

# BOOK 1

Arms and a man I sing, the first from Troy,  
A fated exile to Lavinian shores  
In Italy. On land and sea divine force  
Shook him, through ruthless Juno's brooding rage.  
War racked him too, until he set his city 5  
And gods in Latium. There his Latin race rose,  
With Alban patriarchs, and high Rome's walls.  
Muse, tell me why. What stung the queen of heaven,  
What insult to her power made her drive  
This righteous hero through so much undoing 10  
And suffering? Can gods' hearts know such fury?

Carthage, an ancient Tyrian outpost, faces  
Italy and the far-off Tiber's mouth,  
Rich, and experienced and fierce in war.  
This land, they say, was Juno's darling. (Samos 15

**1-man:** The Trojan hero Aeneas, son of Anchises and the goddess Venus, the protagonist of the poem. The Latin *vir*, "man," can also mean "hero."

**2-Lavinian:** Here, Italian. Lavinium will be the first city Aeneas finds in Italy, named after his future wife, Lavinia.

**7-Alban patriarchs:** The noble houses of Alba Longa, the city founded by Aeneas' son Ascanius; these included the Julii; see 1.270-71.

**10-righteous:** Latin *pious*, "devoted to country, gods, and family." This is Aeneas' chief character trait.

**12-Carthage:** a Phoenician colony in northwest Africa that became Rome's greatest rival in the Mediterranean. The three Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage (264-146 BCE) ended with the complete destruction of Carthage.

**12-Tyrian:** Tyre is the Phoenician city from which Dido fled to found Carthage.

**13-Tiber:** The river on which Rome was founded.

**15-Samos:** An Aegean island with an important temple of Juno.

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Came second.) There her chariot and arms  
Were kept, and from the start she planned that Carthage  
Would rule the world – if only fate allowed!  
But she had heard that one day Troy’s descendants  
Would pull her Tyrian towers to the ground. 20  
A war-proud race with broad domains would come  
To cut down Africa: the fates ordained it.  
Saturn’s child feared this. She recalled the war  
She’d fought at Troy for her beloved Greeks  
And also what had caused her savage anger. 25  
Deep in her heart remained the verdict given  
By Paris, and the insult to her beauty –  
Ganymede raped and honored – that whole race  
Of Trojans. Hot with rage, she barred from Latium  
Those spared by cruel Achilles and the Greeks. 30  
They tossed on endless seas, went wandering,  
Fate-driven, year on year around the world’s seas.  
A weighty work, to found the Roman nation!

Sicily fell from sight. They sailed with joy  
Into the open, bronze prows churning foam. 35  
But Juno, with her deep, unhealing heart wound,  
Muttered, “Am I defeated, done with trying  
To keep the Trojan king from Italy?”

**23–Saturn’s child:** Juno, daughter of the Titan Saturn.

**26–27–the verdict given by Paris:** a reference to the Judgment of Paris, the Trojan prince who was asked to judge which goddess, Venus, Minerva, or Juno, was the most beautiful. He chose Venus, who promised him the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen, for his bride.

**28–Ganymede raped and honored:** The Trojan prince Ganymede was raped by Jupiter, then given the honor of being cupbearer to the gods. Juno is enraged by her husband’s infidelities.

**30–cruel Achilles and the Greeks:** Aeneas and his small band of Trojans are refugees from Troy, destroyed by the Greeks following a ten-year siege. Achilles was one of the mightiest Greek heroes, slayer of the Trojan prince Hector.

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Fate blocks me. But then why could Pallas burn  
The Trojan fleet and drown the men it carried, 40  
Merely to punish Ajax' frenzied crime?  
Out of the clouds she hurled Jove's hungry fire,  
Scattered the ships and overturned the sea.  
Her flames impaled the man, her whirlwind snatched him,  
And on a piercing rock he gasped his life out. 45  
But I, parading as the queen of heaven,  
Jove's wife and sister, fight a single people  
For years. Will anyone now bow and pray  
To me and place his tribute on my altar?"  
Blazing within, the goddess sought the land 50  
Of thunderclouds, which teems with southern gales.  
There struggling winds and howling tempests fill  
The whole vast cave that King Aeolus rules.  
He disciplines them, chains them in their prison.  
They shriek with rage around the bolted doors; 55  
The mountain echoes. Throned up on a summit,  
Aeolus holds a scepter, checks their anger —  
Without him, they would seize land, sea, and deep sky  
To carry with them in their breakneck flight.  
But the almighty father, fearing this, 60  
Shut them in that black cave, heaped mountains on it,  
And set a ruler over them to slacken  
The reins or tighten them, strict in control.

**39–Pallas:** The goddess Minerva (in Greek, Pallas Athena).

**41–Ajax' frenzied crime:** During the sack of Troy the Greek warrior Ajax the Lesser raped Cassandra, a Trojan priestess, though she had taken refuge at Minerva's altar.

**42–Jove's hungry fire:** Jove's (Jupiter's) daughter, Minerva, here borrows her father's weapon, lightning.

**53–The whole vast cave:** According to myth the winds were imprisoned in a cave on the island of Aeolia. Vergil later (8.417) identifies Aeolia with Lipari, a volcanic island off the northern coast of Sicily.

**60–the almighty father:** Jupiter.

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Juno approached him now and made this plea:  
“The king of men and father of the gods 65  
Gives you the right to rouse and soothe the waves.  
A race I hate sails the Tyrrhenian Sea,  
Bringing Troy’s beaten gods to Italy.  
Goad your winds into fury, swamp the ships,  
Or scatter them, strew bodies on the water. 70  
Fourteen voluptuous nymphs belong to me,  
And the most beautiful is Deiopea.  
Her I will make your own, in steadfast union,  
If you will help me. She will spend her life  
With you – the lovely children that you’ll sire!” 75  
Aeolus said, “You merely must decide,  
My sovereign. I must hurry to obey.  
My reign – my modest kingdom – and Jove’s favor  
You brought me. I recline with gods at banquets,  
I rule the stormy clouds because of you.” 80  
With his upended spear he struck a flank  
Of the hollow mountain. In a battle charge  
The winds pour out. They spiral through the world:  
The East and South gales, and the mass of whirlwinds  
From Africa swoop down, uproot the sea, 85  
And send enormous billows rolling shoreward.  
The men begin to shout, the ropes to squeal.  
Sudden clouds snatch away the daylight sky  
From Trojan sight. Black night roosts on the deep.

**67–Tyrrhenian Sea:** A tract of the Mediterranean Sea situated between Sardinia and Corsica and the Italian peninsula, named after the Etruscan prince Tyrrhenus.

**68–gods:** the household gods. See 1.379n.

**83–The winds pour out:** Descriptions of storms were a standard element in epic poetry, from the *Odyssey* on, and offered poets a chance to compete with their predecessors.

**84–The East and South gales:** The wind gods Eurus (the East Wind) and Notus (the South Wind).

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Heaven resounds, fires dancing in its heights. 90  
 The world becomes a threat of instant death.  
 A swift and icy terror numbed Aeneas.  
 He moaned and held his hands up to the stars  
 And gave a cry: “Three times and four times blessed  
 Are those who perished in their fathers’ sight 95  
 Beneath Troy’s walls. You, Diomedes, boldest  
 Of Greeks, could you not spill my blood and let me  
 Fall on the fields of Troy, like raging Hector,  
 Slain by Achilles’ spear, or tall Sarpedon,  
 Where Simois River churns beneath his ripples 100  
 Shields, helmets, bodies of so many brave men?”  
 A screaming northern gale blew past his wild words  
 And slammed the sails and pulled a wave toward heaven.  
 The oars broke, the prow swerved and set the ship  
 Against a looming precipice of water. 105  
 Crews dangled on the crest or glimpsed the seabed  
 Between the waves. Sand poured through seething water.  
 The South Wind hurled them three times at the rocks  
 That lurked midway – Italians call them altars;  
 Their massive spine protrudes – three times the East Wind 110  
 Dashed them clear to the shallows – awful sight –  
 And rammed them tight, and ringed them with a sand wall.  
 Before Aeneas’ eyes a towering wave tipped,

**90–fires dancing in its heights:**  
 Probably Saint Elmo’s Fire, a weather phenomenon in which a bright blue or violet glow appears around masts in inclement weather.

**96–Diomedes:** One of the greatest of the Greek warriors; he nearly killed Aeneas at Troy, but Venus pulled her son from the fight (see *Iliad* 5).

**98–Hector:** The greatest Trojan warrior, whose slaughter by Achilles is depicted in Homer’s *Iliad*.

**99–Sarpedon:** A Trojan warrior, son of Jupiter.

**109–altars:** The Aegimori, two small rocky islands off the coast of Carthage.

**111–shallows:** The Syrtes, dangerous sandbanks off the northern coast of Africa.

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To strike head-on the ship of staunch Orontes  
And the Lycians, and whirled the helmsman out 115  
Headfirst. The boat was whipped in three tight circles,  
And then the greedy whirlpool swallowed it.  
The endless sea showed scatterings of swimmers.  
Planks, gear, and Trojan treasure strewn the waves.  
The storm subdued the strong ships carrying 120  
Ilioneus, Abas, brave Achates,  
And old Aletes. Deadly torrents pushed  
Through the hulls' weakened joints, and fissures started  
To gape. Now Neptune sensed with stern displeasure  
The roaring havoc that the storm let loose. 125  
Even the still depths spurted up. He raised  
His calm face from the surface and looked down.  
He saw Aeneas' ships thrown everywhere,  
Trojans crushed under waves, the plunging sky.  
Juno's own brother knew her guile and rage. 130  
He called the East and South Winds and addressed them:  
"Is this the arrogance of noble birth?  
Without my holy sanction, have you dared  
To churn up land and sea and raise these mountains?  
Which I – but first I'll calm these waves you've roused. 135  
Later I'll punish you with more than words.  
Get out now, fast, and tell this to your ruler:  
I was allotted kingship of the sea,  
And the harsh trident. In his massive stone hall,  
Home to you, East Wind, and the rest, we let him 140  
Swagger, but he must keep that dungeon locked."

**114–15–Orontes and the Lycians:**  
Orontes is the leader of the Lycians, Trojan allies from Anatolia, a term that now denotes the largest part of Turkey.

**121–22–Ilioneus, Abas, brave Achates, and old Aletes:** Trojan companions of Aeneas.

**138–kingship of the sea:** Neptune and his brothers, Jupiter and Pluto, split rulership of the cosmos into three domains: the sky (Jupiter), the sea (Neptune), and the Underworld (Pluto).

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Faster than words, he calmed the swollen sea,  
 Chased off the mass of clouds, brought back the sun.  
 Cymothoë and Triton heaved the ships  
 Off jagged boulders. Neptune with his trident 145  
 Helped them. He freed vast sandbanks, smoothed the surface,  
 His weightless chariot grazing billows' peaks;  
 As often, in a crowded gathering,  
 Crude commoners in rage begin to riot,  
 Torches and stones fly, frenzy finds its weapons – 150  
 If a grave, upright hero of the nation  
 Appears, compelling silence and attention,  
 Then he can tame their hearts and guide their passions:  
 Like this, the broad sea's brawling sounds grew quiet  
 Under its lord's gaze. Now beneath a clear sky 155  
 With slackened reins he rode the breezes onward.  
 Aeneas' worn-out cohort turned to struggle  
 Toward Libya because its coast was nearest.  
 A bay runs inland; island bluffs like walls  
 Create a harbor. From the deep, the waves 160  
 Break there and flutter out their separate ways.  
 Mammoth cliffs flank the place, and twin stone spires  
 Loom to the sky. Beneath them, smooth and safe,  
 The water's hushed. A wooded backdrop quivers  
 Above; black-shadowed, bristling uplands loom. 165  
 At the bay's head, cliffs hang to form a grotto  
 With a clear spring and seat of natural rock.  
 Nymphs live there. At the shore no rope is needed  
 To hold worn ships, no hooked and biting anchor.  
 Aeneas landed seven ships, regrouped 170

**144–Cymothoë and Triton:** Cymothoë is a sea nymph, daughter of Nereus and Doris; Triton is a sea god.

**148–As often:** This is the first of Vergil's many similes in the poem; the po-

litical relevance to Vergil's own times is notable here.

**151–a grave, upright hero:** This hero, who sounds like Aeneas, is presented as a role model for Roman leaders, including Augustus, thanks to his *pietas*.

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From the whole fleet. The Trojans went ashore  
In mighty, yearning love for that dry sand.  
Dripping with briny water, they lay down.  
To start, Achates struck a spark from flint  
And caught the flame in leaves and gave it dry food 175  
All around, till it blazed up through the tinder.  
Downheartedly they took out the equipment  
Of Ceres, and the soaking grain they'd rescued;  
They had to sear it dry before they ground it.  
Meanwhile Aeneas climbed a crag to view 180  
The great expanse of sea. Where did the wind toss  
Antheus, Capys, Caicus' lofty prow  
Hung with his arms – or any Trojan vessel?  
There was no ship in sight. But three stags wandered  
The shore. Entire herds came after them, 185  
And grazed in one long column through the valley.  
Taking a stand, he snatched the bow and arrows  
That his devoted friend Achates carried.  
He brought the strutting, branching-antlered leaders  
To the ground first, and then his arrows chased 190  
The crowd in havoc through the leafy groves.  
Exulting, he continued till he leveled  
Seven large bodies for his seven ships,  
Then went to share the meat out at the harbor,  
Along with casks of wine, a noble gift 195  
From kind Acestes to the crew departing  
From Sicily. Aeneas spoke this comfort:  
“Friends, we are all at home with suffering –  
Some worse than this – but god will end this too.

**177–78–equipment of Ceres:** Tools used to convert grain into meal. Ceres is both the Roman goddess of agriculture and the Latin word for “grain.”

**182–Antheus, Capys, Caicus:** Companions of Aeneas.

**196–Acestes:** The son of a river god and a Trojan woman named Egesta or Segesta, Acestes is a king of Sicily who hosts Aeneas and his Trojans before they land at Carthage (5.30).



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You veered toward Scylla's frenzy, and the deep roar 200  
 At the cliffs, you saw the rocks the Cyclops threw.  
 Revive your hearts, shake off your gloomy fear.  
 Sometime you may recall today with pleasure.  
 We fight through perils and catastrophes  
 To Latium, where divine fate promises 205  
 A peaceful homeland, a new Trojan kingdom.  
 Endure and live until our fortunes change."  
 Sick with colossal burdens, he shammed hope  
 On his face, and buried grief deep in his heart.  
 Trojans tied back their clothes and made his quarry 210  
 A feast: tore back the hide, bared ribs and guts.  
 While some men pierced the quivering chunks with spits,  
 Others set cauldrons out or tended flames.  
 The food restored and filled them – the old wine,  
 The rich game – as they stretched out on the grass. 215  
 After the meal was done and cleared away,  
 They spoke with longing of their missing friends.  
 They hoped, they feared: were these men still alive,  
 Or past the end and deaf to any summons?  
 Loyal Aeneas, most of all, was groaning 220  
 Softly for keen Orontes, Amycus, Lycus,  
 For Gyas and Cloanthus – brave men, hard deaths.  
 Now they were finished. Jove looked down from heaven  
 At the sail-flying waters, open flatlands,  
 The shores, the far-flung nations. At the sky's peak, 225  
 He fixed his gaze on Libyan territory.

**200–201–Scylla's frenzy, and the deep roar at the cliffs:** Scylla (a sea monster) and Charybdis (a whirlpool) were traditionally located in the Strait of Messina between Sicily and Italy.

**201–the rocks the Cyclops threw:** A reference to Homer's *Odyssey* 9, in which the Cyclops Polyphemus throws boul-

ders at the ship of Odysseus (Ulysses) in an effort to sink them.

**210–tied back their clothes:** An anachronistic reference to a custom of Vergil's own time. Cumbersome Roman togas needed to be drawn up and girded close to the body for active work.

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His mind was anxious, busy. And now Venus  
 Spoke these sad words to him, her shining eyes  
 Filling with tears. “You, everlasting ruler  
 Of gods and men; you, fearsome lightning-hurler, 230  
 What great crime did Aeneas and the Trojans  
 Commit against you? They have died and died,  
 But in the whole world found no Italy.  
 You promised that the circling years would draw  
 Teucer’s new lineage from them, Romans, chieftains, 235  
 With power everywhere on land and sea.  
 Father, what new thought turns you from this purpose?  
 When Troy calamitously fell, I weighed it  
 Against the fate to come, to my great comfort.  
 Yet fortune goes on pummeling these heroes. 240  
 When will you, mighty ruler, end their hardships?  
 Antenor fled, unharmed, from the surrounding  
 Greeks, to Illyria’s deep coves, clear to the kingdom  
 Of Liburnia and the Timavus’ source,  
 Where the sea breaks through nine mouths, and the mountain 245  
 Roars, and the echoing waves oppress the fields.  
 And there he founded Padua, a homeland  
 For Trojans, with a Trojan name, its gateway  
 Displaying Trojan arms. He has his rest there.  
 But we, your children, promised heirs to heaven, 250  
 Lost our ships – monstrous! – through Somebody’s anger  
 And treachery. We’re kept from Italy.  
 Where is our new realm, won through righteousness?”

**235–Teucer’s new lineage:** Teucer was the original ancestor of the Trojan kings. Through his descendant Aeneas, the Romans traced their line directly to the Trojan royal house.

**242–Antenor:** A nephew of Priam, king of Troy. After the city fell, he founded a colony of Trojans at Venetia (modern Padua).

**243–Illyria:** The area of the west Balkans, east of the Adriatic Sea.

**244–Liburnia:** A part of Illyria.

**244–Timavus:** A river in Italy.

**247–Padua:** A Trojan colony in northern Italy.

**253–righteousness:** Latin *pietas*, “devotion to country, gods and family”; cf. 1.10n.

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The gods' and mortals' father gave his daughter  
 The smile that clears the sky of storms and kissed her 255  
 Lightly, and this was how he answered her:  
 "Take heart: no one will touch the destiny  
 Of your people. You will see Lavinium  
 In its promised walls, and raise your brave Aeneas  
 To the stars. No new thoughts change my purposes. 260  
 But you're tormented, so I'll tell the future,  
 Unwinding to the light fate's secret scroll.  
 In Italy your son will crush a fierce race  
 In a great war. With the Rutulians beaten,  
 Three winters and three summers he'll shape walls 265  
 And warrior customs, as he reigns in Latium.  
 His son Ascanius – called "Iulus" too now  
 (From Ilus, before Ilium's rule ended) –  
 Will reign while thirty spacious years unroll  
 Their whirling months, and he will move the kingdom 270  
 To Alba Longa, heaving up strong ramparts.  
 Three centuries the dynasty of Hector  
 Will govern, until Ilia, royal priestess,  
 Conceives by Mars and brings twin boys to light.  
 And the wolf's nursling (glad to wear brown wolfskin) 275  
 Romulus will then lead the race and found  
 The walls of Mars for Romans, named for him.  
 For them I will not limit time or space.  
 Their rule will have no end. Even grim Juno,  
 Who now exhausts sea, land, and sky with terror, 280

**268–Ilus:** The traditional founder of Ilium (Troy).

**272–the dynasty of Hector:** Descendants of the Trojan royal house, via Aeneas and his wife, Creusa, Hector's sister, were said to have ruled Alba Longa until the eighth century BCE, when

Romulus was credited with founding the city of Rome.

**273–Ilia:** Mother of Romulus and Remus.

**278–For them I will not limit time or space:** Jupiter's prophecy of everlasting empire has helped inspire colonialist expansion through the centuries.

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Will change her mind and join me as I foster  
 The Romans in their togas, the world's masters.  
 I have decreed it. Gliding years will bring  
 Anchises' clan as rulers into Phthia,  
 Mycenae (once renowned), and beaten Argos. 285  
 The noble Trojan line will give us Caesar –  
 A Julian name passed down from mighty Iulus –  
 With worldwide empire, glory heaven-high.  
 At ease you will receive him with his burden  
 Of eastern spoils. They'll pray to him in heaven. 290  
 Then wars will cease, cruel history will grow gentle.  
 Vesta, old Faith, and Quirinus, with Remus  
 His twin, will make the laws. Tight locks of iron  
 Will close War's grim gates. Inside, godless Furor,  
 Slavering blood on heaps of brutal weapons, 295  
 Will roar against the chains that pinion him."

**284–Anchises' clan:** The Romans. Their Trojan roots are emphasized; though Troy was sacked, its descendants will eventually conquer Greece.

**284–85–Phthia, Mycenae . . . Argos:** Greek settlements: Phthia was the home of Achilles and his Myrmidon warriors; Agamemnon ruled Mycenae; Diomedes, Argos. Jupiter predicts the Roman conquest of Greece in the second century BCE.

**286–Caesar:** Not Julius but his heir Augustus, previously called Octavian.

**287–Julian name:** Augustus inherited the name of Caesar from his adoptive father, Julius Caesar, his great-uncle by blood.

**290–eastern spoils:** Augustus negotiated the return of lost battle standards from the eastern realm of Parthia (in modern Iran), a significant symbolic and diplomatic achievement. This is prob-

ably also a reference to his decisive victory over Antony and the Egyptian queen Cleopatra in 31 BCE.

**292–old Faith:** Loyalty, here personified as a goddess, whose cult was established by King Numa early in Rome's history.

**292–Quirinus:** Another name for Romulus; see 6.859n.

**294–close War's grim gates:** Located in the Roman Forum, the gates of the temple of Janus, the two-faced god of boundaries, were open in times of war, closed in times of peace. They were closed extremely rarely: in Vergil's lifetime only in 29 and 25 BCE. See 7.601–15.

**294–Furor:** Madness or frenzy, here personified. The conflict between frenzy and piety—duty to one's family and duty to the gods—is a central motif in the *Aeneid* (see the Introduction).

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Concluding, he dispatched the son of Maia  
 To have the Trojans welcomed down in Carthage  
 With its new fort—since Dido, unaware  
 Of fate, might keep them out. The god’s wings rowed him 300  
 Through the vast air, to stand on Libya’s shore.  
 Since it was heaven’s will, the fierce Phoenicians  
 Peacefully yielded; most of all, their queen  
 Turned a calm, gentle face to meet the Trojans.  
 Steadfast Aeneas spent a worried night, 305  
 But at the light of nurturing dawn decided  
 To go and find out where the wind had brought them  
 And who or what—the land looked wild—lived here,  
 And bring what he could learn to his companions.  
 The fleet lay hidden in a tree-hemmed inlet, 310  
 Under a rocky overhang enclosed  
 By bristling shade. He set off with Achates  
 And took two quivering pikes with iron blades.  
 Deep in the wood his mother came to him,  
 A girl in face and clothes, armed as in Sparta, 315  
 Or like Harpalyce in Thrace, outracing  
 The breakneck Hebrus with her harried horses—  
 A huntress with a bow slung, quick to hand,  
 From her shoulders, loose hair streaming in the wind,  
 Her clothing’s flowing folds tied over bare knees. 320  
 She greeted them and asked, “Please, have you met  
 One of my sisters roaming? Shouting, chasing  
 A boar whose mouth drips foam? She has a quiver,  
 And wears a spotted lynx skin and a belt.”

**297–son of Maia:** Mercury, messenger of the gods.

**302–Phoenicians:** Here, Carthaginians; see 1.12n.

**305–Steadfast:** Another way of translating *pius*.

**315–armed as in Sparta:** Spartan

women were trained in martial skills, including running, hunting, and riding.

**316–Harpalyce in Thrace:** a mythical Thracian warrior princess who lived in the forest.

**317–Hebrus:** A river in Thrace, regarded by the Romans as wild country.

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Venus had spoken; now her son began: 325  
 “Young girl, I haven’t heard or seen your sister.  
 But I should call you – what? There’s nothing mortal  
 In such a voice or face. No, you’re a goddess.  
 Apollo’s sister? Daughter of a nymph clan?  
 No matter: have compassion, ease our hardship. 330  
 Where on earth, on what shores have storm winds thrown us?  
 Beneath which tract of sky? The wind and huge waves  
 Drove us to this strange land in which we wander.  
 I’ll slaughter many victims at your altar.”  
 She answered, “This I surely don’t deserve. 335  
 These quivers are what Tyrian girls all carry;  
 We all wear purple boots, laced on our calves.  
 This is the Punic realm, Agenor’s city.  
 Unconquerable Africans surround us.  
 Dido is queen; she came here out of Tyre, 340  
 Escaping from her brother’s persecution.  
 It’s quite a story, but I’ll tell it briefly.  
 Her husband was Sychaeus, the Phoenician  
 Who owned the most land – she, poor thing, adored him.  
 Her father joined her to him as a virgin, 345  
 In her first marriage. But Pygmalion  
 Her brother ruled; there’s no worse criminal.  
 Hate rose between them. In blind lust for gold,  
 Indifferent to his sister’s love, Pygmalion  
 Wickedly caught Sychaeus at an altar 350  
 And murdered him. He dodged and made up stories,  
 Cynically drawing out her anxious hope.  
 But in her dreams there came to her the vision  
 Of her unburied husband’s strange pale face.  
 He showed his wounded chest: the ghastly crime 355

**329–Apollo’s sister:** Diana, virgin goddess of hunting and the wilderness.

**338–Agenor’s city:** Venus refers to Carthage by naming Agenor, king of Tyre, one of Dido’s ancestors.

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At the altar – monstrous secret – was laid bare.  
He urged a quick escape. To aid the journey  
Out of her country, he revealed where treasure,  
A mass of gold and silver, lay long buried.  
Alarmed, she made her plans, alerted friends – 360  
All those who also loathed the brutal tyrant  
Or lived in sharp fear. Seizing ready ships,  
They loaded them with gold. The broad sea carried  
Greedy Pygmalion's wealth; a woman led.  
They came here, where you now see giant walls 365  
And the rising citadel of newborn Carthage.  
They purchased land, 'as much as one bull's hide  
Could reach around,' and called the place 'the Bull's Hide.'  
But who are you? What country do you come from?  
Where are you going?" Answering, Aeneas 370  
Sighed as he drew these words from his heart's depths:  
"Goddess, our whole sad story, from its start,  
Would keep you here until the Evening Star  
Closed off Olympus, bringing this day rest.  
Through endless seas, we come from ancient Troy – 375  
Perhaps you've heard that name. A storm has thrust us,  
By its whim, to these shores of Africa.  
I'm staunch Aeneas, heaven-famed, from Jove's line.  
My fleet conveys the household gods I saved  
To Italy, the homeland that I seek. 380

**364–a woman led:** A striking Latin phrase: *dux femina facti*, literally, "a woman was the leader of the action."

**367–68: "as much as one bull's hide could reach around":** The Phoenicians were offered as much ground as they could surround with a bull's hide, so they cut the hide into thin strips to make a single long string.

**373–Evening Star:** The planet Venus, called Vesper.

**378–from Jove's line:** Aeneas refers to his Trojan ancestor Dardanus, son of Jupiter and Electra.

**379–the household gods:** The Penates, Roman deities of the home, closely associated with the Lares (a family's guardian deities) and with Vesta, goddess of the hearth. Aeneas was credited with introducing their worship to Italy.

## BOOK 1

My goddess mother shows my fated way.  
 Of twenty ships launched on the Phrygian sea,  
 Seven survive the tearing waves and East Wind.  
 Europe and Asia banished me to wander  
 The wastes of Libya, a needy stranger.” 385  
 Venus cut short this grief, these grievances.  
 “Whoever you might be, I think the favor  
 Of the gods has brought you to this Tyrian city.  
 Simply go on from here, up to the queen’s door.  
 I have good news. Your friends and ships are safe. 390  
 The North Wind turned and brought them back. My parents  
 Taught me to read the sky, I hope correctly.  
 Look at that cheerful squadron of twelve swans.  
 Jove’s eagle swooped from heaven through the clear sky  
 And routed them. But the long row regrouped— 395  
 Those still aloft look down on those who’ve landed.  
 Their joyful rushing wings on their return,  
 Their cries, their crowded circles in the sky  
 Speak of the ships that carry all your people:  
 Arrived in port or heading in with full sails. 400  
 Go on, then, make your way along the road.”  
 She turned away. Her rosy neck now shone.  
 Her hair’s ambrosia breathed a holy fragrance.  
 Her belt fell loose, her robe’s hem swept her feet.  
 Like a true god she walked. He recognized 405  
 His mother and called after her retreat:

**382–Phrygian sea:** As Phrygia was the part of Asia Minor where Troy was situated, “Phrygian” often means “Trojan.”

**391–North Wind:** The wind god Aquilo, associated with winter.

**392–to read the sky:** A reference to the Roman practice of augury, in which

the flights of birds were interpreted as omens.

**403–ambrosia:** Often represented as the food of the gods; also used as a divine unguent or perfume.

**404–her robe’s hem swept her feet:** Her short hunting tunic (line 320) transforms into the long flowing robe of a goddess.



BOOK 1

“Why do you, cruel as anybody, taunt me,  
Your child, with tricks and phantoms? Take my hand!  
Let there be words between us as we are!”  
Bitter, he set out toward the city walls, 410  
But Venus hid the group in murky air,  
In a thick cloud draped over them like clothing  
That let nobody see or touch them; no one  
Could ask why they were there or hold them back.  
She soared off gladly to her home in Paphos, 415  
To her shrine’s hundred altars, warm with incense  
From Arabia and fragrant with fresh garlands.  
Meanwhile they hurried, following the path.  
They climbed a lofty hill above the city,  
And looked down at the fortress straight ahead. 420  
Aeneas was amazed at those great structures  
Where huts had been: the gates, paved roads – the hubbub!  
Tyrians feverishly laid out long walls  
Or rolled up rocks to raise the citadel;  
Men ringed their building sites with trenches, chose 425  
Laws, magistrates, and sacred senators.  
A port was being dug, a theater’s  
Deep footing laid, great columns carved from cliffs  
To ornament the stage that would be built there:  
Like bees in spring across the blossoming land, 430  
Busy beneath the sun, leading their offspring,  
Full grown now, from the hive, or loading cells  
Until they swell with honey and sweet nectar,  
Or taking shipments in, or lining up  
To guard the fodder from the lazy drones; 435

**415–Paphos:** A coastal city on the island of Cyprus. Venus was believed to have landed here first after she was born of sea foam; her Greek name Aphrodite (*aphros* means “sea foam”) alludes to this myth.

**426–Laws, magistrates, and sacred senators:** Vergil represents the rising city of Carthage in Roman terms.

BOOK 1

The teeming work breathes thyme and fragrant honey.  
“What luck they have – their walls grow high already!”  
Aeneas cried, eyes lifted to those roofs.  
Still covered by the cloud – a miracle –  
He passed in through the crowds, and no one saw him. 440  
Deep in the city is the verdant shade  
Where the Phoenicians, tempest-worn, unearthed  
The sign that royal Juno said they’d find:  
A horse’s head, foretelling martial glory  
And easy livelihood through future ages. 445  
Dido was building Juno a vast shrine here,  
Filled with rich offerings and holy power.  
The stairs soared to a threshold forged of bronze;  
Bronze joined the beams; the doors had shrill bronze hinges.  
Here a strange sight relieved Aeneas’ fear 450  
For the first time, and lured him into hope  
Of better things to follow all his torments.  
While waiting for the queen, he scanned with wonder  
The whole huge shrine – the city’s wealth it spoke of,  
The toiling concord of the different craftsmen – 455  
And saw Troy’s battles painted in their sequence,  
A worldwide story now: Atreus’ sons  
And Priam – and Achilles, cruel to both.  
He halted, weeping: “What land isn’t full  
Of what we suffered in that war, Achates?” 460  
There’s Priam! Even here is praise for valor  
And tears of pity for a mortal world.  
Don’t be afraid. Somehow, our fame will save us.”  
With steady sobbing and great streams of tears,

**444–A horse’s head:** According to Vergil, Juno indicated via an oracle that Carthage should be founded where Dido found the buried head of a horse. Car-

thaginian coins had a horse motif on one side.

**457–Atreus’ sons:** Agamemnon and Menelaus.

BOOK 1

He fed his heart on shallow images. 465  
 He saw men fight around the citadel—  
 Trojan troops routing Greeks, Achilles' crest,  
 His chariot bearing down on routed Trojans.  
 He wept to recognize, close by, the white tents  
 Of Rhesus: savage Diomedes stormed 470  
 And massacred the camp on its first night,  
 And seized the fiery horses there before  
 They tasted Trojan grass or drank the Xanthus.  
 Here Troilus—poor boy, no match for Achilles—  
 Who'd lost his weapons, clutched his reins, though sprawling 475  
 Behind his empty chariot and panicked  
 Horses. His neck and flowing hair were skidding  
 Over the ground. His spear point scored the dust.  
 The Trojan women, hair unbound, went begging  
 To the temple of implacable Athena. 480  
 They took a robe for her and beat their breasts.  
 She wouldn't raise her eyes and look at them.  
 Three times Achilles dragged the corpse of Hector  
 Around Troy's walls, then traded it for gold.  
 Aeneas gave a soulful groan to see 485  
 His comrade's armor, chariot, and body,  
 And Priam stretching out defenseless hands.  
 He saw himself among Greek chieftains, fighting;

**470–73–Rhesus . . . Xanthus:** Rhesus was a Thracian prince, killed by Ulysses and Diomedes on the day he arrived at Troy. According to prophecy, if his horses drank from the river Xanthus and grazed on Trojan grass, the city would never be taken.

**474–Troilus:** A Trojan prince, son of Priam. Vergil often directs sympathetic attention to young casualties of war.

**483–Achilles dragged the corpse of**

**Hector:** In *Iliad* 22 Achilles chases Hector on foot around the walls of Troy before he kills him, and in *Iliad* 24 he attaches his body to his chariot and drags it around Patroclus' tomb. Vergil's version of Achilles selling the corpse comes from another source.

**487–Priam stretching out defenseless hands:** A reference to the scene in *Iliad* 24 in which Priam appeals to Achilles to return his son Hector's body.

BOOK 1

He saw black Memnon and the ranks of Dawn.  
 Penthesilea, leading Amazons 490  
 Who carried crescent shields, stormed through the throng,  
 Her gold belt tied beneath a naked breast –  
 A warlike girl who dared to clash with men.  
 Astounding pictures, rendering Aeneas  
 Of Troy transfixed, entranced – but while he stared, 495  
 Dido, the lovely queen, paced to the temple,  
 A large and youthful troop attending her.  
 On Eurotas' banks or Cynthus' heights, Diana  
 Keeps dances moving; there she's flanked and followed  
 By a thousand clustering nymphs – they're goddesses, 500  
 But she looms taller, shouldering her quiver  
 (A speechless joy engulfs Latona's heart):  
 So cheerful Dido moved among her people,  
 Urging on work to make her kingdom strong.  
 Facing the doors, beneath the temple's vault, 505  
 On her high throne she sat, flanked by her armed guards,  
 Gave judgments, made decrees, assigned the work  
 In fair proportions or by drawing lots.  
 But now Aeneas saw among the crowd  
 Fearless Cloanthus, Antheus, Sergestus, 510  
 And other Trojans whom the pitch-black whirlwind  
 Had scattered, driving them to distant shores.

**489–black Memnon and the ranks of Dawn:** Memnon, the son of Tithonus and the dawn goddess Aurora, brought a force from Ethiopia to aid the Trojans.

**490–Penthesilea, leading Amazons:** The Amazons, women warriors, were allies of the Trojans who arrived in the last year of the war. Achilles fell in love with their queen, Penthesilea, at the moment he killed her in battle.

**498–Eurotas:** A major river that ran through Sparta in the Peloponnese.

**498–Cynthus:** A mountain on the island of Delos, birthplace of Apollo and Diana.

**502–Latona:** Greek Leto, mother of Diana and her twin brother Apollo by Jupiter.

**510–Sergestus:** The ancestor of one of the oldest elite families in Rome, *gens Sergia*, of which the infamous Catiline was a member. See 8.669n.

BOOK 1

He and Achates both were riveted  
With fear and joy. They yearned to clasp their friends' hands,  
But didn't, being startled and bewildered. 515  
They hung back, watching from the hollow cloud.  
What was the news, where were they moored, and why  
Had they come here? Spokesmen from every ship  
Clamored into the shrine with their petitions.  
When he was given leave to speak, the eldest, 520  
Ilioneus, peaceably addressed her:  
"Your highness, we poor Trojans plead with you:  
Jove let you found a city and bring justice  
To lawless tribes. We wander on the sea,  
Wind-harried: save our ship from evil fires. 525  
Spare decent people – think what we've been through.  
We haven't come to plunder Libyan homes  
Or drive your herds away onto the beaches.  
Arrogant crime is not for beaten men.  
There is a place Greeks call Hesperia, 530  
An ancient land, rich-loamed and strong in war.  
Oenotrians lived there, whose descendants call it  
Italy, from king Italus, we're told.  
On our way there,  
Stormy Orion heaved the surge against us, 535  
Cruel South Winds drove us far into the shallows,  
Scattered us under conquering waves and over  
Stone barriers. We few rowed to your shores.  
What race is this? What nation would permit

**521–Ilioneus:** The oldest of the Trojans in Aeneas' party.

**530–Greeks call Hesperia:** Italy, named from the Greek word for "west" (*hesperos*), as it lies to the west of Greece.

**532–Oenotrians:** Native inhabitants of Italy.

**533–Italus:** King of the Oenotrians.

**534–On our way there:** The first of about fifty-eight incomplete lines in the *Aeneid*, usually seen as a sign that Vergil did not have the chance to complete the poem.

**535–Orion:** The constellation Orion (the Hunter) was seen as a bringer of storms and rain.

BOOK 1

Such outrage? With belligerence, they've thrust us 540  
From the beach; they yield no resting place on land.  
You scorn the human race and human weapons?  
Don't doubt the gods remember good and evil.  
Aeneas was our leader – none more just  
Or faithful ever lived, no better fighter. 545  
If fate still lets him breathe instead of sleeping  
Among the shades of death, we'd have no fear,  
And you would not be sorry for competing  
With him in kindness. We have towns and troops  
In Sicily. We're kin of great Acestes. 550  
Please, let us beach the fleet the winds have ruined,  
And saw new planks, shape new oars in your woods.  
Perhaps our friend and leader will return –  
Then we can sail with joy to Italy.  
If that won't save us, and our loving father 555  
Lies in the sea, and there's no hope for Iulus,  
We'd sail to Sicily – a king, Acestes,  
A home is there for us across the strait.”  
So Ilioneus spoke, and all the Trojans  
Instantly roared approval. 560  
Dido looked down and gave this brief reply:  
“Calm your hearts, Trojans, put away your fears.  
The threats to my new kingdom here have forced me  
To place guards carefully on all the borders.  
Who hasn't heard about Aeneas' family, 565  
Or Troy – those brave men and the flames of war?  
Phoenicians know the world! This town's not set  
Beyond the place the Sun God yokes his horses.  
To Saturn's fields, the great lands of the West,

**568–Beyond the place the Sun God yokes his horses:** I.e., beyond the known world.

**569–Saturn's fields:** Italy, where the

Titan Saturn was exiled after he was deposed from rule over the gods in a coup by his son Jupiter.

BOOK 1

Or the kingdom of Acestes next to Eryx, 570  
 I'll send you off secure and well supplied.  
 Or would you settle here and share my kingdom?  
 The city that I found is yours, so land  
 Your ships. You will be equal to my people.  
 I wish the storm had brought your king Aeneas 575  
 Himself. But I will send some trusted men  
 Up and down Libya's shoreline, since he might  
 Be cast up, wandering through woods or towns."  
 Heartened now, staunch Achates and Aeneas  
 The patriarch were yearning to break free 580  
 Out of their cloud. Achates asked his leader:  
 "Goddess' son, what new thoughts rise up in you?  
 Your fleet and followers are in safe havens.  
 Save for one man our own eyes saw the waves  
 Take under, it is as your mother said." 585  
 He'd scarcely finished when the cloud that veiled them  
 Ripped apart and dissolved in open air.  
 Aeneas stood, his godlike face and shoulders  
 Flashing in clear light, since his mother breathed  
 Graceful long hair, the blushing glow of youth, 590  
 And happy shining eyes onto her son –  
 Like ivory beautifully carved, like silver,  
 Or Parian marble edged with tawny gold.  
 To the astonished queen and all the others  
 He quickly spoke out: "Here I am, you see – 595  
 Trojan Aeneas, saved from Libyan waters.  
 You are the first to pity Troy's misfortunes.  
 We are the scraps the Greeks left. We have nothing.  
 Disaster pelted us on land and sea.  
 It could not be in all our people's power 600

**570–Eryx:** Mount Eryx, on the western side of Sicily.

**593–Parian marble:** Marble quar-

ried from the island of Paros was highly valued in antiquity, especially for carving statues.

BOOK 1

(We are world-scattered now) to thank you, Dido,  
For making us the sharers of this place.  
The gods and your own conscience must reward you.  
Surely divine powers honor selflessness,  
And justice does exist. What happy era 605  
And what outstanding parents gave you birth?  
While streams run to the sea, while shadows move  
On mountain hollows, while stars graze in heaven,  
You will have praise and honor, in whatever  
Land calls me.” Now he reached out to Sergestus 610  
And Ilioneus, with his right and left hands;  
And then to brave Cloanthus and brave Gyas.  
Phoenician Dido was amazed to see him,  
And shocked by all his suffering. She spoke:  
“What fate has hounded you through endless danger? 615  
What force has brought you to our savage shores?  
Are you the one born by the river Simoïs –  
Trojan Anchises and kind Venus’ son?  
Teucer in exile came to Sidon, looking  
For a new kingdom, I recall, and seeking 620  
My father, Belus’ help – he was away  
Ravaging wealthy newly conquered Cyprus.  
Since then I’ve known the tragedy of Troy,  
The kings from Greece who fought there, and your name.  
Your enemy himself admired Trojans 625  
And claimed to share the ancient Teucrian line.  
So come now, warriors, join me in my house.  
Fate dragged me through much suffering myself  
Until it let me settle in this land.  
My own experience has taught compassion.” 630  
She spoke, and led Aeneas to her palace,

**619–Sidon:** A Phoenician city.

**625–Your enemy himself:** Teucer, the  
Greek warrior.



BOOK 1

Proclaiming sacrifices in the temples.  
She sent his shore-bound comrades twenty bulls,  
A hundred giant boars with bristling backs,  
A hundred fat lambs and their mothers too, 635  
Gifts for a joyful day.  
Regal, bright luxury equipped the house.  
The feast was laid out in the central hall:  
Embroidery exquisite on proud purple,  
A mass of silver vessels, with reliefs 640  
In gold of her heroic ancestry,  
The whole long story of her ancient race.  
Aeneas, with an anxious father's love,  
Dispatched Achates swiftly to the ships,  
To give Ascanius news and bring him here. 645  
All the fond father's thought was for the boy.  
Aeneas ordered gifts brought in, the salvage  
Of Troy: a mantle stiff with gold-stitched figures,  
A veil trimmed yellow with acanthus flowers –  
Greek Helen's trappings, taken from Mycenae 650  
When she set off for Troy and lawless marriage,  
Glorious presents from her mother, Leda –  
And the scepter once held by Ilione,  
Eldest of Priam's daughters; a pearl necklace;  
And a crown's double bands of gold and gems. 655  
Achates rushed to fetch them from the ships.  
But Venus was revolving new designs,  
A new plan: Cupid, thoroughly transfigured,  
And not Ascanius, would bring the gifts,  
And twist a frenzied flame around the queen's bones. 660  
She feared this lying race, this doubtful refuge.  
At evening, too, came thoughts of ruthless Juno  
To trouble her, so she approached winged Love:  
"My son, you are my strength, I rule through you.  
You even scorn the father's lightning bolts. 665

BOOK 1

Humbly I come to seek your holy aid.  
You know your brother's tortuous worldwide voyage,  
How Juno's spite will never let him rest.  
You've shared my grief about this many times.  
Phoenician Dido flatters and detains him. 670  
Juno has sanctioned this – but for what purpose?  
She won't hang back at this decisive time.  
So I'll move quickly, shrewdly, trap the queen  
In flames, and then no will on high can change her.  
She will be mine, through passion for Aeneas. 675  
Now listen while I tell you how to do it.  
My darling prince, at his dear father's call,  
Is setting out to the Phoenician city  
With gifts saved from the sea and Trojan flames.  
I'll hide him, tranced in sleep, on Cythera's heights, 680  
Or high above Idalium – my shrines.  
He won't know, he won't stumble on the scheme.  
You are a boy too: for a single night  
Impersonate the features Trojans know.  
Amid the royal banquet's flowing wine, 685  
Dido will be enchanted with you, hold you  
In her lap, with doting kisses. That's your chance:  
Stealthily breathe on her your flame of poison.”  
Love shed his wings, obeying his dear mother,  
And strutted in a gleeful imitation. 690  
Venus poured deep sleep through the prince's body  
And took him in her arms to the high groves  
Of Idalium. Soft marjoram wrapped flowers  
And breathed their aromatic shade around him.  
In glee and deference, now, Cupid followed 695  
After Achates with the royal gifts.

**681–Idalium:** A small city on the island of Cyprus where Venus had a sanctuary.

BOOK 1

He found the queen among her splendid hangings,  
Posed in the middle, on a golden couch.  
Father Aeneas and the ranks of Trojans  
Assembled and reclined on purple covers. 700  
The slaves poured water on their hands, provided  
Baskets of bread and finespun napkins. Inside,  
Fifty maids honored household gods with hearth flames  
And made the long feast ready course by course.  
Two hundred men and women of the same age 705  
Served wine and weighed the tables down with good things.  
Phoenician guests flocked in the festive doorway  
And took their places on embroidered couches,  
Struck by Aeneas' gifts, and struck by "Iulus" –  
The god's bright face and masquerading words, 710  
The cloak and the embroidered yellow flowers.  
The Punic Queen, cursed and disaster bound,  
Brooded insatiably and burned with staring,  
Enchanted by the presents and the boy.  
He put his arms around Aeneas' neck, 715  
Which gratified the duped and loving father,  
Then sought the queen. Her eyes and mind were fixed  
On him. Poor thing, she held him in her lap,  
The mighty hidden god. He thought of Venus,  
His mother, and began to ease Sychaeus 720  
Out of her mind, to try a living love  
Against a heart long quiet and disused.  
An interval; the tables are removed.  
They set out giant wine bowls crowned with flowers.  
A clamor rises, and their voices roll 725  
Through the wide hall. Lamps hang from golden panels,  
Blazing, and waxed-rope candles rout the darkness.  
The queen called for a bowl – heavy with gems  
And gold – for unmixed wine. From Belus on,  
The dynasty had drunk from it. Now, silence. 730

BOOK 1

“They say you govern visits, Jupiter.  
 Make this a glad day for our Trojan guests  
 And us, a day our children all remember.  
 Bacchus who gives us joy, good Juno, come!  
 Tyrians, kindly solemnize our coming 735  
 Together.” She poured out an offering,  
 Then took the lead – her lips just brushed the rim –  
 And, with a challenge, passed to Bitias:  
 He wallowed in the full, foam-brimming gold.  
 The other leaders drank. Long-haired Iopas, 740  
 Great Atlas’ pupil, struck his golden lyre.  
 He sang the wandering moon, the sun’s eclipses,  
 Fire and rain, how men and beasts were made,  
 The keeper of the Bear, the Twins, the Rain Stars;  
 Why winter suns dive in the sea so quickly, 745  
 What obstacle makes winter nights so slow.  
 Repeated cheers rose, led by Tyrians.  
 Unlucky Dido spoke of various things,  
 Drawing the night out, deep in love already.  
 She asked so many questions: Priam, Hector, 750  
 The armor of the son of Dawn, what breed  
 Diomedes’ horses were, how tall Achilles.  
 “Tell it all from start, my friend – the ambush  
 By Greeks, your city’s fall, your wanderings.  
 This is the seventh summer now that sends you 755  
 Drifting across the wide world’s lands and seas.”

**731–you govern visits:** Jupiter traditionally protected guests and travelers, as well as friendships between individuals and alliances between communities.

**738–Bitias:** Son of Alcanor, a companion of Aeneas.

**740–Iopas:** A Carthaginian bard; his singing at a banquet is imitated from *Odyssey* 1 and 8.

**741–Atlas:** A Titan condemned by

Jupiter to bear the heavens on his shoulders; also sometimes credited as the founder of the science of astronomy.

**742–He sang:** Iopas’ song deals with natural history, and it reprises the songs of Orpheus in Apollonius’s *Argonautica* 1 and Silenus in Vergil, *Eclogue* 6.

**750–She asked so many questions:** Dido’s questions include some posed by ancient commentators on Homer.

## BOOK 2

All faces now were fixed on him in silence.  
Father Aeneas, on the high couch, spoke:  
“Must I renew a grief beyond description,  
Telling how Greeks destroyed the power of Troy,  
That tear-stained kingdom, since I saw the worst, 5  
While playing no small part? Telling about it,  
A Myrmidon, a Dolopian, a trooper  
Of cruel Ulysses too would weep. The moist night  
Falls to its end, the setting stars urge sleep.  
But if you are so passionate to hear, 10  
Briefly, of the death agony of Troy,  
I will begin, although my heart shrinks back  
From memory. The years of war had broken  
The Greek kings; destiny had pushed them back.  
They built a mountainous horse, with woven ribs 15  
Of fir – Athena’s genius aided them.  
‘An offering for a safe voyage home!’ The news spread.  
They picked the bravest men. With stealth they shut them  
Into the darkness of the flanks: an armed squad  
Filling the vast, deep cavern of the belly. 20  
Tenedos shows offshore, the famous island –

**7–Myrmidon . . . Dolopian:** Greek warriors from Thessaly. The Myrmidons were under the command of Achilles, the Dolopians of Achilles’ son, Neoptolemus.

**11–Briefly:** Aeneas’ narrative, modeled on Odysseus’ inset narrative in *Odyssey* 9–12, occupies books 2–3.

**13–The years of war:** The siege of Troy lasted ten years.

**21–Tenedos:** An Aegean island just off the coast of Turkey, near the entrance of the Dardanelles.

BOOK 2

Wealthy while Priam's empire still existed,  
 Now just an inlet with its treacherous mooring.  
 They sailed there, to a lonely beach, and lurked,  
 As if they'd caught the winds out toward Mycenae. 25  
 The whole of Troy broke free of its long mourning.  
 We poured out through the open gates, delighted  
 To tour the Greek camp on the empty shore.  
 Achilles' tent was here, Dolopians there.  
 The fleet moored there. Here was the battleground. 30  
 Some ogled that huge horse, gift of the virgin  
 Minerva for our ruin. Thymoetes  
 Was first to want it taken to our stronghold—  
 His own guile or the fate of Troy inspired him.  
 Capys and those who shared his good sense urged us 35  
 To hurl the treacherous bounty of the Greeks  
 Into the sea or set a fire beneath it,  
 Or drill into the secrets of its womb.  
 The fickle mob took opposite positions.  
 Now, leading his attendants in a crowd, 40  
 Laocoön rushed raging from the town's heights.  
 'Poor Trojans, have you lost your minds?' he shouted.  
 'You think they're gone? Are any Greek gifts given  
 Sincerely? Don't you know Ulysses better?  
 The Greeks are hiding in this wooden gadget, 45  
 Or else this is a siege machine they've built  
 For spying or alighting on our homes,  
 Or some such trick. Don't trust the horse, my people.

**25–Mycenae:** Here, Greece in general.

**32–Minerva:** The Greeks pretended to leave the Trojan Horse as an offering to Minerva to guarantee safe passage home.

**32–Thymoetes:** A Trojan. His son

was put to death to avert a prophecy linking his birth to the downfall of the city; Thymoetes' suggestion here may be an act of revenge.

**35–Capys:** A companion of Aeneas.

**41–Laocoön:** A Trojan priest of Neptune.

BOOK 2

Even when they bring presents, I fear Greeks.'  
 He hurled a massive spear with all his strength 50  
 Into the creature's round and riveted belly.  
 The shaft was planted, quivering; the deep,  
 Recoiling womb sent out an echoing groan.  
 Had heaven willed it, had we all been sane,  
 We would have followed, shattering the Greek lair; 55  
 Priam's high citadel would still be standing.  
 Shepherds approached the king now, clamoring,  
 Dragging a youth whose hands were tied behind him,  
 A stranger they had come across just now –  
 But he had plotted this, to open Troy 60  
 To Greeks. He was tough-mindedly prepared  
 To trap us with his lies or yield to death.  
 Trojan boys rushed to view the captive, crowding  
 Around him, seeing who could taunt him hardest.  
 Hear how the Greek plot worked: this single crime 65  
 Shows them for what they are.  
 Amid those stares, unarmed and looking harried,  
 He stood and swept his eyes around our ranks.  
 'Is there some sea, is there some land to take me?'  
 He cried. 'I'm finished. What do I have left? 70  
 No place among the Greeks, and now the Trojans  
 As well are shouting for my blood in payment.'  
 At this our rage was calmed, our onslaught stifled.  
 But still we had to know – who were his people?  
 What was the news he brought? Why should we spare him? 75  
 He finally put his 'fear' aside and spoke:  
 'All that I'll say, your highness, is the truth,

49–Even when they bring presents, I fear Greeks: *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentis*; one of the most famous sayings in the poem, often quoted.

76–The line is thought to be spurious.

BOOK 2

Whatever happens. First, I am a Greek,  
Sinon. If Fortune made me desolate,  
She will not make me lie, cruel as she is. 80  
Perhaps you've heard the name of Palamedes,  
The glorious son of Belus, whom the Greeks  
Slanderosly, outrageously accused  
Of treason when he stood against the war.  
They drained his life's light, but they mourn him now. 85  
My father, who was poor, sent me in boyhood  
As Palamedes' page, since we were family.  
While he still safely ruled, strong in the councils  
Of kings, I had my share of reputation  
And honor. But when sly Ulysses' envy— 90  
You know it— thrust him from this upper world,  
I lived in mourning darkness, persecuted  
And raging at my blameless patron's death.  
I was in fact a fool, and pledged revenge  
If chance allowed, if I came home in triumph 95  
To Argos. Hatred rose against my words.  
This tipped me toward disaster. Now Ulysses  
Kept threatening, accusing, scattering rumors,  
Recruiting helpers in his plot against me.  
He didn't rest until the seer Calchas— 100  
But no, it's useless; you don't want to hear it.  
I'm wasting time. If Greeks are all the same,  
Kill me, I'm Greek. The sons of Atreus  
Would pay you well. Ulysses would be pleased.<sup>7</sup>  
This only made us burn to hear it all, 105  
In innocence of evil Argive guile.

**81–Palamedes:** A Greek warrior who was framed by Ulysses and wrongfully executed as a traitor.

**82–Belus:** A distant ancestor of Pala-

medes, not to be confused with Dido's father.

**100–Calchas:** A Greek seer, tasked with determining the will of the gods for the army.



## BOOK 2

Shaking with false emotion, he continued:  
‘The Greeks were often yearning, often trying  
To leave. The endless war had worn them out.  
I wish they’d gone. The stormy winter sea 110  
Or South Wind often turned them from the journey.  
The horse of maple wood stood here already,  
When the sky rang with even louder storms.  
In doubt, we sent Eurypylus to query  
Apollo’s oracle, and got bad news: 115  
“You Greeks appeased the winds with virgin blood  
When you first traveled to the shores of Troy.  
Now you must offer yet another Greek life  
For your return.” The common soldiers heard this  
With horror. Icy trembling seized their marrow: 120  
Whose death was it Apollo asked of them?  
Ulysses dragged old Calchas in, with much noise  
And bullying: What did the god decree?  
Many foresaw the schemer’s brutal crime:  
They saw what was to come but held their peace. 125  
The seer in his tent refused for ten days  
To give a name and send a man to death.  
Finally, driven by Ulysses’ clamor,  
He spoke. They’d planned it: I would be the gift.  
They all agreed. Each, fearing death, was happy 130  
To see it land on my pathetic self.  
The ghastly day had come: the salted grain,  
Fillets around my head, the ritual.  
I broke these chains of death – yes, I confess it.  
In the swamp, among the reeds, I hid all night, 135  
Breathlessly waiting for the fleet to sail.

**114–Eurypylus:** The son of Telephus, leader of the Thessalians.

**116–virgin blood:** Before setting out for Troy the Greeks had sacrificed Iphi-

genia, a daughter of Agamemnon, to ensure favorable winds for sailing.

**133–Fillets:** wool ribbons used to decorate sacrificial animals before slaughter; they were also worn by priests.

BOOK 2

I can't return again to see my homeland,  
 Sweet children, and the father that I yearn for—  
 Perhaps they now may pay for my escape;  
 My weakness might just cost them their poor lives. 140  
 I beg you by those powers that know the truth,  
 By any pure trust placed in anything  
 Among us mortals, pity my affliction—  
 Pity the persecution of a good heart.  
 We spared his life; we even pitied him. 145  
 Priam stepped in and had the man's tight chains  
 And manacles removed, and spoke these kind words:  
 'Stranger, the Greeks are lost to you: forget them.  
 You will be ours. But answer truthfully:  
 Who had the giant horse set up, and why? 150  
 Is it for worship or for making war?'  
 Greek cunning and conspiracy now caused him  
 To raise his hands—unbound now—to the stars.  
 'By these eternal fires and sacred Troy,  
 By the altar and the evil blade I fled, 155  
 And the god's ribbons that this victim wore:  
 It's right to break the holy bonds of Greeks,  
 To hate them and make public everything  
 They hide. My nation's laws don't hold me now.  
 But keep your word, since Troy's saved if my news 160  
 Is true, and proves rich payment for my safety.  
 All that the Greeks could hope for in this war  
 Was in the power of Pallas. Since the plotter  
 Ulysses and the godless Diomedes  
 Slaughtered the keepers of the soaring fortress, 165  
 And tore away that fateful effigy,

**156—the god's ribbons that this victim wore:** fillets; see 2.133n.

**164—Ulysses and the godless Diomedes:** Ulysses and Diomedes are especially villainous Greeks in the *Aeneid*:

Ulysses as the inventor of the Trojan Horse, Diomedes as the warrior who almost killed Aeneas in the *Iliad* (see 1.96n).

BOOK 2

The Palladium, from its shrine, and even pawed  
 Her virgin fillets with their bloody fingers,  
 The tide is turned, the Greek cause slipping backward.  
 Their strength is broken by her stubborn anger. 170  
 She gave us signs, miraculous and clear:  
 We'd scarcely set her image in the camp  
 When its eyes flashed and burned, and salty sweat  
 Ran down it. From the ground it leaped three times  
 And shook its shield and spear – amazing story. 175  
 Calchas' divine advice: escape by sea;  
 The Greeks would not raze Troy till they returned  
 To Argos for new omens and brought back  
 The deity they'd taken in their curved ships.  
 They've sailed home to Mycenae, to rearm 180  
 And gather gods as allies. They will cross  
 Back here and strike. So Calchas read the omens.  
 This statue pays for the Palladium,  
 An offering to violated godhead.  
 Calchas commanded that it be immense, 185  
 A mass of joined logs reaching to the sky,  
 And never pass the gates into your city  
 And save you, as the cult of Pallas did.  
 Handle Minerva's gift impiously,  
 And ruin – may the gods turn back the omen 190  
 Against the seer – will meet the realm of Priam.  
 If your hands help it climb into your city,  
 Asia can hurl itself in war against  
 The walls of Pelops, in our grandsons' time.'  
 Sinon's false oaths and trickery convinced us. 195

**167–68–Palladium . . . fillets:** A statue of Minerva, upon whose protection the city depended; its title is derived from her Greek name, Pallas Athena. The fillets are the ribbons sanctifying the statue.

**193–94–Asia . . . Pelops:** Here Asia refers to Troy and the walls of Pelops to Greece.

## BOOK 2

The tears that he contrived did what Achilles  
And Diomedes and ten years of war  
And a thousand ships could not: they brought us down.

“Poor Trojans! Something still more horrible  
Sprang up to fill our spirits with confusion. 200  
Laocoön, the chosen priest of Neptune,  
Was at the altar, slaughtering a large bull,  
When over the calm sea from Tenedos  
Came two huge coiled snakes – even now I shudder.  
Breasting the water, paired, they sought the beach. 205  
They reared among the waves, their blood-red crests  
Towering, while their bellies trailed the surface.  
Their backs were flowing in enormous spirals.  
The salt foam roared. But now they reached dry land.  
Fire and blood were brimming in their eyes. 210  
Their quivering tongues licked hissing mouths. We ran,  
White with fear. They were aimed, in their incursion,  
Straight at Laocoön – he wasn’t first, though:  
Each gripped a tiny son of his, entangling  
The body, gnawing on its wretched limbs. 215  
Their father snatched a spear and ran to help.  
Both serpents caught him in their giant whorls.  
Their scaly length went twice around his waist  
And throat; above him reared their heads and necks.  
He fought to rip apart the knotted forms. 220  
Their slime and poison-black drool soaked his fillets.  
His shrieks of agony rose to the sky,

**198–a thousand ships:** A rounded number; there are 1,186 in Homer’s catalogue of ships.

**204–two huge coiled snakes:** It is possible that Vergil knew the second-century BCE marble sculpture of Lao-

coön and his two sons, which Pliny regarded as superlative, and which inspired the German Romantic critic and dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s *Laocoon: An Essay upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1766).

## BOOK 2

As when a bull escapes the altar, shedding  
The ax that was half-buried in his neck.  
The snakes now ducked away, made for the fierce 225  
Tritonian's temple in its lofty setting.  
At the statue's feet they hid, beneath the round shield.  
Now a fresh terror twisted through our hearts.  
We quaked; some murmured that Laocoön  
Deserved this for the hideous crime of striking 230  
The sacred wooden image with his spear:  
'Bring it where it belongs. Beseech the power  
Of the goddess.'  
We cut the walls and opened up the city.  
Bare-legged work put rollers underneath 235  
Its feet, and tightened ropes around its neck.  
The great catastrophe climbed to the fortress,  
Pregnant with arms. Young boys and girls around it  
Sang hymns and touched the cables in their joy.  
It loomed into the middle of the town. 240  
Heroic walls of Ilium, the gods' home,  
My country! Four times in the gate itself  
It halted – weapons clattered in its belly.  
We pushed on, blind with passion and distracted,  
And set the monster in our sacred stronghold. 245  
Cassandra spoke then, echoing the future.  
But by the gods' will, Troy could never hear her.  
We wretches on our last day garlanded  
The temples of the gods all through the city.  
The heavens swung round, night leaped from the ocean 250  
To wrap the earth and sky – and Greek deceit –  
In its great shadow. On the walls the Trojans  
Sprawled, muffled in a deep, exhausted sleep.  
The Greek fleet came already in formation,

**226–Tritonian:** An epithet for Minerva.

BOOK 2

From Tenedos – the friendly moon hung silent – 255  
 To the familiar shore; and now the king's ship  
 Signaled with flame. Sinon, protected by  
 Heaven's harsh rulings, slipped pine bolts, birthed Greeks.  
 The horse gaped to the sky. The eager chieftains  
 Slid from the wooden cave and down the rope: 260  
 Machaon, then Thessandrus, Sthenelus,  
 Acamas, cruel Ulysses, Thoas, Peleus'  
 Grandson Neoptolemus, Menelaus,  
 And Epeos, who'd crafted this device.  
 They swarmed a city sunk in wine and sleep, 265  
 Slaughtered the guards, opened the gateway, let  
 Their comrades in, uniting ranks as planned.  
 It was the time when that first, sweetest sleep,  
 A gift from gods, slips into weary mortals.  
 I saw an anguished Hector in my dreams, 270  
 Streaming with tears and black with dust and gore.  
 His feet were swollen with the thongs that pierced them  
 When he was dragged behind the chariot.  
 How different from that Hector who returned  
 Wearing the plundered armor of Achilles 275  
 Or hurled our Trojan torches onto Greek ships!  
 His beard was dirty; dried blood caked his hair.  
 He bore the many wounds he got defending  
 His city's walls. And in that dream I wept  
 And greeted that brave man with mournful words: 280  
 'Light of our country, truest hope of Troy,  
 Why were you gone so long? What shore has sent us

**262–Peleus:** The father of Achilles  
 and grandfather of Neoptolemus.

**263–Neoptolemus:** The son of  
 Achilles, also called Pyrrhus, portrayed  
 by Vergil as more cruel and violent than  
 his father.

**275–the plundered armor of Achilles:**  
 Hector acquired Achilles' armor when he  
 killed Achilles' friend Patroclus, to whom  
 Achilles had lent it.

BOOK 2

This longed-for sight of you? So many died.  
 Your city and its people are worn out  
 With all their griefs. What undeserved disaster 285  
 Marred your calm face? What are these wounds I see?  
 He took no notice of my empty questions,  
 But, sighing from his heart's depths, only said,  
 'Child of the goddess, run, escape these flames.  
 The walls are taken. From its pinnacle 290  
 Troy falls. Our country, Priam – gone. If my hand  
 Could have defended Troy, you would be safe.  
 Troy trusts its cult, its household gods to you.  
 Take them to share your fate, find room across  
 The sea to build high walls for them again.' 295  
 Then from the inmost shrine he brought the ribbons  
 And mighty Vesta and her ceaseless fire.  
 Confusion and distress spread through the fortress.  
 My father's house was set far back and sheltered  
 By trees, and yet the martial din pierced through; 300  
 Now terror broke in, bristling with its weapons.  
 Startled from sleep, I scrambled to the rooftop  
 And stood there, motionless and listening:  
 It was like fire the raging South Winds send  
 Into the wheat, or torrents from a mountain 305  
 That flatten thriving crops (the work of oxen),  
 And drag whole forests headlong; on a high rock  
 A shepherd stands and stares in bafflement.  
 Here was plain evidence of Greek connivance.  
 The fire topped Deïphobus' broad house 310  
 And brought it down. Ucalegon's beside it

**293–its household gods:** The Penates. See 1.379n.

**297–Vesta:** Goddess of the hearth. See 1.379n.

**310–Deïphobus:** Helen's second Tro-

jan husband, whom she married after the death of Paris. Aeneas will meet his spirit in the Underworld at 6.494–534.

**311–Ucalegon:** One of Priam's aged counselors.

## BOOK 2

Had caught. The wide Sigean strait shone red.  
 The shouts of men, the ring of trumpets rose.  
 Blindly I seized my weapons – senselessly –  
 But my heart burned to gather friends and rush 315  
 To some high place. Delirious rage pitched me  
 Ahead: how beautiful to die in battle!  
 The priest of Phoebus of the citadel,  
 Othrys' son Panthus, clutching holy emblems  
 And routed gods and his small grandson, dashed 320  
 Through the Greek spears in panic to my door.  
 'Where is the hardest fight?' I asked, 'Our strong point?'  
 Quickly he answered me, but with a groan:  
 'This is the last day, inescapable  
 For our nation – Troy, the Trojans, and our glory 325  
 Are gone. Fierce Jupiter has given all this  
 To Argos. Greeks are masters of these flames.  
 The horse is looming, pouring troops among us.  
 Sinon in mocking triumph scatters fire  
 Everywhere, and as many thousand others 330  
 As great Mycenae sent are at the broad gates.  
 In alleyways the spears are poised for ambush.  
 A flashing line of sword points is prepared  
 To murder us. Guards at the entrances  
 Scarcely resist them in the first blind clash.' 335  
 The priest's words and the gods' power, felt within me,  
 Drove me to burning battle. The grim Furies,  
 The roars and shouts that rose to heaven called me.  
 I drew in comrades: Rhipeus, Epytus  
 (Great warrior) emerged by moonlight; Dymas, 340

**312–Sigean strait:** Near the Sigean promontory on the coast of Asia Minor, close to the mouth of the Hellespont.

**319–Othrys' son Panthus:** A Greek from Delphi whom Priam made a priest of Apollo after his abduction to Troy.

**337–The grim Furies:** Female Underworld deities associated with revenge, they also sometimes personify the drive to battle.



BOOK 2

Hypanis, and Coroebus, Mygdon's son,  
Strode with me – this young man had journeyed here  
In burning and deranged love for Cassandra,  
To fight, as Priam's son-in-law, for Troy –  
Poor man, his promised bride had raged and warned him: 345  
He hadn't heard.

Now when I saw them come together ready  
For war, I urged them on. 'Come, are you burning  
To waste your courage, fighters, following me  
Into a final clash? You see our fortune. 350

All of the gods who kept this kingdom standing  
Have left their shrines and altars. These are flames  
You fight. Let's rush to die in that dense combat.  
The beaten have one hope: to lose all hope.'

The young men's frenzy grew. Like plundering wolves 355  
Whose ravening stomachs drive them on a blind hunt  
Through black fog while their cubs, with dry throats, wait  
Back in the lair, we kept on pressing forward  
Through our armed enemies, straight through the city  
To certain death. The blackness swirled around us. 360

Who could describe that night's catastrophes?  
What tears could show our agony in full?  
An empire, generations old, was falling.  
We saw unmoving bodies sprawled and scattered  
In houses, on the roads, on holy thresholds 365  
Of gods' homes. But not only Trojans paid  
The price in blood. New courage seized our hearts.  
Greeks in their triumph fell. Ferocious grief,  
Terror, and every kind of death enclosed us.

Androgeus with his mass of troops was first 370  
To meet us. He mistook us for his allies

**346-He hadn't heard:** Coroebus does not believe Cassandra: she is fated to prophesy accurately and never be believed. **370-Androgeus:** A companion of Aeneas.

BOOK 2

And shouted at us these congenial words:  
 'Hurry, men! What's this dragging of your feet?  
 Why hold back? All the rest are plundering  
 Troy's flames. You've left your tall ships only now?' 375  
 No reassuring answers came to him—  
 He knew he'd stumbled into his opponents.  
 Stunned, he retreated from his words and us.  
 Like someone on a brambly path who treads  
 On a hidden snake and backs away in terror 380  
 From the blue swollen neck, erect in rage,  
 Androgeus looked at us and backed up, shaking.  
 We swarmed around them with our weapons, scattered  
 And killed them—they were panicked in that strange place.  
 So Fortune blessed our very first endeavor. 385  
 Coroebus was exuberant; he shouted,  
 'Friends, we should take the road that Fortune's favored  
 At the beginning: there we'll find our safety.  
 Let's put Greek armor on and swap our shields.  
 A trick's as good as courage in a war, 390  
 And here's our chance!' He took the long-plumed helmet  
 And shield with its fine blazon from the leader,  
 And put them on, and belted on the Greek sword.  
 Then Rhipeus too, and Dymas, and others  
 Eagerly armed with fresh loot. We set out 395  
 Among the Greeks, under Greek auspices.  
 In the thick dark we skirmished many times  
 With them, and we sent many down to Orcus,  
 While others sought their ships on sheltered beaches.  
 A truly craven few climbed back and hid 400  
 In the familiar belly of the Greek horse.  
 No one should trust the gods against their will.  
 Priam's unmarried daughter, streaming-haired,

**398–Orcus:** The Underworld.

rior Ajax the Lesser sets Minerva against

**403–Priam's unmarried daughter:**

the Greeks.

Cassandra, whose rape by the Greek war-

BOOK 2

Was dragged out of Minerva's shrine. She lifted  
 Her burning eyes to heaven, uselessly – 405  
 Her eyes, because her tender hands were tied.  
 Seeing this put Coroebus in a frenzy.  
 He threw his doomed self straight against the captors;  
 We followed, rushing where the clash was densest.  
 But now, hurled from the temple's lofty rooftop, 410  
 Trojan spears overwhelmed us, abject slaughter:  
 Our plumes, our emblems turned us into Greeks.  
 Roaring frustration at the young girl's rescue,  
 The gathered Greeks attacked: ferocious Ajax,  
 Atreus' two sons, Pyrrhus with his army – 415  
 As when a whirlwind breaks and sets the West Wind  
 Against the South and East who relishes  
 Driving Dawn's horses. Woods roar, Nereus  
 Rages and foams, and from its floor the sea rears.  
 Even the men we'd ambushed in night's shadows, 420  
 Routing them, chasing them all through the city,  
 Emerged now they could see through our disguise,  
 And also hear our language wasn't Greek.  
 They swarmed us instantly. Coroebus fell first,  
 Before the mighty warrior goddess' altar. 425  
 Peneleus killed him. Rhipeus fell too –  
 It was the gods' will, though no other Trojan  
 Served justice better. Hypanis and Dymas  
 Died on their comrades' spears. Apollo's emblem  
 That reverent Panthus wore was no protection. 430  
 By Trojan ashes, by those fatal flames  
 I swear: in that collapse I shirked no fighting  
 Or other hazard. If my fate had been  
 To fall, I would have earned it. I was stranded  
 With Iphitus (weighed down with age) and Pelias 435

414–**Ajax**: See 1.41n.

418–**Nereus**: A sea deity.

415–**Pyrrhus**: See 2.263n.

BOOK 2

(Lame from a wound Ulysses had inflicted).  
 We now heard shouts and ran to Priam's palace,  
 Where what we saw drove all the other battles  
 And massacres in Troy to nothingness.  
 Implacably the Greeks attacked the building, 440  
 Crowding the door, their shields above their heads.  
 Ladders gripped walls beside the gates; feet struggled  
 Toward higher rungs, while left hands grasped the shelter  
 Of shields and right hands reached to seize the gables.  
 The Trojans ripped up parapets and whole roofs 445  
 For weapons of defense. They knew the end  
 Was coming: they would fight until it came.  
 They rolled down gilded beams, the ornaments  
 Of generations. Others drew their swords  
 And in a dense rank blocked the gates below. 450  
 So now we turned to bring the palace help,  
 To bring relief and new strength to the beaten.  
 There was a hidden door that linked two parts  
 Of Priam's house, remote and at the back.  
 Andromache, poor thing, while Troy survived, 455  
 Went through there unattended to her in-laws,  
 Taking Astyanax to see his grandsire.  
 This way I reached the rooftops, where the Trojans  
 Uselessly, pitiably hurled their weapons.  
 A soaring tower, by a steep drop down, 460  
 Was once our lookout onto all of Troy,  
 And the whole Greek encampment with its ships.  
 Now we assailed the tower's upper stories,  
 Where joints were loose, and ripped it from its high perch,  
 Shoving it over. In a swift collapse 465  
 And roar it skidded down. On top of Greek ranks

455–**Andromache:** The wife of Hector. after the sack of Troy, he was thrown from the city walls, as depicted in Euripides' *Trojan Women*.

457–**Astyanax:** Hector's infant son;

## BOOK 2

It smashed – but others came. There was no pause  
Of stones or other missiles.  
Pyrrhus stood in the gateway to the courtyard,  
Exultant, glittering in his bronze armor – 470  
Just as a serpent, fed on poison weeds,  
Emerges swollen from its winter burrow  
And sheds its skin and gleams, its youth renewed,  
And swirls its glossy length and rears its head  
Straight toward the sun, and darts its three-forked tongue. 475  
Huge Periphas, Achilles' squire and driver  
Automedon, and all the Scyrian troops  
Pressed up and hurled their torches to the roof.  
Pyrrhus was at the front. He snatched an ax  
To smash the bronze-bound doors and tear their hinges, 480  
First hacking out a panel for a hole  
In the hard oak – a wide and gaping window.  
Inside, the house: its atrium stretched back –  
The ancient kings' and Priam's sanctuary –  
And on the threshold stood its armed defenders. 485  
Sounds of disaster and confusion echoed  
Throughout the place, with women's lamentations  
And howls. Shouting struck the golden stars.  
Terrified mothers roamed all through the mansion,  
And clung to doorposts, pressing kisses on them. 490  
Strong as his father, Pyrrhus came on. Locks,  
Guards couldn't hold him back. The battering ram  
Made the door sway, unhinged, and topple forward.  
The Greeks broke murderously through. They killed  
The first defenders, swarmed through all the rooms. 495  
A foaming, storming river is far gentler,  
Which roars out past its mounded banks' resistance.

**477-Automedon:** The chariot driver  
for Achilles and later for his son Neo-  
ptolemus.

BOOK 2

Swollen, it tears through broad fields, sweeping herds  
 And barns along. I saw there, in the doorway,  
 Blood-frenzied Neoptolemus, Atreus' sons, 500  
 Hecuba with her hundred daughters, Priam,  
 Whose blood would foul the altar flames he'd blessed.  
 The fifty bedrooms (bountiful with grandsons),  
 Pillars that flaunted gold barbarian spoil—  
 Everything fell. Where flames failed, Greeks laid hold. 505  
 Perhaps you want to know how Priam died.  
 He saw his city fallen, taken, gates  
 Torn open, and the enemy inside.  
 On shaking shoulders he set armor—last worn  
 Decades ago—strapped on a useless sword, 510  
 And rushed to die in hordes of hostile soldiers.  
 Beneath steep, open heaven in his courtyard  
 Stood a great altar, where an ancient laurel  
 Leaned to embrace the household gods with shade.  
 Hecuba and her daughters ringed the high shrine 515  
 Like doves that rush for refuge from a black storm,  
 Futilely, and embraced the effigies.  
 The queen saw Priam in his youthful armor  
 And said, 'Poor husband, what insanity  
 Dressed you for war? Where are you hurrying? 520  
 No such defenders, no such help is called for  
 Today— not even if my Hector lived.  
 Retreat here, let this altar keep us safe,  
 Or die with us.' She took the old king's hand  
 And in that sacred place she sat him down. 525  
 But look! The Trojan prince Polites ran  
 From Pyrrhus' carnage, ducked through hostile spears.  
 Down the long porch, across the empty courtyard,  
 Wounded, he fled. Pyrrhus in bloodlust followed,

**501–Hecuba with her hundred daughters:** Traditionally Priam and Hecuba's daughters-in-law here. Hecuba had fifty sons and fifty daughters;

BOOK 2

Thrusting his spear, grasping beyond his reach. 530  
 Emerging in his father's sight at last,  
 Polites fell. Blood, life gushed out of him.  
 Now Priam, though encircled by the slaughter,  
 Didn't hold back from shouting in his fury:  
 'If there is sight and conscience up in heaven, 535  
 The gods will give you your deserved reward,  
 Their thanks for this outrageous crime, for letting  
 Me see with my own eyes my own son's murder.  
 You have defiled a father's sight with death.  
 Achilles was your father? It's a lie. 540  
 This isn't how he fought. He had respect  
 For a trusting suppliant's rights. He sent me back  
 To my throne with Hector's corpse for burial.'  
 The old man threw a weak, unwarlike spear.  
 All it could do was clang across the bronze shield 545  
 And hang there by the leather of the boss.  
 Pyrrhus replied, 'Then go tell Peleus' son,  
 My father, how far short of him I fall.  
 Be sure he knows what hateful things I did.  
 So die.' The king was dragged up to the altar, 550  
 Shaking and slipping in his own son's blood.  
 A left hand gripped his hair. A right hand lifted  
 A flashing sword and sank it to the hilt.  
 As Priam watched Troy burn, its fortress topple,  
 Death took him, and he found his destined end. 555  
 But he had once been haughty lord of Asia,  
 Its lands, its peoples. On the shore a tall corpse  
 Lies nameless, with its head ripped from its shoulders.

**542-43-He sent me back . . . with Hector's corpse for burial:** In the final book of the *Iliad*, Achilles gives up his rage and returns Priam's son Hector's body for a proper funeral.

**557-58-On the shore a tall corpse . . . from its shoulders:** Priam's corpse is described in terms designed to evoke the headless corpse of Pompey the Great after his assassination on the shore of Egypt in 48 BCE.

BOOK 2

That was the moment savage horror gripped me.  
 I froze. I seemed to see my darling father 560  
 In the king – the same age – with that savage gash,  
 Who gasped his life out. What about Creusa,  
 Alone – the house torn open – little Iulus?  
 I looked around to find some troops to help me.  
 Deserters! In their terror and exhaustion, 565  
 They'd jumped from walls or dashed into the flames.  
 Now I was all alone there – no, I saw  
 Through Vesta's doorway, quiet, skulking, hiding,  
 Tyndareus' daughter in the glare the flames  
 Shed for my ranging feet and searching eyes. 570  
 She feared the Trojans' vengeance for their city,  
 Justice from Greeks, the outrage of a husband  
 Betrayed. She was a Fury for both lands.  
 A loathsome thing, she crouched behind the altar.  
 My heart caught fire: I had to punish her 575  
 For crimes that had destroyed my fatherland.  
 'She'll safely gaze on Sparta and Mycenae,  
 Where she was born? She'll triumph as the queen?  
 She'll see her father's home, her husband, children –  
 Slaves will escort her, Trojan boys and ladies? 580  
 Priam is butchered. Troy burns. All this time,  
 Our shore has sweated blood. No – not for this.  
 To execute a woman brings no glory –  
 It is no triumph trailing praise behind it.

**562–63–Creusa . . . Iulus:** Aeneas' wife and son.

**567–88–**The “Helen episode” is not preserved in the most important manuscripts and may not have been written by Vergil.

**569–Tyndareus' daughter:** Helen, properly the daughter of Jupiter. Tyndareus, a Spartan king, is her mortal stepfather.

**573–Fury:** Here a metaphor suggesting that Helen is the spirit of vengeance.

**577–Sparta . . . Mycenae:** Helen was originally the wife of Menelaus, the king of Sparta. Mycenae here refers to Greece in general or to Menelaus' brother Agamemnon's kingdom.



BOOK 2

Yet I'll destroy this evil, bring it justice — 585  
 I will be praised — I'll satisfy my heart  
 With flames of vengeance for my own who're dying?  
 My ranting fury carried me along —  
 Then, in pure brightness, through the night appeared  
 My gentle mother, never clear as now, 590  
 Revealing her divinity, the form  
 She has in heaven, and her hand restrained me.  
 Out of her rosy mouth there came these words:  
 'My child, what pain could bring on such wild anger?  
 Why rave this way? Where is your love for us? 595  
 Where have you left Anchises, your poor father,  
 Broken with age? Ascanius, Creusa —  
 Are they still living? Everywhere around them  
 Greek forces mill. If not for my protection,  
 The weapons and the flames would have consumed them. 600  
 Give up your hatred of the lovely Helen  
 And wicked Paris, since it is the gods  
 Who are so cruel and topple wealthy Troy.  
 Look! I will take away the whole black cloud  
 That wraps around you mistily and dims 605  
 Your mortal sight. But have no fear and do  
 As I command. Have faith in me, your mother.  
 Here where you see a giant mass of rock  
 Shattered and strewn in rippling, dusty smoke,  
 Neptune has smashed the walls with his great trident, 610  
 And shaken and uprooted all the city.  
 Bloodthirsty Juno, girded with a sword,  
 Has seized the Scaean Gate and wildly calls  
 Her army from the ships.  
 There on the citadel Athena flashes 615

**602–Paris:** The Trojan prince who abducted Helen and thus triggered the war.

**613—the Scaean Gate:** The main gate of Troy.

## BOOK 2

Her ruthless Gorgon shield through burning cloud.  
Father Zeus fills the Greeks with winning courage  
In person, rousing gods against your troops.  
Stop struggling and lay hold of your escape.  
I'll take you safely to your house's door.' 620  
She hid away then in the night's thick mist.  
Before me stood grim shapes, great deities  
Hostile to Troy.  
Truly, I saw the whole of Troy collapsing  
In flames, and Neptune's city overthrown, 625  
Like an old mountain ash that several farmers  
Hack with unresting axes in a race  
To tear it loose. It menaces, its leaves  
Tremble and dip, once its high top is shaken.  
Wounds slowly weaken it. It gives a last groan, 630  
Rips loose, drags devastation down the hillside.  
Some god then led me from the roof, released me  
From flames and weapons – all of these gave way.  
When I arrived at my ancestral house,  
Seeking my father first, and keen to take him 635  
Into the towering hills before the others,  
He said he couldn't live past Troy's extinction,  
Wouldn't bear exile. 'You, with youth unbroken,  
And hearty blood and staunch and solid strength,  
Hurry, escape. 640  
If those above had wanted me to live,  
They would have saved my city. I've survived  
One captured, fallen Troy – it is enough.  
Say your farewell: this is my funeral.

**616–Gorgon shield:** Minerva's shield, the aegis, bore the decapitated head of the snake-haired Gorgon Medusa.

**625–Neptune's city:** Neptune and Apollo were credited with building Troy's giant walls.

**642–43:–I've survived one captured, fallen Troy:** Troy had been captured once before, by the hero Hercules.

BOOK 2

Some plunderer will show me mercy, ending 645  
 My life. To lie unburied is a small loss.  
 Uselessly, hated by the gods, I linger  
 Since heaven's father and the king of men  
 Blasted me with his fire and windy thunder.  
 These were his stubborn words. He wouldn't move. 650  
 In tears we begged him – I, my wife Creusa,  
 My son, our household: 'Don't drag everything  
 Down with you, making heavy fate a rockslide.'  
 But he refused, fixed in his plans and place.  
 My hopeless urge was war again, and death. 655  
 Nothing in life remained to me but these.  
 'Father, you thought I'd leave you here and run?  
 Abomination from a father's mouth!  
 If out of towering Troy the gods leave nothing,  
 If you're resolved to give this dying city 660  
 Yourself and us, the door to that stands open –  
 To Pyrrhus, soaked with Priam's blood, who kills  
 The son and then the father at the altar.  
 Sweet mother, did you save me from the flames  
 Of war for this? The enemy in my home, 665  
 My son, my father, and Creusa lying  
 Streaked with each other's blood, like slaughtered cattle?  
 My armor – bring it: we are not quite beaten.  
 Let me go back to battle with the Greeks.  
 We won't all die today without revenge.' 670  
 Buckling my sword on, readying my shield  
 In my left hand, I was about to go.  
 My wife, there on the threshold, grasped my feet  
 And thrust our son, our little Iulus, toward me.  
 'If you go out to die, then take us with you. 675  
 But if you think you have some hope in weapons,  
 Then guard this house. To whom do you leave Iulus,  
 Your father, me – your wife but soon your widow?'  
 Her words, her groans, her wails rang through the house –

BOOK 2

But an astounding portent intervened. 680  
 With Iulus in our arms, near our sad faces,  
 We saw a filmy, shining tongue of flame  
 Rise from his head; it licked his baby locks  
 And browsed around his temples harmlessly.  
 In our alarm we tried to slap the fire out 685  
 And drench the sacred burning of his hair.  
 Father Anchises gazed, though, toward the stars  
 In joy, stretched out his hands, and spoke these words:  
 ‘Almighty Jupiter, if prayer can move you,  
 Look down on us; for our devotion, Father, 690  
 Grant us a sky sign now, affirm this omen.’  
 A sudden, crashing roar rose on the left side  
 While the old man still spoke, and through the dark sky  
 A comet hurtled, with a dazzling tail.  
 We saw it glide above the towering rooftops 695  
 And hide its brilliance in the woods of Ida.  
 Its tail still glowed, a long, light-brimming furrow.  
 Its sulfur smoldered over all that country.  
 My father stood up, conquered by the truth.  
 In reverence for that sacred star, he prayed, 700  
 ‘No more delay! Gods of my fathers, lead me:  
 I’ll follow. Save my family, save my grandson.  
 This was your sign, and Troy is in your power,  
 And I will yield and go with you, my son.’  
 Now through the walls the fire’s roar grew louder. 705  
 The blasts of heat were rolling closer to us.  
 ‘Dear Father, let them set you on my shoulders.  
 I’ll carry you—you will not weigh me down.  
 Whatever happens, it will be one peril,  
 One rescue for us both. Our little Iulus 710

**692–on the left side:** The favorable side for omens.

**708–I’ll carry you:** Aeneas shoulder-

ing his father and leading his son by the hand became a famous motif in Western art.

BOOK 2

Will walk with me, my wife will follow, far back.  
Servants, pay close attention to my orders.  
A barrow and an old deserted temple  
Of Ceres lies outside the fort. Our fathers  
Have long revered an ancient cypress near it. 715  
We'll all take separate paths but meet up there.  
Father, you take our gods, these holy statues.  
Smear'd with the fresh gore of a dreadful battle,  
I must not touch them but must first be cleansed  
In running water.' 720  
And now I pulled a tawny lionskin  
Over my bending neck and brawny shoulders  
And took my load. My little Iulus' fingers  
Were twined in mine; he trotted by my long steps.  
Behind me came my wife. We went our dark way. 725  
Before, I hadn't minded hurtling spears  
Or Greeks who massed against me from their ranks.  
Now every gust and rustle panicked me  
Because of whom I led and whom I carried.  
Now I approached the gates. The journey seemed 730  
Over, when suddenly a massive tramping  
Sounded. My father, spying through the shadows,  
Shouted, 'Run – run, my boy! They're coming close!  
Shields flashing and the glint of bronze – I see it.'  
Some hostile god then seized me in my terror 735  
And stole my reason. Byways led me running  
Beyond the streets of the familiar city.  
And there my wife, Creusa – no! – was taken  
By fate, or strayed, or else collapsed, exhausted.  
Who knows? We never saw her anymore. 740  
I didn't think of her or note her absence  
Until we reached the mound and ancient shrine  
Of Ceres. When we gathered there, we found  
Her gone – her husband, child, friends cheated of her.  
I spared no god or man in my wild curses. 745

BOOK 2

Nothing in that whole city's fall was crueler.  
I left my son, my father, and my gods  
In comrades' care, deep in a twisted gully.  
Bright in my weapons, I went back again,  
Determined to run all those risks once more, 750  
To risk my life in searching all of Troy.  
I now approached the walls, the gates' dim threshold  
That I had fled from, searching out my footprints  
Keenly in darkness, following them back.  
The very silence filled my heart with terror. 755  
I set out homeward – maybe she had gone there –  
Maybe. The Greeks infested that whole building,  
And instantly the flames, rolled by the wind,  
Consumed the rooftop, shot insane heat skyward.  
I passed to Priam's palace and the fort. 760  
On the forlorn porch, in the sanctuary  
Of Juno, Phoenix stood with grim Ulysses,  
Assigned to guard the spoils, heaped Trojan treasure,  
Torn from the flaming shrines: the pure gold wine bowls,  
The tableware and clothing of the gods 765  
Were captured now. Mothers and children stood  
In long lines, terrified.  
I even dared to shout across the shadows,  
Uselessly filling all the roads with grief,  
Ceaselessly calling out Creusa's name. 770  
On I went, in my race to search the buildings –  
But the sad apparition of Creusa  
Came to me, taller than the living woman.  
Shock choked my voice and stood my hair on end,  
Yet what she said was soothing to my spirit: 775  
'Why do you rave and revel in this sorrow,  
Sweet husband? It was by the will of heaven

**762–Phoenix:** Accompanied Odysseus (Ulysses) on the embassy to Achilles in *Iliad* 9.

BOOK 2

This came about. It was not right to take me:  
 The king of high Olympus will not let you.  
 In a long exile, you will plow a vast sea, 780  
 Clear to the West, where Tiber's Lydian water  
 Serenely sweeps through warriors' rich fields.  
 A thriving kingdom and a royal wife  
 Are yours. So weep no longer, though you love me.  
 I am a Trojan; Venus is your mother: 785  
 I will not serve Greek matrons in the cities  
 Of proud Dolopians and Myrmidons.  
 The gods' Great Mother keeps me here – farewell.  
 We share a child: keep love for him alive.  
 She left me, cutting short my words and weeping – 790  
 I had so much to say; her image faded.  
 Three times I threw my arms around her neck.  
 Three times her image fled my useless hands,  
 Like weightless wind and dreams that flit away.  
 When I rejoined my friends, the night was gone. 795  
 It startled me to find how many more  
 Had streamed there – mothers, men in their best years,  
 And youths had massed pathetically for exile.  
 They came from everywhere, supplied, resolved  
 To sail with me to any land I chose. 800  
 The Dawn Star rose past Ida's highest slopes  
 And brought the day. The Greeks held every gate  
 To the city. There was nothing left to help us.  
 I picked my father up and sought the mountains.”

**781–Tiber's Lydian water:** The river Tiber, in central Italy, flowed through the land of the Etruscans, who were believed to have emigrated from Lydia in Asia Minor.

**788–the gods' Great Mother:** The mother goddess Cybele, whose cult worship originated in Anatolia, the same re-

gion as Troy, and spread to Rome in the late third century BCE.

**792–Three times:** the triple embrace attempt comes from *Odyssey* 11; Vergil repeats this motif at 6.700.

**801–Ida:** A sacred mountain near Troy.

## BOOK 3

“The gods’ decree brought down the Asian empire  
And Priam’s blameless race. Proud Ilium fell.  
Smoke rose from all of Neptune’s leveled Troy.  
Prophecy drove us into empty lands  
And far-off exile. Toiling to build ships 5  
In Phrygian Ida’s foothills near Antandros,  
We didn’t know where fate would let us settle,  
But mustered men. At summer’s start my father  
Urged us to spread our sails to destiny.  
I set out, weeping, from my country’s shores, 10  
The plains where Troy had been. I swept to exile  
With friends, my son, my family’s gods, the great gods.  
Far off are spacious fields, the land of Mars  
That Thracians till; once cruel Lycurgus reigned there.  
Blood ties and ritual bound the place to Troy 15  
While our luck held. I landed, set my first walls  
On the curving shore, and formed a name from mine,  
‘Aeneas’ Town’ – but fate was hostile here.  
Providing offerings for my mother, Venus,  
And gods who bless new works, I planned to slaughter 20  
A fine bull on the beach for heaven’s king.

**3–Neptune’s leveled Troy:** Neptune and Apollo built the walls of Troy.

**6–Phrygian Ida’s . . . Antandros:** Antandros is a city at the base of Mount Ida, on the opposite side from Troy.

**12–my family’s gods:** The Penates.  
See 1.379n.

**13–14–Mars . . . Thracians . . . cruel**

**Lycurgus:** Thrace, in northeast Greece, was associated with the war god Mars.

The legendary king Lycurgus persecuted the worshippers of Bacchus and was driven mad by the god.

**18–“Aeneas’ Town”:** In legend, Thrace was one of Aeneas’ stops. Cities in the area were named after him.



BOOK 3

Nearby, a mound was topped with clumps of cornel  
And myrtle bristling like a mass of spears.  
I tried to wrench that greenwood from the ground  
To roof the altar with the leaves and branches. 25  
Then – hideous sight, almost unspeakable –  
The first plant pulled away oozed drops of blood  
From its torn roots, a filthy gore that tainted  
The ground. A freezing tremor shot me through;  
My blood ceased flowing, icy with my fear. 30  
I didn't stop but pulled a second stem,  
To find whatever cause lay deep inside.  
Again, black blood came dripping from the bark.  
I prayed, confounded, to the rustic nymphs  
And Father Mars, lord of the Getic fields, 35  
To come and take away this omen's curse.  
At the third shaft, I made a harder try,  
Struggling, with both knees planted in the sand.  
Do I dare say this? From the barrow's depths  
I heard somebody sob and call to me: 40  
'Aeneas, no – don't maul a buried corpse,  
Polluting your clean hands. Troy gave me life,  
You know me – me, not wood that oozes blood.  
Run from this cruel land, from its greedy shore,  
Since I am Polydorus, and a woodland 45  
Of iron pierced me – here the sharp spears grow.'  
Confused and terrified, I stood unmoving,  
My hair on end, words clotted in my throat.  
Poor Priam secretly sent Polydorus  
And a great treasure to the Thracian king 50  
Years ago, in his fear of weapons' failing  
To save our city from the siege that ringed it.  
But when the luckless Trojan power was broken,

**35-Getic fields:** The Getae were a Thracian tribe.

BOOK 3

The Thracian joined in Agamemnon's victory:  
He broke with honor, killing Polydorus 55  
To loot the gold. What will that hellish hunger  
Not drive a man to do? When I'd stopped quaking,  
I told our leaders – first of all my father –  
About the omen here and sought advice.  
They agreed: from this evil land, defiling 60  
Guest-friendship, the South Winds should take our fleet.  
We gave fresh rites to Polydorus, raising  
A large tomb on the mound. His spirits got  
Their altar, grim with cypress and dark fillets.  
The Trojan women stood with loosened hair. 65  
We brought him cups of warm and frothing milk,  
Basins of sacred blood. We roused his spirit  
With one last shout, then laid it in the tomb.  
When we could trust the sea, and the wind called us  
With gentle rustling to the placid deep, 70  
The men massed on the shore and launched the ships.  
The port, the land, the cities dipped behind.

“A sacred land lies in the sea, the favorite  
Of the Nereids' mother and Aegean Neptune.  
It floated loose until the thankful Archer 75  
Lashed Mykonos and high Gyarus to it:  
It could be lived on then, and flout the winds.  
Here I now sailed. The bay serenely welcomed  
Our weary crews. We hailed Apollo's town.  
King Anius, who was the god's priest too, 80

**60–61–evil land, defiling guest-friendship:** Guests were held to be sacrosanct in the ancient world.

**73–A sacred land:** Delos was sacred to marine deities, including Doris, mother of the Nereids. Apollo fixed the

free-floating island in place in the Cycladic Islands to reward the Delians for allowing his mother, Latona, to give birth to him and his sister Diana there.

**80–Anius:** King of Delos and priest of Apollo.

BOOK 3

Fillets and laurels on his sacred head,  
Hurried to meet Anchises, his old friend.  
He clasped our hands and took us to his house.  
The shrine was built of ancient rock. I prayed,  
'Give us a home, Apollo. We are worn out. 85  
Give refugees from Greeks and cruel Achilles  
Enduring city walls; grant us descendants.  
Where must we go and settle? Under what guide?  
Grant us an omen, Father! Fill our hearts!'  
Suddenly, everything appeared to shake: 90  
The door, the laurels, the entire hill.  
The secret place lay bare; the tripod roared.  
We fell and hid our faces. Now a voice came:  
'Enduring Trojans, where your race was born,  
A fertile, loving land will take you back 95  
As nurslings. Seek out your primeval mother.  
Aeneas' sons will rule in every country –  
His children's children through the generations.'  
These were the god's words. Jubilant wild shouting  
Broke out. Where was the town, we asked, that Phoebus 100  
Was summoning us back to as we wandered?  
My father then considered the traditions.  
'Noblemen, hear what we can hope for now.  
Crete, great Jove's island, stretches in mid-ocean.  
There in Mount Ida's land our race arose. 105  
Crete has a hundred cities, wealthy empires,  
And Teucer, our progenitor, set sail

**89–Father:** Apollo's Delian title was "begetter."

**92–tripod:** A sacred three-legged stand associated with the oracles of Apollo.

**104–5–Crete . . . Mount Ida:** Jupiter (Jove) was born on Crete, at the base of Mount Ida.

**107–Teucer:** Apollo has directed the Trojans to settle in the land of their ancestors. He means Italy, the original home of Dardanus, but Anchises thinks he means Crete, the original home of Teucer.

BOOK 3

From there – if I remember what they tell –  
 And found a place to reign. Troy’s citadel  
 Was not yet built; its people lived in deep vales. 110  
 From Crete came Mother Cybele, Corybants  
 With cymbals, faithful silence for her rites  
 In Ida’s woods, tame, chariot-yoked lions.  
 We need to hurry where the gods direct us.  
 Give offerings to the winds and sail for Knossos. 115  
 It isn’t far. With Jupiter to help us,  
 The fleet will moor there when the third dawn breaks.’  
 And then he slaughtered what he owed the gods:  
 A bull for Neptune, one for bright Apollo,  
 The good West Wind’s white sheep, the Storm God’s black one. 120  
 The rumor came: Idomeneus banished  
 From his ancestral kingdom, Crete deserted,  
 Empty of enemies, homes for the taking.  
 We left the Delian port and skimmed the sea  
 Past Naxos’ Bacchic ridges, green Reed Island, 125  
 Then Olive Island, snow-white Paros, scatter  
 Of Cyclades. We threaded shallow roiled straits.  
 Each sailor fought to do the most. They shouted  
 For speed to Crete, the country of our fathers.  
 A fair wind rose behind to waft our vessels 130

**111–Mother Cybele, Corybants:** Cybele, the mother goddess, drove a chariot pulled by lions; her ecstatic followers were the Corybants. There is a Mount Ida in her homeland of Phrygia, near Troy, as well as one on Crete, so she was associated with both regions.

**115–Knossos:** The principal city of Crete.

**120–West Wind:** The Zephyr.

**121–Idomeneus:** The king of Crete

and enemy of the Trojans. He fought with the Greeks at Troy and was exiled on his return home for sacrificing his son after foolishly promising to sacrifice the first thing he saw.

**125–27–Naxos’ Bacchic ridges, green Reed Island . . . Olive Island, snow-white Paros . . . Cyclades:** They sail through the island group in the Aegean known as the Cyclades. The largest, Naxos, was sacred to Bacchus.

BOOK 3

To where the Curetes lived long ago.  
Craving to stay, I founded Pergamum –  
A welcome name – and urged my race to love  
Their homes and fill the citadels with rooftops.  
The ships were on the shore and almost dry, 135  
Marriage and farming occupied the young,  
Laws and allotments me; when suddenly  
That sky rained wretched rotting sickness on us.  
The trees and fields grew only death that year.  
We gave our sweet breath up or dragged our lives out. 140  
And then the sterile Dog Star scorched the fields.  
Shoots withered, and the sick crops gave no food.  
My father urged a crossing back to plead  
Once more at Phoebus' oracle and ask him  
When he would grant an end to our exhaustion, 145  
Where we should look for help, where we should go.

“Night had brought sleep to all who live on earth.  
The sacred forms of Trojan household gods  
That I had rescued from the city's flames  
Appeared before my eyes as I was lying 150  
Asleep. They stood out plainly in the bright light  
The moon was pouring through my open window.  
They seemed to speak to me and soothe my worry.  
‘What the god would have told you at his shrine,  
He kindly sends by us, right to your threshold. 155  
When Troy was burned, we soldiered after you.  
We crossed the swelling water with your fleet,  
And we will raise your children to the stars  
And give the wide earth to your city. High walls

131–Curetes: Priests of the goddess  
Cybele.

132–Pergamum: The citadel of Troy.

141–the sterile Dog Star: Sirius, a  
star associated with drought, madness,  
and the “dog days” of summer.

BOOK 3

For your high gods you'll need there. Do not shirk 160  
 Hard travel to a new home, since Apollo  
 Did not intend your settling here in Crete.  
 There is a place Greeks call Hesperia,  
 An old land, strong in war and rich in loam.  
 Oenotrians lived there, whose descendants take 165  
 Their name, it's said, from Italus the king.  
 This is our own home. Dardanus was born here,  
 And our clan's founder, Father Iasius.  
 Wake! Hurry! Go with joy to your old father.  
 There is no question this time: he must go 170  
 To Italy. Jove denies you land in Crete.<sup>7</sup>  
 The sight and sound of gods dumbfounded me.  
 (It was no dream, you see. I recognized  
 Expressions, garlands, faces there before me,  
 And my whole body dripped with chilly sweat.) 175  
 I leapt from bed and raised a suppliant's hands  
 And voice to heaven, poured unwatered wine  
 Onto the hearth. These rites with joy completed,  
 I told Anchises all that had transpired.  
 He saw we had a double origin; 180  
 He'd made a fresh mistake about old places.  
 'Child, how the destiny of Troy torments you!  
 Only Cassandra gave us such predictions.  
 Now I recall she often said our race  
 Was meant to have "the West" or "Italy." 185  
 But who'd imagine Trojans going there?  
 And who believed Cassandra in those days?  
 Have faith in Phoebus – now he sets us right.<sup>8</sup>

**165–66–Oenotrians . . . Italus:** The Oenotrians were an ancient people of unknown origin who lived in southern Italy; Italus was their king.

**167–68–Dardanus . . . Iasius:** Dardanus and Iasius, or Iasus, his older

brother, were founding ancestors of the Trojans.

**177–unwatered wine:** Romans diluted their drinking wine with water, but only pure wine was appropriate to offer to deities.

BOOK 3

With shouts of triumph all of us obeyed.  
 We left another home, but some remained. 190  
 Now sails unfurled. Light hulls skimmed untold water.

“A long way out, with nothing in our sight  
 Anywhere but the ocean and the sky,  
 A blue-black mass of rain and stormy midnight  
 Loomed in; the water bristled in the dark wind. 195  
 All that colossal surface rose in arcs,  
 Flinging and strewing us across itself.  
 The storm clouds muffled day, the soaking night  
 Hid the sky, fire kept shattering the vapor.  
 Slammed off our course, we groped through blinding waves. 200  
 That sky, said Palinurus, muddled night  
 With day: he’d lost his way across the sea.  
 For three long days (we thought – the gloom confused us)  
 We wandered, and as many starless nights.  
 On the fourth day at last we saw land rising: 205  
 Some distant mountains and a curl of smoke.  
 We lowered sails. The sailors’ plunging rowing  
 Raised curls of foam and swept us on the blue.  
 So I was saved, and reached the Turning Islands,  
 A Greek name. In the wide Ionian 210  
 They are now fixed, and home to grim Celaeno  
 And other Harpies, who have all been banished  
 From Phineus’ palace, routed from his banquet.  
 The fury of the gods has raised no horror,  
 No plague more vicious from the waves of Styx. 215

**209–13—the Turning Islands . . .**  
**Celaeno and other Harpies . . . Phineus’**  
**palace:** The Harpies (literally “snatch-  
 ers”) were woman-faced birds, sent as  
 punishment by Jupiter to steal and pol-  
 lute King Phineus’ banquets. The Argo-  
 nauts drove them to the Turning Islands

(the Strophades), so named because the  
 Argonauts were “turned back” there in  
 their pursuit by the rainbow goddess Iris,  
 who promised that the Harpies would  
 leave King Phineus alone.

**215–Styx:** A river in the Underworld.

BOOK 3

They have girls' features, but their stomachs drip  
Revolting filth, their hands have claws, their faces  
Are always pale with hunger.  
We put to land there. Just beyond the harbor,  
We saw a sleek herd scattered in a meadow — 220  
Cattle and goats with no one guarding them.  
We drew our swords, swarmed in, and called on Jove  
And other gods to share our spoils. The curved shore  
Filled with our couches as we cooked a feast.  
A terrifying swoop out of the mountains: 225  
The Harpies with their clanking wings came screeching  
To loot the food. All that they touched was smeared  
With filth. We caught their nauseating stench.  
In a deep hollow underneath a cliff  
Enclosed by trees and bristling shade, we set 230  
Fresh tables and restored our altar fires.  
From other lairs and corners of the sky—  
A circling, screaming, taloned, snatching horde,  
Spreading their dirty drool. I called my friends  
To arms, to meet that fiendish breed in war. 235  
Just as I ordered them, they stashed their swords  
In grass clumps all around and hid their shields.  
Now when the birds plunged, shrieking, down the shore's arc,  
Misenus gave the signal from his lookout  
With his bronze horn. My men rushed in to maim 240  
These hideous seabirds with their swords— strange battle.  
No one was strong enough to strike a wound  
Through those hard plumes. Stampeded to the sky,  
They left half-eaten loot and sickening slime.  
Celaeno, though, ill-omened prophet, perched 245  
On a high cliff and shouted out these words:  
'Trojans, on top of slaughtering our cattle,

230—The line is thought to be spurious.

239—**Misenus**: A trumpeter; he reappears in book 6.



BOOK 3

You take up war against the blameless Harpies  
 And try to drive us from our rightful kingdom?  
 Store in your hearts the prophecy that Phoebus 250  
 Gave me. It came from the almighty father;  
 I, greatest of the Harpies, now reveal it.  
 You'll call the wind to sail to Italy.  
 When you arrive, you'll find an open harbor,  
 But walls will never ring your promised city 255  
 Until this crime against us and your hunger  
 Drive you to grind your tables in your jaws.  
 She now took wing and fled into the woods.  
 My comrades' blood froze. Overcome with fear,  
 They told me to abandon arms and plead 260  
 With prayers and promises to be let go,  
 Whether these things were gods or loathsome birds.  
 On the shore my father stretched his hands out, calling  
 High powers, and announcing their due rites.  
 'Gods, block their threats! Hold this disaster back! 265  
 We serve you – save us!' He had mooring ropes  
 Torn free, and sheets let out. Now the South Wind  
 Bellied the sails. Now on the foaming waves  
 We fled, winds and the pilot guiding us.  
 Wooded Zacynthus rose amid the waves, 270  
 Dulichium, Samē, Neritos' steep rocks.  
 Ithaca's crags passed by, where once Laertes  
 Was king; we cursed Ulysses' motherland.  
 The misty peak of Leucata appeared –  
 Apollo's shrine, which sailors hold in awe. 275

**257–to grind your tables in your jaws:** Celaeno's prophecy is fulfilled at 7.109–26.

**269–the pilot:** Palinurus.

**270–72–Zacynthus . . . Dulichium, Samē, Neritos . . . Ithaca:** Greek islands in the Ionian Sea. Samē is also known as Samos.

**272–73–Ithaca . . . Laertes . . . Ulysses:** Ulysses was the king of Ithaca; Laertes was his father.

**274–75–Leucata . . . which sailors hold in awe:** A promontory with a temple of Apollo constructed on a dangerous rock.

BOOK 3

We dropped our anchors at the little town,  
Exhausted. All along the beach our ships stood.  
Beyond hope, we had gained a place on dry land.  
We cleansed ourselves for Jove, burned promised gifts,  
Held Trojan ritual games on Actium's shore. 280  
My comrades stripped and wrestled in the old way,  
Dripping with oil, relieved at their escape  
Through all those cities of Greek enemies.  
Meanwhile the sun passed through the great year's circuit;  
The waves grew sharp in icy winter's North Winds. 285  
The curved bronze shield great Abas' arm once held  
I nailed outside the gate above this verse:  
'Aeneas won these arms from conquering Greeks.'  
My orders: man the oars and leave the harbor.  
With zeal they lashed the sea and swept across it. 290  
Quickly, Phaeacia's cloud-high bastion dipped  
From sight. We traced Epirus' shores and landed  
At the Chaonian port of high Buthrotum.

"A rumor — unbelievable — possessed us:  
Helenus, Priam's son, reigned in the Greek towns, 295  
Succeeding Pyrrhus; and Andromache  
Had found in him her second Trojan husband!

**280–Actium's shore:** North of Leucata; location of the decisive naval battle in 31 BCE through which Augustus (then Octavian) secured power by defeating Marc Antony and Cleopatra.

**286–Abas:** One of Aeneas' companions.

**291–Phaeacia:** A legendary location from Homer's *Odyssey*, ruled by the benevolent King Alcinous.

**292–Epirus:** A region in northwestern Greece.

**293–Chaonian . . . Buthrotum:** Buthrotum is the Greek city ruled by the Trojan refugees Helenus and Andromache. Helenus names part of it after his Trojan friend Chaon.

**295–97–Helenus . . . Andromache . . . second Trojan husband:** Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, took Hector's wife, Andromache, as a slave after the sack of Troy. According to Vergil, Pyrrhus gifted her to another Trojan captive, Helenus.

BOOK 3

I was amazed and eager in my heart  
To question him about these strange events.  
My fleet was in the harbor; I went inland. 300  
By chance Andromache was in the woods  
Beside the river ‘Simoïs,’ offering  
The ritual food and gifts to Hector’s ashes,  
To call his spirit at the hollow green mound  
And the two altars sacred to her tears. 305  
She saw me coming in my Trojan armor  
And froze, beside herself, stunned by the portent.  
As she stood gazing, all warmth left her body.  
She fainted. Finally, she could speak, and said,  
‘Goddess’ son, is it you I see – alive? 310  
You’re really here – with news? But if you’ve lost  
The kind light, where is Hector?’ Now her tears gushed,  
Her wailing filled that place; I was distressed,  
And as she raved, I struggled with a few words:  
‘I am alive, through all of my ordeals. 315  
Don’t doubt your eyes.  
Andromache, you were the wife of Hector.  
How far you fell! But has some worthy fate  
Now caught you? Or is Pyrrhus still your husband?’  
She bent her head and whispered this to me: 320  
‘Lucky beyond us all was Priam’s daughter,  
Compelled to die beside a hostile grave  
Beneath Troy’s high walls. No lots drawn for her,  
No conqueror’s bed to take her prisoner!  
Hauled past remote seas once my homeland burned, 325  
I bore the insults of Achilles’ son.

**302–“Simoïs”:** Helenus has named the river after the one beside Troy, as he has done with other place names.

**321–Priam’s daughter:** Polyxena, sacrificed by the Greeks to the dead Achilles.

BOOK 3

I had a child in slavery. Pyrrhus, chasing  
 A Spartan bride, Hermione, Leda's grandchild,  
 Gave me to Helenus, another slave.  
 Orestes, Fury-hounded for his own crime, 330  
 And full of rage when Pyrrhus stole his bride,  
 Caught him and killed him at his father's altar.  
 And at his death a portion of his kingdom  
 Passed rightfully to Helenus, who named  
 This land Chaonian, for Trojan Chaon, 335  
 And put a tower, 'Ilium,' on that ridge.  
 What wind, what fate has set your course, what god  
 Drove you here to our shores, without your knowing?  
 Your boy Ascanius still drinks the air?  
 He was at Troy with you— 340  
 And does he miss his mother, who is gone?  
 And do his father and his uncle Hector  
 Inspire him for his legacy of courage?  
 She poured this out, with tears and useless wailing—  
 Then Priam's son, heroic Helenus, 345  
 Came from the town, with plenty of attendants.  
 He knew us, and with joy he led us homeward,  
 And every word he spoke was bathed with tears.  
 Now I approached a little Troy, a tower

**328–31—A Spartan bride . . . his bride:** These events are described in Euripides' tragedy *Andromache*: Pyrrhus marries Hermione, daughter of the Spartan king Menelaus and Helen, daughter of Leda. But Hermione was already betrothed to Orestes (see 4.471–73n), who slays Pyrrhus at Delphi.

**332—at his father's altar:** An echo of Pyrrhus' killing of Priam at Troy at 2.550–55.

**335—Chaon:** A Trojan warrior, the friend or brother of Helenus.

**336—"Ilium":** Another name for Troy; see 302n.

**339—Your boy Ascanius:** Andromache is thinking of her young son Ascyanax, killed after the sack of Troy.

**341–42—his mother . . . uncle Hector:** Aeneas' wife, Creusa, died at Troy. Hector was her brother.

BOOK 3

Shaped like the great one, and a dry stream, ‘Xanthus.’ 350  
 I kissed the threshold of a ‘Scaean Gate.’  
 My Trojans too enjoyed their kindred city.  
 The king in his broad vestibule received them,  
 And in his central hall they poured libations,  
 Holding the wine bowls. Food was set on gold plates. 355

“A day passed, then another. Breezes called  
 Our sails. The South Wind puffed to swell the canvas,  
 And I approached the prophet, questioning:  
 ‘Trojan-born voice of gods! To you are known  
 The power, the Clarian bay trees, and the tripod 360  
 Of Phoebus; stars and birdcalls, signs from birds’ flight:

Tell me (since all the rites have promised me  
 A good voyage, and the gods’ will urged me on  
 To make for Italy, so far away –  
 Except Celaeno spoke of some strange evil 365  
 To come, a fearful anger that would bring

A loathsome hunger), what are my chief dangers?  
 What can I do to overcome my trials?’  
 Helenus slaughtered sacramental heifers,  
 Begged the gods’ favor, freed his sacred head 370  
 Of wreaths and led me, cautious at the great

And holy presence, into Phoebus’ house,  
 And from his priestly mouth came this foretelling:  
 ‘Son of the goddess, certainly gods guide you  
 Across the sea. The king of them allotted 375

**350–“Xanthus”:** Named after a river beside Troy.

**351–“Scaean Gate”:** Named after the landmark at Troy.

**358–the prophet:** Helenus.

**360–61–the Clarian bay trees, and the tripod of Phoebus:** Bay (or laurel)

was sacred to Apollo. For the tripod, see 3.92n.

**361–signs from birds’ flight:** Augury, the study of the flight of birds to determine the will of the gods.

**375–The king of them:** Jupiter.

BOOK 3

This fate, this turning wheel of incident.  
These words will help you cross the unknown seas  
In safety, clear to an Italian haven.  
Some things that I could say the Fates have hidden;  
Some Juno, Saturn's daughter, holds inside me. 380  
First, you think Italy is close. In planning  
To gain its harbors easily, you're wrong.  
The road that is no road runs by long shorelines.  
In the Sicilian waves you'll bend your oars  
And cross the salty plain near Italy 385  
By Circe's island and the lakes of hell  
Before a safe land lets you found a city.  
Keep carefully in mind the signs I speak of:  
Troubled at heart, you'll find a huge sow lying  
With thirty piglets by a distant river 390  
Under the holm oaks. On her bed of dark ground  
She will be white, white youngsters suckling her.  
Your city will be there, and your sure respite.  
And as for eating tables, calm your terror.  
Follow fate's path and ask Apollo's help. 395  
Avoid the nearer coast of Italy,  
The beaches washed by tides we share, since evil

**384–Sicilian waves:** Aeneas will sail around the island of Sicily.

**386–Circe's island:** Aeaea, legendary home of the sorceress Circe in the *Odyssey*. They will sail by her at 7.10.

**386:–the lakes of hell:** Lake Avernus, traditionally located at the entrance of the Underworld. See 6.238 and 6.242n.

**389–90–a huge sow lying with**

**thirty piglets:** The prophecy is repeated at 8.42–45 and fulfilled at 8.81–83.

**392–white:** “White” (*alba*) refers to Alba Longa, the city that will be founded by Ascanius in Italy.

**394–eating tables:** Celaeno made this prophecy at 3.247–57; see 3.257n.

**396–the nearer coast of Italy:** That is, the eastern coast, nearer Greece.

BOOK 3

Greeks live in every fort: the Locrians  
 Have built Narycium's walls; Idomeneus  
 Of Lyctos occupies Sallentian flatlands; 400  
 Small Petelia can rely on walls built  
 By Philoctetes, Meliboea's chieftain.  
 Once moored across the sea, when you are giving  
 Your promised gifts at newbuilt shoreline altars,  
 Hide your head, drape it in your purple clothing, 405  
 So that amid the flames of sacred rites  
 You see no enemy and spoil the omens.  
 Let your companions hold to this – and you too,  
 And your sons' sons: keep pure in this observance.  
 The wind will take you on to Sicily; 410  
 Pelorus will disclose its narrow gap.  
 Aim for the left shore, circle in from far out;  
 Avoid the land and water on the right.  
 They say some cataclysm split these places.  
 (Time holds within it such tremendous changes.) 415  
 It was a single place once, but the waves  
 Burst through the middle, splitting Italy  
 From Sicily, to sever farms and cities  
 By the new shores and narrow, sweeping tides.  
 Scylla lurks on the right, vicious Charybdis 420  
 On the left; its vortex sucks down vast cascades  
 Sheer to the bottom three times every day  
 And spouts them back to strike the stars with froth.  
 Scylla, down in her secret, murky cave,

**398–402–the Locrians . . . chieftain:** Various Greek enemies from the Trojan War. The Locrians were the troops of Ajax the Lesser; on Idomeneus, see 3.121n. The Greek warrior Philoctetes was stranded by the Greeks because of the rotten smell of his wound.  
**405–Hide your head:** A forerunner

of the Roman custom of covering one's head when conducting a sacrifice.

**411–Pelorus:**–The northeastern tip of Sicily.

**420–Scylla . . . Charybdis:** Dangers on either side of the Strait of Messina encountered by Odysseus (Ulysses) in *Odyssey* 12. See 1.200–201n.

BOOK 3

Thrusts out her mouths, drags vessels onto rocks. 425  
 She's human – she's a girl with lovely breasts  
 Above the waist, below a gruesome sea beast;  
 Wolves at her belly end in dolphin tails.  
 Better to double back and make your slow way  
 Around Pachynum, Sicily's far headland, 430  
 Than glimpse disgusting Scylla in her huge lair  
 And hear her sea-blue dogs make boulders echo.  
 And if I can be trusted as a prophet,  
 And know my art, and if the god inspires me,  
 Then above all hear this, child of the goddess, 435  
 An urgency I can't repeat enough:  
 Plead with and pray to mighty Juno's godhead;  
 Win the queen over with your suppliant gifts  
 And cheerful promises: at last she'll let you  
 Leave Sicily for Italy – your triumph. 440  
 When you reach Cumae, near the sacred lakes  
 And the deep-sighing forest of Avernus,  
 You'll see the raving Sibyl in a deep cave.  
 She chants the future, and with special signs  
 Marks it on leaves. The virgin puts these verses 445  
 In sequence and then locks them in her cave.  
 They stay there motionless, in perfect order.  
 But when a hinge turns, and a tender breeze  
 Falls on that flimsy foliage and disturbs it,  
 She doesn't chase its flutters through her cavern, 450  
 Or link the lines back in their proper order.

**430–Pachynum:** A promontory on the southeastern side of Sicily. Helenus suggests that Aeneas go around Sicily rather than risk encountering Scylla and Charybdis in the Strait of Messina.

**438–Win the queen over:** Juno remains hostile to Aeneas until the end of book 12.

**441–43–Cumae . . . Avernus . . . Sibyl:** Near modern Naples, Cumae was the home of Apollo's prophetess Sibyl, who wrote her prophecies on oak leaves. These events will be described in book 6.



BOOK 3

Disgusted, people leave, forgoing counsel.  
You must not brood about the time you spend there,  
Though your friends grumble, though your goal insists  
On canvas bellying across the deep. 455  
Approach the seer, beg to know your future  
From her own chanting mouth, by her goodwill:  
She'll tell of tribes that live there, wars to come,  
And hardships to endure or to avoid.  
Revere her, and she'll grant a good voyage back. 460  
But this is all that I'm allowed to tell you.  
Go then, raise Troy to heaven with your strivings.<sup>7</sup>  
After the augur spoke these loving words,  
He had the gifts, heavy with their carved ivory  
And gold, brought to our ships. He packed our hulls 465  
With silver bars and cauldrons from Dodona.  
A corselet, triple-layered in gold chain mail,  
And splendid helmet, topped with flowing plumes,  
Had once been Pyrrhus'; and my father got  
Special gifts. Pilots, horses were provided, 470  
Fresh rowers, and new armor for my comrades.  
Meanwhile, Anchises had the sails refitted—  
Nothing must keep us when the wind was right.  
Helenus spoke to him with great respect:  
'Anchises, fit to marry lofty Venus, 475  
Troy fell twice, twice the gods who love you saved you.  
There is your western land. Spread sails and seize it.  
Take care, though: skirt the near side, since the far side  
Alone is opened for you by Apollo.  
Go now! You're blessed with this devoted son. 480

**466–Dodona:** The oldest oracle of Zeus (Jupiter), located in Epirus, near Buthrotum, in northwestern Greece.

**476–Troy fell twice:** Hercules had sacked Troy before the Trojan War, after

the Trojan king Laomedon refused to compensate him as promised for killing a sea monster plaguing the city.

**480–this devoted son:** Another reference to Aeneas' *pietas*.

BOOK 3

I mustn't waste the rising South Wind's time.  
Andromache, as gracious as her husband,  
Heaped on more gifts, in grief at our departure:  
Clothing she had embroidered with gold yarn,  
And for Ascanius a Trojan cloak. 485  
'Take what my hands worked and remember me.  
Andromache, the wife of Hector, pledges  
Her love this way. Receive your family's last gifts –  
You, the sole image of Astyanax  
Left to me, with his hands and his expressions 490  
And eyes; he'd be at boyhood's end, like you.'  
As I was leaving, tears rose in my eyes:  
'Be happy, since your destiny is finished.  
We are called on to one and then another.  
You have your peace: no ocean field to plow, 495  
No land to seek that falls away from you  
Forever. You've made images of Xanthus  
And Troy with your own hands – with better omens,  
I hope, than Troy, and out of reach of Greeks.  
And if I ever come to Tiber's country 500  
And see the ramparts granted to my people,  
Italy and Epirus at its border –  
Which share a history, and a founder too,  
Dardanus – will unite in heart. We'll make  
A single Troy. Our heirs must see to this.' 505

"We sailed out. Circling the Ceraunian headland  
Gave us the quickest voyage to Italy.  
The sun plunged down. The mountains shadowed over.  
On the dry beach – warm, yearned-for earth – we drew  
Lots for the next day's rowing, then dispersed, 510

**500–Tiber's country:** Italy.

**502–Epirus:** See 3.292n.

**506–the Ceraunian headland:** The Ceraunians are a coastal mountain range in Albania, north of Greece.

BOOK 3

Sprawled, rested. Fresh sleep poured through tired limbs.  
 The Hours had not yet driven Night halfway  
 Around, when zealous Palinurus rose,  
 Ears sifting air to test for any wind.  
 He traced the still sky's gliding constellations: 515  
 The Rainy Ones, the Oxen and the Great Bear,  
 And in the south, Orion with gold armor.  
 Seeing the proper signs in limpid heaven,  
 He blared a signal from the stern. We broke camp  
 And spread our wings of sails and ventured out. 520  
 Now blushing Dawn had chased the stars away;  
 We glimpsed dim hills – there, just above the sea,  
 Was Italy. Achates gave the first shout,  
 Then the whole company cheered: 'Italy!' 525  
 Father Anchises wreathed a giant bowl,  
 Filled it with wine, and on the looming stern  
 Stood calling on the gods:  
 'Deities who rule land and sea and storms,  
 Be gracious, send a wind, make our way easy.'  
 The breezes strengthened, and a harbor opened; 530  
 Then on the heights we saw Minerva's shrine.  
 They furled the sails and turned the prows toward shore.  
 Waves from the east have made a bow-shaped harbor.  
 In front sharp rocks are sprayed with briny water.  
 On either side stone spires with their low arms 535  
 Form twin walls, and the shrine is safely inland.  
 Four snow-white horses, our first omen seen,  
 Ranged browsing on the plain. My father spoke:  
 'New land, you'll bring us war, since horses go

516–17–**The Rainy Ones, the Oxen**  
 . . . **the Great Bear . . . Orion:** The con-  
 stellations the Pleiades, Boötes, and Ursa  
 Major (Big Dipper or Plow); the scene is  
 modeled on *Odyssey* 5.

531–**Minerva's shrine:** Castrum Mi-  
 nervae, in Calabria, Italy.

BOOK 3

To war in armor—these beasts threaten war. 540  
 They can submit, though, and be trained to draw  
 A chariot beneath a yoke of concord;  
 So peace may come.’ Cheering, we disembarked.  
 We called on Pallas first, shield-clanging godhead.  
 Trojan clothes hooded us before her altars. 545  
 As Helenus had urged this most of all,  
 We honored Argive Juno, offering  
 Gifts in the flames. Our vows fulfilled, we hurried  
 To point the sail-draped yardarms out to sea.  
 This was a land of Greeks, which made us leery. 550  
 Tarentum’s gulf!—where Hercules (the tale says)  
 Visited. Facing it rose Juno’s temple,  
 Caulon’s fort, and ship-wrecking Scylaceum.  
 Above the far flood rose Sicilian Etna.  
 We heard the sea-struck rocks in their vast groaning 555  
 Already, and the shattered voice of breakers.  
 The shallows leapt, the sand ran through their seething.  
 My father shouted, ‘That must be Charybdis—  
 Helenus warned us of those crags and grim rocks.  
 Friends, save us! All together at the oars!’ 560  
 The men obeyed, and Palinurus led,  
 Wrenching his creaking prow out toward the sea.  
 The whole fleet rowed and turned their sails to follow.  
 The arching billow heaved up to the sky,  
 Then hollowed out: we sank as deep as hell. 565  
 Three times the caverns at the cliff’s base thundered.  
 Three times the foam shot out and soaked the stars.  
 Sun and wind left us now. Exhausted, lost,

544–Pallas: Minerva.

547–Argive Juno: Juno was the patron goddess of Argos, a city in Greece.

551–Tarentum’s gulf . . . Hercules: Tarentum, located in the arch of the

“boot” of Italy, was said to have been founded by Hercules.

552–54–Juno’s temple, Caulon’s fort . . . Scylaceum . . . Etna: Locales on the eastern coast of Sicily.

BOOK 3

We drifted to a coast, to Cyclops country.  
The harbor, blocked from wind, is broad and peaceful, 570  
But Etna's gales of rubble roar beside it.  
Sometimes a dark cloud blasts clear up to heaven,  
A pitch-black smoky whirlwind ringed with white ash:  
Its swarms of hurtling fire flick the stars.  
Sometimes it vomits crags and mountain entrails 575  
Into the air, or masses melted stone  
From its deep roots and, with a groan, boils over.  
The Giant, lightning-scorched Enceladus,  
They say, is pinned beneath enormous Etna,  
Which breathes its fires out of shattered forges, 580  
And when he turns, exhausted, all the island  
Trembles and roars, and thick smoke masks the sky.  
Cowering all night in the woods, we suffered  
Inhuman horrors, noises out of nowhere.  
Neither the stars' flames nor the moon were showing. 585  
The heights of heaven lost all incandescence;  
The hours of night were buried in dark cloud.  
The day was rising, and the dawn appeared.

"Aurora drove the shadows from the damp sky  
When a strange form burst on us from the forest: 590  
A pitiful, starved heap of dirt and rags.  
A suppliant, his hands out, he approached.  
We stared. His long beard straggled, he was filthy,  
Thorns pinned his clothes. But he was Greek, we saw:  
A past invader, in his country's armor. 595  
He'd seen our Trojan clothes and arms already  
And halted for a little while in terror –

**569–Cyclops country:** The region were punished by being chained under  
around Mount Etna. mountains (here, the volcano Mount

**578–Enceladus:** One of the Giants, Etna).  
who rebelled against the Olympians and

**589–Aurora:** The dawn goddess.

BOOK 3

Then he came rushing forward to the shore,  
Weeping and pleading: 'By the stars, the gods,  
This sky that gives us shining air to breathe, 600  
Take me on board, to any country, Trojans.  
That is enough. I sailed in that Greek fleet,  
And I attacked your homes – yes, I admit it.  
If my crime is too great, then scatter me  
Across the waves and sink me in the vast deep. 605  
Give me the joy of death at human hands!  
He clutched my knees, in an unyielding grovel.  
I strove to draw from him his name and lineage,  
And then the story of his misery.  
Anchises quickly gave the youth his right hand, 610  
A ready sign of friendship, lending courage.  
At last he let his terror go and spoke:  
'I'm Achaemenides. Luckless Ulysses  
Took me to Troy: my father, Adamastus,  
Was poor – I wish I'd stayed in poverty. 615  
My friends forgot me in their fear and left me  
In the Cyclops' monstrous cavern when they stole  
Out of his savage door. That huge, dark house  
Is fouled with gory food. He towers, striking  
The stars. Gods, rid the world of such a plague! 620  
Who'd want to speak to him or look at him?  
He eats poor human entrails and black blood.  
In the middle of his cave I saw him lying:  
He put his giant hand on two of us  
And smashed them on a rock; the cavern's entrance 625  
Ran with sprayed blood. I saw him chewing bodies

**613–Achaemenides:** Not mentioned in previous literature and probably an invention of Vergil.

**617–the Cyclops' monstrous cavern:** A reference to *Odyssey* 9, in which Odysseus (Ulysses) and his men encounter the Cyclops Polyphemus.

BOOK 3

Black with their own gore, while their limbs still quivered.  
He paid. Ulysses acted like the hero  
He was, and took a great, defiant risk.  
The Cyclops, stuffed with food and sunk in wine, 630  
Stretched his great length across the cave and laid down  
His lolling head, and slept, and vomited  
Blood, wine, and gory fragments. We beseeched  
The holy powers, drew lots for tasks, and swarmed  
Around him. With a sharpened spike we pierced 635  
The single eye beneath his brutal brow—  
Sun-big, big as a shield an Argive carries.  
The joy, when we avenged our comrades' ghosts!  
But run, poor people! Slash your mooring cables!  
Get away! 640  
As huge as Polyphemus in his cave,  
Shutting his woolly herds in pens for milking,  
A hundred Cyclopes are on the loose  
On this curved shore and wander in these mountains.  
And now the third moon fills its horns with light, 645  
Tally of time endured deep in these woods  
Among beasts' dens. From cliffs I see the monsters.  
I tremble when I hear their steps and voices.  
Trees give me miserable fodder: berries,  
And stony cornels, and I pull at roots. 650  
Yours are the first ships I have known to land here  
In all my watching— and at any price,  
I submit, to escape this evil race.  
Grant any death you like, and take my spirit.'  
Just as he finished, we saw Polyphemus 655  
Himself, high on a hill among his herd,  
His great bulk moving toward the shore he knew—  
A massive, hideous monster, though now blinded.  
A pine log led his hand and braced his steps.  
The woolly ewes, his sole delight and comfort, 660  
Followed him.

BOOK 3

He waded to the deep and level water  
 To wash the scooped-out socket's running matter,  
 Grinding his teeth and groaning. Now he strode  
 Far out, but no waves wet his towering flanks. 665  
 Away we scrambled with the suppliant,  
 Poor man. With stealth, we cut the ropes and rowed  
 Flat out, churning the surface frantically.  
 He wrenched his footsteps toward the sound we made,  
 But couldn't get his grasping hands on us — 670  
 We were too fast on the Ionian currents.  
 His roar shook every wave on that wide sea;  
 Inland, through Italy it sent its terror,  
 And bellowed in the arching caves of Etna.  
 All of the Cyclops tribe, roused by the noise, 675  
 Ran from the woods and hills to fill the beach.  
 We saw the clan of Etna standing there,  
 Each with a cloud-high head and one wild eye —  
 Grim council — like the oaks that fill the ether,  
 Or cone-hung cypresses; like mountain forests 680  
 Of Jove, like groves in which Diana hunts.  
 Our terror drove us headlong — anywhere.  
 We let the sails out for the wind to take.  
 Helenus warned us of the narrow way  
 By Scylla and Charybdis: death crowds both sides. 685  
 We chose to set the canvas for retreat.  
 A north wind from Pelorus' narrow cape  
 Drove us around Pantagia's rocky gates —  
 The bay of Megara — low-lying Thapsus.

**671–Ionian:** The Ionian Sea is the stretch of water between Italy and Greece.

**681–Diana:** The goddess of hunting.

**688–89–Pantagia's . . . Thapsus:** Aeneas' most direct route would be through the Strait of Messina (see

3.420n, 3.430n), but he avoids it because of the dangers posed by Scylla and Charybdis. Instead, he sails around Sicily, passing a number of Sicilian locales along the way, including the mouth of the river Pantagia.



BOOK 3

Hapless Ulysses' Achaemenides 690  
 Pointed out shores he'd skimmed in coming there.  
 Wave-washed Plemyrion confronts an island  
 Stretched across a Sicilian bay. The ancients  
 Called it Ortygia, land of Arethusa,  
 The spring to which the Alpheus River tunneled 695  
 From Elis, as they say, to blend in this sea.  
 We prayed to local gods, as we'd been told to,  
 And sailed on past Helorus' fertile wetlands,  
 And grazed the jutting, high Pachynian cliffs.  
 Far off rose Camerina – fate forbade 700  
 Moving it – and the fields outlying Gela,  
 A city named for roaring Laughter River;  
 Steep Acragas then showed huge walls far off –  
 Once, long ago, it bred high-hearted horses.  
 We passed palm-filled Selinus with a fair wind 705  
 And picked through Lilybaeum's vicious shallows  
 And found a port, and grief, at Drepanum.  
 There I lost my consoler for each mishap  
 And care, Anchises, whom so many storms  
 Had hounded. Best of fathers, you were worn out 710  
 And left me, after all I saved you from.  
 From all dire things foretold by Helenus  
 And grim Celaeno, this one grief was missing,

694–96–Ortygia . . . Arethusa . . .

**Elis:** The Sicilian spring Arethusa was said to originate in the Peloponnese. According to myth the nymph Arethusa, pursued by the river god Alpheus, fled under the sea to Sicily. Alpheus followed and their waters merged at Ortygia, near Syracuse.

699–707–Pachynian cliffs . . .

**Drepanum:** Starting from Cape Pachynus, the southeastern tip of Sicily, Aeneas sails along the southern coast and up the western side to the port of Drepanum, the northwestern corner of the island. He is ready to turn in toward Italy when Juno's storm sends him southwest to Carthage on the African coast.

BOOK 3

And this I suffered last in my long travels.  
It was from there god brought me to your shore.”  
So, with the crowd engrossed, Father Aeneas  
Told of the fate the gods sent, and his travels.  
At last he reached the end and sat in silence.

715

**715—to your shore:** Vergil returns the  
frame to Dido and the Carthaginians.

## BOOK 4

Now the queen's lifeblood fed her brutal love wound;  
A flame, unseen, gnawed at her hour by hour.  
His martial manhood and his family's glory  
Came back to her – his face, his words now clung to  
Her heart; her body had no peace or rest. 5  
Dawn had raised Phoebus' torch to light the earth,  
And pushed the drizzling shadows from the sky,  
When stricken Dido told her loving sister:  
"Anna, half-waking dreams have terrified me.  
This stranger who has come here as our guest – 10  
His face, his walk, his heart's and weapons' strength –  
I think – it must be true – this is a god's child.  
Fear marks plebeian spirits. How I pity  
His hard fate and the long, grim war he told of!  
If ever my heart moved from where I fixed it – 15  
I set myself against the ties of marriage  
When death had cheated me of my first love,  
Blighting for me the wedding torch and chamber –  
I might relent, this single time, and falter.  
Anna, I must confess, since poor Sychaeus 20  
Fell, since my brother stained our home with murder,  
This one alone has moved me; now I waver.  
I recognize the remnants of that flame.

**6–Phoebus' torch:** The sun; Phoebus is Apollo, the sun god.

**10–stranger . . . guest:** The Greeks and Romans believed in treating strangers as honored guests.

**17–my first love:** Dido's dead husband, Sychaeus.

**21–my brother . . . murder:** Pygmalion, king of Tyre and Dido's brother, had Sychaeus killed. See Venus' narrative at 1.338–68.

BOOK 4

But let the earth first gape to its foundation,  
 Or the almighty father's lightning drive me 25  
 To the pale shades of Erebus and deep night,  
 Before I wrong you, Honor, and your laws.  
 The man who first was part of me has taken  
 My love. He ought to keep it where he's buried."  
 Her overflowing tears now soaked her dress. 30  
 Anna replied, "You, who are more than life  
 To me, mean to let grief devour your youth,  
 Without sweet children and the gifts of Venus?  
 You think that ashes care, or ghosts in graveyards?  
 Both here in Libya and back in Tyre 35  
 No suitors tamed your grief. Iarbas and others  
 Reared by this rich, triumphant Africa  
 Are scorned – and now you fight a love that suits you?  
 Recall whose land this is you've made your home in:  
 The cities of Gaetulians, never conquered, 40  
 The wild Numidians, treacherous Syrtis,  
 Bare desert, and marauding Barcaeans  
 Encircle you, and conflict looms from Tyre –  
 Your brother threatens.  
 It was the provident gods and Juno's favor 45  
 That steered the Trojan ships here on the wind.  
 The city that you'll see, the rising empire  
 Out of this marriage! Trojan allied arms  
 Will bring this Punic town to soaring glory.

**33–the gifts of Venus:** Sex.

**35–Libya:** Here, Africa is meant.

**35–Tyre:** Dido's hometown in Phoenicia (modern Lebanon) which she fled after the murder of her husband.

**36–Iarbas:** Dido's most determined suitor; king of the Gaetulians and son of the African god Ammon (Jupiter's African counterpart). See 4.196–219.

**40–41–Gaetulians . . . Numidians:** Peoples of northern Africa.

**41–Syrtis:** Dangerous sandbanks in the modern Gulf of Sirte.

**42–Barcaeans:** Barce was a city close to modern-day Tripoli. Vergil may mention it here for its resemblance to Hannibal's family name, Barca. See 4.386n.

**49–Punic:** Carthaginian.

BOOK 4

Seek the gods' sanction with propitious gifts. 50  
Weave pretexts for delaying as you fete him:  
Seas raging through the days of wet Orion,  
Ships damaged, and a hard and stubborn sky."  
This appeal made the spark of passion blaze,  
Lent hope to hesitation, melted shame. 55  
First they approached each temple and its altar  
With ritual pleas, killed chosen sheep for Phoebus,  
Law-giving Ceres, the Lyaeon Father,  
But Juno first, who joins the bonds of marriage.  
Radiant Dido held the bowl, her right hand 60  
Tipping it on a snow-white heifer's forehead.  
She strode beneath gods' eyes to wealthy altars,  
Began each day with gifts, searched for the meaning  
Cut open in the steaming guts of beasts.  
O empty-minded augurs! In her madness, 65  
What use were prayers and temples? Flame devoured  
Soft marrow, and a heart's wound throbbed in hiding.  
Poor Dido burned, raved, wandered through the city,  
As when a deer, at peace in Cretan glades,  
Is pierced from far off by a hunting shepherd. 70  
Not knowing where the flying iron point  
Landed, he leaves it. Through the groves of Dicte  
She runs at random, in her side the death reed.  
Now Dido leads Aeneas through the fortress,  
Shows him Sidonian wealth, the rising city, 75  
Begins to speak but leaves her words half-said.  
At fall of daylight, she repeats her banquet,

**52-Orion:** The setting of the constellation Orion in November was linked to stormy weather.

**58-the Lyaeon Father:** Bacchus, here called "The Looser" as the god of wine and revelry.

**72-Dicte:** A mountain in Crete.

**75-Sidonian:** Carthaginian; Sidon was a city in Phoenicia.

BOOK 4

Demands to hear the Trojans' trials again,  
Again hangs on his words in her delusion.  
Her guests are gone, the moon puts out its dim light, 80  
And falling constellations counsel sleep;  
She sorrows in the empty house, reclining  
There on the couch he left – sees, hears his absence.  
She holds Ascanius – so like his father! –  
In her lap, cheats her real and shameful love. 85  
The towers she began don't rise. The young men  
No longer drill or build defending ramparts  
Or ports. The work stalls, halfway done – the menace  
Of high walls, and the cranes as high as heaven.  
So sickness gripped the queen, who let her folly 90  
Outrun her good name. Juno, Jove's dear wife  
And Saturn's daughter, saw, and went to Venus.  
"Truly, your son and you have won such glory,  
Such huge spoils. Power worth eternal praise  
Shows in two gods who dupe a mortal woman! 95  
I know that you've been wary of our walls here,  
Distrustful when you saw high Carthage settled.  
Where will this end? Where is this fierce fight going?  
Why not a lasting treaty and a contract  
Of marriage? What your heart desired, you have. 100  
Dido's love burns. Her bones draw in its fury.  
Why not unite two races? We can rule them  
Together. As a Phrygian husband's slave,  
She'll hand you all these Tyrians, her dowry."  
But Venus felt the trick in this, the effort 105  
To steer Italian power to Libya.  
She countered: "To agree is merely sane.  
Who would prefer to take up arms against you?  
If only what you plan succeeds in practice . . .

**103–Phrygian:** Here, Trojan; Juno refers to Aeneas.

BOOK 4

Fate, to me, sways, uncertain. Is Jove's plan 110  
One town for Tyrians and Trojan exiles?  
Alliance or a blended population?  
You, as his wife, could rightly probe his thinking.  
Ask him, and I'll be with you." Juno answered,  
"Leave that to me. For now, I'll tell you briefly – 115  
So listen – how we finish what's at hand.  
Poor Dido and Aeneas are preparing  
A woodland hunting trip at dawn tomorrow,  
When the sun's rising rays reveal the round earth.  
While horsemen rush to cordon off the passes, 120  
I'll mingle dusky cloud with hail and rain  
And pour it down and shake the sky with thunder.  
Their retinue will scatter in the dark.  
The same cave will receive the Trojan leader  
And Dido. I'll be there (with your approval); 125  
Join her to him, make her his own in marriage  
That's sanctioned. These will be the rites." Then Venus,  
Amused at the duplicity, agreed.

Dawn rose now, leaving Ocean; and the gates,  
In her fresh rays, emitted chosen troops, 130  
With nets and traps and broad-tipped hunting spears.  
Massylian horsemen, keen-nosed dogs ran forward.  
At the queen's door the Tyrian leaders waited.  
Her horse stood radiant in gold and purple,  
And fiercely stamped, and gnawed a foaming bit. 135  
At last, thronged with her retinue, she came.  
Her cloak was Punic, edged with lavish stitching.  
Her hair was clasped in gold, her quiver gold,  
A brooch of gold secured her purple robe.  
The Trojan troops and an excited Iulus 140

**126–in marriage:** Juno is the goddess  
of marriage.

**132–Massylian:** Refers to a people of  
northern Africa.

BOOK 4

Came up. Finest of all these was Aeneas,  
 Who as her escort joined his ranks with hers.  
 Apollo, coming to his mother's Delos  
 From winter Lycia and the river Xanthus,  
 Renews the dance. Around the altar shout 145  
 Dryopians, Cretans, tattooed Agathyrsi.  
 He walks the slope of Cynthus with his long hair  
 Braided and bound with tender leaves and gold.  
 Arrows clank on his shoulder. Just as lively,  
 As beautiful, as noble, rode Aeneas. 150  
 They came into the hills and trackless woods.  
 Wild goats they started from a stony summit  
 Ran down the slope. Deer from another refuge  
 Sped off in crowding ranks across the bare plain,  
 In dusty panic to escape the mountain. 155  
 The boy Ascanius, keen-horsed keen rider,  
 Outraced each troop of hunters through the valley  
 And scorned the tame herds – better that the heights  
 Disgorge foam-spitting boars or tawny lions!  
 From the sky now a racket and a tumult 160  
 Erupted; storm clouds shot in, full of hail.  
 Trojan youth, Punic escorts, Venus' grandson  
 From Dardanus' realm scattered through the fields  
 Toward urgent shelter. From the hillsides, streams rushed.  
 The Trojan lord and Dido found the same cave. 165  
 Primeval Earth and Juno, bride-bestower,  
 Signaled, and in collusion, lightning flashed  
 At the union. On the mountaintops nymphs howled.  
 From this day came catastrophe and death.

**143–Delos:** The island in the Aegean Sea where Apollo and his twin sister, Diana, were born.

**144–Lycia:** In Anatolia, modern Turkey.

**146–Dryopians . . . Agathyrsi:** Somewhat obscure Greek tribes.

**147–Cynthus:** A mountain on Delos.

**166–Primeval Earth:** A Roman goddess.



BOOK 4

No thought of public scandal or of hiding 170  
 Her passion troubled Dido any longer.  
 She called it marriage, covering her own fault.

Rumor, the swiftest plague there is, went straight  
 To all the settlements of Libya.  
 She thrives on motion, drawing strength from travel; 175  
 Tiny and timid first, then shooting upward,  
 She hides her head in clouds yet walks the ground.

They say the Earth, in anger at the gods,  
 Bore this child last, quick-footed, quick-winged sister  
 Of Titan Enceladus and huge Coeus. 180

Beneath each feather of the ghastly monster –  
 This is the startling legend – is a wide eye,  
 A tongue, a blaring mouth, a pricked-up ear.  
 Between the earth and sky, in shadow, shrieking,  
 She flies at night. No sweet sleep shuts her eyes. 185

By day she sits as lookout on a rooftop  
 Or a high tower and alarms great cities.  
 Her claws hold both true news and evil lies.  
 She filled the realms now with her tangled talk,  
 Chanting in glee a mix of fact and fiction: 190

“Aeneas, from a Trojan family, came here.  
 Beautiful Dido chose him as her lover.  
 What kind of rulers spend the whole long winter  
 Sunk deep in sensuous and sordid passion?”  
 The ugly goddess passed along these stories 195  
 At large, then flew directly to King Iarbas,

173–Rumor: Latin *Fama*, a deity.

178–80–the Earth . . . huge Coeus: The Olympian gods came to power by staging a coup against the previous generation, the Titans. The Earth goddess Gaia, their mother, took revenge by birthing the chaos-spreader Rumor.

193–94–What kind of rulers . . . sordid passion?: Vergil’s language probably evoked images of Antony and Cleopatra for his contemporary audience.

196–Iarbas: See 4.36n.

BOOK 4

And with her words piled high and lit his rage.  
 A Garamantian nymph and Ammon's violence  
 Created him. His broad lands raised to Jove  
 A hundred huge shrines. Priests and altar flames 200  
 Kept constant vigils for the gods, while herds' blood  
 Slathered the floor and bright wreaths decked the doorways.  
 Stung with this hearsay now, in frantic rage,  
 He faced the living gods before their altars,  
 Raised suppliant hands and prayed insistently, 205  
 "Almighty Jove, to whom the race of Moors  
 On their embroidered couches pour libations –  
 Here, have you seen? When you hurl thunder, Father,  
 Is terror needless? Is that fire, that noise  
 Up in the clouds without an aim or meaning? 210  
 A woman straying on my borders rented  
 A scrap of shore for building on and farming  
 On *my* conditions. She refused me marriage  
 But lets Aeneas rule with her – no, rule her.  
 That Paris with his mincing retinue, 215  
 An Asian headdress on his perfumed hair,  
 Masters his loot. I guess it's empty legend  
 Alone that makes us fill your shrines with gifts?"  
 This was the king's prayer as he grasped the altar;  
 And the almighty heard, and turned to see 220  
 The queen's walls and the heedless, shameless lovers.  
 He spoke to Mercury and gave this order:  
 "Call the West Winds, my son, glide on your wings;  
 Speak to the Trojan leader loitering  
 At Tyrian Carthage with no thought for cities 225

**198–Ammon:** An African deity identified with Jupiter.

**206–Moors:** The people of Mauretania in northwest Africa.

**215–That Paris with his mincing**

**retinue:** Iarbas disparages Aeneas by linking him with his fellow Trojan Paris, first as a wife stealer, and second as effeminate, a charge typical of Roman prejudice toward Easterners.

BOOK 4

Granted by fate. Go, hurry my words landward.  
 This wasn't what his lovely mother promised,  
 Or why, both times, she saved him from the Greeks,  
 But to rule Italy, beget an empire  
 That roars with war, to give us noble Teucer's 230  
 Descendants, who will bring the whole world laws.  
 If this majestic future cannot rouse him  
 To take this labor on for his own glory,  
 Does he begrudge his son the Roman fortress?  
 What can he gain here in a hostile nation? 235  
 Ausonian progeny? Lavinian fields?  
 The sum of what I want him told: Set sail!"

He spoke. So on his mighty father's orders,  
 The son prepared, first tying golden sandals  
 Onto his feet, to take him swift as wind 240  
 High over land and ocean on their wings.  
 He took the wand that calls pale souls from Orcus,  
 Sends them to gloomy Tartarus, awakens  
 And puts to sleep, and opens perished eyes.  
 With this he drove the winds and skimmed through chaos 245  
 Of clouds. He saw the brow and looming flanks  
 Of rocky Atlas, prop of the high heavens –  
 Atlas, with black clouds always at his head,  
 Where the pines grow, and wind and rain blast hard.  
 The snow spreads down his shoulders. Off the chin 250  
 Of the old man torrents pour. Ice locks his sharp beard.  
 Mercury halted, poised on balanced wings,

**228–she saved him from the Greeks:**  
 Venus first spirited Aeneas away from a  
 deadly battle with Diomedes (*Iliad* 5);  
 she then directed him out of Troy as it  
 fell (see 2.589–92).

**236–Ausonian:** Italian.

**242–43–Orcus . . . Tartarus:** Under-

world locations. Mercury is a guide of  
 souls, or psychopomp, tasked with lead-  
 ing the dead to and from the Underworld  
 with his wand.

**247–Atlas:** Mercury's grandfather;  
 the Titan condemned to hold the sky on  
 his shoulders.

BOOK 4

Then hurled his body headlong toward the waves.  
 A certain kind of bird skims shoreline waters  
 Or rounds the base of crags where fish are teeming. 255  
 Like this, Cyllene's native sliced the winds,  
 Leaving his mother's father, passed to earth,  
 To Libya's sandy shoreline, where he landed.  
 He set his feathered feet among the shanties  
 And saw Aeneas laying out the towers 260  
 And building houses. Tawny jasper flecked  
 His sword. His shoulders trailed a purple cloak,  
 Glowingly rich, with thin gold stripes, a present  
 Woven by wealthy Dido. The god scolded:  
 "Your wife must like you laying the foundations 265  
 For lofty Carthage, such a splendid city—  
 Forgetting your own kingdom that awaits you.  
 The ruler of the gods, whose strength bends heaven  
 And earth, has sent me down from bright Olympus,  
 Commanding that I fly here with this message: 270  
 What will this loitering in Libya bring you?  
 If you're unmoved by all the coming splendor,  
 Which is a weight you do not wish to shoulder,  
 Think of your hopes as Iulus grows, your heir,  
 Owed an Italian realm and Roman soil." 275  
 These were the words from the Cyllenian's mouth.  
 Still speaking, he passed out of human vision  
 And trailed away until the thin air hid him.  
 This apparition left Aeneas stunned.  
 His hair stood up, and words stuck in his throat. 280

**254—A certain kind of bird:** Probably a gull; the simile echoes *Odyssey* 5, in which Mercury, sent by Jupiter, orders Odysseus (Ulysses) to leave his lover Calypso and continue his journey home.  
**256—Cyllene's native:** Maia, a daugh-

ter of Atlas, bore Mercury on Mount Cyllene in southern Greece.

**261—Tawny jasper:** The jewels are on the hilt or the scabbard.

**273—**The line is thought to be spurious.

BOOK 4

He burned to run, however sweet this land was.  
The gods' august command had terrified him.  
But how? What would he dare to tell the queen –  
So passionate? How could he start explaining?  
His mind kept darting and his thoughts dividing 285  
Through the whole matter and each baffling question.  
After much wavering, this seemed the best plan:  
He called Mnestheus and brave Serestus  
And Sergestus: they must get the men together  
Quietly, rig the fleet, and hide the reason 290  
Things stirred. And meanwhile Dido, the good lady,  
Would not expect such vital love could fail.  
He would approach her at the kindest time  
And seek the best words. With alacrity,  
These men obeyed in everything he ordered. 295  
But who can fool a lover? Soon the queen –  
Anxious when nothing threatened – sensed the trick,  
Though no ship moved yet. Evil Rumor told her  
The fleet was being fitted for a journey.  
She raved all through the town in helpless passion, 300  
Like a bacchant customary mysteries rouse  
With ritual ululations, brandished emblems,  
And shouts that summon her to dark Cithaeron.  
She faced off with Aeneas and accused him:  
"You traitor, did you think that you could hide 305  
Such a great crime, that you could sneak away?  
The pledge you made, our passion for each other,  
Even your Dido's brutal death won't keep you?  
Monster, you toil beneath these winter skies  
And rush to cross the deep through northern blasts – 310  
For a strange home on someone else's land?"

**301–bacchant:** a female follower of Bacchus. Thebes, sacred to Bacchus and hence the location of bacchic rituals performed by the bacchantes.  
**303–Cithaeron:** Mountain near the bacchantes.

BOOK 4

If ancient Troy still stood today to sail to,  
 Would you make off across that surging plain?  
 You run from me? By your pledged hand, my tears  
 (Since everything but these is stripped from me), 315  
 Our union, and the wedding we embarked on –  
 If I have ever earned it through my kindness,  
 Have pity on my tottering house and me.  
 If pleading has a chance still, change your mind.  
 The Libyan clans and Nomad rulers hate me, 320  
 So do the Tyrians, because of you.  
 You ruined me and my good name – my one path  
 To the stars. Tell me, my guest (the sole term left –  
 Not *spouse*): Whose hands will kill what you abandon?  
 My prospect? Will Pygmalion raze my walls? 325  
 Gaetulian Iarbas lead me off, a captive?  
 If only I'd conceived before you bolted,  
 And had your offspring, if a small Aeneas  
 Played in my palace, with a face like yours –  
 I wouldn't feel so cheated and abandoned." 330  
 She spoke; he kept his eyes down, at Jove's orders,  
 Struggling to force his feelings from his heart.  
 Finally, briefly: "Name your favors, list them.  
 There isn't one I ever would deny.  
 Never will I regret Elissa's memory 335  
 While I *have* memory, while I breathe and move.  
 A little on the facts, though: don't imagine  
 I meant to sneak away; and as for *spouse*,  
 I never made a pact of marriage with you.  
 If fate would let me live the life I chose, 340

**320–Libyan clans and Nomad rulers:** Dido refers to the local tribes in North Africa in whose territory her city of Carthage was being built.

**325–Pygmalion:** see 4.21n.

**335–Elissa:** An alternate name for Dido.

**339–I never made:** Aeneas' interpretation of what happened in the cave differs from Dido's (4.172).

BOOK 4

If I had power over my decisions,  
 I would have stayed at Troy, where I could tend  
 Belovèd graves; Priam's high house would stand;  
 I would have built a new Troy for the conquered.  
 But Grynean Apollo and the edicts 345  
 Of Lycia drive me into Italy.  
 My love, my home are this. You, though Phoenician,  
 Are riveted by towers in Libya.  
 So how can you resent us Trojans' settling  
 In Italy, *our* lawful foreign kingdom? 350  
 When the night masks the earth with drizzling shadows,  
 When fiery stars rise, then the troubled ghost  
 Of my father, dear Anchises, hounds my dreams.  
 I know I cheat Ascanius, my dear son,  
 Out of his western realm, the fields fate grants. 355  
 The envoy of the gods, dispatched by Jove  
 Himself (I swear, on both our heads), brought orders  
 Down through the air. In the clear day I saw him  
 Within these walls, and these ears heard his voice.  
 Don't goad me – and yourself – with these complaints. 360  
 Italy is against my will.”  
 Although her back was turned, she still surveyed  
 The speaker blankly and distractedly  
 Over her shoulder, then broke out in fury.  
 “Traitor – there is no goddess in your family, 365  
 No Dardanus. The sharp-rocked Caucasus

**345–46–Grynean Apollo and the edicts of Lycia:** A reference to the oracles authorizing Aeneas' quest; Apollo was worshipped under the title “Grynean” in the Aeolis, a northwestern region of Asia Minor, and under the title “Lycian” in southwestern Asia Minor. Compare the oracles of Apollo at 3.161–62.

**356–envoy of the gods:** The god Mercury.

**365–no goddess:** Dido rejects Aeneas' claim that his mother is Venus.

**366–Dardanus:** Son of Jupiter and Electra, ancestor of Ilus, Tros, and the Trojans.

**366–Caucasus:** Mountains between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, regarded as harsh and inhospitable.

BOOK 4

Gave birth to you, Hyrcanian tigers nursed you.  
 Why pretend now? Is something worse in store?  
 Was there a sigh for tears of mine? A glance?  
 Did he give in to tears himself, or pity? 370  
 Injustice overwhelms me – which concerns  
 Great Juno and our father, Saturn’s son.  
 What bond can hold? I helped a castaway,  
 I shared a kingdom with him, like a fool.  
 The ships you lost – I saved your friends from death – 375  
 Hot madness drives me. *Now* the fortune-teller  
 Apollo, Lycian lotteries, Jove dispatching  
 Dire orders earthward through the gods’ own mouthpiece –  
 As if such work and worry roiled their peace!  
 I will not cling to you or contradict you. 380  
 Ride windy waves to chase Italian kingdoms.  
 I hope that heaven’s conscience has the power  
 To trap you in the rocks and force reprisal  
 Down your throat, as you call my name. I’ll send –  
 I’ll *bring* black flames, I’ll hound you after cold death 385  
 Draws out my soul. Even among the dead  
 In hell, I’ll hear when you, at last, are paying.”  
 In torment, she broke off and turned away,  
 And ran out of his sight into the palace.  
 Frozen, he stood – prepared to say so much. 390

**367–Hyrcanian tigers:** Hyrcania was the region southeast of the Caspian Sea and regarded as extremely wild.

**372–Saturn’s son:** Jupiter. Dido here refers to the gods as parents of human-kind.

**377–Lycian lotteries:** A disparaging recasting of lines 345–46: see note.

**379–As if such work . . . peace!:** In the view of Epicureans, the gods existed,

but in a separate realm untroubled by human concerns.

**386–Even among the dead:** Anticipates Dido’s dying curse on Aeneas, in which she calls for an avenger (625–29), understood by the Roman audience to be Hannibal of Carthage, though he is never named in the poem, who waged war on Rome in the Second Punic War (218–201 BCE).



BOOK 4

She fainted and was lifted by her maids;  
The bed inside the marble walls received her.  
Now the right-thinking hero, though he wished  
To give some comfort for so great a grief,  
Obeyed the gods, returning to his ships, 395  
While he continued groaning, deeply lovesick.  
The Trojans fell to work and pulled the vessels  
Down from the beach in one long line. Tarr'd hulls  
Floated. The busy crews brought leafy oars  
And logs with bark still on them. 400  
That rush from everywhere in town resembled  
Ants plundering a giant heap of spelt  
To store at home in readiness for winter.  
Over the grass the thin black phalanx goes,  
Loaded with booty. Some are heaving huge grains 405  
Forward, and some are marshaling and prodding,  
So the entire pathway hums with work.  
What did you feel, then, Dido, when you saw?  
How did you sob when all that shoreline seethed?  
You gazed from your high tower: that whole sea 410  
Was an industrious uproar and commotion.  
Reprobate Love, wrencher of human hearts!  
She's driven now to tears, and now to beg  
And cravenly submit her pride to passion —  
Whatever leaves a hope of shunning death. 415  
“Anna, you see the whole shore in a tumult.  
They come from everywhere. Sails draw the breeze.  
Sailors in joy hang garlands on the sterns.  
As surely as I saw this great grief coming,  
So surely I'll endure. But do one service 420  
In pity, since the traitor was your friend —  
Yours only: you were trusted with his secrets,  
And you know how to reach him when he's weak.  
Go, sister, kneel to my proud enemy.

BOOK 4

I was no Greek at Aulis when they swore 425  
 To smash his race. I sent no fleet to Troy,  
 Nor made his father's ghost and ashes homeless.  
 How can he block his ears against my words?  
 Where is he running? As a last sad love gift,  
 He ought to wait for winds that make it easy. 430  
 I do not plead the marriage he betrayed.  
 Let the man go be king in charming Latium.  
 I just want time, a pause to heal my mind  
 And teach myself to mourn in my defeat.  
 I ask this final wretched favor, sister – 435  
 A loan – and I will give my death as interest.”  
 Weeping, she made this plea. Her grieving sister  
 Delivered it repeatedly. No tears  
 Could move him; no words found his sympathy.  
 His fate and Jupiter had barred his ears. 440  
 As in the Alps, the North Wind's blasts assault  
 A solid, tough, and venerable oak,  
 Competing to uproot it; under hard blows,  
 Creaking, it spreads its high leaves on the ground  
 But clasps the cliff with roots that go as far 445  
 Toward hell as its top reaches up to heaven:  
 Just as relentless were the words that battered  
 The hero. Though his generous heart suffered,  
 The tears fell useless. His resolve endured.  
 Appalled now by her fate, poor Dido prayed 450  
 For death; she wished to see the sky no longer.  
 But there was more to drive her from the daylight:  
 Her gifts on incense-burning altars rotted,

**425-26-Greek at Aulis when they swore to smash his race:** The Greek commanders met at Aulis before setting off to attack Troy; Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter Iphigeneia there.

**449-The tears fell useless:** Critics debate whose tears these are, Anna's or Aeneas'.

BOOK 4

Horrible to describe; wine turned to black  
 And filthy gore the second that she poured it. 455  
 No one was told. Her sister did not know it.  
 There stood inside her home a marble shrine  
 To her dead husband: there she worshipped him,  
 Spreading white fleece and hanging holy wreaths.  
 She thought she heard his echoing voice call there. 460  
 When the night's darkness covered all the earth,  
 She listened to a lone owl on a rooftop,  
 Whose song of death kept trailing into sobs.  
 Many grim warnings of the long-dead seers  
 Panicked her too. In dreams a fierce Aeneas 465  
 Chased her. She raved in fear or was abandoned,  
 Friendless, forever walking a long road,  
 Seeking her Tyrians in a lifeless land:  
 So Pentheus, in madness, saw a phalanx  
 Of Furies, two Thebes, and a double sun; 470  
 So, in a play, the son of Agamemnon  
 Runs from his mother's torches and black snakes,  
 While vengeful demons lurk outside the door.  
 Her conquered heart was full of grief and madness,  
 And she chose death. She had a time and method, 475  
 But hid her plan behind a face of peace  
 And hope, in speaking to her wretched sister.  
 "Anna, I've found a way – congratulate me! –  
 To bring him back or set me free from love.  
 Next to the setting sun and Ocean's boundary, 480  
 In Ethiopia, where giant Atlas

**469–70–Pentheus . . . a double sun:**  
 The Theban king Pentheus banned the  
 worship of Bacchus and was driven mad  
 by the god; this description of his hal-  
 lucinations is reworked from Euripides'  
*Bacchae*.

**471–73–the son of Agamemnon . . .**

**outside the door:** Orestes killed his  
 mother, Clytemnestra, in revenge for her  
 murder of his father, Agamemnon. He  
 was pursued by his mother's ghost and  
 by the Furies, snake-haired Underworld  
 entities who wield torches, as related in  
 Aeschylus' *Oresteia*.

BOOK 4

Turns the star-blazing heavens on his shoulder,  
Lived a Massylian priestess I've now found,  
Who guarded the Hesperides' shrine there,  
Nourished the snake, preserved the sacred branches, 485  
And strewed sleep-bringing poppy and moist honey.  
She says her spells soothe any minds she wishes  
Or send out grueling troubles into others,  
Stop rivers, turn stars backward in their courses,  
And call out ghosts at night. The earth will roar 490  
Beneath your feet, as ash trees rush down mountains.  
Sister, I swear it by your darling life  
And by the gods – I wouldn't *choose* such weapons.  
Build me a pyre in secret in the courtyard.  
The arms that evil man hung in our bedroom, 495  
The clothes he left me here, our bed of union  
(My death) – put it all there. I want the remnants  
Of the criminal destroyed. She's shown me how."  
Now she was silent, and her face went pale.  
But Anna didn't guess her sister's funeral 500  
Hid in these strange rites, or suspect such frenzy –  
What could be worse than when Sychaeus died?  
She did as she was told.

Deep in the house, beneath the sky, a pyre  
Now towered high, with logs of pine and oak. 505  
The queen festooned the walls with funeral garlands.  
Conscious of what must be, she put his picture  
On the bed, above his sword and cast-off clothes.

**483–Massylian:** Relevant here as tragic foreshadowing for Dido. In the Second Punic War the North African Massylian king Massinissa betrayed the Carthaginians to help the Romans, but the Romans refused to pardon his Carthaginian wife, resulting in her suicide.

**484–the Hesperides' shrine:** The Hesperides were the nymphs of the evening; their shrine, an orchard of golden apples, was believed to be located in northern Africa.

BOOK 4

Altars stood round. The loose-haired priestess called  
Countless gods – Erebus, Chaos, Hecate 510  
With three forms, or Diana with three faces.  
She sprinkled drops she said were from Avernus.  
Herbs appeared, cut with bronze knives at the full moon,  
Swollen and oozing coal-black milk of poison;  
A love charm too, torn from a new foal's forehead 515  
Before the mare could get it.  
Dido, with sacred meal in clean hands, robes loose,  
One sandal off, now stood at the high altar,  
Called gods, called fate-wise stars as witnesses.  
She prayed to anything in heaven that sees 520  
And punishes a broken bond of love.

Now it was night, and all earth's weary creatures  
Slept peacefully. The woods and untamed waters  
Were still. The stars were halfway through their journeys  
Above the tranquil fields. Cattle and bright birds 525  
Of the broad lakes and brambly wilderness  
All lay asleep beneath the noiseless sky,  
Their troubles soothed, their sufferings forgotten –  
But not the desolate Phoenician queen.  
Her heart and eyes shunned darkness and the ease 530  
Of sleep. Her torments thronged, her love ran wild,  
Surged back and forth on seething tides of madness.  
Her heart was churning with its endless questions:  
“What should I do? Go back where I'll be laughed at,  
And beg to marry a Numidian prince 535

**510–11–Erebus, Chaos . . . three faces:** Underworld deities; Hecate, the three-faced goddess of witchcraft, is associated with Diana.

**512–Avernus:** The lake outside the entrance to the Underworld.

**517–18–with sacred meal . . . one sandal off:** Loosened clothing and bare feet aid in the working of magic.

**528–**The line is thought to be spurious.

**535–Numidian:** African.

BOOK 4

After I turned those suitors all away?  
Follow the Trojan ships and do whatever  
The Trojans order? Surely they'll recall  
The help I gave and, for the past's sake, help me.  
Yet – were I willing – would they let the outcast 540  
On their proud ships? Poor fool, you're not familiar  
With treachery in Laomedon's descendants?  
Would I dog cheering sailors all alone  
And leave my people? Or take Tyrian ranks  
As escorts? Would those barely torn from Sidon 545  
Endure another sea voyage on my orders?  
No, die – you've earned it. Give the sword your sorrow.  
But you, my sister, weakened by my tears,  
Turned folly to disaster and defeat.  
I couldn't live a blameless life, unmarried, 550  
Like a wild thing, and spared this agony.  
I broke my promise to the dead Sychaeus.”  
Out of her heart these words of sorrow broke.  
On the high stern, Aeneas was asleep,  
In confidence that everything was ready, 555  
When in a dream he saw the god again:  
Mercury's face and coloring were there,  
His yellow hair and handsome young man's body.  
The image spoke the warning once again:  
“You sleep, child of the goddess, while disaster 560  
Teeters unseen, and dangers lurk around?  
Fool, can't you hear the opportune West Winds?  
The woman, who now knows her death is coming,  
Is tossed in heaving, scheming tides of rage.

**542–treachery in Laomedon's descendants:** The Trojan ancestor Laomedon swindled the gods Apollo and Neptune out of their payment after they had built the walls of Troy. See also 3.476n.

**545–Sidon:** A city in Phoenicia, Dido's homeland.

BOOK 4

Bolt from here headlong, while you have the chance, 565  
 Or you'll see storms of wreckage and the glare  
 Of brutal torches. Flames will fill the beach  
 If the dawn finds you loiter in this land.  
 Be quick and go! A woman is a changing,  
 A fitful thing." The form ebbed into black night. 570  
 The sudden vision of this chilling shade  
 Ripped him from sleep. He shook his comrades too.  
 "Wake – now! – and take your places on the benches.  
 Hurry! Unfurl the sails. Once more from heaven  
 A god's come, driving our escape: start cutting 575  
 The twisted ropes! We follow you, whichever  
 God you might be – again we hail your orders.  
 Be with us, guide us graciously, and bring us  
 Favoring stars." He drew his flashing sword  
 And struck the mooring line. A single passion 580  
 Seized all of them. They ran and snatched their gear  
 And quit the beach. The level blue was hidden  
 By skimming ships. The oars raised twists of foam.  
 Dawn, risen from her husband's saffron bed,  
 Was scattering her light across the world. 585  
 The sky grew white above the queen's high tower.  
 Below, the ships went forward in a row.  
 The port, the shore were bare, the sailors gone.  
 Repeatedly she struck her lovely breast  
 And tore her blond hair. "Jupiter! He's leaving? 590  
 A stranger comes – and goes – and mocks my power?  
 Why doesn't the whole city arm and follow  
 In ships torn madly from their moorings? Hurry!  
 Bring torches, pass out arms, ram the oars forward!

**569–70–A woman is a changing, a fitful thing:** This quotation is sometimes used misogynistically.

**584–her husband's saffron bed:** The

orange color of saffron makes it suitable for the bed of the dawn goddess, but its associations with marriage in Roman culture highlight Dido's abandonment.

BOOK 4

What? Where is this new madness taking me? 595  
 Poor thing. His crimes – you feel them only now?  
 You made him king. See what his word is worth!  
 They say he brought his household gods with him,  
 And hauled his frail old father on his shoulders.  
 I could have scattered the torn pieces of him 600  
 Across the waves. I could have killed his friends –  
 His son – and made a banquet for the father –  
 A struggle I might not have won – no matter:  
 I still would die. My torches should have swarmed  
 His camp and gangways till they made a pyre 605  
 For father, son, the whole race, and myself.  
 Come, Sun, the blazing lamp of all creation –  
 Juno, the witness and the go-between –  
 And Hecate, a name shrieked at the crossroads –  
 Avenging Furies – and my own death demons: 610  
 Turn heaven’s justice where it should be turned.  
 This is my prayer now: If that living curse  
 Must skim his way to harbor in that country,  
 If Jove and fate require this to happen,  
 Then let a bold and warlike people drive him 615  
 Out of his realm and tear his Iulus from him.  
 Make him go beg for help and see the death  
 Of blameless friends. Degrading pacts won’t bring  
 The happy life he hoped for in his kingdom.  
 He’ll fall and lie unburied in the sand. 620

**600–601–scattered the torn pieces of him across the waves:** In imitation of Medea, who scattered pieces of her brother to slow down her father as he pursued her.

**602–made a banquet for the father:** In imitation of Atreus who took revenge on his brother Thyestes by serving his children to him in a banquet.

**615–29–Then let a bold and warlike people drive him . . . children:** This is Dido’s infamous curse, which anticipates Hannibal.

**617–go beg for help:** Aeneas begs for assistance from the Greek king Evander in Italy (book 8).



BOOK 4

And now, my last plea, gushing with my blood:  
Tyrians, hound with hatred for all time  
The race he founds. My ashes call from you  
This service. Let there be no pacts of friendship.  
Out of my grave let an avenger rise 625  
To visit fire and sword on Trojan settlers –  
Now – someday – when the power is there to strike.  
Our shores will clash, weapons and seas collide.  
My curse is war for Trojans and their children.”  
She finished. Now her thoughts went everywhere, 630  
Seeking the fastest way to leave the light.  
She told the old nurse of Sychaeus, Barce  
(Her own had died back in the fatherland),  
“Darling, please bring my sister Anna – hurry!  
Have her splash river water on her body 635  
And bring the beasts and other offerings.  
Cover your own brow with a reverent fillet.  
I’ll now round out the ritual I started  
For Jove below the earth, to end my pain,  
And light the pyre that holds the Trojan’s life.” 640  
Quickly the fond old woman hobbled off.  
Now Dido’s own grim plans had made her frantic.  
Her red eyes darted, and her cheeks were blotched  
And shook – but she grew pale in facing death.  
Frenzied, she reached the center of the house, 645  
Climbed up the pyre and drew the Trojan sword –  
A gift she’d begged, not meaning it for this.  
Here she surveyed the bed she knew so well,  
The Trojan clothes. In tearful contemplation  
She lay a little while, and spoke these last words: 650  
“Sweet leavings – while divine fate kept you sweet –  
Receive my breath and free me from this pain.  
I lived, I ran the race that fate allotted.  
I’ll send the Underworld a noble ghost.  
I saw the walls of my great city standing, 655

BOOK 4

Avenged my husband, made my brother pay.  
A happy – no, a more than happy life,  
If Trojan ships had never touched these shores.”  
She kissed the bed. “I die without revenge –  
But let me die. I like this path to darkness. 660  
Let the cruel Trojan’s eyes take in these flames.  
The omen of my death will go with him.”  
Her maids now saw her falling on her sword,  
Still speaking, saw her blood foam down the blade  
And fleck her hands. A shout rose to the rooftop, 665  
And through the shaken city Rumor raged.  
Long-drawn-out shrieks of grief and women’s keening  
Brimmed from the buildings. Anguish filled the sky,  
As if invading troops brought Carthage down –  
Or ancient Tyre were sacked – and flames were scaling 670  
The rooftops of the houses and the temples.  
Her sister heard and ran to her in panic,  
Clawing her cheeks, bruising her breast with blows.  
Plunging straight through the crowds, she called that doomed  
name.  
“This was your purpose, sister – to deceive me? 675  
The pyre, the flames, the altars bring me this?  
How could you leave me like a cast-off thing  
And go alone, and not take me along?  
One sword, one hour, one agony for both!  
I piled the wood, I called our fathers’ gods 680  
To let you lie alone here, heartless monster?  
You killed yourself and me, your city’s people,  
And the Phoenician lords. Come, give me water  
To wash these wounds – and if a last breath hovers,  
My mouth will take it.” She had climbed the pyre, 685  
And held her sister now, that fading life,

**658–If Trojan ships had never touched these shores:** Vergil reworks Medea’s wish about the Argonauts in Ennius’ play *Medea*.

BOOK 4

And moaned and mopped the black blood with her clothes.  
Dido now strained to lift her heavy eyes  
But failed. Around the sword, her breast's wound hissed.  
Three times she rose a little, on her elbow, 690  
Collapsed each time, and with her wandering vision  
Searched for the bright high sky and sighed to find it.  
Queen Juno cut her torture short, in pity,  
Dispatching Iris earthward from Olympus  
To free the struggling spirit from its bonds. 695  
There was no fate or justice in her death.  
Her madness brought a wretched early end,  
Proserpina had cut no lock of blond hair  
To dedicate this life to Stygian Orcus,  
So dewy Iris swooped on saffron wings, 700  
Trailing a thousand sun-reflecting colors,  
And floated near her head. "I am to take  
This gift to Dis and free you from your body."  
Her right hand made the stroke. All living heat  
Vanished, and life dissolved into the wind. 705

**694–Iris:** Goddess of the rainbow, a messenger of the gods. of the Underworld, snips a lock of hair from the dying to offer to Pluto (Orcus);

**698–99–Proserpina had cut no lock . . . to Stygian Orcus:** Proserpina, queen as Dido's death is unexpected, Iris must snip it instead.

## BOOK 5

Aeneas staunchly voyaged out with his fleet,  
Cutting the waves the driving North Wind darkened.  
He saw behind him poor Elissa's fire,  
A huge glow in the fort – but what had caused it  
The Trojans couldn't tell. Yet what they knew 5  
Of woman's rage from ruined love's hard grief  
Gave them a grim foreboding in their hearts.  
They sailed the open water; no land met them,  
Yet everywhere were sea and sky alone.  
But then a purple-black light-stifling storm 10  
Came swooping down. Night bristled on the water.  
On the high stern, the pilot Palinurus  
Himself cried, "These huge thunderheads that wrap  
The sky – what are you doing, Father Neptune?  
Row hard and pull the tackle in," he ordered. 15  
He sloped the sails against the wind and added,  
"No hope for Italy in such foul weather,  
Not even if Jove promised, brave Aeneas.  
The black west sends a rising, roaring wind  
Into our side. Air thickens into cloud. 20  
We haven't got the strength to fight against it.  
Fortune has triumphed, and we must submit,  
Turning our course her way. We near the havens  
Of Sicily and your loyal brother Eryx,  
If I recall the stars I traced in coming." 25

**24–Eryx:** Half-brother of Aeneas by Venus, after whom a city and mountain in Sicily are named.

BOOK 5

Steadfast Aeneas answered, "I have watched you  
Struggling against insistent winds and losing.  
Shift the sails, turn. There's no land I prefer  
To send these tired ships to than the one  
That keeps for me Dardanian Acestes 30  
And holds my father's bones in its embrace."  
They sought the port. Favoring West Winds hurried  
The fleet's stretched sails across the deep. They turned  
At last toward welcome and familiar beaches.  
Startled to see them from a far-off peak, 35  
Acestes rushed to greet the kindred ships.  
Child of a Trojan mother and the river  
Crinisus, he now wore rough Libyan bearskin  
And carried sharp spears. Mindful of his lineage,  
He happily received his weary friends 40  
As guests again, in rustic luxury.

The stars were routed by the brightening dawn.  
From the long beach Aeneas called his comrades  
Together and addressed them from a raised mound:  
"Descendants of high gods, heroic Trojans, 45  
One circling year is full, its months completed,  
From when we laid my honored father's bones  
In the ground and consecrated his sad altar.  
This seems to be the bitter day the gods  
Decreed that I commemorate forever. 50  
If I were exiled in Gaetulian Syrtes,  
Or caught by storms and captive in Mycenae,

**30-Dardanian Acestes:** A Trojan leader who has settled in Sicily; he is called Dardanian after Dardanus, the Italian ancestor of the Trojans.

**46-One circling year is full:** A year has passed since the end of book 3, when the Trojans buried Anchises on this shore.

**51-Gaetulian Syrtes:** Dangerous sandbanks near Carthage in North Africa, where the Gaetuli lived.

**52-Mycenae:** A major Greek city, the home of Agamemnon.

BOOK 5

Still I would carry out these solemn rites  
And pile the altar with the proper gifts.  
But here we are now, at a friendly port, 55  
And in the bones' and ashes' very presence.  
It must have been the gods' will that achieved this.  
So let us all be glad in this observance,  
Ask for good winds, and pray he'll grant this rite  
Each year in our new city, in his own shrine. 60  
Acestes, who was born at Troy, will give you  
Two oxen for each ship. Invite our home gods,  
Our country's, and our host's to share the feast.  
But when the ninth dawn brings the nurturing day  
To mortals, and its beams light up earth's circle, 65  
I'll hold a race for speedy Trojan ships.  
Strong runners, too, and hardy, confident  
Masters of javelins and buoyant arrows,  
Any bold boxers with their rawhide thongs  
Can step up. There are prizes for the winners. 70  
Place garlands on your heads, in holy silence."  
He hid his forehead in his mother's myrtle.  
Helymus did the same, and old Acestes,  
And also young Ascanius and his peers.  
With a great crowd of soldiers for an escort, 75  
Aeneas left the conclave for the grave mound.  
There on the ground he poured two ritual cups  
Each of unmixed wine, fresh milk, holy blood,  
And scattered purple flowers. "Hallowed father,  
I call unceasingly to your poor spirit, 80

**59–this rite:** Aeneas is credited with founding the Roman festival of *Parentalia*, which honors family ancestors.

**72–his mother's myrtle:** Myrtle is sacred to Venus.

**73–Helymus:** Son of Anchises, half-brother of Aeneas.

BOOK 5

Your ghost: the body that I saved is ashes.  
I couldn't seek with you our fated lands  
In Italy, and a river called the Tiber."  
Then from beneath that holy site there slipped  
A giant snake, who drew his seven coils 85  
Gently around the barrow and the altar.  
His back was blazoned blue, and gold-flecked scales  
Kindled and glowed, as when a rainbow catches  
The sun, and myriad colors strike the clouds.  
Aeneas was amazed. It stretched its great length 90  
Among the bowls and polished cups. It tasted  
The dishes and slid back beneath the tomb  
Harmlessly from the banquet on the altar.  
The son resumed the rites with greater fervor.  
Was this the place's spirit? Or his father's 95  
Attendant? Now he sacrificed two sheep,  
Two sows, and two black bullocks, poured out wine,  
And called upon the soul of great Anchises,  
The ghost that Acheron had now released.  
With a good will each comrade brought the gifts 100  
That he could spare, killed bulls, and heaped the altar.  
Others lined cauldrons up and then stretched out  
On the grass to roast the spitted meat on coals.

The long-awaited ninth day came. The horses  
Of Phaethon brought dawn in pleasant weather. 105  
The fame of glorious Acestes drew  
The eager neighboring tribes. They filled the shore  
To see Aeneas' men — or challenge them.

**82–83—our fated lands in Italy, and a river called the Tiber:** Aeneas is only vaguely aware of his destination.

**99—Acheron:** A river in the Underworld.

**105—Phaethon:** Here the sun, literally “shining one.”

BOOK 5

At the start, the center of the field displayed  
 The prizes for the winners: sacred tripods, 110  
 Garlands, palm branches, clothing dyed with purple,  
 Along with massive bars of gold and silver.  
 From a mound, a trumpet's blare began the games.  
 For the first contest, four ships, closely matched,  
 With heavy oars were chosen from the fleet. 115  
 Mnestheus took the *Whale*, with its keen rowers  
 (In Italy, the Memmian clan is his),  
 And Gyas the *Chimera's* hulking mass,  
 A town's size, rearing triple banks of oars  
 And driven forward by the youth of Troy. 120  
 Sergestus, father of the Sergian house,  
 Rode the vast *Centaur*; sky-blue *Scylla* carried  
 Cloanthus: the Cluentii are his.  
 In open sea, far from the foaming shore,  
 A rock lies, sometimes sunk in swollen waves 125  
 When the northeastern storms conceal the stars.  
 Now it rose quiet from the tranquil water,  
 Its flat top welcome to the sunning gulls.  
 Father Aeneas set a leafy oak branch  
 Out there to show the sailors where to turn 130  
 And bend their lengthy courses back again.  
 They drew for starting places, and the captains  
 Stood on the sterns in glowing gold and purple.  
 The young men in the crews wore poplar garlands.  
 Their shoulders glistened with the oil rubbed on. 135  
 They sat and took a tight grip on their oars,

**109–10—the center of the field displayed the prizes for the winners:** The games for Anchises are modeled on the funeral games for Patroclus in *Iliad* 23.

**116–23—Mnestheus . . . Cluentii:** The key racers are ancestors of powerful Roman families of Vergil's time.

**118—*Chimera*:** Named for the fire-breathing monster killed by the hero Belerophon.

**129—Father Aeneas:** Aeneas takes on the leadership role more fully after his father's death.



BOOK 5

Keen for the signal; throbbing trepidation,  
Hot greed for praise clutched at their leaping hearts.  
The trumpet blared, and instantly they sprang  
Over the line. Their shouting struck the sky. 140  
Their arms drew back, they whipped the sea to foam.  
The ships cut trenches in a row. The surface  
Split with the force of oars and trident beaks.  
Chariots never with such plunging speed  
Poured from the gate and tore along the course, 145  
Their drivers shaking free the waving reins  
And bending forward to apply the whip.  
Then the whole forest roared with the applause  
Of partisans. The deep-set bay sent voices  
Rolling, the hills recoiled from pounding shouts. 150  
First Gyas slipped ahead across the waves,  
Beyond the crowded clatter. Then Cloanthus  
Chased him, although the heavy pine hull hampered  
His better crew. The *Centaur* and the *Whale*,  
An equal space behind, fought for third place. 155  
Now the *Whale* has it, now the giant *Centaur*  
Passes him, now the two prows shoot in tandem,  
While long salt furrows trail behind the hulls.  
But now they neared the rock, their turning post.  
Gyas, the halfway victor, kept the lead. 160  
He shouted to Menoetes at the helm:  
“Why are you headed so far right? Turn this way!  
Keep to the shore! Your oars should graze the crags.  
The rest can sail the sea.” But still Menoetes,  
Who dreaded hidden rocks, swerved toward the deep. 165  
“Where are you going? Toward the rocks, I said!”  
Yelled Gyas. Looking back, he saw Cloanthus  
Gaining – and circling closer to the shore,  
Between his own ship and the sounding cliffs.  
He scraped his way through, quickly passed the leader – 170  
Beyond the turning post he reached safe waters.

BOOK 5

Fury flamed in the other captain's young bones.  
Tears on his cheeks, forgetting dignity  
And safety, he threw circumspect Menoetes  
Out of the lofty stern into the sea. 175  
He took the helm himself now, as the pilot,  
Urged on the men and swung the rudder shoreward.  
Menoetes (in a while) escaped the sea floor,  
Old as he was and hampered by his wet clothes.  
He climbed the rock and settled on a dry ledge. 180  
Trojans had laughed to see him fall and swim,  
And now they laughed to see him spewing brine.  
Sergestus and Mnestheus, who were last,  
Were thrilled—they might pass Gyas as he lingered.  
Sergestus pulled ahead—but it was only 185  
By half a length—as he approached the rock.  
Alongside skimmed the *Whale's* competing prow.  
Mnestheus paced amidships, rallying  
His crew: "Heave! Throw your whole strength into it!  
Comrades of Hector, allies whom I chose 190  
In Troy's last crisis: show the strength and courage  
That served you at the sandbanks of the Syrtes,  
Ionian seas, and savage Malean waves.  
I don't demand the glory of first place  
(And yet—no, Neptune, you must choose the winner). 195  
But last! Humiliation! That at least  
We must avoid." They made a flat-out effort.  
The bronze-beaked ship was trembling with the blows.  
The surface slipped away, the panting shook  
Arms, legs, and dry mouths. Sweat flowed down in streams. 200  
It was mere chance that brought the men their triumph.

**193—Malean waves:** Cape Maleas, on the southeastern coast of the Peloponnese, is treacherous for shipping.

BOOK 5

Sergestus in his fervor drove his prow  
Close to the rock—an inside, risky passage—  
And caught disastrously on jutting outcrops.  
His oars struck those rough edges with a crunch. 205  
The prow was rammed and hung above the water.  
With shouts, the crew sprang up and steadied her,  
And took out pointed rods and poles made stiffer  
With iron to fish back their broken oars.  
Mnestheus, even keener in his good luck, 210  
With a swift sweep of oars, invoking winds,  
Sped to the shore across the open water,  
Like a dove startled from her darling nestlings  
Hidden in crannies of a soft-stone cave  
That is her home. She bursts out with a clatter 215  
Into the countryside, then coasts through air  
That’s calm and clear, and stills her rapid wings.  
Like her the *Whale* flew, on its own momentum,  
And sliced the surface at the course’s end,  
Leaving Sergestus struggling on a sharp rock 220  
At first, then in the shallows as he yelled  
For help and learned to make his way with split oars.  
Still, he reached Gyas and the huge *Chimera*;  
Robbed of its pilot, this one fell behind.  
Only Cloanthus needed overtaking. 225  
Mnestheus, with all his power, chased him.  
The noise swelled on the shore, everyone clamored  
For the ship in second place. The high air echoed.  
The leader’s crew would have been mortified  
To lose their victory, glory worth their lives! 230  
The others’ strength was growing as they gained:  
Now neck and neck, they might have won together,  
Had not Cloanthus, arms held toward the sea,  
Poured out this prayer and made the gods this promise:  
“Hear, ocean’s rulers, on whose plain I move: 235

BOOK 5

To pay my vow as victor on the shore,  
 I'll set a snow-white bull before your altar,  
 And give your salt waves flowing wine and entrails."  
 In the deep current all the Nereids heard,  
 All Phorcus' troupe, and virgin Panoepa. 240  
 The father, God of Ports, pushed with his huge hand;  
 The ship shot past the speed of wind or arrows  
 And bolted to the deep protecting harbor.  
 Anchises' son then duly told the herald  
 To call the people and announce Cloanthus 245  
 The winner. A fresh bay wreath hid his temples.  
 Aeneas let each crew divide the prizes:  
 Three heifers, wine, a hundredweight of silver.  
 Particular awards were for the captains:  
 The winner got a gold cloak, with two waves 250  
 Of Meliboean purple on its border,  
 Ganymede woven in, on leafy Ida,  
 A fierce-speared runner-down of speedy stags,  
 Panting like life—but now caught up on high  
 In the hooked claws of Jove's swift armor-bearer. 255  
 His aged minders reached up helplessly  
 To the stars, and dogs bayed, menacing the air.  
 The man whose skill had gained him second place  
 Got a gold breastplate, triple-meshed and polished;  
 Aeneas's spoil from Demoleos beaten 260

**239–41–Nereids . . . Phorcus . . . Panoepa . . . God of Ports:** Oceanic deities. Phorcus is an old man of the sea. Panoepa is a Nereid, or sea nymph. Portunus was the God of Ports.

**246–bay wreath:** A symbol of victory in athletic and artistic competition; in Rome, it was awarded to generals in military parades called triumphs.

**251–Meliboean purple:** A rich red-

purple. The dye was extracted from sea snails.

**252–Ganymede . . . Ida:** The Trojan prince Ganymede was abducted from Mount Ida near Troy by Jupiter: see 1.28n.

**255–hooked claws:** Of the eagle, Jupiter's bird.

**260–Demoleos:** A Greek warrior at Troy, killed on the battlefield there.

BOOK 5

Near rushing Simoïs under towering Troy.  
The battle refuge graced another man now –  
Two servants, Sagaris and Phegeus,  
Staggered beneath its layered weight. Demoleos  
Had worn it running after Trojan stragglers. 265  
The third prize was a pair of matched bronze caldrons,  
And solid silver cups, rugged with carvings.  
And while the victors swaggered in the thrill  
Of rich rewards, red ribbons on their heads,  
Sergestus reached the shore. He'd worked his hull free 270  
From the cruel rock, lost his oars, and bashed a row  
Of oarlocks useless. *He* won only laughter.  
His ship was like a snake caught on the road's edge,  
Cut across by a bronze wheel or left mangled  
And half-dead by a traveler's heavy stone. 275  
It tries to whip away, but this is hopeless –  
The hissing, arching head and burning eyes  
Are held back by the crippled part that knots  
The struggling creature back upon itself.  
Like this the ship moved, with its ruined oars; 280  
And yet it reached the port with full-spread sails.  
Aeneas, happy that the crew and vessel  
Were saved, gave to Sergestus what he'd promised:  
A Cretan slave girl, Pholoë, nursing twins,  
And skillful at Minerva's weaving work. 285  
Righteous Aeneas, at this contest's end,  
Strode toward the grassy field that was surrounded  
By wooded hills, a natural stadium  
For a racetrack. Thousands trailed behind the hero.  
Seated amid the stands there on a platform, 290  
He offered prizes to entice the daring

**285–Minerva's weaving work:** Minerva is the patron of crafts, especially weaving.

BOOK 5

Of anyone considering the footrace.  
 Competitors converged – Trojans, Sicilians –  
 First Nisus and Euryalus;  
 Euryalus a handsome, blooming youth 295  
 Whom Nisus loved devotedly. Diores  
 Came next, a prince of Priam’s peerless bloodline;  
 Then Salius, an Acarnanian;  
 And Patron, an Arcadian Tegean;  
 In old Acestes’ cohort, Helymus 300  
 And Panopes, youths from Sicilian woodlands;  
 And many more, obscure, unknowable.  
 Aeneas, in the center of them, spoke:  
 “I know you’ll be delighted when you hear this:  
 No one will leave without a gift from me. 305  
 Two spearheads of bright iron, worked in Crete,  
 And a two-headed ax embossed in silver  
 Will honor everyone. But olive leaves  
 Of tawny green will crown the fastest three.  
 The winner gets a horse with handsome trappings, 310  
 The next an Amazonian quiver full  
 Of Thracian arrows, with a wide gold strap  
 Whose buckle is a solid polished gem.  
 This Argive helmet must content the third.”  
 The runners took their places. At the signal, 315  
 They sprang across the line and down the course,  
 Pouring like clouds. Now with the goal in sight,  
 Nisus flashed out ahead and took the lead  
 As swiftly as the wind or wings of thunder.  
 The next, but with a lengthy gap before him, 320

**294–Nisus and Euryalus:** A warrior couple modeled on Homeric and Platonic ideals. They will appear again at 9:174–449.

**311–12–Amazonian quiver full of Thracian arrows:** The Amazons were known for their skill at archery; Thracians were considered especially fierce and warlike.

BOOK 5

Was Salius; Euryalus came third,  
Some distance back.  
Helymus followed him, and right behind  
Diores sped – his foot brushed on a heel,  
His shoulder loomed. And had the track been longer 325  
He would have slipped ahead or tied for fourth.  
But as they came exhausted to the last stretch,  
Poor Nisus skidded on some slippery blood  
That had poured out and wet the grassy ground  
When, as it happened, steers were slaughtered there. 330  
Already thrilled with victory, the young man  
Couldn't secure his step, and staggered, fell  
Face-first in filthy dung and sacred blood.  
But with his dear Euryalus in mind,  
He lurched up from the muck – in Salius' way. 335  
A rapid somersault laid *him* on hard sand.  
Through his friend's help, Euryalus flashed by  
And flew in first, with roaring crowds to greet him.  
Helymus came in next, Diores third.  
Through the whole vast arena, where the elders 340  
Watched from the front, the yells of Salius rang,  
Demanding the award a foul had stolen.  
The crowd, though, backed Euryalus' shy tears –  
And the great beauty of his budding manhood.  
Diores helped him with his own loud protests: 345  
He'd won the third prize, but it would be void  
If Salius was now to have the first.  
Father Aeneas answered: "All your prizes  
Are safe, boys: nobody will change the order.  
But I can soothe a friend who's been unlucky." 350  
To Salius he gave a lion's pelt  
From Libya: huge, heavy-maned, and gold-clawed.  
But Nisus said, "If that's what losers get,  
And accidents win pity, what's for me?  
I deserved first prize, and I would have won it, 355

BOOK 5

But for the same bad luck that Salius had.”  
 He gestured to the wet dung on his face  
 And body. The good father of the Trojans  
 Laughed and had fetched a shield that Didymaon  
 Had made – Greek spoil from Neptune’s holy door – 360  
 A splendid gift for this outstanding youth.  
 When all of this was done, Aeneas said:  
 “Whoever has staunch ready manhood in him,  
 Let him step up and bind and raise his fists.”  
 He set out two more prizes: for the winner, 365  
 A bull with gilded horns and hanging ribbons;  
 A sword and splendid helmet, loser’s solace.  
 Unhesitating, Dares thrust his jaw out  
 And rose in all his strength. The whole crowd murmured.  
 He alone had been used to fighting Paris; 370  
 He’d crushed the champion, huge Butes (boasting  
 Lineage from Bebrycian Amycus)  
 And laid him out to die on tawny sand  
 Beside the tomb where peerless Hector rested.  
 Such a man reared his towering head to fight, 375  
 Showed his wide shoulders, shot out first one arm  
 And then the other, hammering the air.  
 The second boxer? Out of that whole crowd,  
 No one dared wrap his hands in thongs to face him.  
 Thinking they were conceding him the prize, 380  
 He took a happy stand below Aeneas.  
 His left hand gripped the bull’s horn, and he spoke:  
 “So, goddess’ son, if no one’s brave enough,  
 How long exactly should I stand here waiting?  
 Tell me to take my prize.” All of the Trojans 385

359–Didymaon: Not otherwise known.

366–ribbons: See 2.133n.

372–Lineage from Bebrycian Amycus: Amycus, king of the savage Bebryces, forced strangers to box with him for their lives.



BOOK 5

Roared for the man to have the promised trophy.  
 Aceses was disgruntled with Entellus,  
 Who sat beside him on a bench of green turf:  
 “You were the strongest – once. What use is that?  
 You’ll let this splendid prize be snatched away 390  
 Without a fight? What good is godlike Eryx  
 You claim as teacher? What about your fame  
 Throughout this land, the prizes on your walls?”  
 Entellus shot back: “It’s not fear defeating  
 My lust for fame, but slow and freezing blood 395  
 Of old age, and my cold depleted strength.  
 If I were in my prime still, like that fellow –  
 So insolent, full of himself, cocksure –  
 I’d take my place, but not to win a fine bull.  
 Prizes don’t draw me.” Into the arena 400  
 He threw a pair of hugely heavy gauntlets  
 Whose hard hide savage Eryx used to wrap  
 Around his hands for every boxing battle.  
 The crowd gaped: riveted with lead and iron  
 To stiffen them were seven massive bulls’ hides. 405  
 Dares backed well away in stupefaction;  
 Anchises’ brave son turned them over, testing  
 The weight of those immense loops in his hands.  
 The veteran boxer spoke then, from his heart:  
 “What if we saw what Hercules himself wore 410  
 In the tough contest on this very beach?  
 Your brother Eryx had these on his hands once  
 (Look at the caked brains, and the spattered blood)  
 And faced that hero, and I used to wear them

**387–Entellus:** Not otherwise known; there was a city in Sicily called Entella.

**401–5–hugely heavy gauntlets . . . seven massive bulls’ hides:** Roman boxers protected their hands by wearing the

leather *caestus*, which extended from the knuckles up the forearm.

**410–Hercules:** Aeneas’ half-brother Eryx was killed by Hercules in a wrestling match.

BOOK 5

In my strong-blooded years, when jealous old age 415  
Had not yet sowed the white hairs on my temples.  
If Dares, though, demurs, and good Aeneas  
Chooses, and if Acestes my supporter  
Agrees, we'll make it fair and take away  
Eryx' straps and your Trojan ones – don't worry." 420  
He dropped his cloak of double thickness, stripping  
The body with the massive joints, bones, arms,  
And took his hulking stand in the arena.  
Anchises' son, the father, brought out matched thongs  
And bound the hands of both with equal weapons. 425  
They didn't pause but faced off, on their toes,  
Fearless, alert, their hands up in the air.  
Their heads were reared far back and out of range.  
Fists tangled, sparred, and sought an opening.  
The one was younger, quicker on his feet, 430  
The other stronger, larger, but his knees  
Faltered, and weary panting shook his bulk.  
Often they missed in swinging at each other,  
But often loudly thumped against a chest  
Or curved-in side; fists darted around temples 435  
And ears, jaws crackled under stony blows.  
Entellus' feet were rooted in position –  
But sharp eyes kept his body swaying, dodging.  
Dares, as if he stormed a city's bulwarks  
Or kept a mountain fortress under siege, 440  
Scanned thoroughly and shrewdly for a gap,  
And drove assaults from everywhere – for nothing.  
Entellus sprang and thrust his right arm up,  
Then down. His quick opponent saw it falling,  
Instantly slipped aside, and wasn't there. 445  
Entellus spilled his strength into the air.  
The force of his own vast weight sent him crashing  
Like a hollow pine tree torn up at the roots

BOOK 5

On Erymanthus or the heights of Ida.  
Trojans, Sicilians, on their feet, were yelling 450  
Clear to the sky. Acestes, though, his agemate  
And friend, ran up and lifted him in pity.  
But the fall didn't slow or cow the hero,  
Who came back fiercer, stronger in his anger  
And searing shame, self-conscious in his courage. 455  
Over the whole arena he pitched Dares.  
He battered with his right hand, then his left,  
Not letting up. Like clouds that pound the rooftops  
With hail, the hero pummeled his opponent  
Ceaselessly with both fists and sent him spinning. 460  
Father Aeneas now was moved to check  
The savage anger of Entellus, ending  
The fight – a rescue for exhausted Dares –  
And did it with these sympathetic words:  
“Poor friend, where has your mind gone? Don't you sense 465  
Some strength here more than his? Gods are against you:  
Relent.” He caused the boxers to be parted.  
Staunch comrades led the loser to the ships.  
His head lolled, and he dragged his crippled knees.  
He spat out broken teeth and clotted blood. 470  
Others were called to claim his sword and helmet,  
Leaving the bull and garland for Entellus.  
The victor, full of heady pride, proclaimed:  
“Son of the goddess, and you other Trojans:  
Think of the strength I had when I was young – 475  
Think of the death from which you just saved Dares.”  
Before the young bull waiting as a prize  
The boxer stood and faced him. Looming high

**449–Erymanthus:** A mountain in  
Arcadia, famous for its monstrous wild  
boar, which Hercules slew.

BOOK 5

He aimed a hard-bound hand between the horns,  
Shattered the creature's skull, and splashed its brains out. 480  
Shaking in death, it crumpled and collapsed,  
And over it he spoke these fervent words:  
"Eryx, I give to you this better soul  
Than Dares' – and unbind my hands forever."

Soon after this, Aeneas sought contestants 485  
For soaring archery and set out prizes.  
His brawny hands took from Serestus' ship  
The mast and planted it and tied a dove –  
The target – to a rope looped through the top.  
In a bronze helmet rivals tossed their lots. 490  
Hippocoön, the son of Hyrtacus,  
Was chosen, to warm cheers, to take the first turn.  
Next was Mnestheus, who'd won the ship race  
And his bright olive crown; Eurytion  
Was third – your brother, famous Pandarus, 495  
Who broke the truce on orders from a god  
And launched a weapon at the warrior Greeks.  
Acestes' was the last lot in the helmet –  
He dared to try the work of younger men.  
Now each one took an arrow from his quiver 500  
And bent his curving bow with burly arms.  
An arrow first soared off the twanging string  
Of Hyrtacus' son, sliced the air in two,  
And hit the wooden mast straight on and lodged.  
The pole shook, and the terrified dove flapped, 505  
And the whole valley echoed with applause.  
Now fierce Mnestheus stood and drew his weapon  
And aimed high, straining both his bow and eyes.

**495–Pandarus:** A Trojan archer who broke the ceasefire during the duel between Menelaus and Paris in *Iliad* 4.

BOOK 5

Too bad! The steel tip failed to reach the bird,  
But broke the knotted linen string that tethered 510  
The creature by the foot atop the mast.  
She sped off toward the storm clouds in the south.  
Eurytion had drawn his bow already;  
He quickly aimed, while praying to his brother.  
With joy and clapping wings she'd reached the free sky 515  
Beneath the clouded darkness, when he shot her.  
She fell and left her life among the stars,  
But brought to earth again the piercing arrow.  
Acestes' chance was gone – he still let fly  
An arrow to the upper air, which showed 520  
His bow-resounding skill, though he was old.  
An omen flashed – its meaning the great outcome  
Proved in the time to come, when fearsome prophets  
Chanted of signs that lagged in their fulfillment.  
The arrow soared in flame through flowing clouds, 525  
Burning a path that faded out and tattered  
In breezes: thus a star that's been dislodged  
Crosses the sky and trails its hair behind it.  
Both Trojans and Sicilians were astonished  
And begged the gods to keep them safe. Aeneas 530  
The great revered the omen and embraced  
Happy Acestes, heaped on gifts, and spoke:  
“Accept these, Father, since Olympus' great king  
Has marked you out for some supreme distinction.  
This embossed bowl, a precious gift from Cisseus, 535  
Keepsake and token of a loving friendship,  
Belonged to my own father, old Anchises.”

**514–his brother:** Pandarus: see 5.495n.

**535–Cisseus:** Father of Hecuba, the wife of Priam.

**522–An omen flashed:** The omen may portend the greatness of Acestes and his city Segesta.

BOOK 5

He ringed Acestes' head with verdant laurel  
And named him winner over all the others.  
Eurytion – fine boy – did not resent it, 540  
Though he'd brought down the bird. The next gifts went  
To the rope's breaker; then the one whose winging  
Arrow had pierced the mast got his reward.

Father Aeneas didn't end the games  
Till he had called Epytides, dear tutor 545  
Of little Iulus. To this trusty man  
He whispered, "Go and tell Ascanius,  
If he's drawn up the squad of boys on horses,  
To lead it out, for his grandfather's sake,  
And put his armed maneuvers on display." 550  
Aeneas had the field, in its long circuit,  
Cleared – people had been pouring onto it.  
Before their fathers' eyes, the boys filed in,  
Gleaming on bridled horses. Both Sicilians  
And Trojans buzzed approval at their coming. 555  
A ritual trimmed chaplet bound each boy's head;  
Each had a pair of steel-tipped cornel spears;  
Some had smooth quivers. From their necks hung circles  
Of pliant gold that twisted at their throats.  
Three troops of riders, each one with its leader, 560  
Wove their way; twelve boys in each double file  
Followed their captains in a neat division.  
One young glad line was led by little Priam,  
Polites' son (bright bearer of a great name  
One father back), who'd sire new Italians. 565  
His Thracian horse was dappled, with white pasterns;  
The forehead that it reared was splashed with white.  
Iulus' beloved agemate led the next squad,

545–Epytides: Periphas, son of Epytus, from Homer, *Iliad* 17.

551–the field, in its long circuit: It resembles the Circus Maximus in Rome.

BOOK 5

Atys, the Latin Atii clan's forebear;  
 Iulus, best-looking of the boys, came last. 570  
 His mount was Tyrian; shining Dido gave it  
 To be his own, for loving memory's sake.  
 The other boys were on Sicilian horses,  
 The gifts of old Acestes.  
 The Trojans cheered their shy sons and were happy 575  
 To see ancestral faces replicated.  
 In joy they passed the crowd, their families watching.  
 The line paused. From the side, Epytides  
 Signaled, first with a shout and then a whip crack.  
 Now the three squads, each in two columns, wheeled 580  
 Apart to right and left. Another signal:  
 They turned back, aiming weapons at each other.  
 Then they made other moves and countermoves,  
 Faced off at distances and overlapped  
 In rings, and acted out armed skirmishes. 585  
 They fled, their backs defenseless, turned their spears  
 For an attack, then rode together, peaceful.  
 Like high Crete's fabled labyrinth that wove  
 Its baffling paths within its blinding walls,  
 With countless tricks to keep its captives lost, 590  
 Confusing any signs that might have led them—  
 So was the Trojan sons' game as they wove  
 A running pattern, mock attacks and mock  
 Retreats, like dolphins playing in the waves  
 Cutting the Libyan or Carpathian straits. 595  
 When he was building Alba Longa's walls,  
 Ascanius revived the battle pageant

**569–Atii:** Augustus' mother, Atia, was a member of the Atian family, or Atii.

**595–Carpathian:** Of the island Carpathus, between Crete and Rhodes.

**588–Crete's fabled labyrinth:** The maze designed by the inventor Daedalus to imprison the Minotaur.

BOOK 5

And taught the ancient Latins to perform it,  
As he had done with fellow Trojan youngsters.  
The Albans passed it down. Rome in her glory 600  
Is heir to this ancestral ritual.  
The boys are “Troy” and their formation “Trojan.”  
With this, the honored father’s games concluded.

Now, in a fresh turn, Fortune changed allegiance.  
While all these sports were offered to the tomb, 605  
Juno the child of Saturn sent down Iris  
To the Trojan fleet, and sped the wind behind her,  
Plotting to satisfy her long-held rancor.  
Over the thousand colors of the rainbow  
The goddess swiftly skimmed, and no one saw her. 610  
Beyond the crowd, she passed along the shore  
And saw the fleet left empty in the port.  
The Trojan women stood and mourned Anchises  
On a lonely beach. They gazed out at the deep  
In tears, and all deplored how many seas 615  
Remained to cross – how it exhausted them!  
“A city! Not the sufferings of voyages!”  
Iris, skilled meddler, slipped among the mothers  
Of Troy, and she exchanged the face and clothing  
Of a goddess for the form of Beroë, 620  
The long-lived wife of Doryclus of Tmaros.  
Well known and nobly born, she’d been a mother.  
“Wretches,” cried Iris, “not dragged off to death  
By warring Greeks beneath your city’s walls!  
What doom does Fortune keep for our poor people? 625  
The seventh summer since Troy’s fall is passing.  
Driven from star to star across the seas,

**601–this ancestral ritual:** The “Troy game,” an equestrian display performed by Roman youths of noble birth, was re-  
vived by Julius Caesar and brought into regular practice by Augustus.



BOOK 5

The whole world's lands and wrecking rocks, we're wave-tossed  
On the great gulf. Italy retreats from us.  
Now our own Eryx' land, our host Acestes 630  
Must let us found a city of our own.  
Fatherland! Gods we saved from war for nothing!  
What walls will have Troy's name? Where will I see  
A Simois and Xanthus, Hector's rivers?  
So come, let's burn these ships that brought such sorrow. 635  
In a dream, I saw the prophetess Cassandra;  
She gave me burning torches: 'Find your Troy here –  
This is your home.' Now is the time to act –  
Quickly, on such great signs. Here are four altars  
Of Neptune. He will give us fire and courage." 640  
She was the first to seize destroying flames.  
She raised a torch and waved it. Then she strained  
And threw it as the Trojan women watched  
In horror. But the oldest of them, Pyrgo,  
The nurse of Priam's many children, shouted, 645  
"Mothers, this isn't Rhoetean Beroë,  
Doryclus' wife! Look at the godly splendor  
Shown in her burning eyes, her haughtiness,  
Her face, the way her voice sounds, and her gait.  
And I myself have just left Beroë 650  
Sick, and upset that she alone was missing  
Her portion in these honors for Anchises."  
So she spoke.  
The matrons didn't know what they should do.  
They glowered at the boats, in bitter yearning 655  
To stay, yet thinking of the fated kingdom.  
But as she fled on even wings, the goddess  
Cut a great rainbow underneath the clouds.

**632–Gods:** The Penates. See 1.379n.

**636–the prophetess Cassandra:** see  
2.346, 3.183–87.

BOOK 5

This apparition made the women shriek,  
Frenzied. Some pillaged central hearths of buildings, 660  
While others snatched up kindling, leaves – then torches  
From altars. Over painted sterns and benches  
And oars the god of fire ran amok.  
Eumelus brought the news to the arena  
Next to Anchises' tomb; but on their own there, 665  
Men saw a cloud of ashes surging skyward.  
Ascanius capered at his squadron's head –  
But now his panting trainers couldn't catch him:  
He'd turned and galloped to the camp in riot.  
"What are you doing? Have you lost your minds? 670  
Poor Trojan women! It's no hostile Greek camp  
You're burning, but your future. This is me,  
Your own Ascanius!" At their feet he dashed  
The helmet worn just now in that staged battle.  
Aeneas rushed in, with a host of Trojans. 675  
The women scattered, panicked, on the shore,  
Then skulked away to trees and rocky hollows.  
Shame drove them to the darkness; they awoke  
To know their own and free their hearts from Juno.  
And yet their raging fire didn't slacken. 680  
The caulking was alive beneath the wet wood,  
Vomiting steady waves of smoke. Unyielding,  
The flame of ruin ate the hulls, the whole ships;  
The floods strong heroes hauled there couldn't stop it.  
Loyal Aeneas, clothes torn from his shoulders, 685  
Begged for the gods' help, stretching out his hands:  
"Almighty Jove, unless you hate us Trojans  
To the last man, and human suffering  
Moves you no longer, let our fleet escape!  
Save our exhausted race from ruin, Father! 690  
Or hurl your thunderbolt of devastation  
At what remains of us – if I deserve it."  
He'd scarcely finished when a monstrous black storm

BOOK 5

Broke in a rage of pouring rain and thunder.  
The plains and mountains shook. The whole wild sky 695  
Slid down in blackness through the whirling South Winds –  
The decks filled up, the half-burned wood was soaked –  
And now the fire was completely out,  
And all the ships but four were saved from ruin.  
A hard blow for the patriarch Aeneas! 700  
Tormented back and forth, he didn't know  
Whether to stay in these Sicilian fields,  
Shirking his fate, or reach for Italy.  
Old Nautes spoke, Tritonian Athena's  
Own chosen pupil, who was known for skill 705  
In prophecies of what the forceful anger  
Of gods would bring – he knew the links in fate's chain.  
He comforted Aeneas: "Venus' son,  
Staying or going, we must follow fate.  
Whatever comes, endurance conquers fortune. 710  
Here is Acestes, Trojan child of heaven.  
Make plans with him – he'll be a willing partner.  
Leave him the lost ships' orphans, leave him those  
Exasperated by your great task's hardships.  
Spare the old men and ocean-weary mothers, 715  
And anyone who's weak or shy of danger,  
And let them rest and have their city here,  
Named for Acestes, if he will allow it."  
The words of his old friend excited him,  
But he was torn between anxieties. 720  
Now black Night's chariot had reached its zenith.  
Father Anchises' image came from there,  
Descending suddenly, and poured these words out:  
"My son, who more than my own life I cherished,  
While I still lived: How Troy's fate tortures you! 725

**704–Nautes:** An ancestor of the elite Roman family the Nautii.

**704–Tritonian Athena:** Minerva was born near the African lake Triton.

BOOK 5

Jove sent me – it was Jove who drove the fire  
 From your ships. The high god pities you at last.  
 Take Nautes’ good advice – his age and wisdom  
 Support it. Choose the staunchest men to voyage  
 To Italy. The race you must defeat there 730  
 Is tough and hardy. First, though, you must enter  
 The house of Dis below, cross deep Avernus,  
 And meet me – not in Tartarus’ cruel prison:  
 Lovely Elysium is now my home,  
 Where guiltless souls convene. Kill many black sheep, 735  
 To earn the virgin Sibyl as a guide  
 To where you’ll see your city and descendants.  
 Good-bye. The dewy Night is at her turning.  
 Ah, the fierce breath of Dawn’s pursuing horses!”  
 He disappeared, like thin smoke in the air. 740  
 “Where have you gone so fast?” Aeneas cried,  
 “Who do you fear? Who keeps us from embracing?”  
 He roused the dozing fire, offered Troy’s  
 Home god and white-haired Vesta in her shrine  
 Ritual flour and burned his store of incense. 745  
 He quickly called Acestes, then his comrades,  
 And told what Jove enjoined, what his dear father  
 Counseled, and what he now himself resolved.  
 Acestes, with no pause for talk, complied.  
 The matrons were enrolled, the city settled 750  
 With volunteers who had no urge for glory.  
 Crews small in number but alive with valor  
 Mended the benches and replaced the wood  
 The flames had gnawed. New oars and ropes were fitted.

- 732–**Dis**: God of the Underworld.      734–**Elysium**: The realm of the blessed.  
 732–**Avernus**: Both the wood at the entrance of the Underworld and, broadly, the Underworld itself.      736–**Sibyl**: The Sibyl of Cumae.  
 733–**Tartarus’ cruel prison**: The Underworld’s area of punishment.      744–**Home god . . . Vesta**: Here, the Lar (singular of Lares); and the female god of the hearth.

BOOK 5

Aeneas plowed out borders, made allotments, 755  
 Named the town Ilium, the country Troy.  
 Trojan Acestes, pleased to rule, ordained  
 A forum and made rules for his new senate.  
 A shrine was laid out for Idalian Venus  
 On Eryx' height. Anchises' tomb was given 760  
 A spacious sacred grove, a priest appointed.  
 Now the whole tribe had sacrificed and feasted  
 For nine days. Peaceful winds smoothed out the sea:  
 The South Wind rose and called them toward the deep.  
 Along the winding shore rose noisy weeping. 765  
 All day, all night they clung in tight embraces.  
 Even the mothers, even those disgusted  
 At the word *sea* and at the sight of it,  
 Were keen for all the suffering of exile,  
 Kindly Aeneas soothed his friends. He wept, 770  
 Trusting them to Acestes, his relation.  
 He ordered three calves sacrificed to Eryx,  
 And to the Storms one lamb, before unmooring.  
 He wore an olive wreath and stood apart  
 In the prow to hold the bowl and pour clear wine 775  
 And offer entrails to the salty waves.  
 A following wind surged up against the stern.  
 Eager crews beat the sea and skimmed above it.  
 But meanwhile Venus, in her anguished worry,  
 Poured out these passionate complaints to Neptune: 780  
 "Juno's hard anger and her ruthless heart  
 Force me to make humiliating pleas.  
 She yields to neither time nor loving duty.

**757–58—ordained a forum and made rules for his new senate:** Vergil uses Roman terminology.

**759—Idalian Venus:** Idalia, on the island of Cyprus, was a sanctuary of Venus.

**773—Storms:** This personification reflects the essentially animistic beliefs of the Romans.

BOOK 5

Fate and Jove's orders cannot break or halt her.  
 It didn't satisfy her vicious hatred 785  
 To tear Troy from its people and devour it,  
 Or drag the bones and ashes of the city  
 Through all this – *she* must know why she's so livid.  
 A while ago, you saw the towering storm  
 She raised off Africa. Through Aeolus' whirlwinds, 790  
 She merged the world's seas with the sky, brash meddling  
 In your domain – for nothing!  
 And see how wickedly she drove the mothers  
 Of Troy to burn the fleet, like criminals,  
 To strand the Trojans where they shouldn't be. 795  
 Let the remainder spread their sails in safety  
 And cross to reach the Tiber at Laurentum –  
 If this can be, if the fates grant a city.”  
 Saturn's son, tamer of the deep sea, spoke:  
 “Lady of Cythera, you rightly trust 800  
 My realm, where you were born, and I've been steadfast,  
 Crushing great rages of the sea and sky.  
 Even on dry land I protect Aeneas –  
 I call to witness Simois and Xanthus:  
 Achilles drove the panicked Trojan ranks 805  
 Against the walls. The river groaned with thousands  
 Of corpses – Xanthus couldn't reach the sea.  
 Peleus' son, for his part, had fierce strength  
 And gods' help. In a saving cloud I hid  
 Aeneas, though I longed to ruin Troy: 810  
 I built it, but it broke its promises.  
 Don't be afraid – I feel the same as then.  
 He'll reach your chosen port beside Avernus.

797–**Laurentum**: A city in Italy;  
 Aeneas will found the city of Lavinium  
 nearby.

799–**Saturn's son**: Neptune.

800–**Lady of Cythera**: Venus.

808–10–**Peleus' son . . . Aeneas**:  
 Achilles fought Aeneas until Aeneas was  
 rescued by his mother (*Iliad* 20).

BOOK 5

The sea will take just one for him to grieve for,  
A single life for many.” 815  
The patriarch had cheered and comforted  
The goddess. Now he yoked his team in gold,  
Bitted their foaming mouths, and gave them rein.  
In his blue chariot he skimmed the sea.  
Beneath the rumbling axle swelling waves 820  
Spread even, and the savage clouds dispersed.  
His suite, in all its forms, came with him: monsters,  
Glaucus’ old troop, Palaemon son of Ino,  
Tritons, swift Phorcus’ ranks, and on the left  
Thetis, young Panopea, Melite, Spio, 825  
Nesaeë, Thalia, and Cymodoce.  
Sweet joy now overwhelmed the anxious thoughts  
Of Father Aeneas, who had all the masts  
Raised quickly and the yardarms draped with sails.  
The crew lined up to set the sheets, released 830  
The folds, first left, then right, and then maneuvered  
The yards, and now a good breeze took the fleet,  
And Palinurus led that crowded column:  
The others were to set their course by him.  
The dewy night was near its turning point 835  
Above. The sailors sprawled, relaxed and peaceful,  
Under the oars and on the rigid benches,  
When Sleep slipped gently down from starry heaven,  
Parting the dusky air and strewing shadows,  
To bring grim dreams to guiltless Palinurus. 840  
High on the stern Sleep sat, disguised as Phorbas,  
And let these words come flowing from his mouth:  
“Iasus’ son, the sea itself transports us.  
The wind breathes evenly; it’s time to rest.  
Lay down your head, steal shut your weary eyes, 845

**841–Phorbas:** A fellow Trojan.

BOOK 5

And I myself will see your tasks are done.”  
But Palinurus scarcely raised a glance.  
“You’re telling me to trust the sea’s calm face  
And peaceful waves? I know that it’s a monster.  
It’s fooled me many times – should I entrust 850  
Aeneas to the double-dealing winds?”  
He spoke, and gripped the helm, and wouldn’t yield it,  
Unwavering in gazing at the stars.  
But the god shook a branch, which dripped with dew  
Of Lethe and the lulling power of Styx, 855  
Over his temples, forced his swimming eyes shut.  
The stealthy doze sank in, and he relaxed.  
Sleep bent to pitch him, with the shattered helm  
He clung to and its rudder, into clear waves.  
His comrades didn’t hear the cries he gave. 860  
Winged Sleep rose through the insubstantial air.  
The fleet ran on in safety, undisturbed  
And free of fear, as Father Neptune promised.  
But now it drifted toward the Sirens’ cliffs –  
A menace once, once white with heaps of bones – 865  
From which rock-pounding water sounded far off.  
Father Aeneas felt the ship was drifting  
Without its guide. He steered it through the night waves  
Himself, with groans of anguish for his friend:  
“Oh, trusting victim of calm sea and sky, 870  
Unburied on some strange shore, Palinurus!”

**855–Lethe and the lulling power of Styx:** Two rivers in the Underworld; Lethe was the river of forgetfulness.

part bird and part woman, who lure ships to ruin, depicted tempting Odysseus in *Odyssey* 12.

**864–Sirens:** Mythological singers,



## BOOK 6

He spoke in tears, and gave the fleet free rein.  
At length they landed at Euboean Cumae.  
Their anchors, biting in, secured the ships  
Prows seaward, while the curved sterns hemmed the beach.  
A band of young men leaped out eagerly 5  
On the Hesperian shore. Some searched for seeds  
Of flame in veins of flint, some sacked the dense woods,  
Home of wild beasts, and brought reports of rivers.  
Steadfast Aeneas sought Apollo's stronghold  
And the huge cave behind it on that height. 10  
There Delos' prophet breathed into the Sibyl  
His mighty will, to show the things to come.  
Hecate's grove, her gold house, arched above them.  
Daedalus, in the story, fled King Minos,  
Venturing to the sky on speedy wings. 15  
By a new route, he swam into the cold North,  
And hung at last above the heights at Cumae.  
This land first took him in. He offered Phoebus  
His wings—like oars—and then a giant temple,

**2–Euboean Cumae:**—Cumae, near Naples, was founded by Greeks from Euboea.

**6–Hesperian:** Italian.

**11–Delos' prophet . . . Sibyl:** The Sibyl will be possessed by Apollo, called Delian after the island of Delos, his birthplace.

**13–Hecate:** The goddess of witchcraft, often identified with Diana.

**14–Daedalus . . . Minos:** The famous Athenian inventor, imprisoned on Crete by King Minos. He escaped by creating wings for himself and his son Icarus.

BOOK 6

Androgeus' death carved on the door, with Athens 20  
 Paying – how pitiful – her yearly fine,  
 Seven sons' lives. The urn is there, the lots drawn.  
 Behind the scene, Crete looms above the sea:  
 Brutal lust for the bull; Pasiphaë,  
 His mate by stealth; their human-bovine offspring, 25  
 The Minotaur, crazed passion's monument;  
 The hopeless, wearying maze beneath the palace.  
 But pitying the deep love of the princess,  
 Daedalus solved his own entrapping riddle:  
 A thread would guide the lost. You, Icarus, 30  
 But for your father's grief, would figure large  
 In that great artwork. Twice his hands failed, trying  
 To show your fall in gold. Now, with Achates  
 Gone in, the Trojans would have scanned each image;  
 He soon returned, though, with Deïphobe, 35  
 Glaucus' child, Phoebus and Diana's priestess,  
 Who told the king, "This is no time for gawking.  
 Come, offer seven heifers from a wild herd,  
 And seven ewes as well, correctly chosen."  
 The Trojans quickly carried out her orders. 40  
 She called them in then, to the soaring temple.  
 A cave cuts deeply through the cliff at Cumae.  
 A hundred mouths, a hundred apertures  
 Disgorge the swarming answers of the Sibyl.  
 "It's time," the virgin shouted at the threshold, 45  
 "To ask what fate will bring you! Look, the god!"

**20–26–Androgeus' death . . . Minotaur:** After mating with a bull, Queen Pasiphaë bore the Minotaur, half-bull and half-man, which Daedalus contained in the labyrinth. After the Athenians murdered Androgeus, Pasiphaë's human son by King Minos, Athens was forced to offer seven youths as a sacrifice to the

Minotaur annually until it was slain by Theseus, guided by the Cretan princess Ariadne, who had fallen in love with him.

**30–Icarus:** Daedalus' son who drowned after flying too close to the sun, which melted the wax of the wings his father created.

**35–Deïphobe:** The name of the Sibyl.

BOOK 6

Just as she spoke before the doors, her color  
Changed, face contorted, hair blew wild, she panted.  
Her heart was frenzied, and she seemed to tower  
And echo the god's voice, since he was near, 50  
"Trojan Aeneas, are your prayers and vows  
So feeble? Only words of thunder stun  
These great gates open." Silence – as a chill  
And tremor skittered through the Trojans' hard bones.  
From deep within his heart, their leader pleaded, 55  
"Phoebus, you always pitied Trojan anguish.  
You guided Paris' hand and arrow, piercing  
The son of Aeacus, and you have led me  
On a bold voyage between the continents,  
Clear to Massylian land, along the Syrtes. 60  
At last we clutch elusive Italy.  
Troy's fortunes must not dog us any farther.  
All of you, gods and goddesses, who balked  
At Ilium, the splendor of our reign,  
Can spare us now, at heaven's will; and you, 65  
Most holy seer, since I only seek  
The realm fate owes me, let the Trojans settle  
In Latium with their wandering harried gods.  
I will decree a marble shrine for Phoebus  
And for Diana of the Crossroads. Feast days 70  
Will have Apollo's name. For you, my kind guide,  
I'll raise a great shrine in my land and put there

**57–58–Paris' hand and arrow, piercing the son of Aeacus:** Paris shot Achilles, actually the grandson of Aeacus, in the heel.

**60–Massylian land . . . Syrtes:** A reference to Aeneas' stay in Carthage; Aeneas credits Apollo with guiding their entire journey thus far, from Troy through Carthage.

**69–a marble shrine for Phoebus:** Aeneas' temple is not mentioned again, but Augustus will dedicate a shrine on the Palatine to Apollo, his patron god, in 28 BCE: see 8.720–21n.

**70–Diana of the Crossroads:** Diana Trivia, or "three ways," who had dominion over Y-shaped or three-way roads.

BOOK 6

Your lots and secret forecasts for my people,  
 And appoint priests. But do not trust your verses  
 To leaves that gusts can play with and confuse. 75  
 Chant them yourself, please.” There he finished speaking.  
 Inside, the priestess ran amok, resisting  
 Phoebus and trying hard to shake that great god  
 Out of her soul. He drove her harder, twisted  
 Her face and curbed her heart, pinioning, shaping. 80  
 The hundred huge doors, on their own, broke open  
 And poured outside the answers of the prophet:  
 “Your perils on the seas are finally over,  
 Though worse will come on land. But be assured:  
 The Trojans will arrive. Lavinium’s land, though, 85  
 Will make them wish they hadn’t. I see war,  
 Grisly war, and the Tiber frothing blood.  
 You’ll have another Simois and Xanthus,  
 A Greek camp, and a Latin-born Achilles,  
 Himself a goddess’ son. Juno will cling 90  
 To hounding you, while on your knees you plead  
 With every town and tribe in Italy.  
 Again a foreign love, an alien marriage  
 Will bring the Teucrians ruin.  
 Do not give in, but where your fortune lets you, 95  
 Go on more bravely still. The path to safety –  
 Yes, it is true – will open through a Greek town.”  
 The Sibyl in her shrine at Cumae chanted.  
 Her fearsome, truth-entangling riddles boomed  
 Out of the cave. Apollo lashed his reins 100

**74–75-verses to leaves:** The Sibyl’s oracular responses were written on oak leaves.

**85–Lavinium’s land:** The realm of King Latinus in Italy.

**87–Tiber frothing blood:** This phrase was made infamous by the British politi-

cian Enoch Powell in his 1968 “Rivers of Blood” speech opposing immigration.

**97–a Greek town:** Pallanteum, founded by the Greek Evander sometime during the Trojan War. Aeneas will visit there in book 8.

BOOK 6

Against her, drove his goads into her heart.  
 But then her frenzy lulled, her rabid mouth  
 Grew quiet, and the hero spoke. “Pure virgin!  
 No unfamiliar form of hardship threatens:  
 My soul has grasped and probed all this. But grant 105  
 One thing. The king below and Acheron’s  
 Welling dark swamp, they say, are through this doorway.  
 Let me come see my father, face to face.  
 Tell me the way, open the holy gates.  
 From fire and a thousand hostile spears, 110  
 From the enemies’ midst I saved him, on these shoulders.  
 He was my comrade over all the seas,  
 Enduring every threat of sky and ocean;  
 His weak old age deserved another fate.  
 He begged me, trusted me to come implore you 115  
 Here at your door. Pity the son, the father.  
 Your kindness has this power: Hecate  
 Put in your charge the forest of Avernus.  
 If Orpheus, with sweet notes on a lyre  
 From Thrace, could call his wife back, and if Pollux 120  
 Could buy his brother’s life, and they exchange  
 The journey back and forth – and Hercules?  
 Great Theseus? I’m kindred, too, of Jove

**106–the king below:** The god Pluto or Dis, king of the Underworld.

**108–my father:** Anchises, who died at the end of book 3.

**119–20–Orpheus . . . his wife:** The Underworld journey (Greek *katabasis*) is a common undertaking for legendary heroes. Orpheus descended into the Underworld to resurrect his wife, Eurydice, but lost her again because he looked back as they emerged, against Pluto’s orders.

**120–21–Pollux could buy his brother’s life:** Pollux and Castor were twins, but only Pollux was immortal. They “shared” death by taking turns in the Underworld.

**122–23–Hercules . . . Theseus:** Hercules went to the Underworld to kidnap the three-headed dog Cerberus, Theseus to help his companion Pirithoüs try to abduct the queen, Proserpina.

BOOK 6

On high.” So he implored, and clutched the altar.  
 The seer began: “Sowed from the gods’ blood, Trojan 125  
 Anchises’ son! The road down to Avernus  
 Is easy. Black Dis’ door gapes night and day.  
 The toil, the struggle is to walk back up  
 Into the open air. A few could: godborn;  
 Those Jove loved justly; those whose burning valor 130  
 Raised them to heaven. Forests fill the center;  
 Cocytus flows in black curves all around.  
 If you’re in love with floating twice on pools  
 Of Styx, and hot to see black Tartarus  
 Twice, if your whim is plunging in this mad task, 135  
 Hear what to do first. In dense foliage hides  
 A pliant gold-leafed branch that’s dedicated  
 To Juno of the Underworld. The whole woods,  
 The dim and shady valley shelter it.  
 Whoever comes within earth’s hidden places 140  
 Must first pluck off the tree its gold-haired offspring.  
 Lovely Proserpina appointed this  
 Her offering. Another will replace it,  
 And other leaves of gold grow from its stem.  
 Search for it high up; when you’ve duly found it, 145  
 Pluck it. It should fall gladly in your hand  
 If fate has summoned you. If not, your whole strength  
 Will fail – you couldn’t tear it off with hard steel.  
 But – you don’t know – a friend lies dead, defiling

**132–Cocytus:** A river in the Underworld.

**137–gold-leafed branch:** The “golden bough,” which was Aeneas’ passport to the Underworld; this episode provided Sir James Frazer with the title of his famous and influential 1890 anthropological study.

**142–Proserpina:** Daughter of Ceres, wife of Pluto, queen of the Underworld.

**149–a friend lies dead:** Misenus, the trumpeter who signaled the attack against the Harpies (3.239–40), whose death is described below.

BOOK 6

The whole fleet with his corpse, while in my doorway 150  
You dawdle, asking for my prophecies.  
First lay him in a tomb, his proper home,  
And kill black sheep, the first appeasing rite;  
Then only will you see the Stygian groves,  
The land that's closed to life." Her lips shut, silent. 155  
Aeneas, grim-faced, eyes fixed on the ground,  
Walked from the cave and in his mind turned over  
What the descent might bring. Faithful Achates,  
In stride with him, shared his anxieties.  
They spoke in trust and spent a long time guessing 160  
Which man had died, and waited to be buried.  
But when they reached the arid shore again,  
They saw Misenus dead – he hadn't earned it.  
No one was better skilled than Aeolus' son  
At kindling valor with a bronze horn's song. 165  
He'd gone to battle in great Hector's cohort.  
You knew him by his trumpet and his spear.  
But when Achilles won, and Hector's life  
Became his plunder, brave Misenus followed  
Aeneas, just as great a Trojan leader. 170  
Yet then, the fool, he blared a hollow conch shell  
Over the sea and challenged gods at music.  
Triton, who envied him – or that's the story –  
Caught him among foam-pouring rocks and drowned him.  
So howls of mourning rang from all his comrades, 175  
Especially good Aeneas. Then they hurried,  
In tears, to raise the altar of a tomb,  
Heaping wood skyward, as the Sibyl ordered.  
They strode into the old woods, deep beast shelter.

173–Triton: A sea god.

BOOK 6

Pines toppled, holm oaks echoed to the ax. 180  
 Wedges split beams of ash and fissile oak,  
 And giant mountain ash rolled down the slope.  
 Aeneas, with the same tools as the others,  
 Set an example, urged the workers on.  
 Scanning the vast woods, pondering his tasks 185  
 In his sad heart, he happened to be pleading:  
 “What if that gold branch were revealed to me  
 In this huge woods, since everything is true  
 The seer said of you, Misenus – too true.”  
 He’d scarcely finished when two doves came flying 190  
 Out of the sky to pass before his eyes,  
 And landed on the grass. The matchless hero,  
 Knowing his mother’s birds, now prayed with joy:  
 “Guide me, if there’s a way; direct your flight  
 Into the grove where that rich bough is shading 195  
 The fertile ground. And you, immortal mother,  
 Be with me in this trial.” He checked his steps  
 To see what signs the birds gave, where they flew.  
 Browsing, they fluttered just the length ahead  
 That kept them in the sight of their pursuer. 200  
 But when they reached Avernus’ reeking throat,  
 They shot up, then soared down through limpid air,  
 Then perched on what Aeneas sought, the contrast  
 Of flashing gold among the tree’s green branches;  
 Just as the mistletoe in dead of winter 205  
 Grows a fresh leaf, its own and not its host’s,  
 And rings the smooth trunk with its yellow shoot,  
 So the gold leaves stood out against the dark oak.  
 Their foil was jangling in the gentle wind.

**180–82–Pines toppled, holm oaks**      **190–two doves:** Doves were sacred  
**echoed to the ax . . . down the slope:** to Venus.  
 Tree-felling scenes are standard in ancient epics.



BOOK 6

He grasped the clinging branch, wrenched it off keenly, 210  
And took it to the prophet Sibyl's home.  
Back on the beach, the Trojans still were weeping  
In last rites for Misenus' thankless ashes.  
They built a massive pyre first, fueled with pitch pine  
And oak logs. On the sides they wove dark leaves, 215  
Set funeral cypresses in front, on top  
The splendid beauty of his flashing armor.  
Some heated pots to make the water swell,  
And washed the cold corpse and anointed it.  
A groan rose. Now they laid out what they wept for, 220  
Beneath its own familiar purple cloak.  
Now some took on that sad task, shouldering  
The giant bier, and, in the ancient rite,  
Applied the torch. Heaped gifts of food and incense  
And bowls of olive oil were burned together. 225  
After the flame died and the ash collapsed,  
Wine washed the thirsty cinders. Corynaeus  
Gathered the bones and laid them in a bronze jar.  
Three times he walked around his comrades, sprinkling  
A clear dew from a fertile olive branch 230  
To cleanse them, speaking last words. On the ashes  
Reverent Aeneas raised a massive mound,  
And placed the hero's horn and armor there  
Beneath a lofty mountain called Misenus  
To keep his name alive throughout the ages. 235

With haste, he now performed the Sibyl's orders.  
There was a cave – monstrously gaping, jagged,  
Deep. A dark woods, a black lake sheltered it.  
Birds at their peril made their winging way

**234—a lofty mountain called Misenus:** The modern Cape Miseno, near Naples.

BOOK 6

Above, in poison breathing from that black throat 240  
 And pouring upward to the dome of heaven.  
 The Birdless Place is what the Greeks have named it.  
 First the priest had four young black bullocks brought  
 To stand there. He poured wine between their horns  
 And clipped the bristling tufts that stood up highest, 245  
 As the first offering for the sacred fire,  
 And called on Hecate, strong in hell and heaven.  
 Others applied their knives and caught the warm blood  
 In bowls. Aeneas slaughtered with his sword  
 A black-fleeced lamb for Night, the Furies' mother, 250  
 And Earth, their sister; for Proserpina  
 A sterile cow; then sacrificed entire bulls  
 In the night rituals of the Stygian king,  
 Pouring a rich oil on the burning entrails.  
 Now, right before the rising sun's light broke, 255  
 The ground beneath their feet roared. Wooded slopes  
 Shifted. Dogs seemed to howl among the shadows.  
 The goddess! "Keep away!" the priestess yelled.  
 "Far away! Leave the grove unless you're pure!"  
 But *you* go forward boldly. Pull your sword free. 260  
 It's now you need your fearless heart, Aeneas."  
 Into the open cave she bolted, maddened,  
 And he kept pace with her, his guide, with brave steps.  
 You gods who rule dead souls, you silent shades,  
 And Phlegethon and Chaos, spread with still night, 265  
 Give holy sanction, let me pass this tale on  
 And open what deep earth and darkness cover.

**242–The Birdless Place:** the Greek-derived name Avernus means "Birdless"; the lake's toxic fumes were thought to be deadly to birds. This line is thought to be spurious.

**243–black bullocks:** Offerings to chthonic deities are usually black.

**253–the Stygian king:** Dis or Pluto.

**265–Phlegethon:** A fiery river in the Underworld.

**265–Chaos:** The primordial void which existed before the creation of the universe.

BOOK 6

They walked along, in dark and lonely night,  
 Through empty shadows and the court of Dis,  
 As by a stingy moon's cloud-crowded glimmer, 270  
 A path leads through the woods when Jove has shadowed  
 The sky, and color hides beneath black night.  
 Before the entrance hall, the mouth of Orcus,  
 Sorrow and stinging Guilt have made their beds.  
 Here are pale Sickness, bleak Old Age, and Fear, 275  
 Crime-urging Hunger, shameful Poverty –  
 Horrible sights – and Drudgery and Death:  
 Death's brother, Sleep, as well; ebullient Evil,  
 And War, the slaughterer, on the threshold, near  
 The Furies' iron rooms; crazed Discord lives there, 280  
 Her hair of snakes tied up with bloodstained ribbons.  
 A huge, dense elm tree in the middle spreads  
 Its ancient arms. They say this is the roost  
 Of lying dreams, which cling beneath each leaf.  
 A great array of monsters has its stables 285  
 There at the gates: half-human Scyllas, Centaurs,  
 The Lernaean horror-hissing beast, the hundred  
 Arms of Briareus, Chimeran flames,  
 Gorgons and Harpies, Geryon's ghost with three forms.  
 Aeneas snatched his sword in sudden terror, 290  
 And held it up against the shapes approaching.  
 Had not his shrewd guide said these flitting things  
 Were flimsy forms, illusions lacking bodies,  
 He would have rushed to stab them, to no purpose.  
 The road leads to the river Acheron: 295  
 A whirlpool's endless chasm seethes with thick mud;  
 Cocytus drinks the vomit of the sand.

**273–Orcus:** A Roman Underworld god; his name, like that of other chthonic deities, can broadly refer to Underworld itself.

**286–89–Scyllas, Centaurs, . . . Geryon:** Various mythological monsters, some of them featuring in the Labors of Hercules.

## BOOK 6

Guarding these waters is a ghastly boatman,  
The squalid, fearsome Charon, with his white beard  
In massive snarls, with fixed and fiery eyes, 300  
His dirty cloak hangs from a shoulder knot.  
He poles his boat along and sets the sails,  
Conveying corpses in his rust-red vessel.  
Old age in him – a god – is fresh and strong.  
All of the mob comes pouring to the shore: 305  
Mothers and grown men and the lifeless bodies  
Of daring heroes; boys, unmarried girls,  
Young men their parents saw placed on the pyre;  
As many as the woodland leaves that fall  
At the first frost, or birds that flock to land 310  
From the high seas when freezing winter drives them  
Across the great gulf into sunny lands.  
Ghosts stand and beg to be the first to cross,  
Stretching their hands out, yearning for the far shore.  
But the grim boatman makes his choice among them 315  
And shoves the rest far back across the beach.  
Aeneas, awed and saddened by this chaos,  
Asked, “Tell me, why this rush down to the river?  
What do these souls want? Why do some retreat  
Up the banks, others row the gloomy water?” 320  
The ancient priestess made a brief reply.  
“Son of Anchises, heaven’s true child! These  
Are the deep-pooling Cocytus and Styx’ swamp.  
Gods swear by it and keep their word, in terror.  
This helpless crowd you see has not been buried. 325  
The boatman, Charon there, transports the others.  
He cannot bring them past the grisly banks  
And roaring stream until their bones find rest.

**299–Charon:** The boatman who ferries the souls of the dead across the river Styx.

BOOK 6

They flit a hundred years around this shore,  
 Then are let through, home to the pools they long for.” 330  
 Anchises’ son now halted in his footsteps,  
 Brooding in pity on that desolate fate.  
 He saw there wretched souls deprived of death rites,  
 Leucaspis and the Lycian fleet’s commander,  
 Orontes. On the stormy way from Troy 335  
 A southern gale engulfed them with their ship.  
 And there the helmsman Palinurus paces,  
 Who in mid-voyage from Africa had fallen  
 Overboard off the stern while tracking stars.  
 Aeneas barely recognized his sad form 340  
 In so much darkness. “Palinurus! Which god  
 Tore you from us and plunged you in mid-ocean?  
 Tell me! When did Apollo ever cheat me  
 In prophesying, but about yourself?  
 He told me you would reach Italian shores 345  
 Uninjured. Is this how he keeps his promise?”  
 He answered, “No, Anchises’ son, my leader,  
 The oracle was truthful. No god drowned me.  
 The rudder that I clutched and steered the ship by  
 Was simply ripped away, and I, its keeper, 350  
 Fell, dragging it along. I swear by rough seas,  
 It was your ship I feared for, robbed of tackle,  
 Its pilot overboard – not for myself.  
 Would it now falter under these huge waves?  
 Three stormy nights a violent South Wind drove me 355  
 Over unending sea, and on the fourth day,  
 From a wave’s crest I just glimpsed Italy.  
 I struggled on and would have landed safely  
 Had not a cruel tribe come at me with swords –  
 Stupid: I was no prize. Weighed down by wet clothes, 360

334–**Leucaspis**: Otherwise unknown.

335–**Orontes**: A Trojan who died in the storm at 1.114–16.

BOOK 6

I clutched the jagged cliff top where I landed.  
 The windy breakers hold me, roll me now.  
 I beg you by the sky's sweet light and air,  
 Your father, and your hopes as Iulus grows,  
 Save me, unconquered hero. Either sail 365  
 To Velia's port again and bury me  
 Or, if your deathless mother knows a way  
 (For I believe the power of gods has brought you  
 To these great rivers and the Stygian swamp),  
 Have pity, take my hand, convey me over, 370  
 Give me at least a place of peace in death."  
 These were his pleas; the prophetess retorted:  
 "This wish of yours is monstrous, Palinurus—  
 To see cold-blooded Styx, the Furies' river,  
 To go down there, unburied and unsummoned? 375  
 Don't try to plead away the gods' decrees.  
 But hear and keep this comfort for your hard fate.  
 The cities all around your tomb, obeying  
 Signs from the high gods, will appease your bones.  
 They'll raise a tomb and give it sacrifices; 380  
 The land there will be named for you forever."  
 This eased the anguish of his heart a short time:  
 A place named after him—it made him glad.  
 They pressed ahead from there and neared the river.  
 But now from streaming Styx the boatman saw them 385  
 Walk through the quiet woods and toward the bank.  
 He was the first to speak, with this rebuke:  
 "Who are you, marching down here with your weapons?  
 Stay where you are, and quick, explain yourself.  
 This is the place of ghosts, sleep, drowsy night: 390  
 This boat of Styx may not take living bodies.  
 To my regret, I shipped great Hercules

366—Velia's port: The city Elea.

for you forever: Cape Palinuro, near Elea

381—The land there will be named on the southwestern coast of Italy.

BOOK 6

Across the lake, and Theseus with his comrade  
 Pirithoüs, unconquered sons of gods.  
 The first one came to chain the guardian hell hound, 395  
 And dragged him trembling from beneath the king's throne;  
 The others tried to take our lady captive –  
 From Dis' bed!" But Apollo's seer spoke briefly:  
 "Don't be afraid – we have no plotting purpose;  
 These arms are peaceful. For all time, that huge guard 400  
 May turn ghosts pale by baying in his cave,  
 The girl stay in her uncle's house, unsullied.  
 Renowned Aeneas, upright, fierce in battle,  
 Goes to the shades below to find his father.  
 The sight of such devotion doesn't move you? 405  
 You know this, then" – the branch, which she drew out  
 From her clothes' folds. His swelling rage subsided,  
 And neither spoke. The hallowed gift amazed him,  
 The branch of fate – so long since he had seen it!  
 He turned the dark ship to approach the bank, 410  
 Shoved the souls from their seats along the benches,  
 And cleared the gangways. Towering Aeneas  
 Boarded the hollow leather boat. Its stitching  
 Groaned at his weight, the swamp poured through the gaps.  
 But the barge set the prophetess and hero 415  
 Safe on the muck, among gray reeds, at last.  
 Cerberus sprawled immense there in his cave.  
 The baying of his three throats filled that kingdom.  
 The snakes rose on his neck, but then the seer  
 Threw him a cake of drug-soaked grain and honey. 420  
 With his three gaping mouths, in savage hunger,  
 He seized it, and his monstrous arch of spine  
 Melted, to stretch his huge form through the grotto.

**393–94 Theseus with his comrade  
 Pirithoüs:** see 6.122–23n.

**395–the guardian hell hound:** Cerberus.

**397–our lady:** Proserpina.

BOOK 6

Aeneas passed the guard, now sunk in sleep,  
 And hurried from the hopeless river's banks. 425  
 Now a loud howling struck them from the spirits  
 Of babies: they were crying at the entrance.  
 They had no share in sweet life. At the breast,  
 An early death – black day – had swallowed them.  
 Next were those executed on false charges. 430  
 Jurors, assigned by lot, appoint the homes here.  
 Minos the judge draws names for voiceless panels  
 And hears what every life now stands accused of.  
 Beyond this, dismal suicides are lodged.  
 Though innocent, they threw away their breath 435  
 In hatred of the light. But now they'd cherish  
 Hardships and poverty beneath the sky!  
 Divine law and the hateful grim swamp trap them.  
 Around them Styx, with its nine loops, is tied.  
 She pointed out the nearby Fields of Mourning – 440  
 This is their name – that stretch in all directions.  
 There hidden tracks, bordered by myrtle trees,  
 Shelter the victims of cruel, wasting love.  
 Even in death their passions do not leave them.  
 Phaedra was here, Procris, and Eriphyle 445  
 (Who sadly showed the wounds from her cruel child),  
 Pasiphaë, Evadne; Laodamia

**432–Minos the judge:** The first king of Crete, who after death became a judge in the Underworld.

**440–Fields of Mourning:** An area filled with spurned lovers, many of whom had come to violent ends.

**445:–Phaedra:** The wife of Theseus, she committed suicide due to unrequited love for her stepson, Hippolytus.

**445:–Procris:** She was killed by her husband, Cephalus, in a hunting accident.

**445–Eriphyle:** She was bribed to betray her husband, Amphiarus, and killed as punishment by her son.

**447–Evadne:** She threw herself on the funeral pyre of her husband, Capaneus.

**447–Laodamia:** She committed suicide after the death of her husband, Protesilaus, the first Greek to die at Troy.



BOOK 6

And Caeneus, once a young man, now a woman –  
Since fate had changed her back – walked by their sides.  
Phoenician Dido wandered in that broad wood, 450  
Her wound still fresh; and when the Trojan hero  
Encountered her and recognized her dim form  
Through shadows, as a person sees the new moon  
Through clouds – or thinks he sees it – as it rises,  
He wept and spoke to her in tender love: 455  
“Poor Dido, then the messenger was right –  
Your own hand held the blade that brought your death?  
And it was my fault? By the stars, the high gods,  
And any truth below the earth: my queen,  
It was against my will I left your country, 460  
And by the orders of the gods, who now  
Ordain my journey through this shadowed squalor,  
These depths of night. I couldn’t have believed  
That I would bring such pain by my departure.  
Stay here – don’t back away, but let me see you. 465  
Who are you running from? Fate gives this last chance  
To speak to you.” She only glared in fury  
While he was pleading, while he called up tears.  
Her eyes stayed on the ground, her face averted,  
As changeless in expression, while he spoke, 470  
As granite or a jagged marble outcrop.  
At last she darted bitterly away  
To the dark forest, where her spouse, Sychaeus,  
Felt for her sorrow and returned her love.  
Aeneas, no less shaken by her hard fate, 475  
Followed her with a tearful gaze of pity.  
On the appointed path he struggled forward.  
They reached the famous warriors’ distant fields.

**448–Caeneus:** A woman who was transformed into a man after her rape by Neptune; Caeneus was eventually killed by Centaurs and reverted to female form in the afterlife.

BOOK 6

Tydeus met them, and Parthenopaeus,  
 Splendid in warfare, and Adrastus' pale form. 480  
 Here were slain Trojans, wept for terribly  
 Above. Aeneas groaned at long ranks: Glaucus,  
 Medon, Thersilochus, Antenor's three sons,  
 Ceres' priest Polyboetes, and Idaeus  
 Still clinging to his arms and chariot. 485  
 The souls were crowding at his right and left.  
 Not happy with one look, they held him back,  
 To walk with him and learn why he had come.  
 But the Greek lords and Agamemnon's cohorts  
 Were terrified to see the hero's weapons 490  
 Flash through the shadows; some were turning, running,  
 As once they'd scampered to their ships, some squeaking—  
 Their open mouths were thwarted: no shouts came.  
 He saw Deïphobus, the son of Priam,  
 All mangled, with cruel slashes on his face 495  
 And both his hands, his ears stripped from his head,  
 His nose grotesquely lopped. He shrank back, trying  
 To hide these awful wounds. Aeneas hardly  
 Recognized him, but kinship made him speak:  
 "Great warrior, from the noble blood of Teucer, 500  
 By whose cruel choice did such afflictions come?  
 Who had such power over you? They told me  
 You'd used your strength up killing Greeks that last night  
 And fallen on a heap of muddled carnage.  
 On the Troad's shore I raised an empty tomb, 505  
 Sent three shouts to the spirits. There your weapons  
 And name remain, but friend, I never saw you.

479–80–**Tydeus** . . . **Parthenopaeus**  
 . . . **Adrastus**: Three of the Seven Against  
 Thebes, warriors who besieged the city  
 of Thebes in the succession struggle be-  
 tween Oedipus' sons.

494–**Deïphobus**: The Trojan hus-  
 band of Helen after Paris' death.

505–**Troad**: The peninsula in modern  
 Turkey where Troy was located.

BOOK 6

I couldn't set you in our country's earth."  
Priam's son answered, "You neglected nothing.  
You did your duty by my ghost and me. 510  
Fate and the Spartan woman's fatal sin  
Engulfed me in this torment – her memento.  
You know how we were duped, and celebrated  
That last night? But there's no forgetting it.  
The fatal horse, pregnant with infantry, 515  
Leaped to our citadel, steep Pergamum,  
And Helen led around our Trojan women  
In a sham Bacchic rite and held a great torch  
Herself: our tower signaled to the Greeks.  
Anxiety had worn me into dull sleep 520  
In my unlucky bed. A sweet, deep rest,  
Peaceful as death, muffled me as I lay there.  
Meanwhile my prize wife cleared the house of weapons –  
Even the trusted sword beneath my pillow.  
She opened up our door to Menelaus – 525  
Hoping, I guess, this favor to her old flame  
Would kill the stink of all her crimes before.  
I'll make it brief: they burst in, with Ulysses,  
Who's behind every crime. Gods, pay the Greeks back!  
Mine is a reverent tongue that asks this favor! 530  
But come – now you: what brought you here still living?  
Were you off course in voyaging, and swept down?  
Did gods direct you? What tormenting fortune  
Shows you this sunless town, this sea of darkness?"  
Aurora's rosy chariot in the ether 535  
Soared past the zenith while the two were talking.  
They might have used up all the time permitted.

**511–the Spartan woman's fatal sin:**  
Helen's leaving her husband, Menelaus,  
king of Sparta, to elope with Paris, start-  
ing the Trojan War.

**516–Pergamum:** The citadel of Troy.  
**535–Aurora:** Dawn.

BOOK 6

Aeneas' guide, the Sibyl, curtly warned him:  
"Night rushes on, and tears take up the hours.  
The road divides here. This branch on the right, 540  
Which stretches to the walls of powerful Dis,  
Will take us to Elysium. The left one  
Sends culprits to their due in Tartarus."  
"Great priestess, don't be angry," said the dead man.  
"I'll take my place again in that dark cohort. 545  
Go on, Troy's glory. May your fate be better."  
Then he retreated, as he finished speaking.  
Aeneas turned, and right there, to his left—  
A fortress with three walls beneath a cliff.  
A raging stream of flame called Phlegethon, 550  
With crashing, whirling boulders, rings it, facing  
Huge gates and columns made of solid steel.  
No human strength, no strength of gods at war  
Could tear it up. An iron tower soars.  
Tisiphone, unsleeping, guards the gates 555  
Day and night, in her hitched-up bloody robe.  
From inside echo savage blows and groans,  
The shriek of iron and the drag of chains.  
Terror transfixed Aeneas at the din.  
"What crimes did they commit? Pure virgin, tell me! 560  
How are they punished? What loud howls are rising!"  
"Great Trojan leader," she replied, "no good man  
Enters this wicked place; but Hecate,  
When she assigned me these Avernan groves,  
Led me around to all the gods' reprisals. 565  
Here Cretan Rhadamanthus rules, unyielding.  
He puts each life on trial, extracts confessions

**542–Elysium:** The part of the Under-world reserved for people who have led virtuous lives.

**555–Tisiphone:** Leader of the Furies, female spirits of revenge.

**566–Rhadamanthus:** Formerly a king of Crete, now judge of the dead.

BOOK 6

Of sins not expiated there above,  
 Hidden with stupid relish, till too late.  
 Tisiphone, who's ready with her whip, 570  
 Swoops down for vengeance, aiming vicious snakes  
 From her left hand, and calls her sisters' cruel ranks.  
 Finally, with a grisly scream of hinges,  
 The holy doors fall open. Do you see  
 Her form that sits and guards the entranceway? 575  
 A fiercer monster lives inside, the Hydra,  
 With fifty black throats. Tartarus itself  
 Plunges next – twice as far, beneath the shades,  
 As a gaze toward Olympus in the aether.  
 Titans, an ancient earth-born race, struck down 580  
 By lightning long ago, writhe at the bottom.  
 Aloeus' giant twins are there – I've seen them.  
 They tried to wrench away the towering sky,  
 Attack the gods above, dethrone their ruler.  
 There I saw Salmoneus cruelly punished – 585  
 He'd aped Jove's flames and the Olympian thunder.  
 Shaking a torch, he drove his chariot  
 In triumph through Greek nations, through his city  
 Of Elis, claiming honors of the gods –  
 Fool: the inimitable thundercloud 590  
 Shammed by the sound of hooves that beat on bronze!  
 Then the almighty father hurled his weapon –  
 Which was no guttering pine torch – through the clouds

**580–Titans:** The gods who preceded the Olympian gods; children of Earth and Sky, who, along with the Giants, rose up against Jupiter and the Olympians and were chained underground as punishment.

**582–Aloeus' giant twins:** Otus and Ephialtes, Giants who tried to seize Diana and Juno to be their wives.

**585–Salmoneus:** A king who attempted to force his subjects to worship him over Jupiter and was struck down by Jupiter.

**591–bronze:** Salmoneus imitated the sound of thunder by driving his horses over a bridge made of bronze.

BOOK 6

And drove him headlong in a monstrous whirlwind.  
 Tityos, reared by all-begetting Earth, 595  
 Was there to see, stretched over nine whole acres.  
 A giant vulture with its hooked beak browses  
 His deathless liver. Through pain-fertile innards  
 It burrows, feeds – lives deep inside his torso;  
 And with no rest, his viscera grow back. 600  
 A crag of flint that hangs above two Lapiths,  
 Ixion and Pirithoüs, seems set  
 To topple any second. Banquet couches  
 Rear high, with shining gold posts. Splendid food  
 Is spread before their eyes. But the chief Fury, 605  
 The guest beside them, will not let them touch it.  
 She leaps up, thrusts her torch at them, and roars.  
 Souls who while living hated brothers, struck  
 Their fathers, or wove fraud around dependents;  
 And those who crouched alone on newfound riches 610  
 (The largest crowd), not sharing with their families;  
 Slaughtered adulterers; and rebel soldiers,  
 Bold criminals, betrayers of their lords:  
 Locked up, all wait for sentencing. Don't query  
 The kinds of torment Fortune's plunged them in. 615  
 Some roll immense rocks, some are splayed on wheel spokes.  
 Poor Theseus sits there – he'll sit forever.

**595–Tityos:** A Titan who attempted to rape Leto, mother of Apollo and Diana.

**601–2–Lapiths, Ixion and Pirithoüs:** The Lapiths Ixion and his son Pirithoüs attempted to rape Olympian goddesses (Juno and Proserpina, respectively). Their punishment (usually associated with the sinner Tantalus) was to have an ever unreachable feast set under a menacing crag; elsewhere Ixion's punishment was to be whirled on a wheel forever.

**616–roll immense rocks . . . splayed on wheel spokes:** Previously the punishments of Tartarus were limited to extraordinary sinners; Vergil expands these punishments to everyday people who commit social and civic crimes.

**617–Theseus:** As punishment for helping his friend Pirithoüs attempt the rape of Proserpina, Theseus was fixed into the rock of the Underworld when he sat down there.

BOOK 6

Phlegyas in his torture shrieks a warning  
To everyone – his voice rings through the shadows:  
'Learn justice from my fate, and fear the gods!' 620  
One sold his country and imposed a tyrant;  
One, for a price, made laws and then remade them.  
One stormed his daughter's room – a lawless marriage.  
All of them dared great evil and succeeded.  
A hundred tongues and mouths, a voice of iron 625  
Wouldn't allow me to describe the crimes  
In all their forms, or list the punishments."  
The ancient priestess of Apollo added,  
"Come, hurry on. Finish the task you started.  
Faster! I see the walls the Cyclopes 630  
Forged. There's a gateway underneath the arch  
Where we must put our gifts, as we were told to."  
They stepped along the dark route, side by side,  
Crossed the gap quickly, and approached the doors.  
Aeneas flicked fresh water on his body 635  
And faced the sill, and set the branch there, upright.  
Their duty to the goddess done at last,  
They came into a glad land: pleasant grounds  
In forests of good fortune, blessed home.  
A richer, shimmering air arrays these fields, 640  
Which have their own familiar sun and stars.  
Men exercised in grassy fields, competed  
In games, or wrestled on the tawny sand.  
Some stamped their dancing feet and chanted songs.  
And there the Thracian singer, in his long robe, 645  
Played to the beat, through seven intervals,

**618–Phlegyas:** He razed a temple of his father, Apollo.

**630–the Cyclopes:** One-eyed giants; their large size made them useful builders for the gods.

**645–the Thracian singer:** Orpheus, the famous singer-hero, who also came to be associated with the afterlife cult of Orphism.

BOOK 6

Changing between his ivory pick and fingers.  
Here was the ancient dynasty of Teucer,  
Handsome, courageous, born in better years:  
Ilus, Assaracus, Dardanus, Troy's founder. 650  
Aeneas gazed at ghostly chariots  
Far off, and armor, planted spears, and horses  
Grazing untethered. The delight the living  
Take in their arms and chariots, the fondness  
For pasturing bright beasts survive the tomb. 655  
Aeneas looked from side to side: some heroes  
Feasted and sang a joyous hymn of praise  
Among sweet laurel stands. Eridanus  
Rolled its great waves into the world above.  
This group was wounded fighting for their country; 660  
These, while they lived, had been pure priests; these prophets  
Were righteous and deserved to speak for Phoebus.  
Some had enriched our life with their inventions,  
Or left the memory of some great service.  
All of them had white bands around their foreheads. 665  
They poured around the Sibyl. She addressed  
Musaeus chiefly (all that huge crowd gazed up:  
He towered, massive-shouldered, in the center):  
"Tell me, you happy souls, and you, great singer,  
Where can we find Anchises, in which quarter? 670  
For him we sailed through Erebus' wide waters."  
With a few words the hero answered her:  
"We have no houses here. Our homes are dim woods,  
Stream banks our couches, verdant, flowing meadows  
Our settlements. But if you speak your heart's wish, 675  
Come up this easy path to climb the ridge."  
He stepped ahead and showed the shining plains

**648–50—the ancient dynasty of Teucer . . . Ilus, Assaracus, Dardanus:** Ancient founders of Troy.

**658–Eridanus:** The river Padus (in modern times the Po).

**667–Musaeus:** A legendary singer.



BOOK 6

That stretched below, but soon they left the high ground.  
 Father Anchises, in a low green valley,  
 Devotedly surveyed the souls confined there 680  
 Before emerging to the light. He happened  
 Now to be tallying his dear descendants –  
 Lives, destinies, achievements, characters –  
 And when he saw Aeneas making toward him  
 Over the grass, he stretched his hands out, blissful. 685  
 The tears poured down his cheeks, and he exclaimed.  
 “You’ve come at last? Love would win out, I knew,  
 On this hard road. And can I see your face,  
 My child, hear your beloved voice, and answer?  
 Really, I counted on this, calculated 690  
 The time, and anxious hope could not deceive me!  
 Welcome! How many lands and wide seas sent you,  
 My son, and on what giant waves of danger!  
 I feared the Libyan realms would injure you.  
 Aeneas answered, “Father, your sad image, 695  
 Which often meets me, called me to this place.  
 My ships stand in the Tuscan sea. My hand –  
 Clasp it and don’t retreat from my embrace.”  
 The tears poured down his face. Three times he tried  
 To throw his arms around his father’s neck, 700  
 Three times the form slid from his useless hands,  
 Like weightless wind or dreams that fly away.  
 The hero now saw, at the valley’s end,  
 A sheltered woods. Wind murmured in its branches.  
 The river Lethe drifted past the still homes. 705  
 Above the water, souls from countless nations  
 Flitted, like bees in tranquil summer meadows  
 Who move from bud to vivid bud and stream

**680–Devotedly surveyed the souls confined there:** Anchises is reviewing souls prior to their reincarnation, much as a Roman censor would ceremonially review Roman citizens.  
**694–the Libyan realms:** Carthage.

BOOK 6

Around white lilies – all the field whirs loudly.  
The unexpected sight enthralled Aeneas. 710  
He wished to learn about it – what the stream was,  
And what men filled the banks in that great phalanx.  
Father Anchises answered, “These are souls  
Fate owes new bodies. Here at Lethe’s water  
They drink up long oblivion and peace. 715  
All of this time, I’ve yearned to tell of them  
And let you see them, counting my descendants,  
To share my joy that you’ve reached Italy.”  
“Father, do some souls really soar back skyward  
From here, returning into sluggish bodies? 720  
What dreadful longing sends them toward the light?”  
“I’ll free you from suspense, my child,” he answered,  
And told it all, in detail and in order.  
“At first, an inner spirit nurtures earth  
And sky, the water’s plains, the moon’s bright globe, 725  
The sun and stars; and mind infuses each part  
And animates the mass of all there is.  
Thus arise humans, grazing beasts, and creatures  
That fly, and monsters in the glittering ocean.  
Their seeds have fiery force; these come from heaven. 730  
And yet the noxious body slows them somewhat.  
The earthly parts that perish make them numb.  
Those parts bring fear, desire, joy, and sorrow.  
Souls in dark dungeons cannot see the sky.  
When, on the final day, a life departs, 735  
Not every evil sickness of the body  
Wholly withdraws from that poor spirit – many  
Are long grown in, mysteriously ingrained.  
So souls are disciplined and pay the price

734–souls in dark dungeons: Vergil incorporates the Orphic idea of the body as the prison of the soul.

BOOK 6

Of old wrongdoing. Some are splayed, exposed 740  
 To hollow winds; a flood submerges some,  
 Washing out wickedness; fire scorches some pure.  
 Each bears his own ghost; then a few are sent  
 To live in broad Elysium's happy fields,  
 Till time's great circle is completed, freeing 745  
 The hardened stain so the ethereal mind,  
 The fire of pure air, is left untainted.  
 When they have circled through a thousand years,  
 God calls them all in one long rank to Lethe,  
 To send them back forgetful to the sky's vault, 750  
 With a desire to go back into bodies."  
 Anchises finished, and he drew the two guests  
 Into the middle of the rumbling crowd.  
 He climbed a ridge that showed him every man  
 In the long line. He knew each face approaching. 755  
 "Come, hear your destiny, the future glory  
 Of Dardanus' long line, all the descendants  
 We are to have from the Italian race —  
 Great souls who will be born into our family.  
 That young man leaning on a headless spear 760  
 Will take the next turn in the airy light:  
 Your posthumous son Silvius (a name  
 From Alba), first of Troy's Italian bloodline.  
 Lavinia will raise him in the forest,  
 And he will be a king and father kings: 765  
 Our family that will reign in Alba Longa.  
 By him stands Procas, glory of Troy's race,  
 Followed by Capys, Numitor, Aeneas

749—**God:** Used vaguely.

757—**Dardanus' long line:** The Romans claimed ancestry from the Trojans.

764—**Lavinia:** Aeneas' future wife in Italy, the daughter of King Latinus.

766—**Alba Longa:** City believed to have been founded by Aeneas's son Ascanius.

767—**Procas:** One of the Latin kings of Alba Longa.

BOOK 6

Silvius, your high-hearted, blameless namesake –  
 If ever he succeeds to Alba's kingship. 770  
 What fine young men! You see the strength in them.  
 Oak leaves of civic honor shade their temples.  
 They'll found Nomentum, Gabii, Fidenae,  
 The fortress of Collatia in the mountains,  
 Pometii, Castrum Inui, Bola, Cora – 775  
 The famous names of places nameless now.  
 Romulus, Mars' child, Trojan through his mother,  
 Will join Mars' father, by his side above.  
 You see the twin crests? They're a special emblem  
 The father of the gods already gives him. 780  
 Under the omens this man saw, renowned Rome  
 Will rule the world and raise her heart to heaven;  
 Blessed in her sons, with one wall ringing seven  
 Citadels: like the tower-crowned Great Mother,  
 Driving her chariot through Phrygian cities, 785  
 Holding in blissful arms her hundred grandsons  
 From gods – all gods themselves, who live in heaven.  
 Now turn your eyes here, see this clan – your Romans:  
 Caesar, and all of Iulus' offspring, destined

**772–Oak leaves of civic honor:** A wreath of oak leaves was presented to Romans who saved a citizen's life in battle.

**773–75–Nomentum . . . Cora:** Early settlements founded from Alba Longa in the region surrounding Rome, all of which had lost their importance by Vergil's day.

**777–Romulus, Mars' child:** The war god Mars impregnated a Vestal Virgin called Ilia, a descendant of Assaracus (named in the Latin here; see 6.648–50n.), who bore Rome's founders, Romulus and Remus.

**784–85–tower-crowned Great Mother . . . Phrygian cities:** The mother goddess Cybele, or Magna Mater, who wore a crown of turrets and drove a chariot pulled by lions. Her cult was imported to Rome during the Second Punic War. Her mention here underlines the Romans' descent from the Trojans.

**789–Caesar . . . Iulus' offspring:** Probably Augustus, since his adoptive father, Julius Caesar, is mentioned below (829–31), but scholars debate this identification.

BOOK 6

To make their way to heaven's splendid heights. 790  
 Here is the god's son you have often heard  
 Promised, Augustus Caesar, who will bring  
 Another age of gold to Saturn's old realm,  
 Latium. Past India he'll take our rule,  
 Beyond the Garamantes and the sun's path 795  
 That marks the year, where Atlas hefts the sky  
 And turns the high vault set with burning stars.  
 The Caspian realm, the land around Maeotis  
 Already quake at prophecies – he's coming!  
 All the Nile's seven mouths are in confusion. 800  
 Hercules didn't travel through so much land  
 To pierce the bronze-hoofed deer or tame the woods  
 Of Erymanthus, or make Lerna tremble  
 Under his bow; nor Bacchus, flexing vine reins,  
 Whom tigers drew in triumph from high Nysa. 805  
 Shall we hang back and not exert our courage,  
 Fearing to stake our claim in Italy?  
 Who is that, far off, olive-crowned, and bringing  
 A sacrifice? White hair, white beard – I know him:  
 This Roman king will found the new-built city 810  
 On laws. From little Cures with its poor soil

792–94–Augustus Caesar . . .

**Latium:** The reign of Caesar Augustus (31 BCE–14 CE) was distinguished as a period of great civic and economic prosperity as well as literary achievement. Vergil claims it resembles the first Golden Age, when the god Saturn ruled in Latium.

795–Garamantes: An African people.

798–The Caspian realm . . . Maeotis: The Caspian Sea and the Sea of Azov.

801–Hercules: The hero Hercules had to complete Twelve Labors to atone for unintentionally killing his family; the

labors included capturing the Cerynaian deer, slaying the Erymanthian boar, and defeating the many-headed Lernaean Hydra.

805–Nysa: Bacchus, god of wine and revelry, was believed to have been born on Mount Nysa in India.

810–11–This Roman king . . . Cures: Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome, was born in the Sabine town of Cures. He instituted many of Rome's most important religious and political customs.

BOOK 6

He'll rise to great dominion. But that next one,  
 Tullus, will break the country's peace and rouse  
 Its men, who've grown unused to victories.  
 Next is the boaster Ancus, even now 815  
 Drunk on the breezes of the people's favor.  
 Now shall I show you Tarquin kings and Brutus,  
 The proud avenger, winning back the fasces —  
 First consul, with that office's harsh axes?  
 For splendid freedom's sake he'll have his own sons 820  
 Put to death, when they stir up war again —  
 Poor man, though ages after him applaud.  
 Love for his country, greed for praise will triumph.  
 Torquatus with his savage ax, the Drusi  
 And Decii, Camillus, who'll bring home 825  
 Our standards. See those two in bright matched armor,  
 Souls in accord while night imprisons them.  
 But once they reach the light, how great a war

**813–Tullus:** Tullus Hostilius, the third king of Rome, who conquered Alba Longa.

**815–Ancus:** Ancus Martius, the fourth king of Rome.

**817–18–Tarquin kings and Brutus, the proud avenger . . . fasces:** Tarquinius Priscus and Tarquinius Superbus (the Proud), the fifth and seventh kings of Rome. The rape by Superbus' son of the Roman noblewoman Lucretia caused Lucius Junius Brutus and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus to drive out the kings in 510 BCE; they became the first Roman consuls and shifted Rome from a monarchy to a republic, symbolized by the fasces, a bundle of wooden rods and an ax bound together (the word *fascism* is derived from this). Brutus the assassin of Julius Caesar was Lucius' descendant.

**824–Torquatus:** Manlius Torquatus, a Roman general from the fourth century BCE who executed his son for abandoning his military post.

**824–the Drusi:** The most famous Drusi were Augustus's wife, Livia, and her son by a previous marriage, the future emperor Tiberius.

**825–Decii:** A Roman plebeian family, most famous for a father and son who ritually sacrificed themselves in battle (Latin *devotio*) for the salvation of Rome in 340 and 295 BCE, respectively.

**825–Camillus:** A soldier and statesman known for being imprisoned by invading Gauls and recovering Roman battle standards from the enemy, which invites recollection of Octavian's recovery of military standards previously lost to the Parthians.

They'll rouse, what ranks of death, father-in-law  
 Come down the bouldered Alps from high Monoecus, 830  
 And son-in-law deploying all the East.  
 Children, don't lose your horror of such warfare.  
 Don't turn your massive strength against your country.  
 You of the gods' stock: take the lead, have mercy!  
 My son, throw down your weapons! 835  
 Mummius – there! – in triumph over Corinth's  
 Slain Greeks will ride up to the Capitol;  
 Paullus will root out Agamemnon's town  
 And Argos: Perseus, Achilles' heir,  
 Will pay for Troy and Pallas' sullied shrine. 840  
 Great Cato, Cossus, who could pass you over?  
 Gracchus' sons? – Scipios, the twin war-lightning  
 Fellers of Libya? – or that resourceful

**829–31–father-in-law . . . son-in-law:** A reference to the Roman civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great, who was married to Caesar's daughter Julia until her death in childbirth. After successful military campaigns in Gaul, in 49 BCE Caesar marched his troops through the Alps and into Roman territory; this was seen as an act of war by the Senate, which ordered Pompey to defend the state. The ensuing conflict ended in Caesar's solidification of power and Rome's permanent shift from republic to empire.

**836–Mummius:** Lucius Mummius, who in 146 BCE sacked the city of Corinth and made Greece part of Rome's territories.

**838–39–Paullus . . . Agamemnon's town . . . Argos:** Lucius Aemilius Paullus conquered Perseus, king of Macedon, in the battle of Pydna in 171 BCE. Agamemnon's town was Mycenae. "Argos" is often used to denote the same part of the Peloponnese.

**840–Pallas' sullied shrine:** A reference to the rape of Cassandra in Minerva's shrine (2.403–6) and perhaps also to the theft of the Palladium (2.162–68).

**841–Great Cato:** Cato the Elder, who ended every speech by urging the destruction of Carthage.

**841–Cossus:** A Roman general famous for killing the king of Veii in single armed combat in 428 BCE and so earning the "Rich Spoils" (*spolia opima*), which were awarded only three times in Roman history. See 6.855–57n.

**842–Gracchus' sons:** The Gracchi brothers, Tiberius and Gaius, who advocated the redistribution of land to veterans and the poor and were assassinated by the Roman elite.

**842–43–Scipios . . . Libya:** Probably Publius Scipio Africanus and Scipio Aemilianus, who defeated the Carthaginian general Hannibal in 202 BCE and sacked the city of Carthage in 146 BCE, respectively. "Libya" refers obliquely to Carthage.

Fabricius, or Serranus, furrow-sower?  
 You, Fabii, seize my weary sight: your Greatest 845  
 Will be Rome's sole protector – through his stalling!  
 Others, I know, will beat out softer-breathing  
 Bronze shapes, or draw from marble living faces,  
 Excel in pleading cases, chart the sky's paths,  
 Predict the rising of the constellations. 850  
 But Romans, don't forget that world dominion  
 Is your great craft: peace, and then peaceful customs;  
 Sparing the conquered, striking down the haughty."  
 They were amazed. Father Anchises added,  
 "See how Marcellus marches in the glory 855  
 Of the Rich Spoils, an over-towering victor.  
 This knight will save a Rome in chaos, crushing  
 Carthage and rebel Gaul; he'll make our third gift  
 Of captured rebel arms to Quirinus."  
 Aeneas saw a fine youth in bright armor, 860  
 Walking beside Marcellus – but his face  
 Was overcast, his eyes fixed on the ground.

**844–Fabricius:** Gaius Fabricius Luscinus, who lost to King Pyrrhus of Epirus in battle; the heavy losses suffered by Pyrrhus in winning his victory are the origin of the phrase “Pyrrhic victory.”

**844–Serranus:** Nickname of the Roman general Gaius Atilius Regulus, a hero of the First Punic War.

**845–Fabii . . . your Greatest:** One of the most celebrated of the Fabian clan was Quintus Fabius Maximus (“the greatest”) Cunctator (“the delayer”) who saved the Romans from Hannibal by delaying tactics.

**847–Others:** The Greeks, whom Anchises otherwise pays little attention to.

**853–Sparing the conquered, striking down the haughty:** One of the most fa-

mous lines in the poem; the end of book 12 raises the question of whether Aeneas follows his father's advice.

**855–57–Marcellus . . . the Rich Spoils . . . This knight:** Marcus Claudius Marcellus, a Roman general during the Second Punic War (218–201 BCE) who had won the *spolia opima* (“Rich Spoils”) for only the third time in Roman history, the first two winners being the legendary king Romulus and Cossus (see 6.841n.).

**859–Quirinus:** Romulus, the founder of Rome, became identified with the god Quirinus after his death.

**860–a fine youth:** Gaius Claudius Marcellus, the nephew and heir-apparent of Augustus, who was only twenty when he fell ill and died in 23 BCE.



BOOK 6

“Father, who’s that companion of the hero?  
 A son perhaps, or grandson of that great stock?  
 What a fine presence, what great praise around him! 865  
 But black night winds sad shadows round his head.”  
 Father Anchises then began to sob:  
 “My son, don’t ask about your clan’s great sorrow.  
 Fate will give just a glimpse of him on earth.  
 Deities, you decreed the Roman race 870  
 Would be too mighty if it kept this gift.  
 What loud laments from citizens will Mars’ Field  
 Send up to Mars’ great city! What processions  
 Will Tiber see when gliding by the new tomb!  
 No boy of Trojan blood will raise more hope 875  
 In Latin forebears. In no other nursling  
 Will Romulus’ land ever glory more.  
 Rectitude, old-time honor, strength unbeaten  
 In war! Nobody meeting him in battle  
 Could have escaped him as he came on foot 880  
 Or gored a horse’s foam-flecked side with spurs.  
 Poor boy – if you could only break this cruel fate!  
 You’ll be Marcellus. Let me give the gifts  
 I can: armloads of lilies, purple flowers,  
 Scattered in empty ritual for the soul 885  
 Of my descendant.” Through the airy, broad fields  
 They wandered now, surveying everything.  
 Anchises led his son to all the sights,  
 And fired the lust for glory in the future,  
 Then told about the wars he soon must fight, 890  
 Laurentian tribes, the city of Latinus,  
 How to endure or else avoid each hardship.

**872–Mars’ Field:** The Campus Martius, where Marcellus’ ashes were interred at the mausoleum of Augustus.

**890–91–told about the wars . . . Lau-**

**rentian tribes, the city of Latinus:** Anchises foresees the events of books 7–12, in which Aeneas will battle the native Italians, here called Laurentians.

## BOOK 6

There are two gates of sleep. The one, they say,  
Is horn: true shades go out there easily;  
The other – shining, white, well-crafted ivory – 895  
Lets spirits send false dreams up toward the sky.  
His speeches done, Anchises brought his son here,  
And sent him with the Sibyl through the ivory.  
Aeneas went straight back, to ships and comrades,  
Then coasted to the harbor of Caieta. 900  
The prows dropped anchors; sterns stood on the shore.

**893–two gates of sleep:** Modeled on the gates of horn and ivory described by Odysseus’s wife, Penelope, in *Odyssey* 19.562–67. Why Aeneas passes through the Gate of Ivory, the gate of false dreams, remains a mystery.

**900–the harbor of Caieta:** A port near the Gulf of Naples, named for Aeneas’s nurse.

# Glossary

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Abas</b>      | The name of two friends of Aeneas, one Trojan and one Etruscan; possibly also the name of a Greek warrior from whom Aeneas wins armor in a skirmish during the sack of Troy   |
| <b>Acestes</b>   | A Trojan hero who hosts Aeneas and his followers in Sicily; founder of Acesta   |
| <b>Achaea</b>    | A region in the northern Peloponnese  |
| <b>Achaeans</b>  | Often used to refer to the Greeks generally, especially those who besieged Troy   |
| <b>Achates</b>   | Aeneas' comrade and armor bearer, famed for his loyalty   |
| <b>Acheron</b>   | A river in the Underworld, sometimes used to refer to the Underworld as a whole   |
| <b>Achilles</b>  | Son of the hero Peleus and the sea nymph Thetis; the greatest Greek warrior at Troy; slayer of the Trojan champion Hector   |
| <b>Actium</b>    | A headland in Acarnania in Greece with a temple of Apollo near which Octavian, later called Augustus Caesar, defeated the Roman general Antony and the Egyptian ruler Cleopatra in a naval battle in 31 BCE to become the uncontested ruler of Rome |
| <b>Adriatic</b>  | The sea between Italy and the Balkan peninsula  |
| <b>Aegean</b>    | The sea between Greece and Asia Minor (modern Turkey)   |
| <b>Aeneas</b>    | The son of the Trojan prince Anchises by the goddess Venus; he established in Italy the dynasty that would found and rule Rome  |
| <b>Aeolia</b>    | An island ruled by Aeolus, master of the winds; probably Lipari, north of Sicily  |
| <b>Aeolus</b>    | A god, master of the winds  |
| <b>Agamemnon</b> | King of Mycenae and leader of the Greeks besieging Troy; he was murdered by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus on his return from Troy   |
| <b>Ajax</b>      | The name of two Greek warriors who fought at Troy: (1) Telamonian Ajax, or Ajax the Great, of Salamis; and (2) Ajax the Lesser, of Locris, who raped Cassandra and was killed by Minerva, from  |

## GLOSSARY

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
|                        | whose temple he had dragged her along with the Palladium, the sacred image of the goddess   |
| <b>Alba [Longa]</b>    | The pre-Roman settlement of the Trojans in Italy  |
| <b>Albula</b>          | A pre-Roman name for the Tiber  |
| <b>Albunea</b>         | Both a grove and a fountain in Latium   |
| <b>Alcides</b>         | “Descended from Alcaeus,” used for Hercules   |
| <b>Allecto</b>         | One of the three Furies   |
| <b>Amata</b>           | Queen of Latium, wife of Latinus, and mother of Lavinia   |
| <b>Anchises</b>        | Father of Aeneas  |
| <b>Andromache</b>      | Wife of the Trojan champion Hector, later married to Helenus  |
| <b>Antony</b>          | A Roman general who along with the Egyptian ruler Cleopatra was defeated by Octavian (later called Augustus Caesar) at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE       |
| <b>Apollo</b>          | Also Phoebus; the god of music, medicine, light, prophecy, and archery; twin brother of Diana and son of Jupiter and Latona; father of the healer Asclepius |
| <b>Arcadia</b>         | A district in the central Peloponnese, the original home of Evander, king of Pallanteum in Italy  |
| <b>Argives</b>         | Greeks  |
| <b>Argos</b>           | A kingdom in the Greek Peloponnese  |
| <b>Ascanius</b>        | Another name for Iulus, Aeneas’ son   |
| <b>Atlas</b>           | The Titan who holds up the sky  |
| <b>Atreus</b>          | The father of Agamemnon and Menelaus  |
| <b>Augustus Caesar</b> | The title adopted by Octavian when he became the first Roman emperor; the <i>Aeneid</i> was written under his auspices                                      |
| <b>Aurora</b>          | The goddess of the dawn; she drives a chariot across the sky  |
| <b>Ausonia</b>         | Another name for Italy; the allies of Turnus and Latinus are sometimes called Ausonians   |
| <b>Avernus</b>         | A lake in Italy and the region around it, believed to be located near an entrance to the Underworld; the Cumaean Sibyl had her cave there                   |
| <b>Bacchus</b>         | The god of wine and ecstatic celebration; his followers were feral women known as Bacchantes  |
| <b>Baiae</b>           | A Roman resort town on the Bay of Naples  |
| <b>Bellona</b>         | An Italian goddess of warfare   |

## GLOSSARY

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Brutus</b>        | The Roman who overthrew the monarchy, which under Tarquin the Proud had become a tyranny, and established the Republic  |
| <b>Camilla</b>       | A woman warrior and leader of the Volscians; ally of Turnus   |
| <b>Carthage</b>      | Dido's city on the coast of North Africa  |
| <b>Cassandra</b>     | A Trojan princess, daughter of Priam; after she refused Apollo sex, he gave her the gift of prophecy along with the curse that no one would believe her predictions; she was murdered along with her later captor Agamemnon |
| <b>Centaur</b> s     | Creatures that were half-human, half-horse  |
| <b>Cerberus</b>      | The three-headed dog that guarded the entrance to the Underworld  |
| <b>Ceres</b>         | The goddess of agriculture and mother of Proserpina, wife of Pluto  |
| <b>Charybdis</b>     | A whirlpool in the straits of Messina located opposite the cave of the monster Scylla   |
| <b>Circe</b>         | A sorceress who turned men into animals; see <i>Odyssey</i> 10  |
| <b>Corinth</b>       | An important Greek city on the isthmus between mainland Greece and the Peloponnese  |
| <b>Crete</b>         | A large Aegean island, the home of King Minos and his wife, Pasiphaë, who mated with a bull and gave birth to the monstrous Minotaur  |
| <b>Creusa</b>        | A Trojan princess and the first wife of Aeneas; the mother of Iulus   |
| <b>Cumae</b>         | A colony near Naples and the home of the Sibyl, a priestess and prophetess of Apollo  |
| <b>Cumaean Sibyl</b> | Prophetess and keeper of the entrance to the Underworld at Cumae; Aeneas' guide in the Underworld   |
| <b>Cupid</b>         | "Desire," the god of erotic love and son of Venus   |
| <b>Curetes</b>       | The indigenous people of Crete, who cared for the infant Jupiter  |
| <b>Cybele</b>        | The Great Mother goddess of Asia Minor  |
| <b>Cyprus</b>        | An Aegean island, important cult center for Venus   |
| <b>Cythera</b>       | An Aegean island in the waters off which Venus was born   |
| <b>Dardanus</b>      | The founder of Troy; Trojans are sometimes called Dardanians  |
| <b>Deïphobus</b>     | A Trojan prince, the son of Priam and Hecuba, who married Helen after the death of his brother Paris  |
| <b>Delos</b>         | The Aegean island where Apollo and Diana were born and a chief site of their cult   |

## GLOSSARY

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Diana</b>    | The goddess of hunting and the moon; sister of Apollo; she was sometimes linked with Hecate, a goddess of the Underworld   |
| <b>Dido</b>     | Also called Elissa; the ruler of Carthage, which she founded after fleeing Tyre, where her husband had been murdered   |
| <b>Diomedes</b> | A Greek hero at Troy who afterward founded the town of Arpi in Italy   |
| <b>Dis</b>      | The god of the Underworld  |
| <b>Elissa</b>   | Another name for Dido  |
| <b>Erebus</b>   | The god of darkness; another name for the Underworld   |
| <b>Eryx</b>     | (1) A mountain in Sicily; (2) A Sicilian hero, son of Venus and Neptune  |
| <b>Etna</b>     | A volcano in Sicily  |
| <b>Etruria</b>  | A nation in Italy; the Etruscans, also called Tuscans, were allies of Aeneas against Turnus and Latinus  |
| <b>Euryalus</b> | The friend of Nisus and his partner on an ill-fated Trojan mission during the war in Italy   |
| <b>Evander</b>  | A Greek king from Arcadia who founded Pallanteum in Italy; the most important ally of Aeneas   |
| <b>Fates</b>    | The three goddesses who spun and cut the threads of mortal lives   |
| <b>Faunus</b>   | An Italian woodland deity, father of King Latinus  |
| <b>Furies</b>   | Three demons of female anger, especially as avengers of the murder of blood relatives: Allecto, Megaera and Tisiphone  |
| <b>Gaul</b>     | The region that is now France; the Gauls attacked Rome in the fourth century BCE and were repulsed; the region became part of the Roman Empire in the first century BCE  |
| <b>Geryon</b>   | A three-bodied giant killed by Hercules  |
| <b>Gorgon</b>   | A monster in the shape of a woman with hair of snakes; the most famous was Medusa, who had the power to turn onlookers to stone and who was killed by Perseus; her head was then placed on Minerva's aegis (shield or breastplate) |
| <b>Hades</b>    | Also called Dis, Pluto, and Orcus; the god of the Underworld and husband of Proserpina; also used to refer to the Underworld itself  |
| <b>Hecate</b>   | A goddess of the Underworld and of witchcraft; she is often linked with Diana  |
| <b>Hector</b>   | Son of Priam and Hecuba, husband of Andromache, brother of Creusa, and brother-in-law of Aeneas; chief defender of Troy, killed by Achilles  |

## GLOSSARY

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Hecuba</b>         | The wife of Priam and queen of Troy   |
| <b>Helen</b>          | The most beautiful woman in the world and the wife of Menelaus of Sparta; her abduction by Paris at the instigation of Venus caused the Trojan War                                  |
| <b>Helenus</b>        | A Trojan prince who married the widowed Andromache and founded Little Troy in Epirus (modern northwestern Greece and southern Albania)  |
| <b>Helicon</b>        | A mountain in central Greece, home to the Muses   |
| <b>Hercules</b>       | A hero and son of Jupiter who achieved divinity after completing twelve superhuman labors   |
| <b>Hesperia</b>       | Literally “The West”: Italy   |
| <b>Hydra of Lerna</b> | A many-headed monster killed by Hercules as one of his Twelve Labors; for each head Hercules lopped off, two grew in its place; Hercules cauterized the stumps to stop regeneration |
| <b>Ilia</b>           | The mother of Romulus and Remus by Mars   |
| <b>Ilium</b>          | Another name for Troy   |
| <b>Iris</b>           | The goddess of the rainbow and a divine messenger   |
| <b>Iulus</b>          | Also called Ascanius, the son of Aeneas and Creusa and the founder of the Julian line that included Julius Caesar   |
| <b>Jove</b>           | Another name for Jupiter  |
| <b>Julius Caesar</b>  | Brilliant Roman general, murdered in 44 BCE for his pretensions to autocracy; he adopted Octavian, later called Augustus, as his heir   |
| <b>Juno</b>           | The queen of the gods, daughter of Saturn, and wife and sister of Jupiter   |
| <b>Jupiter</b>        | Also called Jove, Greek name Zeus; the son of Saturn, he became ruler of the gods after he defeated his father and the other Titans   |
| <b>Juturna</b>        | The sister of Turnus, deified after her rape by Jupiter   |
| <b>Latinus</b>        | King of Latium, husband of Amata and father of Lavinia  |
| <b>Latium</b>         | Latinus’ kingdom in Italy   |
| <b>Lausus</b>         | The son of Mezentius  |
| <b>Lavinia</b>        | A princess of Latium betrothed to Turnus but destined for marriage with Aeneas; her father’s refusal to give her to Aeneas starts the war between the Italians and Trojans          |
| <b>Lethe</b>          | The river of forgetfulness in the Underworld  |
| <b>Libya</b>          | A region on the coast of North Africa   |

## GLOSSARY

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| <b>Manlius</b>     | A Roman general who defended the Capitol from an attack by the Gauls in the fourth century BCE  |
| <b>Mars</b>        | The god of war, father of Romulus and Remus   |
| <b>Megaera</b>     | One of the three Furies   |
| <b>Menelaus</b>    | The king of Sparta and cuckolded husband of Helen of Troy   |
| <b>Mercury</b>     | The messenger god and conductor of souls to the Underworld  |
| <b>Messapus</b>    | A son of Neptune and ally of Turnus   |
| <b>Metabus</b>     | The expelled king of Privernum and father of Camilla  |
| <b>Mezentius</b>   | The deposed king of Etruscan Caere and an ally of Turnus  |
| <b>Minerva</b>     | Also called Pallas; in Greek, Athena; the goddess of wisdom, warfare, and women's handicrafts   |
| <b>Mnestheus</b>   | A lieutenant of Aeneas  |
| <b>Neoptolemus</b> | Also called Pyrrhus; a Greek hero at Troy, the son of Achilles; he enslaved Andromache, widow of Hector, and married Hermione, the daughter of Helen and Menelaus |
| <b>Neptune</b>     | The god of the sea, who built the walls of Troy but then turned against the city when King Laomedon refused to pay him  |
| <b>Nisus</b>       | The friend of Euryalus and his partner on an ill-fated Trojan mission during the war in Italy   |
| <b>Numitor</b>     | (1) A king of Alba Longa and the father of Ilia; (2) a Rutulian warrior   |
| <b>Olympus</b>     | The home of the gods, at the top of Mount Olympus on the border between Macedonia and Thessaly  |
| <b>Orcus</b>       | Another name for Hades; the Underworld  |
| <b>Orestes</b>     | A Greek prince who killed his mother, Clytemnestra, in revenge for her murder of his father, Agamemnon, and was driven insane by the Furies                       |
| <b>Palatine</b>    | One of the seven hills of Rome  |
| <b>Palinurus</b>   | Aeneas' helmsman  |
| <b>Pallanteum</b>  | The city in Italy founded by the Greek king Evander   |
| <b>Pallas</b>      | (1) Evander's son; (2) Evander's ancestor; (3) another name for Minerva   |
| <b>Paris</b>       | The Trojan prince who caused the Trojan War by his abduction of Helen   |
| <b>Pasiphaë</b>    | A queen of Crete cursed with love for a bull; she became the mother of the Minotaur by him  |



## GLOSSARY

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|-------------------|--|
| <b>Peleus</b>     | The father of Achilles   |
| <b>Phoebus</b>    | “Shining,” another name for Apollo   |
| <b>Phrygia</b>    | A region in Asia Minor that was subject to Troy; Trojans are sometimes referred to as Phrygians  |
| <b>Pirithoüs</b>  | A friend of Theseus who was condemned to perpetual torture for attempting to kidnap Proserpina, queen of the Underworld                                |
| <b>Pluto</b>      | God of the Underworld; also called Hades   |
| <b>Polyphemus</b> | The Cyclops blinded by Odysseus (Ulysses)  |
| <b>Priam</b>      | The king of Troy at the time of the Trojan War; husband of Hecuba and father of fifty sons, including Hector and Paris                                 |
| <b>Proserpina</b> | Wife of Pluto and queen of the Underworld  |
| <b>Pyrrhus</b>    | Another name for Neoptolemus   |
| <b>Quirinus</b>   | A native Italian god and another name for Romulus  |
| <b>Rhoeteum</b>   | A promontory near Troy; hence “Rhoeteian” can denote “Trojan”  |
| <b>Romulus</b>    | Also called Quirinus; a descendant of Aeneas, the son of Mars, twin brother of Remus, and founder of Rome  |
| <b>Rutulians</b>  | Turnus’ tribe in Italy   |
| <b>Sarpedon</b>   | A son of Jupiter and an ally of Troy during the Greek siege  |
| <b>Saturn</b>     | A Titan, the father of Jupiter and Juno, and the original ruler of Italy; he was driven there after being deposed from kingship of the gods by Jupiter |
| <b>Scylla</b>     | A sea monster lurking in the Straits of Messina opposite the whirlpool Charybdis   |
| <b>Sibyl</b>      | A prophetess; in the <i>Aeneid</i> the keeper of the entrance to Hades at Cumae, and Aeneas’ guide in the Underworld                                   |
| <b>Simoïs</b>     | A river near Troy  |
| <b>Sparta</b>     | A city in the Greek Peloponnese, home to Helen and Menelaus  |
| <b>Styx</b>       | A river in the Underworld; oaths sworn by the gods on Styx were binding  |
| <b>Sychaeus</b>   | The husband of Dido in Tyre, murdered by her brother Pygmalion   |
| <b>Syrtes</b>     | Notoriously dangerous sandbanks off the northern coast of Africa, modern Gulf of Sidra   |
| <b>Tartarus</b>   | The part of the Underworld reserved for punishing wrongdoers; also used for the Underworld in general  |

## GLOSSARY

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| <b>Teucer</b>    | (1) The original ancestor of the Trojan royal house: Trojans are often referred to as Teucrians; (2) a Greek warrior who fought at Troy and was later an exile from his kingdom, Salamis |
| <b>Theseus</b>   | The killer of the Minotaur (with the help of Ariadne) and later king of Athens; he joined his friend Pirithoüs in the attempted kidnapping of Proserpina                                 |
| <b>Tibur</b>     | A city in Latium; modern Tivoli  |
| <b>Tisiphone</b> | One of the three Furies  |
| <b>Troy</b>      | Also called Ilium; the city of Aeneas in Asia Minor, destroyed by the Greeks after the ten-year Trojan War   |
| <b>Turnus</b>    | A prince of the Rutulians in Italy, betrothed to Lavinia   |
| <b>Tuscans</b>   | Another name for Etruscans   |
| <b>Tyre</b>      | The Phoenician city from which Dido fled to found Carthage   |
| <b>Ulysses</b>   | For the Greeks, Odysseus; the king of Ithaca and an important Greek hero at Troy   |
| <b>Venus</b>     | For the Greeks, Aphrodite; the goddess of love and the mother of Aeneas by Anchises  |
| <b>Vulcan</b>    | The god of fire and metalworking and the husband of Venus  |
| <b>Xanthus</b>   | A river beside Troy  |

THE  
AENEID

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VERGIL

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