)
12.289-299: with Telamonian Ajax encourages the troops not to run back to the ships (11);
13.75-86: tells Telamonian Ajax that they've just been talking to a god (12);
23.578-588: ridicules Idomeneus for being old and having poor eyesight (11);
23.963-965: comments on how Athena is always helping Odysseus (3).

ALCIMEDON
17.581-587: asks Automedon what he's doing alone in Achilles'S chariot (7) .

ANDROMACHE
6.498-538: asks Hector to pity her and stay within the walls of Troy (41);
22.561-574: tells her servants her worries about Hector (14);
22.593-641: laments at the sight of Hector's corpse (49);
24.891-919: laments over the body of Hector (29).

ANTENOR
3.223-246: tells his impressions of Menelaus and Odysseus in an earlier encounter (24);
7.405-412: proposes in council that the Trojans give back Helen and her possessions (8).

ANTILOCHUS
18.21-26: informs Achilles of the death of Patroclus (6)
23.487-506: urges his horses to catch Menelaus' team. (20);
23.662-679: objects to Achilles giving away the second prize to Eumelus (18);
23.721-731: gives the prize to Menelaus and says he doesn't want to offend (11);
23.968-976: comments on how fast Odysseus and Achilles can run (9).

APHRODITE
3.435-440: in the form of a wool carder, tells Helen that Paris is in their bedroom (6);
3.463-467: threatens to punish Helen for disobedience (5);
5.424-428: begs Ares for his horses so she can go back to Olympus (5);
5.443-448: tells Dione that it was Diomedes who wounded her (6);
14.231-235: tells Hera she will do what Hera asks (5);
14.256-258: tells Hera it would be inappropriate to refuse Hera's request (3);
14.265-268: instructs Hera in how to wear her erotic charms (4).

APOLLO
4.588-593: orders the Trojan to attack the Argives, tells them Achilles is not in the battle (6);
5.522-525: shouts at Diomedes to retreat from his attack on Aeneas (4);
5.539-545: asks Ares to get Diomedes away from the battle (7);
5.550-556: tells Priam's sons to help of Aeneas, under attack from Diomedes (7);
7.26-36: asks Athena why she's visiting the battle, proposes they stop the fighting for the day (11);
7.44-49: proposes to Athena that they get Hector to challenge the Argives to single combat (6);
15.293-295: asks Hector why he's having fainting spells (3);
15.306-314: reassures Hector, tells him he'll smooth the horses path across the ditch (9);
16.824-828: shouts at Patroclus, telling him to get back from the city (5);
16.840-847: in form of Asius, tells Hector to attack Patroclus (8);
17.93-102: in the form of Mentes tells Hector not to chase Achilles's horses (10);
17.417-423: in the form of Periphas urges Aeneas to defend Troy (7);
17.713-720: in the form of Phaenops tells Hector that Podes has been killed (8);
20.98-101: in the form of Lycaon challenges Aeneas to fight Achilles (4);
20.124-132: as Lycaon encourages Aeneas to take on Achilles (9);
20.450-454: warns Hector not to confront Achilles directly (5);
21.556-562: declines Poseidon's invitation to fight (7);
22.9-18: tells Achilles he's been chasing a god (10);
24.36-65: complains to the gods about Achilles's treatment of Hector's body (30).

ARES
5.996-1016: complains to Zeus about Athena's conduct on the battlefield (21);
15.138-142: reacts to Hera's news that he favourite human son has been killed (5);
21.472-479: complains to Athena about her conduct (8).

ARTEMIS
21.567-574: chides Apollo for not fighting Poseidon (8);
21.617-619: tells Zeus that Hera hit her (3).

ASIUS
12.170-179: complains to Zeus about the two Lapiths guarding the Achaean wall (10).

ASTEROPAEUS
1.184-194: tells Achilles his identity before they fight (11).

ATHENA
1..225-234: tells Achilles not to draw his sword against Agamemnon (10);
2.202-213: tells Odysseus to stop the troops from getting into the ships and leaving (12);
4.109-122: in the form of Laodocus, tells Pandarus to shoot an arrow at Menelaus (14);
5.34-38: urges Ares to leave the battle with her, to avoid Zeus's anger (5);
5.142-151: tells Diomedes she's helping him, instruct him not to fight the gods (10);
5.500-506: with Hera teases Zeus about Aphrodite's wound (7);
5.914-930: criticises Diomedes for not living up to his father's standard (17);
5.945-955: instructs Diomedes to attack Ares (11);
7.38-42: agrees with Apollo to stop the fighting for the day, asks him how to do that (5);
8.36-43: assures Zeus they know his strength, tells of her concern for the Argives (8);
8.416-443: complains to Hera about Zeus, tells Hera she'll arm for battle (28);
10.609-612: tells Diomedes to return from his night spy mission (4);
15.154-171: berates Ares for wanting to flout Zeus by entering the battle (18);
17.678-682: in the form of Phoenix tells Menelaus to stand firm by Patroclus's corpse (5);
21.491-497: taunts Ares after striking him with a rock (7);
21.514-520: cries in triumph after knocking down Aphrodite (7);
22.220-225: tells Zeus the gods do not approve of sparing Hector (6);
22.268-277: tells Achilles to rest while she gets Hector to fight (10);
22.283-287: in the form of Deïphobus offers to help Hector against Achilles (5);
22.297-305: in the form of Deïphobus urges Hector to attack Achilles (9).

AUTOMEDON
17.589-595: answers Alcimedon, invites him to guide Achilles's chariot (7);
17.617-625: tells Alcimedon to keep the horses close to him in the fight (9);
17.627-635: calls to the Ajaxes and Menelaus for help against Hector and Aeneas (9);
17.658-661: boasts after killing Aretus (4).

BRISEIS
19.348-365: laments for Patroclus (18).

CALCHAS
1.78-88: requests protection from Achilles if he interprets Apollo's anger (11);
1.98-108: tells Achaeans Apollo is angry because of their treatment of Chryseis (11).

CASSANDRA
24.866-870: cries out to the city that Hector's body has returned to Troy (5).

CEBRIONES
11.589-600: tells Hector they should move to another part of the battle (12).

CHARIS
18.478-481: welcomes Thetis to her home (4);
18.486: calls out to Hephaestus to come (1).

CHRYSES
1.20-25: pleads with Menelaus and Agamemnon for the release of his daughter (6);
1.39-46: prays to Apollo to hurt the Achaeans for not giving his daughter back (8);
1.506-512: prays to Apollo to stop hurting the Achaeans (7).

DEIPHOBUS
13.490-493: boasts to the Achaeans after killing Hypsenor (4);
13.545-551: shouts to Aeneas for help fighting over the body of Alcathous (7).

DIOMEDES
4.481-489: tells Sthenelus not to quarrel with Agamemnon (9);
5.124-126: asks Sthenelus to pull the arrow out of his shoulder (3);
5.131-138: prays to Athena to help him kill Pandarus (8);
5.298-326: praises Aeneas's horses, tells Sthenelus to catch them (29);
5.341-344: responds to Pandarus's joy at having hit him with a spear (4);
5.410-415: tells Aphrodite to leave the battlefield (6);
5.705-711: advises his men to fall back in the face of Hector's attack (7);
5.932-943: answers Athena's criticisms, saying he was following her instructions (12);
6.150-177: asks Glaucus who he is, says he won't fight him if he's a god (28);
6.275-295: suggests to Glaucus that they not fight but exchange presents (21);
7.470-472: urges Achaeans not to accept Paris's offer of reparations (3);
8.106-111: calls to Odysseus to come with him to assist Nestor (6);
8.117-128: calls to Nestor to get in his chariot, since Nestor's horses are too slow (10);
8.168-173: tells Nestor how he's afraid of being shamed if he turns back in the battle (6);
9.37-59: criticizes Agamemnon's defeatist attitude, says he's not going to return if the others do (23);
9.878-892: tells Agamemnon to forget about Achilles and to encourage the troops (15);
10.197-202: asks Nestor what he doing waking him up in the middle of the night (6);
10.261-278: volunteers for the night spy mission, asks for a partner to go with him (18);
10.288-294: says he would like Odysseus to go with him on the night spy mission (7);
10.338-351: prays to Athena for success and help on the night spy mission (14);
10.440-442: warns Dolon to stop or he'll be killed (3);
10.536-543: tells Dolon why he has to kill him (8);
11.360-363: tells Odysseus he'll stay and stand up to the Trojan attack with him. (4);

11.394-395: tells Odysseus they're about to be overwhelmed and should make a stand (2);
11.410-418: yells out to Hector after the latter recovers from being hit by Diomedes's spear (9);
11.440-451: insults Paris after being hit by his arrow, boasts about his own battle prowess (9);
14.135-161: proposes to the wounded Achaean leaders they encourage the fighting warriors (27).

DIONE
5.438-441: asks Aphrodite who wounded her (4);
5.450-495: reassures Aphrodite by telling her of ways in which gods have been hurt by mortals (46).

DOLON
10.381-391: at a meeting of Trojan volunteers for the mission to spy on the Achaeans (11);
10.449-453: begs Odysseus and Diomedes to spare his life and ransom him (5);
10.465-476: tells Odysseus the details of his spy mission (12);
10.493-505: gives Odysseus further details about the Trojan and allied army (13);
10.511-534: tells Odysseus the precise location of allied forces and the armour of king Rhesus (24).

DREAM
2.25-41: in form of Nestor, gives Zeus's message about capturing Troy to Agamemnon (17).

EPEIUS
23.824-834: states that he's going to win the boxing competition (11).

EUPHORBUS
17.15-22: asks Menelaus to move away from Patroclus's body, threatens to kill him (8);
17.45-56: responds to Menelaus, invites him to start fighting (12).

EURYPYLUS
11.662-666: calls to troops to stand by the greater Ajax (5);
11.953-968: tells Patroclus the Achaeans are in trouble, asks Patroclus for medical treatment (16).

GLAUCUS
6.179-271: responds to Diomedes's question, tells about his family, including Bellerophon (93);
16.599-614: prays to Apollo for strength to defend Sarpedon's body (16);
16.625-638: tells Hector to come to the defence of Sarpedon's body (14);
17.180-217: tells Hector to fight for Patroclus's corpse, accuses him of being afraid to face Ajax (38) .

HECUBA
6.318-329: asks Hector why he is in the city, offers him wine (12);
22.102-111: appeals to Hector to come inside the gates (10);
22.538-545: laments at the sight of Hector's corpse (8);
24.250-271: protests to Priam about his proposed trip to the Achaean ships (22);
24.355-371: tells Priam to pray to Zeus and ask for a favourable omen (17);
24.922-934: laments over Hector's body (13).

HECTOR
3.38-62: insults Paris (Alexander) for not standing up to Menelaus in single combat (25);
3.95-106: proposes to both armies a single combat between Menelaus and Paris (12);
6.138-142: shouts to Trojan army to keep fighting while he goes to the city (5);
6.331-361: refuses Hecuba's offer of wine, tells her to assemble the women and pray to Athena (31);
6.402-411: insults Paris, urges him to join the fighting (10);
6.446-454: informs Helen he is going to visit his home, asks her to get Paris to hurry up (9);
6.462-466: asks his housekeeper where Andromache has gone (5);
6.539-573: tells Andromache he'd be shamed if he didn't keep fighting (35);
6.583-591: prays to Zeus that his son may be a great warrior (9);
6.595-605: reassures Andromache, tells her to go about her business (11);
6.634-646: tells Paris he's a good soldier but holds himself back too much (13);
7.76-105: makes a challenge to the Argives to fight someone in single combat (30);
7.277-290: responds to Ajax's challenge before their single combat (14);
7.336-354: tells Ajax he's ready to stop fighting and exchange gifts (19);
8.183-191: taunts Diomedes for turning back from combat (9);
8.199-211: shouts encouragement to the troops, urging them on (13);
8.213-228: urges his horses to run after Diomedes' chariot (16);
8.584-638: issues instructions to the army about staying out overnight on the plain (55);
10.361-373: at a meeting of Trojans calls for a volunteer to spy on the Achaeans (13);
10.393-396: says he will give Dolon Achilles's horses if he succeeds in his spy mission (4);
11.325-330: calls out to the troops to fight harder now Agamemnon is leaving the battle (6);
12.247-268: rejects Polydamas's interpretation of an omen, says they'll keep fighting (22);
12.486-488: shouts out to the Trojans to attack the wall and burn the ships (3);
13.175-180: shouts to the Trojan troop to hold their positions against Achaeans (6);
13.883-885: tells Polydamas to stay where he is while he organizes troops elsewhere (3);
13.901-907: taunts Paris, asks him where the Trojan and allied leaders are (7);
13.966-976: responds to a challenge of Telamonian Ajax on the battlefield (11);
15.297-304: gives Apollo details about how he was wounded with a rock (8);
15.411-415: shouts to the Trojans to charge the ships (5);
15.497-501: calls to the troops to rally around the corpse of Caletor (5);
15.570-587: shouts out encouragement to his troops (18);
15.648-655: taunts Melanippus to get him to attack the Argives (8);
15.829-838: shouts out to the Trojans to bring fire to the ships (10);

16.963-978: speaks words of triumph over the dying Patroclus (16);
16.999-1002: tells the dead Patroclus not to predict his death (4);
17.219-236: responds to Glaucus's insult, tells him to observe his conduct on the battlefield (15);
17.238-242: shouts out to the troops that he's going to put on Patroclus's armour (5);
17.283-300: urges on the allied leaders to push Ajax away from Patroclus's body (18);
17.600-606: asks Aeneas to come with him to capture Achilles's chariot (7);
18.353-387: attacks Polydamas for suggesting a retreat to the city (35);
20.437-446: encourages his men, says he'll confront Achilles (10);
20.516-524: responds to Achilles's challenge on the battlefield (9);
22.122-164: worries about his options as Achilles approaches (43);
22.289-295: welcomes Athena in the form of Deïphobus (7);
22.309-323: tries to negotiate with Achilles before the fight (15);
22.350-362: challenges Achilles during their fight (13);
22.373-386: realizes he is about to die (14);
22.425-432: begs Achilles to treat his body with respect (8);
22.448-455: warns Achilles that his death will come soon (8).

HELEN
3.187-196: expresses regret about her situation to Priam, identifies Agamemnon for him (10);
3.219-221: identifies Odysseus for Priam (3);
3.252-268: identifies the greater Ajax and Idomeneus for Priam, wonders about her brothers (17);
3.443-461: complains to Aphrodite about her treatment, refuses to obey her (19);
3.480-490: criticizes Paris for not facing up to Menelaus (11);
6.425-444: tells Hector what a bad opinion she has of herself and her husband (Paris) (20);
24.938-955: lament over Hector's body (18).

HELENUS
6.92-126: advises Hector to rally the troops in front of the city (35);
7.54-61: suggests to Hector that he challenge Argives to a single combat (8).

HEPHAESTUS
1.644-655: tries to stop the bickering between Zeus and Hera (12);
1.658-669: tells his mother not to stand up to Zeus (12);
18.488-507: welcomes Thetis into his home, speaks of his being raised by her (20);
18.524-529: asks Thetis why she's come to see him (6);
18.577-582: tells Thetis he'll make armour for Achilles (6).

HERA
1.602-605: questions Zeus about his scheming with some other god (4);
1.615-626: tells Zeus her suspicions about his dealing with Thetis (12);
2.185-195: tells Athena to go down to the troops to stop them going home (11);

4.29-36: rejects Zeus' proposal to end the war (8);
4.62-82: suggests Athena gets Trojans to break the truce (21);
5.500-506: with Athena teases Zeus about Aphrodite's wound (7);
5.820-825: complains to Athena about Ares' conduct on the battlefield (6);
5.864-873: asks Zeus if she can hurt Ares and get him out of the battle (10);
5.899-905: shouts to the Achaean army, insulting them for their lack of success (7);
8.232-240: asks Poseidon about his feelings for Achaeans and about defying Zeus (9);
8.408-414: complains to Athena about Hector's success (7);
8.497-503: remarks to Athena that they have to abandon their plan to enter the battle (7);
8.541-548: tells Zeus she'll refrain from fighting, but will give advice to the Danaans (8);
14.227-230: asks Aphrodite if she will do what she asks (4);
14.237-254: asks Aphrodite to give her erotic charms (18);
14.279-288: asks Sleep to make Zeus fall asleep, promises him a reward (10);
14.314-320: reassures Sleep, offers him Pasithea as his wife (7);
14.356-371: tells Zeus she's going to visit Oceanus (16);
14.394-405: tells Zeus that if he wants to make love they should do it in his bedroom (12);
15.44-57: swears to Zeus she had no hand in the help Poseidon is giving the Achaeans (14);
15.111-119: tells Themis not to question her (9);
15.124-135: tells the gods they are fooling to get angry at Zeus (12);
15.176-178: orders Apollo and Iris to go to Zeus on Mount Ida (2);
16.516-537: insists to Zeus that Sarpedon must die, tells him to deal properly with the body (20);
18.448-456: tells Zeus she's entitled to hurt the Trojans (9);
20.139-160: talks to the gods about interfering in the fight between Aeneas and Achilles (22);
20.371-380: tells Poseidon he'll have to save Aeneas on his own (10);
21.396-410: tells Hephaestus to burn the river Xanthus and the corpses (15);
21.454-456: orders Hephaestus to stop his fires (3);
21.504-507: orders Athena to go after Aphrodite on the battlefield (4);
21.578-588: insults and taunts Artemis (11);
24.66-77: tells gods they should not compare Achilles and Hector (12).

HERMES
21.600-604: declines to fight Leto (5);
24.448-461: in the form of a young man offers to protect Priam (14);
24.470-477: in the form a young man asks Priam what he's doing out at night (8);
24.482-500: tells Priam he's an Achaean warrior with Achilles (9);
24.508-523: tells Priam that Hector's body has been preserved by the gods (16);
24.536-545: declines Priam's offer of a gift, offers to guide Priam to Achilles (10);
24.566-575: reveals his identity to Priam (10);
24.842-849: warns Priam that it's time to leave Achilles's camp (8).

HIPPOLOCHUS
11.145-150: begs Agamemnon for his life, asking for ransom (6).

HOUSEKEEPER
6.468-479: tells Hector that Andromache has gone to the walls of Troy (10).

IDAIOS
3.277-289: tells Priam the armies are expecting him on the plain (to administer an oath) (13);
7.326-330: tells Ajax and Hector to stop their single combat (5);
7.451-467: informs the Argives of Paris' offer to give reparations, asks about a truce (17);
24.437-442: warns Priam about the approach of Hermes (6).

IDOMENEUS
4.313-320: responds to Agamemnon, tells him to rouse other Achaeans (8);
11.576-582: tells Nestor to drive Machaon back to the ships (7);
13.258-268: tells Poseidon he doesn't know what's wrong with the Achaeans (11);
13.289-296: asks Meriones what he's doing away from the battle (8);
13.303-309: tells Meriones he has plenty of captured weapons (7);
13.321-347: praises Meriones's courage and prowess as a warrior (27);
13.367-387: tells Meriones they should rejoin the battle on the left (21);
13.442-455: taunts Othryoneus after hitting him with a spear (14);
13.524-535: boasts to Deïphobus after killing Alcathous (12);
13.568-575: shouts to Achaean leaders for help against Aeneas (8);
23.556-576: comments that Diomedes seems to be winning the chariot race (21);
23.589-596: insults Oïlean Ajax for his stupidity (8).

IRIS
2.877-890: in the form of Polites, tells Priam and Hector to organize and lead out the army (14);
3.144-152: in the form of Laodice, informs Helen of the combat between Menelaus and Paris (9);
8.482-495: delivers to Hera and Athena Zeus's order to return and his threats (14);
11.227-239: gives Hector a message from Zeus (13);
15.206-218: gives Poseidon Zeus's orders to leave the battle (13);
15.242-246: asks Poseidon if he really wants to defy Zeus's order to leave the battle (5);
18.210-223: tells Achilles to do something to protect the corpse of Patroclus (14);
18.228-231: informs Achilles that Hera has sent her to him (4);
18.245-251: tells Achilles to show himself to the Trojans (7);
23.245-253: tells the winds she can't stay, passes on Achilles's prayer for a wind (9);
24.109-110: tells Thetis that Zeus is calling for her (2);
24.211-234: delivers Zeus's instructions to Priam (24).

LYCAON
21.85-114: pleads with Achilles for his life (30).

MENELAUS
3.109-125: responds to Hector's proposal of a single combat between Menelaus and Paris (17);
3.388-393: prays to Zeus that he will kill Paris as revenge for breach of hospitality (6);
3.404-409: complains to Zeus about lack of success against Paris (6);
4.217-221: tells Agamemnon his wound (an arrow from Pandarus) is not serious (5);
7.110-119: expresses his disgust that no one has accepted Hector's challenge, says he will (10);
10.40-46: asks Agamemnon why he is arming himself in the middle of the night (7);
10.72-75: asks Agamemnon how he wants him to carry out his order (4);
11.526-533: tells greater Ajax they should help out Odysseus in the battle (8);
13.728-754: complains about the Trojans after killing Peisander (27);
15.666-669: urges Antilochus to jump out and attack a Trojan (4);
17.24-43: responds to Euphorbus's threat, tells him to move back (20);
17.114-135: worries about what to do on the battlefield, decides to seek out Ajax (22);
17.152-156: calls out to Ajax to help him defend the corpse of Patroclus (5);
17.684-691: answers Athena (in the form of Phoenix), wants Athena to give him strength (8);
17.814-819: issues instructions to Meriones and the Ajaxes about defending Patroclus' corpse (6);
17.833-846: instructs Antilochus to tell Achilles about the death of Patroclus (14);
17.863-871: tells the Ajaxes he's sent Antilochus to Achilles (9);
23.519-522: yells at Antilochus to race less recklessly (4);
23.534-539: swears at Antilochus for forcing him to slow down (6);
23.541-543: urges his horses to run faster (3);
23.698-720: asks Antilochus to swear he didn't cheat in the chariot race (23);
23.738-750: gives the prize back to Antilochus and commends him (13).

MENESTHEUS
12.372-382: sends Thoötes with a message for help to the Ajaxes (11).

MERIONES
13.297-301: tells Idomeneus that he's come back to get a spear (5);
13.311-319: tells Idomeneus that he has lots of spears back in his hut, but it's far away (9);
13.361-365: asks Idomeneus where they should rejoin the battle (5);
16.719-728: boasts of his own prowess to Aeneas on the battlefield (10);
17.758-760: tells Idomeneus to take a chariot back to the ships (3).

NESTOR
1..280-316: tries to soothe the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon (37);
2.95-100: responds in assembly to Agamemnon's story of his dream (6);
2.398-438: speaks to soldiers, proposes Agamemnon get the troops ready for battle (41);
2.511-517: suggests to Agamemnon that the army be assembled (7);
4.354-362: gives his soldiers advice on fighting tactics (9);

4.373-381: tells Agamemnon how old he (Nestor) is getting, not the man he used to be (9);
6.79-85: yells at the Achaeans not to stop for loot, but to keep killing (7);
7.145-194: complains that no Argive has accepted Hector's challenge (50);
7.205-209: issues instructions on how to choose the one to fight Hector (5);
7.380-400: after dinner proposes they bury the dead and build a wall (21);
8.159-166: tells Diomedes to turn back, because Zeus is giving glory to Hector (8);
8.175-179: reassures Diomedes about his reputation if he turns back (5);
9.63-97: advises Agamemnon to post sentries and then to call a meeting to discuss what to do (35);
9.115-135: in council suggests they try to persuade Achilles to return to war (21);
9.200-212: suggests the leaders who should go to Achilles to persuade him to return to war (13);
10.97-101: asks Agamemnon why he is wandering through the camp at night (5);
10.123-142: agrees to accompany Agamemnon, criticizes Menelaus (20);
10.156-159: comments on Menelaus's behaviour to Agamemnon (4);
10.173-178: tells Odysseus to join him in waking up the leaders for a meeting (6);
10.192-195: wakes up Diomedes for a meeting (4);
10.204-212: tells Diomedes to wake up Achaean leaders for a meeting (9);
10.229-231: congratulates and encourages the Achaean sentries (3);
10.242-258: asks the Achaean leaders if someone is will to go on a night spy mission (17);
10.637-644: worries that Diomedes and Odysseus may be in trouble on their night mission (8);
10.649-661: welcomes Odysseus back from his night mission, asks about the horses (13);
11.741-931: asks Patroclus why Achilles is so angry still, tells a story of his own youth (191);
14.2-9: tells wounded Machaon to stay in the hut while he goes out to look around (8);
14.60-74: advises Agamemnon to think about what to do (15);
15.438-445: prays to Zeus for protection from the Trojan attack (8);
15.769-774: encourages the troops, tells them to remember shame (6);
23.368-426: gives Antilochus advice about the chariot race (59);
23.771-805: accepts a prize from Achilles, talks of his youthful prowess (35).

ODYSSEUS
1.494-499: tells Chryses the Achaeans are returning his daughter (6);
2.223-233: informs Achaean leaders to get their soldiers to remain in place (11);
2.236-243: orders individual common soldiers to obey orders and not run off to the ships (8);
2.291-312: silences and threatens Thersites (22);
2.333-393: speaks to the assembled army about the omen in Aulis and Calchas' prophecy (61);
4.410-417: responds to Agamemnon's criticism, tells him he's been talking nonsense (8);
9.273-382: outlines Agamemnon's offer Achilles, urges Achilles to return to battle (110);
9.853-873: tells Agamemnon that Achilles has rejected Agamemnon's offer and is going home (21);
10.169-171: questions Nestor why he is wandering around at night (3);

10.296-301: tells Diomedes not to praise or censure him in front of other Argives (6);
10.329-336: prays to Athena for success in the night spy mission (8);
10.407-415: warns Diomedes of Dolon's approach, tells him to cut him off (9);
10.455-463: reassures and questions Dolon (9);
10.478-491: questions Dolon about the state of the Trojan and allied forces (14);
10.507-509: asks Dolon about the location of the allied forces (3);
10.553-556: offers Dolon's gear to Athena as an offering (4);
10.570-576: tells Diomedes to kill the Thracians while he goes for the horses (7);
10.663-674: informs Nestor about what he and Diomedes did on their night mission (12);
11.355-358: calls Diomedes to stand by him in the fight (4);
11.460-469: worries about what he should do at a critical point in the battle (10);
11.498-503: tells Socus he's about to be killed (6);
11.508-516: exults after killing Socus (9);
14.100-127: severely criticizes Agamemnon for his proposal that they go home (28);
19.194-227: tells Achilles it's important to the soldiers to eat before battle (34);
19.268-293: reminds Achilles that lots of people are dying in the war (26);
23.949-950: prays to Athena for help during the footrace (2).

PANDARUS
5.115-119: shouts to Trojans that he's hit Diomedes with an arrow (5);
5.207-254: responds to Aeneas' request he shoot an arrow at Diomedes (48);
5.270-281: tells Aeneas to take the reins of the chariot, says he'll fight Diomedes (12);
5.330-333: challenges Diomedes on the battle field (4);
5.338-339: exults for having hit Diomedes with his spear. (2).

PARIS
3.64-84: responds to Hector's insults, volunteers for single combat against Menelaus (21);
3.491-503: answers Helen's criticisms, asks her to make love with him (13);
6.413-422: responds to Hector' criticism, says he'll join him once he's put his armour on (10);
6.630-632: greets Hector on their way out of the city towards battle (3);
7.415-426: refuses in council to return Helen (12);
11.433-438: boasts to Diomedes after hitting him with an arrow in the foot (6);
13.909-924: responds to Hector's criticism (16).

PATROCLUS
11.682-683: asks Achilles why he called for him (2);
11.730-739: declines Nestor's invitation to sit, says he'll return to Achilles (10);
11.944-951: asks Eurypylus how the Achaeans will manage in the fight (8);
11.970-975: tells the wounded Eurypylus he won't leave him to suffer alone (6);
15.469-475: tells Eurypylus he has to go to Achilles (7);
16.25-58: tells Achilles the Achaeans are in trouble, asks to be allowed to go to war (34);
16.319-327: speaks to the Mymidons before going into battle (9);
16.648-656: tells the two Ajaxes to fight over Sarpedon's body (9);

16.730-737: tells Meriones not to boast on the battlefield (8);
16.868-875: mocks Cebriones as he is dying (8);
16.980-993: as he is dying speaks to Hector, telling him he will not live long (14);
23.80-111: appeals as a ghost to Achilles to complete his burial (32).

PEISANDER
11.145-150: begs Agamemnon for his life, asking for ransom (6).

PENELEUS
14.585-591: boasts to Trojans after killing Ilioneus (7).

PHOENIX
9.542-764: urges Achilles to return to battle, tells the story of Meleager (223).

POLYDAMAS
12.62-83: proposes to Hector and others they should cross the ditch without their horses (22).
12.221-245: gives Hector a pessimistic interpretation of an omen (25).
13.853-879: advises Hector that he should order the Trojan forces to regroup (27).
14.530-534: exults after killing Prothoënor (5).
18.312-351: advises the Trojans to retreat to the city now that Achilles is back (40).

POSEIDON
7.519-529: complains to Zeus about the Achaean wall (11);
8.242-245: rejects Hera's suggestion about defying Zeus (4);
13.50-65: in the form of Calchas urges the two Ajaxes to fight (16);
13.108-145: encourages a number of Achaean leaders to hold out against Hector (38);
13.254-256: with the voice of Thoas, asks Idomeneus what's wrong with the Achaeans (3);
13.269-278: in the form of Thoas, proposes to Idomeneus that they fight as a team (10);
14.168-178: in the form of an old man reassures Agamemnon about the battle (11);
14.431-441: rallies the Achaeans, tells them he'll lead them against Hector (11);
15.219-240: complains about Zeus' orders, says he won't obey (22);
15.247-262: concedes that he'll obey Zeus, but threatens trouble if Zeus spares Troy (16);
20.17-21: asks Zeus why he's called the gods to assembly (5);
20.161-174: tells Hera they should move aside and watch the battle (14);
20.349-369: talks to Hera and Athena about rescuing Aeneas (21);
20.394-403: advises Aeneas to move back from Achilles and to fight once Achilles is dead (10);
21.347-359: reassures Achilles, tells him that he and Athena will help him (13);
21.523-554: suggests to Apollo that the two of them should fight (32).

PRIAM
3.176-185: tells Helen she bears no blame, asks her about an Achaean warrior (Agamemnon) (10);

3.198-208: expresses his admiration for Agamemnon's magnificence (11);
3.210-217: asks Helen to identify an Achaean warrior (Odysseus) (8);
3.248-250: asks Helen to identify an Achaean warrior (the greater Ajax) (3);
3.342-347: tells the armies he is going back to Troy before the single combat (6);
7.430-444: suggests sending Idaios to the Argives with Paris's offer of reparations (15);
21.638-645: tells the gate keepers to hold the gates open (8);
22.47-96: appeals to Hector to come inside the gates (50);
22.516-535: cries out in sorrow to see Hector's corpse (20);
24.240-248: tells Hecuba Zeus's instructions to him to go to the ships (9);
24.273-285: tells Hecuba he's going to go to the ships (13);
24.296-306: complains to the Trojans bothering him, tells them to go away (11);
24.314-328: yells at his sons, says how useless they are (15);
24.373-375: tells Hecuba he'll take her advice about praying to Zeus (3);
24.382-391: prays to Zeus for a favourable omen before his journey to the ships (10);
24.462-468: welcomes Hermes in the form of a young man (7);
24.479-480: asks Hermes in disguise who he is (2);
24.502-506: questions Hermes in disguise about the state of Hector's body (5);
24.525-534: offers Hermes in disguise a gift (10);
24.596-624: pleads with Achilles for the return of Hector's body (29);
24.686-692: urges Achilles to give him Hector back quickly (7);
24.786-794: asks Achilles if he can go to bed (9);
24.813-824: gives Achilles details of Hector's funeral (12);
24.881-883: yells at the Trojan crowd to make room for the cart (3);
24.957-963: tells the Trojans to go out to collect wood (7).

SARPEDON
5.559-584: advises Hector to be more considerate of his allies (26);
5.754-762: responds to Tlepolemus's challenge before they fight (9);
5.790-794: asks Hector for assistance after being wounded (5);
12.332-355: evokes the warrior ethic for Glaucus before going into battle. (24);
12.452-457: rallies his Lycians during the attack on the Achaean wall (6);
16.494-499: shouts out to the Lycians to fight, says he'll fight Patroclus (6);
16.573-584: as he is dying tells Glaucus to defend his body (13).

SCAMANDER
21.254-267: tells Achilles to stop killing people in the river (14);
20.277-281: cries out to Apollo, asking what he's doing (5);
21.371-389: shouts to Simoeis to attack Achilles, says he'll bury him (19);
21.427-432: cries out to Hephaestus to stop his fires burning the river (6);
21.443-452: shouts out to Hera to stop Hephaestus's fires (10).

SLEEP
14.289-313: tells Hera it's too dangerous to lull Zeus asleep (25);

14.322-329: agrees to Hera's request if she will swear to give him Pasithea (8);
14.423-427: tells Poseidon he can help the Argives because Zeus is asleep (5).

SOCUS
11.487-491: challenges Odysseus on the battlefield (5).

STHENELUS
4.473-479: tells Agamemnon not to insult him and Diomedes; they are better than their fathers (7);
5.287-296: advises Diomedes to retreat before Pandarus and Aeneas (10).

TALTHYBIUS
4.239-243: informs Machaon that Agamemnon needs him to inspect Menelaus's wound. (5).

TEUCER
8.342-350: tells Agamemnon how he's been trying to hit Hector without success (9);
15.547-552: complains about his bowstring breaking (6).

THEMIS
15.108-110: asks Hera why she has come and wonders if Zeus has frightened her (3).

THERSITES
2.261-287: insults Agamemnon and criticizes the entire war. (27).

THETIS
1.401-403: asks Achilles why he is so upset (3);
1.461-478: agrees to intervene with Zeus, tells Achilles not to fight in the war (18);
1.560-570: pleads with Zeus to honour Achilles by giving Trojan success in battle (11);
1.574-577: asks Zeus to respond to her request (4);
18.60-78: leads her sisters in a lament for Achilles (19);
17.88-94: asks Achilles what's wrong (7);
18.118-120: reminds Achilles that he'll die soon (3);
18.159-171: tells Achilles not to fight until she brings him armour from Hephaestus (13);
18.173-179: tells her sisters to return to the ocean while she goes to Olympus (7);
18.530-575: tells Hephaestus what's happened to Achilles, asks him for armour (46);
19.8-13: tells Achilles to accept the armour of Hephaestus (6);
19.35-45: informs Achilles she will protect the corpse of Patroclus (11);
24.112-116: wonders why Zeus is summoning her (5);
24.156-170: delivers Zeus's message to Achilles, asking him to return Hector's body (15).

THOAS
15.340-357: suggests the best warriors band together to stop Hector (18).

THOOTES
12.386-398: delivers Menestheus's demand for help to the Ajaxes (13).

TLEPOLEMUS
5.737-752: boasts of his ancestry to Sarpedon before they fight (16).

TROJAN ELDERS
3.168-174: comment on Helen's beauty. (7)

TROJAN TROOPS
3.334-339: pray to Zeus that the oaths will be kept after the single combat (6);
3.356-360: pray to Zeus before the single combat between Menelaus and Paris (5);
4.98-100: respond to Athena's arrival on the battlefield (3);
17.527-528: urge each other to keep fighting (2).

WOMEN OF TROY
6.381-387: pray to Athena for help against Diomedes (7).

XANTHUS (horse)
19.490-503: tells Achilles the horses were not responsible for Patroclus's death (14).

ZEUS
1.578-589: agrees to Thetis's request to honour Achilles by helping the Trojans (12);
1.606-613: tells Hera to mind her own business (8);
1.628-638: tells Hera, with threats, to accept that he's in charge (11);
2.9-17: issues instructions to Dream to visit Agamemnon with a message (9);
4.7-23: deliberately stirs up trouble on Olympus by suggesting an end to the war (17);
4.38-60: asks Hera why she hates the Trojans so much, demands equal concessions (23);
4.85-87: instructs Athena to get the Trojans to break the truce (3);
5.509-512: tells Aphrodite to stay away from battle and focus on love (4);
5.875-878: tells Hera to set Athena against Ares to get him out of the fight (4);
5.1018-1030: criticises Ares for his character (and Hera, too) (13);
7.531-540: dismisses Poseidon's concerns about the Achaean wall (10);
8.6-32: forbids the gods to participate in the war, threatens them (27);
8.45-47: reassures Athena about his feelings (3);
8.465-476: orders Iris to tell Hera and Athena to come back to Olympus, threatens them (12);
8.520-535: taunts Hera and Athena, tells him what he would have done if they had disobeyed (16);
8.550-569: tells Hera what's going to happen on the battlefield in the next day (20);
11.212-222: orders Iris to go to Hector with a message (11);
14.352-354: asks Hera what's she's doing away from Olympus (3);
14.372-392: Zeus asks Hera to make love, reviews his various love partners (21);
14.406-411: tells Hera not to worry about anyone seeing them make love (6);

15.15-42: expresses his anger at being deceived to Hera, reminds her of a previous punishment (28);
15.59-95: tells Hera what is going to happen in the battles coming up (37);
15.187-199: instructs Iris to go to Poseidon and order him out the battle (13);
15.266-284: orders Apollo to give Hector renewed strength after being hit by a rock (19);
16.508-515: asks Hera if he should spare Sarpedon (8);
16.776-788: tells Apollo to deal with the corpse of Sarpedon (13);
17.259-270: laments for Hector as he watches him put on Patroclus' armour (12);
17.548-564: feels sorry for Achilles's horses, says he'll give Hector strength (17);
18.444-447: speaks to Hera, says she's now got what she wanted (4);
19.416-425: instructs Athena to put some nourishment in Achilles (10);
20.22-38: tells the gods they can join in the conflict now Achilles has returned (17);
21.612-615: asks Artemis who has hurt her (4);
22.206-218: expresses sympathy for Hector as he is being chased by Achilles (13);
22.227-230: tells Athena she can do what she likes with Hector and Achilles (4);
24.79-96: tells Hera and the gods he'll arrange for Hector to be returned (18);
24.128-148: orders Thetis to go to Achilles and get him to return Hector (21);
24.188-198: gives Iris instructions to take to Priam (11);
24.413-419: orders Hermes to accompany Priam to the Achaean ships (7).

SOME COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE LIST

1. There are 81 speakers in the poem, who deliver 684 speeches, with a total of 9196 lines (this line total includes three speeches, totalling fourteen lines, which are counted twice, because they are spoken simultaneously by the Trojan and Achaean troops, and another speech of 11 lines, also counted twice because it is spoken by both Ajaxes). The spoken dialogue in this reckoning accounts for about 49.7 percent of the poem, a figure that is somewhat higher than the conventional figure of 45 percent for the Greek, because of the above-mentioned repetition and the inclusion of partial lines as complete lines (which are quite frequent in the translation used) and because the speeches in the Johnston translation are written more or less as pentameters, with ten syllables per line, whereas, the descriptive passages which are not spoken are written more or less as hexameters. Thus, the speeches tend to take up a disproportionate number of lines.

2. Ten speakers (Achilles, Agamemnon, Nestor, Hector, Zeus, Odysseus, Hera, Diomedes, Priam, and Poseidon) account for 57 percent of the speeches and 59 percent of the lines of spoken verse. The first twenty speakers (the above ten along with Menelaus, Phoenix, Athena, Greater Ajax, Thetis, Glaucus, Apollo, Idomeneus, Patroclus, and Andromache) account for 76 percent of the speeches and 78 percent of the lines of spoken verse.

3. The longest speech is the one by Phoenix in Book Nine, 223 lines. Since that's his only speech, he also has the highest average length of speech.

4. The ranking according to the number of lines of spoken verse is as follows (partial lines count as complete lines in the total):

Achilles (87 speeches, 1281 lines)
Agamemnon (46 speeches, 724 lines)
Nestor (32 speeches, 685 lines)
Hector (49 speeches, 677 lines)
Zeus (38 speeches, 489 lines)
Odysseus (26 speeches, 441 lines)
Hera (32 speeches, 327 lines)
Diomedes (27 speeches, 297 lines)
Priam (25 speeches, 283 lines)
Poseidon (16 speeches, 237 lines)
Menelaus (22 speeches, 227 lines)
Phoenix (1 speech, 223 lines)
Athena (20 speeches, 198 lines)
Telamonian Ajax (19 speeches, 182 lines)
Thetis (14 speeches, 168 lines)
Glaucus (4 speeches, 161 lines)
Apollo (19 speeches, 156 lines)I
domeneus (12 speeches, 152 lines)
Patroclus (12 speeches, 147 lines)
Andromache (4 speeches, 133 lines)
Aeneas (6 speeches, 130 lines)
Iris (12 speeches, 128 lines)
Polydamas (5 speeches, 119 lines)
Helen (7 speeches, 98 lines)
Sarpedon (7 speeches, 89 lines)
Hecuba (6 speeches, 82 lines)
Paris (7 speeches, 81 lines)
Hermes (8 speeches, 80 lines)
Pandarus (5 speeches, 71 lines)
Dolon (5 speeches, 65 lines)
Antilochus (5 speeches, 64 lines)
Hephaestus (5 speeches, 56 lines)
Scamander (5 speeches, 54 lines)
Dione (2 speeches, 50 lines)
Helenus (2 speeches, 43 lines)I
daios (4 speeches, 41 lines)
Achaean Troops (9 speeches, 40 lines)
Sleep (3 speeches, 38 lines)
Oïlean Ajax (4 speeches, 37 lines)
Aphrodite (7 speeches, 34 lines)
Ares (3 speeches, 34 lines)
Agenor (2 speeches, 32 lines)
Antenor (2 speeches, 32 lines)
Meriones (5 speeches, 32 lines)
Lycaon (1 speech, 30 lines)
Automedon (4 speeches, 29 lines)
Thersites (1 speech, 27 lines)
Calchas (2 speeches, 22 lines)
Chryses (3 speeches, 21 lines)
Eurypylus (2 speeches, 21 lines)
Euphorbus (2 speeches, 20 lines)
Briseis (1 speech, 18 lines)
Thoas (1 speech, 18 lines)
Dream (1 speech, 17 lines)
Sthenelus (2 speeches, 17 lines)
Tlepolemus (1 speech, 16 lines)
Trojan Troops (4 speeches, 16 lines)
Teucer (2 speeches, 15 lines)
Xanthus (horse) (1 speech, 14 lines)
Thootes (1 speech, 13 lines)
Cebriones (1 speech, 12 lines)
Artemis (2 speeches, 11 lines)
Asteropaeus (1 speech, 11 lines)
Deïphobus (2 speeches, 11 lines)
Epeius (1 speech, 11 lines)
Menestheus (1 speech, 11 lines)
Asius (1 speech, 10 lines)
Housekeeper (1 speech, 10 lines)
Acamas (1 speech, 9 lines)
Alcimedon (1 speech, 7 lines)
Peneleus (1 speech, 7 lines)
Trojan Elders (1 speech, 7 lines)
Women of Troy (1 speech, 7 lines)
Hippolochus (1 speech 6 lines)
Peisander (1 speech, 6 lines)
Adrestus (1 speech, 5 lines)
Cassandra (1 speech, 5 lines)
Charis (2 speeches, 5 lines)
Socus (1 speech, 5 lines)
Talthybius (1 speech, 5 lines)
Themis (1 speech, 3 lines).