

and stand fast, the colour of their skin changed, and no longer could any endure to sweep in further and fight for the body.
735 So these, straining, carried the dead man out of the battle and back to the hollow ships, and the fight that was drawn fast between them

was wild as fire which, risen suddenly, storming a city of men sets it ablaze, and houses diminish before it in the high glare, and the force of the wind on it roars it to thunder;
740 so, as the Danaans made their way back, the weariless roaring of horses, chariots, and spearmen was ever upon them.

But they, as mules who have put the on-drive of strength upon them drag down from the high ground along a steep stony trail either a beam or some big timber for a ship, and the heart in them wears under the hard work and sweat of their urgent endeavour;
745 so these, straining, carried the dead man away, and behind them the two Aiantes held them off, as a timbered rock ridge holds off water, one that is placed to divide an entire plain, which, though flood-currents of strong rivers drive sorely against it,
750 holds them off and beats back the waters of them all to be scattered over the plain, and all the strength of their streams cannot break it; so behind the Achaians the Aiantes held off forever the Trojan attack. But these stayed close, and two beyond others, Aincias, who was son of Anchises, and glorious Hektor.

755 But before these, as goes a cloud of daws or of starlings screaming terror when they have seen coming forth against them the hawk, whose coming is murder for the little birds, so now before Aincias and Hektor the young Achaian warriors went, screaming terror, all the delight of battle forgotten.
760 Many fine pieces of armour littered the ground on both sides of the ditch, as the Danaans fled. There was no check in the fighting.

BOOK EIGHTEEN

So these fought on in the likeness of blazing fire. Meanwhile, Antilochos came, a swift-footed messenger, to Achilleus, and found him sitting in front of the steep-horned ships, thinking over in his heart of things which had now been accomplished.

Disturbed, Achilleus spoke to the spirit in his own great heart:
'Ah me, how is it that once again the flowing-haired Achaians are driven out of the plain on their ships in fear and confusion? May the gods not accomplish vile sorrows upon the heart in me in the way my mother once made it clear to me, when she told me how while I yet lived the bravest of all the Myrmidons must leave the light of the sun beneath the hands of the Trojans. Surely, then, the strong son of Menoitios has perished.

Unhappy! and yet I told him, once he had beaten the fierce fire off, to come back to the ships, not fight in strength against Hektor.'
15 Now as he was pondering this in his heart and his spirit, meanwhile the son of stately Nestor was drawing near him and wept warm tears, and gave Achilleus his sorrowful message:

'Ah me, son of valiant Pelcus; you must hear from me the ghastly message of a thing I wish never had happened. Patroklos has fallen, and now they are fighting over his body which is naked. Hektor of the shining helm has taken his armour.'

He spoke, and the black cloud of sorrow closed on Achilleus. In both hands he caught up the grimy dust, and poured it over his head and face, and fouled his handsome countenance, and the black ashes were scattered over his immortal tunic.

Yet I shall go, to look on my dear son, and to listen
to the sorrow that has come to him as he stays back from the fighting.'
So she spoke, and left the cave, and the others together
went with her in tears, and about them the wave of the water
was broken. Now these, when they came to the generous Troad,
followed each other out on the sea-shore, where close together
the ships of the Myrmidons were hauled up about swift Achilles.
There as he sighed heavily the lady his mother stood by him
and cried out shrill and aloud, and took her son's head in her arms, then
sorrowing for him she spoke to him in winged words: 'Why then,
child, do you lament? What sorrow has come to your heart now?
Speak out, do not hide it. These things are brought to accomplishment
through Zeus: in the way that you lifted your hands and prayed for,
that all the sons of the Achaians be pinned on their grounded vessels
by reason of your loss, and suffer things that are shameful.'
Then sighing heavily Achilles of the swift feet answered her:
'My mother, all these things the Olympian brought to accomplishment.
But what pleasure is this to me, since my dear companion has perished,
Patroklos, whom I loved beyond all other companions,
as well as my own life. I have lost him, and Hektor, who killed him,
has stripped away that gigantic armour, a wonder to look on
and splendid, which the gods gave Peleus, a glorious present,
on that day they drove you to the marriage bed of a mortal.
I wish you had gone on living then with the other goddesses
of the sea, and that Peleus had married some mortal woman.
As it is, there must be on your heart a numberless sorrow
for your son's death, since you can never again receive him
won home again to his country; since the spirit within does not drive me
to go on living and be among men, except on condition
that Hektor first be beaten down under my spear, lose his life
and pay the price for stripping Patroklos, the son of Menoitios.'
Then in turn Thetis spoke to him, letting the tears fall:
'Then I must lose you soon, my child, by what you are saying,
since it is decreed your death must come soon after Hektor's.'
Then deeply disturbed Achilles of the swift feet answered her:
'I must die soon, then; since I was not to stand by my companion
when he was killed. And now, far away from the land of his fathers,
he has perished, and lacked my fighting strength to defend him.

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And he himself, mightily in his might, in the dust lay
at length, and took and tore at his hair with his hands, and defiled it.
And the handmaidens Achilleus and Patroklos had taken
captive, stricken at heart cried out aloud, and came running
out of doors about valiant Achilleus, and all of them
beat their breasts with their hands, and the limbs went slack in each of
them.
On the other side Antilochos mourned with him, letting the tears fall,
and held the hands of Achilleus as he grieved in his proud heart,
fearing Achilleus might cut his throat with the iron. He cried out
terribly, aloud, and the lady his mother heard him
as she sat in the depths of the sea at the side of her aged father,
and she cried shrill in turn, and the goddesses gathered about her,
all who along the depth of the sea were daughters of Nereus.
For Glauke was there, Kymodoke and Thaleia,
40 Nesaie and Speio and Thoë, and ox-eyed Halia;
Kymothoë was there, Aktaia and Limnorea,
Melite and Iaira, Amphithoë and Agauë,
Doto and Proto, Dynamene and Pherousa,
Dexamene and Amphinome and Kallianeira;
45 Doris and Panope and glorious Galateia,
Nemertes and Apseudes and Kallianassa;
Klymene was there, Ianeira and Ianassa,
Maira and Oreithyia and lovely-haired Amatheia,
and the rest who along the depth of the sea were daughters of Nereus.
50 The silvery cave was filled with these, and together all of them
beat their breasts, and among them Thetis led out the threnody:
'Hear me, Nereids, my sisters; so you may all know
well all the sorrows that are in my heart, when you hear of them from me.
Ah me, my sorrow, the bitterness in this best of child-bearing,
55 since I gave birth to a son who was without fault and powerful,
conspicuous among heroes; and he shot up like a young tree,
and I nurtured him, like a tree grown in the pride of the orchard.
I sent him away with the curved ships into the land of Ilios
to fight with the Trojans; but I shall never again receive him
won home again to his country and into the house of Peleus.
60 Yet while I see him live and he looks on the sunlight, he has
sorrows, and though I go to him I can do nothing to help him.

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Now, since I am not going back to the beloved land of my fathers,
since I was no light of safety to Patroklos, nor to my other
companions, who in their numbers went down before glorious Hektor,
but sit here beside my ships, a useless weight on the good land,
105 I, who am such as no other of the bronze-armoured Achaians
in battle, though there are others also better in council—
why, I wish that strife would vanish a way from among gods and mortals,
and gall, which makes a man grow angry for all his great mind,
that gall of anger that swarms like smoke inside of a man's heart
and becomes a thing sweeter to him by far than the dripping of honey.
110 So it was here that the lord of men Agamemnon angered me.
Still, we will let all this be a thing of the past, and for all our
sorrow beat down by force the anger deeply within us.

Now I shall go, to overtake that killer of a dear life,
115 Hektor; then I will accept my own death, at whatever
time Zeus wishes to bring it about, and the other immortals.
For not even the strength of Herakles fled away from destruction,
although he was dearest of ail to lord Zeus, son of Kronos,
but his fate beat him under, and the wearisome anger of Hera.
120 So I likewise, if such is the fate which has been wrought for me,
shall lie still, when I am dead. Now I must win excellent glory,
and drive some one of the women of Troy, or some deep-girdled
Dardanian woman, lifting up to her soft cheeks both hands
to wipe away the close bursts of tears in her lamentation,
125 and learn that I stayed too long out of the fighting. Do not
hold me back from the fight, though you love me. You will not
persuade me.'

In turn the goddess Thetis of the silver feet answered him:
'Yes, it is true, my child, this is no cowardly action,

130 to beat aside sudden death from your afflicted companions.
Yet, see now, your splendid armour, glaring and brazen,
is held among the Trojans, and Hektor of the shining helmet
wears it on his own shoulders, and glories in it. Yet I think
he will not glory for long, since his death stands very close to him.
Therefore do not yet go into the grind of the war god,
135 not before with your own eyes you see me come back to you.
For I am coming to you at dawn and as the sun rises
bringing splendid armour to you from the lord Hephaistos.'

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140
So she spoke, and turned, and went away from her son,
and turning now to her sisters of the sea she spoke to them:
'Do you now go back into the wide fold of the water
to visit the ancient of the sea and the house of our father,
and tell him everything. I am going to tall Olympos
and to Hephaistos, the glorious smith, if he might be willing
to give me for my son renowned and radiant armour.'

145
She spoke, and they plunged back beneath the wave of the water,
while she the goddess Thetis of the silver feet went onward
to Olympos, to bring back to her son the glorious armour.

So her feet carried her to Olympos; meanwhile the Achaians
with inhuman clamour before the attack of manslaughtering Hektor
150 fled until they were making for their own ships and the Hellespont;
nor could the strong-greaved Achaians have dragged the body
of Patroklos, henchman of Achilleus, from under the missiles,
for once again the men and the horses came over upon him,
and Hektor, Priam's son, who fought like a flame in his fury.
Three times from behind glorious Hektor caught him
155 by the feet, trying to drag him, and called aloud on the Trojans.
Three times the two Aiantes with their battle-fury upon them
beat him from the corpse, but he, steady in the confidence of his great
strength,

kept making, now a rush into the crowd, or again at another time
stood fast, with his great cry, but gave not a bit of ground backward.
160 And as herdsmen who dwell in the fields are not able to frighten
a tawny lion in his great hunger away from a carcass,
so the two Aiantes, marshals of men, were not able
to scare Hektor, Priam's son, away from the body.

165
And now he would have dragged it away and won glory forever
had not swift wind-footed Iris come running from Olympos
with a message for Peleus' son to arm. She came secretly
from Zeus and the other gods, since it was Hera who sent her.
She came and stood close to him and addressed him in winged words:

'Rise up, son of Peleus, most terrifying of all men.

Defend Patroklos, for whose sake the terrible fighting
stands now in front of the ships. They are destroying each other;
the Achaians fight in defence over the fallen body
while the others, the Trojans, are rushing to drag the corpse off

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175 to windy Iliou, and beyond all glorious Hektor
rages to haul it away, since the anger within him is urgent
to cut the head from the soft neck and set it on sharp stakes.
Up, then, lie here no longer; let shame come into your heart, lest
Patroklos become sport for the dogs of Troy to worry,
180 your shame, if the body goes from here with defilement upon it.
Then in turn Achilleus of the swift feet answered her:
'Divine Iris, what god sent you to me with a message?
Then in turn swift wind-footed Iris spoke to him:
'Hera sent me, the honoured wife of Zeus; but the son of
185 Kronos, who sits on high, does not know this, nor any other
immortal, of all those who dwell by the snows of Olympus.'
Then in answer to her spoke Achilleus of the swift feet:
'How shall I go into the fighting? They have my armour.
And my beloved mother told me I must not be armoured,
190 not before with my own eyes I see her come back to me.
She promised she would bring magnificent arms from Hephaistos.
Nor do I know of another whose glorious armour I could wear
unless it were the great shield of Telamonian Aias.
But he himself wears it, I think, and goes in the foremost
195 of the spear-fight over the body of fallen Patroklos.'
Then in turn swift wind-footed Iris spoke to him:
'Yes, we also know well how they hold your glorious armour.
But go to the ditch, and show yourself as you are to the Trojans,
if perhaps the Trojans might be frightened, and give way
200 from their attack, and the fighting sons of the Achaians get wind
again after hard work. There is little breathing space in the fighting.'
So speaking Iris of the swift feet went away from him;
but Achilleus, the beloved of Zeus, rose up, and Athene
swept about his powerful shoulders the fluttering aegis;
205 and she, the divine among goddesses, about his head circled
a golden cloud, and kindled from it a flame far-shining.
As when a flare goes up into the high air from a city
from an island far away, with enemies fighting about it
who all day long are in the hateful division of Ares
210 fighting from their own city, but as the sun goes down signal
fires blaze out one after another, so that the glare goes
pulsing high for men of the neighbouring islands to see it,

in case they might come over in ships to beat off the enemy;
so from the head of Achilleus the blaze shot into the bright air.
215 He went from the wall and stood by the ditch, nor mixed with the other
Achaians, since he followed the close command of his mother.
There he stood, and shouted, and from her place Pallas Athene
gave cry, and drove an endless terror upon the Trojans.
As loud as comes the voice that is screamed out by a trumpet
by murderous attackers who beleaguer a city,
220 so then high and clear went up the voice of Aiaikides.
But the Trojans, when they heard the brazen voice of Aiaikides,
the heart was shaken in all, and the very floating-maned horses
turned their chariots about, since their hearts saw the coming afflictions.
The charioteers were dumbfounded as they saw the unwearied dangerous
225 fire that played above the head of great-hearted Peleion
blazing, and kindled by the goddess grey-eyed Athene.
Three times across the ditch brilliant Achilleus gave his great cry,
and three times the Trojans and their renowned companions were routed.
230 There at that time twelve of the best men among them perished
upon their own chariots and spears. Meanwhile the Achaians
gladly pulled Patroklos out from under the missiles
and set him upon a litter, and his own companions about him
stood mourning, and along with them swift-footed Achilleus
235 went, letting fall warm tears as he saw his steadfast companion
lying there on a carried litter and torn with the sharp bronze,
the man he had sent off before with horses and chariot
into the fighting; who never again came home to be welcomed.
Now the lady Hera of the ox eyes drove the unwilling
240 weariless sun god to sink in the depth of the Ocean,
and the sun went down, and the brilliant Achaians gave over
their strong fighting, and the doubtful collision of battle.
The Trojans on the other side moved from the strong encounter
in their turn, and unyoked their running horses from under the chariots,
245 and gathered into assembly before taking thought for their supper.
They stood on their feet in assembly, nor did any man have the patience
to sit down, but the terror was on them all, seeing that Achilleus
had appeared, after he had stayed so long from the difficult fighting.
First to speak among them was the careful Poulydamas,
250 Panthoös' son, who alone of them looked before and behind him.

He was companion to Hektor, and born on the same night with him,
but he was better in words, the other with the spear far better.
He in kind intention toward all stood forth and addressed them:

255 'Now take careful thought, dear friends; for I myself urge you
to go back into the city and not wait for the divine dawn
in the plain beside the ships. We are too far from the wall now.
While this man was still angry with great Agamemnon,
for all that time the Achaians were easier men to fight with.
For I also used then to be one who was glad to sleep out
260 near their ships, and I hoped to capture the oarswep vessels.

But now I terribly dread the swift-footed son of Peleus.

So violent is the valour in him, he will not be willing
to stay here in the plain, where now Achaians and Trojans
from either side sunder between them the wrath of the war god.

265 With him, the fight will be for the sake of our city and women.
Let us go into the town; believe me; thus it will happen.

For this present, immortal night has stopped the swift-footed
son of Peleus, but if he catches us still in this place
tomorrow, and drives upon us in arms, a man will be well
270 aware of him, be glad to get back into sacred Ilion,

the man who escapes; there will be many Trojans the vultures
and dogs will feed on. But let such a word be out of my hearing!
If all of us will do as I say, though it hurts us to do it,

this night we will hold our strength in the market place, and the great
walls

275 and the gateways, and the long, smooth-planned, close-joined gate timbers
that close to fit them shall defend our city. Then, early
in the morning, under dawn, we shall arm ourselves in our war gear
and take stations along the walls. The worse for him, if he endeavours
to come away from the ships and fight us here for our city.

280 Back he must go to his ships again, when he wears out the strong necks
of his horses, driving them at a gallop everywhere by the city.
His valour will not give him leave to burst in upon us
nor sack our town. Sooner the circling dogs will feed on him.'

Then looking darkly at him Hektor of the shining helm spoke:
285 'Poulydamas, these things that you argue please me no longer
when you tell us to go back again and be cooped in our city.
Have you not all had your glut of being fenced in our outworks?

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There was a time when mortal men would speak of the city
of Priam as a place with much gold and much bronze. But now
the lovely treasures that lay away in our houses have vanished,
and many possessions have been sold and gone into Phrygia
and into Maionia the lovely, when great Zeus was angry.

290 But now, when the son of devious-devising Kronos has given
me the winning of glory by the ships, to pin the Achaians
on the sea, why, fool, no longer show these thoughts to our people.
Not one of the Trojans will obey you. I shall not allow it.
Come, then, do as I say and let us all be persuaded.

Now, take your supper by positions along the encampment,
and do not forget your watch, and let every man be wakeful.

300 And if any Trojan is strongly concerned about his possessions,
let him gather them and give them to the people, to use them in common.
It is better for one of us to enjoy them than for the Achaians.

In the morning, under dawn, we shall arm ourselves in our war gear
and waken the bitter god of war by the hollow vessels.

305 If it is true that brilliant Achilleus is risen beside their
ships, then the worse for him if he tries it, since I for my part
will not run from him out of the sorrowful battle, but rather
stand fast, to see if he wins the great glory, or if I can win it.
The war god is impartial. Before now he has killed the killer.'

310 So spoke Hektor, and the Trojans thundered to hear him;
fools, since Pallas Athene had taken away the wits from them.
They gave their applause to Hektor in his counsel of evil,
but none to Poulydamas, who had spoken good sense before them.
They took their supper along the encampment. Meanwhile the Achaians
315 mourned all night in lamentation over Patroklos.

Peleus' son led the thronging chant of their lamentation,
and laid his manslaughtering hands over the chest of his dear friend
with outbursts of incessant grief. As some great bearded lion
when some man, a deer hunter, has stolen his cubs away from him
320 out of the close wood; the lion comes back too late, and is anguished,
and turns into many valleys quartering after the man's trail
on the chance of finding him, and taken with bitter anger;
so he, groaning heavily, spoke out to the Myrmidons:

'Ah me. It was an empty word I cast forth on that day
when in his halls I tried to comfort the hero Menoitios.

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I told him I would bring back his son in glory to Opous
with Ilion sacked, and bringing his share of war spoils allotted.
But Zeus does not bring to accomplishment all thoughts in men's minds,
Thus it is destiny for us both to stain the same soil
330 here in Troy; since I shall never come home, and my father,
Peleus the aged rider, will not welcome me in his great house,
nor Thetis my mother, but in this place the earth will receive me.
But seeing that it is I, Patroklos, who follow you underground,
I will not bury you till I bring to this place the armour
and the head of Hektor, since he was your great-hearted murderer.
335 Before your burning pyre I shall behold twelve glorious
children of the Trojans, for my anger over your slaying.
Until then, you shall lie where you are in front of my curved ships
and beside you women of Troy and deep-girdled Dardanian women
340 shall sorrow for you night and day and shed tears for you, those whom
you and I worked hard to capture by force and the long spear
in days when we were storming the rich cities of mortals.'

So speaking brilliant Achilles gave orders to his companions
to set a great cauldron across the fire, so that with all speed
they could wash away the clotted blood from Patroklos.
345 They set up over the blaze of the fire a bath-water cauldron
and poured water into it and put logs underneath and kindled them.
The fire worked on the swell of the cauldron, and the water heated.
But when the water had come to a boil in the shining bronze, then
350 they washed the body and anointed it softly with olive oil
and stopped the gashes in his body with stored-up unguents
and laid him on a bed, and shrouded him in a thin sheet
from head to foot, and covered that over with a white mantle.

Then all night long, gathered about Achilles of the swift feet,
355 the Myrmidons mourned for Patroklos and lamented over him.
But Zeus spoke to Hera, who was his wife and his sister:
'So you have acted, then, lady Hera of the ox eyes.
You have roused up Achilles of the swift feet. It must be then
that the flowing-haired Achaians are born of your own generation.'
360 Then the goddess the ox-eyed lady Hera answered him:
'Majesty, son of Kronos, what sort of thing have you spoken?
Even one who is mortal will try to accomplish his purpose
for another, though he be a man and knows not such wisdom as we do.

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As for me then, who claim I am highest of all the goddesses,
365 both ways, since I am eldest born and am called your consort,
yours, and you in turn are lord over all the immortals,
how could I not weave sorrows for the men of Troy, when I hate them?

Now as these two were saying things like this to each other,
370 Thetis of the silver feet came to the house of Hephaistos,
imperishable, starry, and shining among the immortals,
built in bronze for himself by the god of the dragging footsteps.
She found him sweating as he turned here and there to his bellows
busily, since he was working on twenty tripods
which were to stand against the wall of his strong-founded dwelling.
And he had set golden wheels underneath the base of each one
375 so that of their own motion they could wheel into the immortal
gathering, and return to his house: a wonder to look at.
These were so far finished, but the elaborate ear handles
were not yet on. He was forging these, and beating the chains out.

As he was at work on this in his craftsmanship and his cunning
380 meanwhile the goddess Thetis the silver-footed drew near him.
Charis of the shining veil saw her as she came forward,
she, the lovely goddess the renowned strong-armed one had married.
She came, and caught her hand and called her by name and spoke to her:
'Why is it, Thetis of the light robes, you have come to our house now?
385 We honour you and love you; but you have not come much before this.
But come in with me, so I may put entertainment before you.'

She spoke, and, shining among divinities, led the way forward
390 and made Thetis sit down in a chair that was wrought elaborately
and splendid with silver nails, and under it was a footstool.
She called to Hephaistos the renowned smith and spoke a word to him:
'Hephaistos, come this way; here is Thetis, who has need of you.'

Hearing her the renowned smith of the strong arms answered her:
395 'Then there is a goddess we honour and respect in our house.
She saved me when I suffered much at the time of my great fall
through the will of my own brazen-faced mother, who wanted
to hide me, for being lame. Then my soul would have taken much
suffering

had not Eurynome and Thetis caught me and held me,
Eurynome, daughter of Ocean, whose stream bends back in a circle.
With them I worked nine years as a smith, and wrought many intricate

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things; pins that bend back, curved clasps, cups, necklaces, working
there in the hollow of the cave, and the stream of Ocean around us
went on forever with its foam and its murmur. No other
among the gods or among mortal men knew about us
405 except Eurynome and Thetis. They knew, since they saved me.
Now she has come into our house; so I must by all means
do everything to give recompense to lovely-haired Thetis
for my life. Therefore set out before her fair entertainment
while I am putting away my bellows and all my instruments.
410 He spoke, and took the huge blower off from the block of the anvil
limping; and yet his shrunken legs moved lightly beneath him.
He set the bellows away from the fire, and gathered and put away
all the tools with which he worked in a silver strongbox.
Then with a sponge he wiped clean his forehead, and both hands,
415 and his massive neck and hairy chest, and put on a tunic,
and took up a heavy stick in his hand, and went to the doorway
limping. And in support of their master moved his attendants.
These are golden, and in appearance like living young women.
There is intelligence in their hearts, and there is speech in them
420 and strength, and from the immortal gods they have learned how to do
things.
These stirred nimbly in support of their master, and moving
near to where Thetis sat in her shining chair, Hephaistos
caught her by the hand and called her by name and spoke a word to
her:
'Why is it, Thetis of the light robes, you have come to our house now?
425 We honour you and love you; but you have not come much before this.
Speak forth what is in your mind. My heart is urgent to do it
if I can, and if it is a thing that can be accomplished.'
Then in turn Thetis answered him, letting the tears fall:
'Hephaistos, is there among all the goddesses on Olympus
430 one who in her heart has endured so many grim sorrows
as the griefs Zeus, son of Kronos, has given me beyond others?
Of all the other sisters of the sea he gave me to a mortal,
to Peleus, Aiakos' son, and I had to endure mortal marriage
though much against my will. And now he, broken by mournful
old age, lies away in his halls. Yet I have other troubles.
435 For since he has given me a son to bear and to raise up

conspicuous among heroes, and he shot up like a young tree,
I nurtured him, like a tree grown in the pride of the orchard.
I sent him away in the curved ships to the land of Ilios
to fight with the Trojans; but I shall never again receive him
won home again to his country and into the house of Peleus.
440 Yet while I see him live and he looks on the sunlight, he has
sorrows, and though I go to him I can do nothing to help him.
And the girl the sons of the Achaians chose out for his honour
powerful Agamemnon took her away again out of his hands.
445 For her his heart has been wasting in sorrow; but meanwhile the
Trojans
pinned the Achaians against their grounded ships, and would not
let them win outside, and the elders of the Argives entreated
my son, and named the many glorious gifts they would give him.
But at that time he refused himself to fight the death from them;
450 nevertheless he put his own armour upon Patroklos
and sent him into the fighting, and gave many men to go with him.
All day they fought about the Skaian Gates, and on that day
they would have stormed the city, if only Phoibos Apollo
had not killed the fighting son of Menoitios there in the first ranks
455 after he had wrought much damage, and given the glory to Hektor.
Therefore now I come to your knees; so might you be willing
to give me for my short-lived son a shield and a helmet
and two beautiful greaves fitted with clasps for the ankles
and a corselet. What he had was lost with his steadfast companion
460 when the Trojans killed him. Now my son lies on the ground, heart
sorrowing.
Hearing her the renowned smith of the strong arms answered her:
'Do not fear. Let not these things be a thought in your mind.
465 And I wish that I could hide him away from death and its sorrow
at that time when his hard fate comes upon him, as surely
as there shall be fine armour for him, such as another
man out of many men shall wonder at, when he looks on it.'
So he spoke, and left her there, and went to his bellows.
He turned these toward the fire and gave them their orders for working.
470 And the bellows, all twenty of them, blew on the crucibles,
from all directions blasting forth wind to blow the flames high
now as he hurried to be at this place and now at another,

wherever Hephaistos might wish them to blow, and the work went forward.

He cast on the fire bronze which is weariless, and tin with it
475 and valuable gold, and silver, and thereafter set forth
upon its standard the great anvil, and gripped in one hand
the ponderous hammer, while in the other he grasped the pincers.

First of all he forged a shield that was huge and heavy,
480 elaborating it about, and threw around it a shining
triple rim that glittered, and the shield strap was cast of silver.
There were five folds composing the shield itself, and upon it
he elaborated many things in his skill and craftsmanship.

He made the earth upon it, and the sky, and the sea's water,
and the tireless sun, and the moon waxing into her fullness,
485 and on it all the constellations that festoon the heavens,
the Pleiades and the Hyades and the strength of Orion
and the Bear, whom men give also the name of the Wagon,
who turns about in a fixed place and looks at Orion
and she alone is never plunged in the wash of the Ocean.

490 On it he wrought in all their beauty two cities of mortal
men. And there were marriages in one, and festivals.
They were leading the brides along the city from their maiden chambers
under the flaring of torches, and the loud bride song was arising.

The young men followed the circles of the dance, and among them
495 the flutes and lyres kept up their clamour as in the meantime
the women standing each at the door of her court admired them.

The people were assembled in the market place, where a quarrel
had arisen, and two men were disputing over the blood price
for a man who had been killed. One man promised full restitution
500 in a public statement, but the other refused and would accept nothing.
Both then made for an arbitrator, to have a decision;

and people were speaking up on either side, to help both men.
But the heralds kept the people in hand, as meanwhile the elders
were in session on benches of polished stone in the sacred circle
505 and held in their hands the staves of the heralds who lift their voices.
The two men rushed before these, and took turns speaking their cases,
and between them lay on the ground two talents of gold, to be given
to that judge who in this case spoke the straightest opinion.

But around the other city were lying two forces of armed men

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510 shining in their war gear. For one side counsel was divided
whether to storm and sack, or share between both sides the property
and all the possessions the lovely citadel held hard within it.

But the city's people were not giving way, and armed for an ambush.
515 Their beloved wives and their little children stood on the rampart
to hold it, and with them the men with age upon them, but meanwhile
the others went out. And Ares led them, and Pallas Athene.

These were gold, both, and golden raiment upon them, and they were
beautiful and huge in their armour, being divinities,
and conspicuous from afar, but the people around them were smaller.

520 These, when they were come to the place that was set for their ambush,
in a river, where there was a watering place for all animals,
there they sat down in place shrouding themselves in the bright bronze.

But apart from these were sitting two men to watch for the rest of them
and waiting until they could see the sheep and the shambling cattle,
525 who appeared presently, and two herdsmen went along with them
playing happily on pipes, and took no thought of the treachery.

Those others saw them, and made a rush, and quickly thereafter
cut off on both sides the herds of cattle and the beautiful
flocks of shining sheep, and killed the shepherds upon them.

530 But the other army, as soon as they heard the uproar arising
from the cattle, as they sat in their councils, suddenly mounted
behind their light-foot horses, and went after, and soon overtook them.

These stood their ground and fought a battle by the banks of the river,
and they were making casts at each other with their spears bronze-headed;
535 and Hate was there with Confusion among them, and Death the
destructive;

she was holding a live man with a new wound, and another
one unhurt, and dragged a dead man by the feet through the carnage.
The clothing upon her shoulders showed strong red with the men's blood.

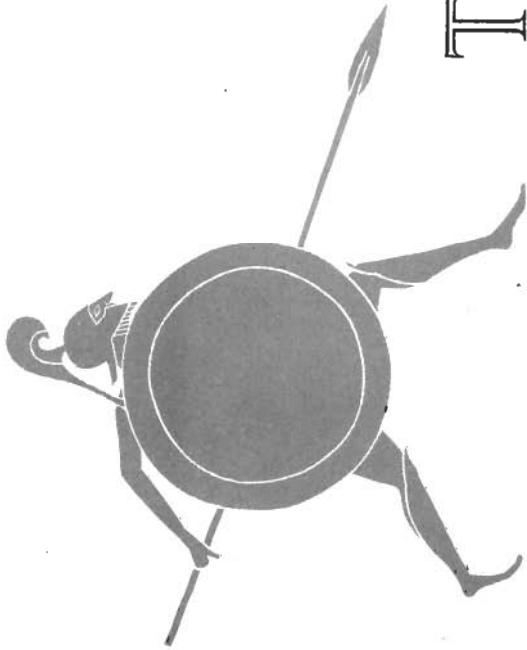
All closed together like living men and fought with each other
and dragged away from each other the corpses of those who had fallen.
540 He made upon it a soft field, the pride of the tilled land,
wide and triple-ploughed, with many ploughmen upon it
who wheeled their teams at the turn and drove them in either direction.

And as these making their turn would reach the end-strip of the field,
a man would come up to them at this point and hand them a flagon
of honey-sweet wine, and they would turn again to the furrows

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in their haste to come again to the end-strip of the deep field.
The earth darkened behind them and looked like earth that has been
ploughed
though it was gold. Such was the wonder of the shield's forging.
550 He made on it the precinct of a king, where the labourers
were reaping, with the sharp reaping hooks in their hands. Of the cut
swathes
some fell along the lines of reaping, one after another,
while the sheaf-binders caught up others and tied them with bind-ropes.
There were three sheaf-binders who stood by, and behind them
555 were children picking up the cut swathes, and filled their arms with them
and carried and gave them always; and by them the king in silence
and holding his staff stood near the line of the reapers, happily.
And apart and under a tree the heralds made a feast ready
and trimmed a great ox they had slaughtered. Meanwhile the women
560 scattered, for the workmen to eat, abundant white barley.
He made on it a great vineyard heavy with clusters,
lovely and in gold, but the grapes upon it were darkened
and the vines themselves stood out through poles of silver. About them
he made a field-ditch of dark metal, and drove all around this
565 a fence of tin; and there was only one path to the vineyard,
and along it ran the grape-bearers for the vineyard's stripping.
Young girls and young men, in all their light-hearted innocence,
carried the kind, sweet fruit away in their woven baskets,
and in their midst a youth with a singing lyre played charmingly
upon it for them, and sang the beautiful song for Linos
570 in a light voice, and they followed him, and with singing and whistling
and light dance-steps of their feet kept time to the music.
He made upon it a herd of horn-straight oxen. The cattle
were wrought of gold and of tin, and thronged in speed and with lowing
575 out of the dung of the farmyard to a pasturing place by a sounding
river, and beside the moving field of a reed bed.
The herdsmen were of gold who went along with the cattle,
four of them, and nine dogs shifting their feet followed them.
But among the foremost of the cattle two formidable lions
580 had caught hold of a bellowing bull, and he with loud lowings
was dragged away, as the dogs and the young men went in pursuit of him.
But the two lions, breaking open the hide of the great ox,

gulped the black blood and the inward guts, as meanwhile the herdsmen
were in the act of setting and urging the quick dogs on them.
But they, before they could get their teeth in, turned back from the lions, 585
but would come and take their stand very close, and bayed, and kept clear.
And the renowned smith of the strong arms made on it a meadow
large and in a lovely valley for the glimmering sheepflocks,
with dwelling places upon it, and covered shelters, and sheepfolds.
And the renowned smith of the strong arms made elaborate on it
590 a dancing floor, like that which once in the wide spaces of Knosos
Daidalos built for Ariadne of the lovely tresses.
And there were young men on it and young girls, sought for their beauty
with gifts of oxen, dancing, and holding hands at the wrist. These
wore, the maidens long light robes, but the men wore tunics
595 of finespun work and shining softly, touched with olive oil.
And the girls wore fair garlands on their heads, while the young men
carried golden knives that hung from sword-belts of silver.
At whiles on their understanding feet they would run very lightly,
as when a potter crouching makes trial of his wheel, holding
600 it close in his hands, to see if it will run smooth. At another
time they would form rows, and run, rows crossing each other.
And around the lovely chorus of dancers stood a great multitude
happily watching, while among the dancers two acrobats
led the measures of song and dance revolving among them.
605 He made on it the great strength of the Ocean River
which ran around the uttermost rim of the shield's strong structure.
Then after he had wrought this shield, which was huge and heavy,
he wrought for him a corselet brighter than fire in its shining,
and wrought him a helmet, massive and fitting close to his temples,
610 lovely and intricate work, and laid a gold top-ridge along it,
and out of pliable tin wrought him leg-armour. Thereafter
when the renowned smith of the strong arms had finished the armour
he lifted it and laid it before the mother of Achilleus.
And she like a hawk came sweeping down from the snows of Olympos
615 and carried with her the shining armour, the gift of Hephaistos.



THE ILLIAD *of* HOMER

TRANSLATED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

Richmond Lattimore

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