

that grieves you? Do not keep it from me, but tell me, so we may know it together."

Achilles drew a deep sigh and said, "You know; why tell you what you know well already? We went to Thebe, the strong city of Eetion, sacked it and brought the spoils here. The sons of the Achaeans shared it duly among themselves, and chose lovely Chryseis as the reward of Agamemnon. But Chryses, priest of Apollo, came to the ships of the Achaeans to free his daughter, and brought with him a great ransom. Moreover, he bore in his hand the scepter of Apollo, wreathed with a suppliant's wreath, and he sought the Achaeans, but most of all the two sons of Atreus who were their chiefs.

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

"Help your brave son, therefore, if you are able. Go to Olympus, and if you have ever done him service in word or deed, implore the aid of Zeus. Often in my father's house I have heard you glory in that you alone of the immortals saved the son of Cronus¹⁹ from ruin, when the others, with Hera, Poseidon, and Pallas²⁰ Athena would have put him in bonds. It was you, goddess, who delivered him by calling to Olympus the hundred-handed monster whom gods call Briareus, but men Aegaeon, for he is stronger even than his father. When therefore he took his seat, all-glorious

beside the son of Cronus, the other gods were afraid, and did not bind him. Go, then, to him, remind him of all this, clasp his knees, and bid him give help to the Trojans. Let the Achaeans be hemmed in at the sterns of their ships and perish on the seashore, so that they may reap what joy they may of their king, and that Agamemnon may rue his blindness in offering insult to the foremost of the Achaeans."

Thetis wept and answered, "My son, woe is me that I should have borne or suckled you. Would indeed that you had lived your span free from all sorrow at your ships, for it is all too brief. Alas, that you should be at once short of life and long of sorrow above your peers. Woe, therefore, was the hour in which I bore you. Nevertheless, I will go to the snowy heights of Olympus, and tell this tale to Zeus, if he will hear our prayer. Meanwhile, stay where you are with your ships, nurse your anger against the Achaeans, and hold aloof from battle. For Zeus went yesterday to Oceanus to a feast among the noble Ethiopians, and the other gods went with him. He will return to Olympus 12 days hence; I will then go to his mansions paved with bronze and will beseech him; nor do I doubt that I shall be able to persuade him."

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

So saying he gave the girl over to her father, who received her gladly, and they ranged the holy

hecatomb, all orderly around the altar of the god washed their hands and took up the barley sprinkle over the victims; while Chryses lifted hands and prayed aloud on their behalf. "He he cried, "O god of the silver bow, that protects and holy Cilla, and rules Tenedos with your Just as you heard me when I prayed before pressed hard upon the Achaeans, so hear again, and stay this fearful pestilence from Danaans."

Thus did he pray, and Apollo heard his prayer. When they had finished praying and sprinkled barley meal, they drew back the heads of the oxen and killed and flayed them. They cut out the bones, wrapped them in two layers of fat, set pieces of raw meat on top of them, and then Cilla laid them on the wood fire and poured wine over them, while the young men stood near him with pronged spits in their hands. When the thighs were burned and they had tasted the inward parts, they cut the rest up small, put the pieces upon spits, roasted them until they were done, and then they took them off. Then, when they had finished their feast and the feast was ready, they ate it, and every man had his full share, so that all were satisfied. As soon as they had had enough to eat and drink, young men fill the mixing-bowl with wine and water and hand it around, after giving every man his drink offering.

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

But Achilles camped at his ships and nursed his rage. He did not go to the honorable assembly, and

19 Son of Cronus: i.e., Zeus.

20 A name of uncertain significance often applied to Athena.

hecatomb, all orderly around the altar of the god. They washed their hands and took up the barley meal to sprinkle over the victims, while Chryses lifted up his hands and prayed aloud on their behalf. "Hear me," he cried, "O god of the silver bow, that protects Chryse and holy Cilla, and rules Tenedos with your might. Just as you heard me when I prayed before, and pressed hard upon the Achaeans, so hear me yet again, and stay this fearful pestilence from the Danaans."

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

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

But Achilles camped at his ships and nursed his rage. He did not go to the honorable assembly, and did

not sally forth to fight, but gnawed at his own heart, pining for battle and the war cry.

Now after 12 days the immortal gods came back in a body to Olympus, and Zeus led the way. Thetis was not unmindful of the charge her son had laid upon her, so she rose from under the sea and went through great heaven with early morning to Olympus, where she found the mighty son of Cronus sitting all alone upon its topmost ridges. She sat herself down before him, and with her left hand seized his knees, while with her right she caught him under the chin and besought him, saying, "Father Zeus, if I ever did you service in word or deed among the immortals, hear my prayer, and do honor to my son, whose life is to be cut short so early. King Agamemnon has dishonored him by taking his prize and keeping her. Honor him then yourself, Olympian lord of counsel, and grant victory to the Trojans until the Achaeans give my son his due and load him with riches in requital."

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

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

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

When the pair had thus laid their plans, they parted—Zeus to his own house, while the goddess left the splendor of Olympus, and plunged into the depths of the sea. The gods rose from their seats, before the coming of their father. Not one of them dared to remain sitting, but all stood up as he came among them. There, then, he took his seat. But Hera, when she saw

at once began to upbraid him. "Trickster," she cried, "which of the gods have you been taking into your counsels now? You are always settling matters in secret behind my back, and have never yet told me, if you could help it, one word of your intentions."

"Hera," replied the father of gods and men, "you must not expect to be informed of all my counsels. You are my wife, but you would find it hard to understand them. When it is proper for you to hear, there is no one, god or man, who will be told sooner, but when I mean to keep a matter to myself, you must not pry or ask questions."

"Dread son of Cronus," answered Hera, "what are you talking about? I? Pry and ask questions? Never. I let you have your own way in everything. Still, I have a strong misgiving that the old merman's daughter Thetis has been talking you over, for she was with you and had hold of your knees this selfsame morning. I believe, therefore, that you have been promising her to give glory to Achilles, and to kill many people at the ships of the Achaeans."

"Wife," said Zeus, "I can do nothing but you suspect me and find it out. You will take nothing by it, for I shall only dislike you the more, and it will go harder with you. Granted that it is as you say; I mean to have it so; sit down and hold your tongue as I bid you for if I once begin to lay my hands on you, though all heaven were on your side, it would profit you nothing."

On this Hera was frightened, so she curbed her stubborn will and sat down in silence. But the heavenly beings were disquieted throughout the house of Zeus, till the cunning workman Hephaestus²¹ began to try and pacify his mother Hera. "It will be intolerable," he said, "if you two fall to wrangling and setting heaven in an uproar about a pack of mortals. If such ill counsels are to prevail, we shall have no pleasure at our banquet. Let me then advise my mother—and she must herself know that it will be better—to make friends with my dear father Zeus, lest he again scold her and disturb our feast. If the Olympian Thunderer wants to hurl us all from our seats, he can do so, for he

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

Hera smiled at this, and as she smiled she took the cup from her son's hands. Then Hephaestus drew sweet nectar from the mixing bowl, and served it around among the gods, going from left to right; and the blessed gods laughed out loud applause as they saw him bustling about the heavenly mansion.²²

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

[*Zeus has lived up to his word to Thetis.*]

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

21 God of the forge.

22 Hephaestus's fall left him permanently lame.

The son of Atreus in dismay bade the heralds call the people to a council man by man, but not to cry the matter aloud; he made haste also himself to call them, and they sat sorry at heart in their assembly. Agamemnon shed tears like a running stream or cataract on the side of some sheer cliff; and thus, with many a heavy sigh he spoke to the Achaeans. "My friends," he said, "princes and councillors of the Argives, the hand of heaven has been laid heavily upon me. Cruel Zeus gave me his solemn promise that I should sack the city of Troy before returning, but he has played me false, and is now bidding me go ingloriously back to Argos with the loss of many people. Such is the will of Zeus, who has laid many a proud city in the dust as he will yet lay others, for his power is above all. Now, therefore, let us all do as I say and sail back to our own country, for we shall not take Troy."

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

The sons of the Achaeans shouted applause at the words of Diomedes, and presently Nestor rose to speak. "Son of Tydeus," he said, "in war your prowess is beyond question, and in council you excel all who are of your own years; no one of the Achaeans can make light of what you say or gainsay it, but you have not yet come to the end of the whole matter. You are still young—you might be the youngest of my own

children—still you have spoken wisely and have counselled the chief of the Achaeans not without discretion; nevertheless I am older than you and I will tell you everything; therefore let no man, not even King Agamemnon, disregard my words, for he that foments civil discord is a clanless, heartless outlaw.

"Now, however, let us obey the behests of night and get our suppers, but let the sentinels, every man of them, camp by the trench that is outside the wall. I am giving these instructions to the young men; when they have been attended to, you, son of Atreus, give your orders, for you are the most royal among us all. Prepare a feast for your councillors; it is right and reasonable that you should do so; there is abundance of wine in your tents, which the ships of the Achaeans bring from Thrace daily. You have everything at your disposal wherewith to entertain guests, and you have many subjects. When many have been gotten together, you can be guided by him whose counsel is wisest—and sorely do we need shrewd and prudent counsel, for the foe has lit his watchfires hard by our ships. Who can be other than dismayed? This night will either be the ruin of our host, or save it."

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

The son of Atreus then bade many councillors of the Achaeans to his quarters and prepared a great feast in their honor. They laid their hands on the good things that were before them, and as soon as they had had enough to eat and drink, old Nestor, whose counsel was ever truest, was the first to lay his mind before them. He, therefore, with all sincerity and goodwill addressed them thus.

"With yourself, most noble son of Atreus, king of men, Agamemnon, will I both begin my speech and end it, for you are king over many people. Zeus, moreover, has vouchsafed you to wield the scepter and to

uphold righteousness, that you may take thought for your people under you; therefore it behooves you above all others both to speak and to give ear, and to carry out the counsel of another who shall have been minded to speak wisely. All turns on you and on your commands, therefore I will say what I think will be best. No man will be of a truer mind than that which has been mine from the hour when you, sir, angered Achilles by taking the girl Briseis from his tent against my judgment. I urged you not to do so, but you yielded to your own pride, and dishonored a hero whom heaven itself had honored—for you still hold the prize that had been awarded to him. Now, however, let us think how we may appease him, both with presents and fair speeches that may conciliate him."

And King Agamemnon answered, "Sir, you have reproved me folly justly. I was wrong. I own it. One whom heaven befriends is in himself a host, and Zeus has shown that he befriends this man by destroying many people of the Achaeans. I was blinded with passion and yielded to my worse mind; therefore I will make amends, and will give him great gifts by way of atonement. I will tell them in the presence of you all. I will give him 7 tripods²³ that have never yet been on the fire, and 10 talents of gold. I will give him 20 iron cauldrons and 12 strong horses that have won races and carried off prizes. Rich, indeed, both in land and gold is he that has as many prizes as my horses have won me. I will give him 7 excellent workwomen, from Lesbos, whom I chose for myself when he took Lesbos²⁴—all of surpassing beauty. I will give him these, and with them her whom I before took from him, the daughter of Briseus; and I swear a great oath that I never went up into her bed, nor have been with her after the manner of men and women.

"All these things will I give him now down, and if hereafter the gods vouchsafe me to sack the city of Priam, let him come when we Achaeans are dividing the spoil, and load his ship with gold and bronze to his liking; furthermore let him take 20 Trojan women, the loveliest after Helen herself. Then, when we reach

Achaean Argos, wealthiest of all lands, he shall be my son-in-law and I will show him like honor with my own dear son Orestes, who is being nurtured in all abundance. I have three daughters, Chrysothemis, Laodice, and Iphianassa; let him take the one of his choice, freely and without gifts of wooing, to the house of Peleus; I will add such dower to boot as no man ever yet gave his daughter, and will give him seven well-established cities, Cardamyle, Enope, and Hire, where there is grass, holy Pherae and the rich meadows of Anthea, Aepea also, and the vine-clad slopes of Pegasus, all near the sea, and on the borders of sandy Pylos. The men that dwell there are rich in cattle and sheep; they will honor him with gifts as though he were a god, and be obedient to his comfortable ordinances. All this will I do if he will now forgo his anger. Let him then yield—it is only Hades who is utterly ruthless and unyielding—and hence he is of all gods the one most hateful to mankind. Moreover I am older and more royal than himself. Therefore, let him now obey me."

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

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

They went their way by the shore of the sea, and prayed earnestly to earth-encircling P that the high spirit of the son of Aeacus²⁵ might favorably towards them. When they reached the tents and the Myrmidons, they found Achilles sitting on a lyre, fair, of cunning workmanship, the cross-bar was of silver. It was part of the spoil he had taken when he sacked the city of Eetion; he was now diverting himself with it and singing the feats of heroes. He was alone with Patroclus, who was opposite to him and said nothing, waiting that he should cease singing. Odysseus and Ajax now came in—Odysseus leading the way—and stood before him. Achilles sprang from his seat with the lyre in his hand, and Patroclus, when he saw the strangers, rose also. Achilles then greeted them, saying, "Welcome, and welcome—you must come upon some greater, you, who for all my anger are still dearest to me, the Achaeans."

With this he led them forward, and bade them sit on seats covered with purple rugs; then he bade Patroclus who was close by him, "Son of Menelaus, set a larger bowl upon the table, mix less water with the wine, and give every man his cup, for these are my very dear friends, who are now under my protection."

Patroclus did as his comrade bade him; he set a chopping-block in front of the fire, and cut the loin of a sheep, the loin also of a goat, and the chine of a fat hog. Automedon held the chops, and Achilles chopped it; he then sliced the pieces of meat on spits while the son of Menoetius held the fire burn high. When the flame had died down, he spread the embers, laid the spits on top of the embers, and setting them upon the tripod, he and he sprinkled them with salt. When the chops were roasted, he set it on platters, and set them around the table in fair baskets, while the heralds gave them their portions. Then Achilles took the chops, and Odysseus against the opposite wall, and Patroclus offer sacrifice to the gods; he cast the offerings into the fire, and he gave his hands upon the good things that were on the table. As soon as they had had enough to eat,

23 A kind of three-legged cauldron, thought originally to have been for use in religious ceremonies, but which at some point also came to be given as gifts.

24 The island was near the supposed site of Troy.

25 Father of Peleus, and so grandfather of Achilles.