

favorably towards them. When they reached the ships and tents of the Myrmidons, they found Achilles playing on a lyre, fair, of cunning workmanship, and its cross-bar was of silver. It was part of the spoils which he had taken when he sacked the city of Eetion, and he was now diverting himself with it and singing the feats of heroes. He was alone with Patroclus, who sat opposite to him and said nothing, waiting till 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 still in his hand, and Patroclus, when he saw the strangers, rose also. Achilles then greeted them, saying, "All hail and welcome—you must come upon some great matter, you, who for all my anger are still dearest to me of the Achaeans."

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

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

good cheer, neither in the tent of Agamemnon, nor yet here; there has been plenty to eat and drink, but our thought turns upon no such matter. Sir, we are in the face of great disaster, and without your help do not know whether we shall save our fleet or lose it. The Trojans and their allies have camped hard by our ships and by the wall; they have lit watch-fires throughout their host and deem that nothing can now prevent them from falling on our fleet. Zeus, moreover, has sent his lightning on their right; Hector, in all his glory, rages like a maniac; confident that Zeus is with him he fears neither god nor man, but has gone raving mad, and prays for the approach of day. He vows that he will hew the high sterns of our ships in pieces, set fire to their hulls, and make havoc of the Achaeans while they are dazed and smothered in smoke; I much fear that heaven will make good his boasting, and it will prove our lot to perish at Troy far from our home in Argos. Up, then, and late though it is, save the sons of the Achaeans who faint before the fury of the Trojans. You will repent bitterly hereafter if you do not, for when the harm is done there will be no curing it; consider before it is too late, and save the Danaans from destruction.

"My good friend, when your father Peleus sent you from Phthia to Agamemnon, did he not charge you saying, 'Son, Athena and Hera will make you strong if they choose, but check your high temper, for the better part is in goodwill. Eschew vain quarrelling, and the Achaeans old and young will respect you more for doing so.' These were his words, but you have forgotten them. Even now, however, be appeased, and put your anger away from you. Agamemnon will make you great amends if you will forgive him; listen, and I will tell you what he has said in his tent that he will give you. He will give you 7 tripods that have never yet been on the fire, and 10 talents of gold; 20 iron cauldrons, and 12 strong horses that have won races and carried off prizes. Rich indeed both in land and

---

25 Father of Peleus, and so grandfather of Achilles. Achilles is at times referred to as the son of Aeacus.

gold is he who has as many prizes as these horses have won for Agamemnon. Moreover he will give you 7 excellent workwomen, from Lesbos, whom he chose for himself when you took Lesbos—all of surpassing beauty. He will give you these, and with them her whom he before took from you, the daughter of Briseus, and he will swear a great oath that he has never gone up into her bed nor been with her after the manner of men and women. All these things will he give you now down, and if hereafter the gods vouchsafe him to sack the city of Priam, you can come when we Achaeans are dividing the spoil, and load your ship with gold and bronze to your liking. You can take 20 Trojan women, the loveliest after Helen herself. Then, when we reach Achaean Argos, wealthiest of all lands, you shall be his son-in-law, and he will show you like honor with his own dear son Orestes, who is being nurtured in all abundance. Agamemnon has three daughters, Chrysothemis, Laodice, and Iphianassa; you may take the one of your choice, freely and without gifts of wooing, to the house of Peleus; he will add such dower to boot as no man ever yet gave his daughter, and will give you 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 Pedasus, 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 you with gifts as though you were a god, and be obedient to your comfortable ordinances. All this will he do if you will now forgo your anger. Moreover, though you hate both him and his gifts with all your heart, yet pity the rest of the Achaeans who are being harassed in all their host; they will honor you as a god, and you will earn great glory at their hands. You might even kill Hector; he will come within your reach, for he is infatuated, and declares that not a Danaan whom the ships have brought can hold his own against him."

Achilles answered: "Odysseus, noble son of Laertes, I should give you formal notice plainly and in all fixity of purpose that there be no more of this cajoling, from whatsoever quarter it may come. Him do I

hate even as the gates of Hades who says one thing while he hides another in his heart; therefore I will say what I mean. I will be appeased neither by Agamemnon son of Atreus nor by any other of the Danaans, for I see that I have no thanks for all my fighting. He that fights fares no better than he that does not; coward and hero are held in equal honor, and death deals like measure to him who works and him who is idle. I have taken nothing by all my hardships—with my life ever in my hand; as a bird when she has found a morsel takes it to her nestlings, and herself fares hardly, even so many a long night have I been wakeful, and many a bloody battle have I waged by day against those who were fighting for their women. With my ships I have taken 12 cities, and 11 around about Troy have I stormed with my men by land; I took great store of wealth from every one of them, but I gave all up to Agamemnon son of Atreus. He stayed where he was by his ships, yet of what came to him he gave little, and kept much himself.

"Nevertheless he did distribute some prizes of honor among the chieftains and kings, and these have them still; from me alone of the Achaeans did he take the woman in whom I delighted—let him keep her and sleep with her. Why, pray, must the Argives fight the Trojans? What made the son of Atreus gather the host and bring them? Was it not for the sake of Helen? Are the sons of Atreus the only men in the world who love their wives? Any man of common right feeling will love and cherish her who is his own, as I this woman, with my whole heart, though she was but a fruitling of my spear. Agamemnon has taken her from me; he has played me false; I know him; let him tempt me no further, for he shall not move me. Let him look to you, Odysseus, and to the other princes to save his ships from burning. He has done much without me already. He has built a wall; he has dug a trench deep and wide all around it, and he has planted it within with stakes; but even so he does not stay the murderous might of Hector. So long as I fought among the Achaeans Hector did not suffer the battle to range far from the city walls; he would come to the Scaean gates<sup>26</sup> and to the oak tree, but no further. Once he

stayed to meet me—and hardly did he escape onset. Now, however, since I am in no mood for him, I will tomorrow offer sacrifice to Zeus and the gods; I will draw my ships into the water and duly victual them; tomorrow morning, if you look, you will see my ships on the Hellespont my men rowing out to sea with might and main. Great Poseidon vouchsafes me a fair passage, in 10 days I shall be in Phthia. I have much there that I left behind me when I came here to my sorrow, and I will bring back still further store of gold, of red copper, of iron, of fair women, and of iron, my share of the spoils that I have taken; but one prize he who gave has insidiously taken away. Tell him all as I now bid you, and tell it in public that the Achaeans may hate him and I may be glad. Of him should he think that he can yet dupe me or that for his effrontery never fails him.

"As for me, I would that he is, he dares not look me in the face. I will take no counsel with him, and will undertake nothing in common with him. If he has wronged me and deceived me enough, he shall not wrong me cozen me further; let him go his own way, for Zeus has robbed him of his reason. I loathe his presents, and he shall care not one straw. He may offer me 100 talents of gold, 20 times what he has now done, no—not though he has all that he has in the world, both now or ever hereafter; he may promise me the wealth of Orchomenos or of Egyptian Thebes, which is the richest city in the whole world, for it has a hundred gates through which of which 200 men may drive at once with their chariots and horses; he may offer me gifts like the sand of the sea or the dust of the plain in multitude, but he shall not move me till I have been revenged. Let him be full for the bitter wrong he has done me. I will not marry his daughter; she may be fair as Aphrodite and skillful as Athena, but I will have none of her. Let another take her, who may be a good match for her and who rules a larger kingdom. If the gods should permit to return home, Peleus will find me a wife; the Achaeans women in Hellas<sup>27</sup> and Phthia, daughters of kings that have cities under them; of these I will choose whom I will and marry her. Many a time was I

26 The great gates of Troy.

27 The narrow waters between Europe and Asia.

28 Goddess of (sexual) love and beauty.

29 The Greeks.

stayed to meet me—and hardly did he escape my onset. Now, however, since I am in no mood to fight him, I will tomorrow offer sacrifice to Zeus and to all the gods; I will draw my ships into the water and then duly victual them; tomorrow morning, if you care to look, you will see my ships on the Hellespont,<sup>27</sup> and my men rowing out to sea with might and main. If great Poseidon vouchsafes me a fair passage, in three days I shall be in Phthia. I have much there that I left behind me when I came here to my sorrow, and I shall bring back still further store of gold, of red copper, of fair women, and of iron, my share of the spoils that we have taken; but one prize he who gave has insolently taken away. Tell him all as I now bid you, and tell him in public that the Achaeans may hate him and beware of him should he think that he can yet dupe others—for his effrontery never fails him.

"As for me, hound that he is, he dares not look me in the face. I will take no counsel with him, and will undertake nothing in common with him. He has wronged me and deceived me enough, he shall not cozen me further; let him go his own way, for Zeus has robbed him of his reason. I loathe his presents, and for himself care not one straw. He may offer me 10 or even 20 times what he has now done, no—not though it be all that he has in the world, both now or ever shall have; he may promise me the wealth of Orchomenus or of Egyptian Thebes, which is the richest city in the whole world, for it has a hundred gates through each of which 200 men may drive at once with their chariots and horses; he may offer me gifts like the sands of the sea or the dust of the plain in multitude, but even so he shall not move me till I have been revenged in full for the bitter wrong he has done me. I will not marry his daughter; she may be fair as Aphrodite,<sup>28</sup> and skillful as Athena, but I will have none of her—let another take her, who may be a good match for her and who rules a larger kingdom. If the gods spare me to return home, Peleus will find me a wife; there are Achaean women in Hellas<sup>29</sup> and Phthia, daughters of kings that have cities under them; of these I can take whom I will and marry her. Many a time was I mind-

ed when at home in Phthia to woo and wed a woman who would make me a suitable wife, and to enjoy the riches of my old father Peleus. My life is more to me than all the wealth of Ilium while it was yet at peace before the Achaeans went there, or than all the treasure that lies on the stone floor of Apollo's temple beneath the cliffs of Pytho. Cattle and sheep are to be had for carrying off, and a man may buy both tripods and horses if he wants them, but when his life has once left him it can neither be bought nor won back again by force.

"My mother Thetis tells me that there are two ways in which I may meet my end. If I stay here and fight, I shall not return alive but my name will live forever, whereas if I go home my name will die, but it will be long before death shall take me. To the rest of you, then, I say, 'Go home, for you will not take Ilium.' Zeus has held his hand over her to protect her, and her people have taken heart. Go, therefore, as in duty bound, and tell the princes of the Achaeans the message that I have sent them; tell them to find some other plan for the saving of their ships and people, for so long as my displeasure lasts the one that they have now hit upon will not be. As for Phoenix, let him sleep here that he may sail with me in the morning if he so wishes. But I will not take him by force...."

[*Achilles remains adamant, and eventually the envoys return to the Greek camp. Before they go, Achilles states that he will take no part in the fighting unless the Trojans attack his ships. When Book 16 opens, the Trojans are attacking the Greek ships, though have not attacked Achilles's.*]

16 Thus did they fight around the ship of Protesilaus. Then Patroclus drew near to Achilles with tears welling from his eyes, as from some spring whose crystal stream falls over the ledges of a high precipice. When Achilles saw him thus weeping he was sorry for him and said, "Why, Patroclus, do you stand there weeping like some silly child that comes running to her mother, and begs to be taken up and carried—she

<sup>27</sup> The narrow waters between Europe and Asia.

<sup>28</sup> Goddess of (sexual) love and beauty.

<sup>29</sup> I.e., Greece.

catches hold of her mother's dress to stay her though she is in a hurry, and looks tearfully up until her mother carries her—even such tears, Patroclus, are you now shedding. Have you anything to say to the Myrmidons or to myself? Or have you had news from Phthia which you alone know? They tell me Menoetius, son of Actor, is still alive, as also Peleus son of Aeacus, among the Myrmidons men whose loss we two would bitterly deplore; or are you grieving about the Argives and the way in which they are being killed at the ships, through their own high-handed doings? Do not keep it from me, but tell me, so we may know it together."

Then, O Patroclus the rider, with a deep sigh you answered, "Achilles, son of Peleus, foremost champion of the Achaeans, do not be angry, but I weep for the disaster that has now befallen the Argives. All those who have been their champions so far are lying at the ships, wounded by sword or spear. Brave Diomedes son of Tydeus has been hit with a spear, while famed Odysseus and Agamemnon have received sword-wounds; Eurypylos again has been struck with an arrow in the thigh; skilled apothecaries are attending to these heroes, and healing them of their wounds; are you still, O Achilles, so inexorable? May it never be my lot to nurse such a passion as you have done, to the baning of your own good name. Who in future story will speak well of you unless you now save the Argives from ruin? You know no pity; Peleus the rider was not your father or Thetis your mother, but the gray sea bore you and the sheer cliffs begot you, so cruel and remorseless are you. If, however, you are kept back through knowledge of some oracle, or if your mother Thetis has told you something from the mouth of Zeus, at least send me and the Myrmidons with me, if I may bring deliverance to the Danaans. Let me, moreover, wear your armor; the Trojans may thus mistake me for you and leave the field, so that the hard-pressed sons of the Achaeans may have breathing time—which while they are fighting may hardly be. We who are fresh might soon drive tired men back from our ships and tents to their own city."

He did not know what he was asking or that he was suing for his own destruction. Achilles was deeply moved and answered, "What, noble Patroclus, are you saying? I know no prophecies which I am

heeding, nor has my mother told me anything from the mouth of Zeus, but I am cut to the very heart that one of my own rank should dare to rob me because he is more powerful than I am. This, after all that I have gone through, is more than I can endure. The girl whom the sons of the Achaeans chose for me, whom I won as the fruit of my spear on having sacked a city—her has King Agamemnon taken from me as though I were some common vagrant. Still, let bygones be bygones—no man may keep his anger forever; I said I would not relent till battle and the cry of war had reached my own ships; nevertheless, now gird my armor about your shoulders, and lead the Myrmidons to battle, for the dark cloud of Trojans has burst furiously over our fleet; the Argives are driven back on to the beach, cooped up within a narrow space, and the whole people of Troy have taken heart to sally out against them, because they do not see the visor of my helmet gleaming near them. Had they seen this, there would not have been a creek or watercourse that would not have been filled with their dead as they fled back again. And so it would have been, if only King Agamemnon had dealt fairly by me. As it is the Trojans have beset our host. Diomedes, son of Tydeus, no longer wields his spear to defend the Danaans, neither have I heard the voice of the son of Atreus coming from his hated head, whereas that of murderous Hector rings in my ears as he gives orders to the Trojans, who triumph over the Achaeans and fill the whole plain with their cry of battle. But even so, Patroclus, fall upon them and save the fleet, lest the Trojans fire it and prevent us from being able to return. Do, however, as I now bid you, that you may win me great honor from all the Danaans, and that they may restore the girl to me again and give me rich gifts into the bargain. When you have driven the Trojans from the ships, come back again. Though Hera's thundering husband should put triumph within your reach, do not fight the Trojans further in my absence, or you will rob me of glory that should be mine. And do not for lust for battle go killing the Trojans or lead the Achaeans on to Ilium, lest one of the ever-living gods from Olympus attack you—for Phoebus Apollo loves them well; return when you have freed the ships from peril, and let others wage war upon the plain. Would, by father Zeus, Athena, and Apollo, that not a single

man of all the Trojans might be left alive, or yet Argives, but that we two might be alone left aside the mantle that veils the brow of Troy."

Thus did they converse. But Ajax could no hold his ground for the shower of darts that upon him; the will of Zeus and the javelins Trojans were too much for him; the helmet gleamed about his temples rang with the clatter of the missiles that kept pouring on to on to the cheek-pieces that protected his face. over his left shoulder was tired from having his shield so long, yet for all this, let fly at him would, they could not make him give ground could hardly draw his breath, the sweat rained every pore of his body, he had not a moment's respite, and on all sides he was beset by upon danger.

And now, tell me, O Muses that hold your thrones on Olympus, how fire was thrown on the ships of the Achaeans. Hector came close up and I with his great sword at the ashen spear of Ajax it clean in two just behind where the point had fastened onto the shaft of the spear. Ajax, therefore, now nothing but a headless spear, while the point flew some way off and came ringing down to the ground. Ajax knew the hand of heaven in this; he was dismayed at seeing that Zeus had now utterly defenseless and was willing victory for the Trojans. Therefore he drew back, and the Trojan fire upon the ship which was at once wreathed in flame.

The fire was now flaring about the ship whereon Achilles struck his two thighs and Patroclus, "Up, noble rider, for I see the hostile fire at our fleet; up, lest they destroy the ships, and there be no way by which we may escape. Gird on your armor at once while I call you together."

As he spoke Patroclus put on his armor and greaved his legs with greaves of good make, fastened with ankle clasps of silver; after this he put on the breastplate of the son of Aeacus, richly studded with silver. He hung his silver-studded shield about his shoulders, and then his helmet. On his comely head he set his helmet wrought, with a nest of horse-hair that nod

man of all the Trojans might be left alive, or yet of the Argives, but that we two might be alone left to tear aside the mantle that veils the brow of Troy."

Thus did they converse. But Ajax could no longer hold his ground for the shower of darts that rained upon him; the will of Zeus and the javelins of the Trojans were too much for him; the helmet that gleamed about his temples rang with the continuous clatter of the missiles that kept pouring on to it and on to the cheek-pieces that protected his face. Moreover his left shoulder was tired from having held his shield so long, yet for all this, let fly at him as they would, they could not make him give ground. He could hardly draw his breath, the sweat rained from every pore of his body, he had not a moment's respite, and on all sides he was beset by danger upon danger.

And now, tell me, O Muses that hold your mansions on Olympus, how fire was thrown on the ships of the Achaeans. Hector came close up and let drive with his great sword at the ashen spear of Ajax. He cut it clean in two just behind where the point was fastened onto the shaft of the spear. Ajax, therefore, had now nothing but a headless spear, while the bronze point flew some way off and came ringing down on to the ground. Ajax knew the hand of heaven in this, and was dismayed at seeing that Zeus had now left him utterly defenseless and was willing victory for the Trojans. Therefore he drew back, and the Trojans flung fire upon the ship which was at once wrapped in flame.

The fire was now flaring about the ship's stern, whereon Achilles struck his two thighs and said to Patroclus, "Up, noble rider, for I see the glare of hostile fire at our fleet; up, lest they destroy our ships, and there be no way by which we may retreat. Gird on your armor at once while I call our people together."

As he spoke Patroclus put on his armor. First he greaved his legs with greaves of good make, and fitted with ankle clasps of silver; after this he donned the breastplate of the son of Aeacus, richly inlaid and studded. He hung his silver-studded sword of bronze about his shoulders, and then his mighty shield. On his comely head he set his helmet, well wrought, with a nest of horse-hair that nodded men-

acingly on above it. He grasped two redoubtable spears that suited his hands, but he did not take the spear of noble Achilles, so stout and strong, for none other of the Achaeans could wield it though Achilles could do so easily. This was the ashen spear from Mount Pelion, which Chiron had cut upon a mountain top and had given to Peleus, wherewith to deal out death among heroes. He bade Automedon yoke his horses with all speed, for he was the man whom he held in honor next after Achilles, and on whose support in battle he could rely most firmly. Automedon therefore yoked the fleet horses Xanthus and Balius, steeds that could fly like the wind; these were they whom the harpy Podarge bore to the west wind, as she was grazing in a meadow by the waters of the river Oceanus. In the side traces he set the noble horse Pegasus, whom Achilles had brought away with him when he sacked the city of Eetion, and who, mortal steed though he was, could take his place along with those that were immortal.

Meanwhile Achilles went about everywhere among the tents, and bade his Myrmidons put on their armor. Even as fierce ravening wolves that are feasting upon a horned stag which they have killed upon the mountains, and their jaws are red with blood—they go in a pack to lap water from the clear spring with their long thin tongues; and they reek of blood and slaughter; they do not know what fear is, for it is hunger that drives them—even so did the leaders and counsellors of the Myrmidons gather around the good guardian of the fleet descendant of Aeacus, and among them stood Achilles himself cheering on both men and horses.

Fifty ships had noble Achilles brought to Troy, and in each there was a crew of fifty oarsmen. Over these he set five captains whom he could trust, while he was himself commander over them all. Menesthus of the gleaming corslet, son to the river Spercheus that streams from heaven, was captain of the first company. Fair Polydora, daughter of Peleus, bore him to everflowing Spercheus—a woman mated with a god—but he was called son of Borus son of Perieres, with whom his mother was living as his wedded wife, and who gave great wealth to gain her. The second company was led by noble Eudorus, son to an unwedded woman. Polymela, daughter of Phylas the grace-

ful dancer, bore him; the mighty slayer of Argus<sup>30</sup> was enamored of her as he saw her among the singing women at a dance held in honor of Artemis, the rushing huntress of the golden arrows; therefore he—Hermes,<sup>31</sup> giver of all good—went with her into an upper chamber, and lay with her in secret, whereon she bore him a noble son, Eudorus, singularly fleet of foot and valiant in fight. When Ilithuia, goddess of the pains of childbirth, brought him to the light of day, and he saw the face of the sun, mighty Echeclus, son of Actor, took the mother to wife, and gave great wealth to gain her, but her father Phylas brought the child up, and took care of him, doting as fondly upon him as though he were his own son. The third company was led by Pisander, son of Maemalus, the finest spearman among all the Myrmidons next to Achilles's own comrade Patroclus. The old horseman Phoenix was captain of the fourth company, and Alcimedon, noble son of Laerces of the fifth.

When Achilles had chosen his men and had stationed them all with their captains, he charged them strictly, saying, "Myrmidons, remember your threats against the Trojans while you were at the ships in the time of my anger, and you were all complaining of me. 'Cruel son of Peleus,' you would say, 'your mother must have suckled you on gall, so ruthless are you. You keep us here at the ships against our will; if you are so relentless it would be better if we went home over the sea.' Often have you gathered and thus chided me. The hour has now come for those high feats of arms that you have so long been pining for; therefore keep high hearts each one of you to do battle with the Trojans."

With these words he put heart and soul into them all, and they serried their companies yet more closely when they heard the words of their king. As the stones which a builder sets in the wall of some high house which is to give shelter from the winds—even so closely were the helmets and bossed shields set against one another. Shield pressed on shield, helm on helm, and man on man; so close were they that the horse-hair plumes on the gleaming ridges of

their helmets touched each other as they bent their heads.

In front of them all two men put on their armor—Patroclus and Automedon—two men, with but one mind to lead the Myrmidons. Then Achilles went inside his tent and opened the lid of the strong chest which silver-footed Thetis had given him to take on board ship, and which she had filled with shirts, cloaks to keep out the cold, and good thick rugs. In this chest he had a cup of rare workmanship, from which no man but himself might drink, nor would he make offering from it to any other god save only to father Zeus. He took the cup from the chest and cleansed it with sulphur; this done he rinsed it in clean water, and after he had washed his hands he drew wine. Then he stood in the middle of the court and prayed, looking towards heaven, and making his drink-offering of wine; nor was he unseen by Zeus whose joy is in thunder. "King Zeus," he cried, "lord of Dodona, god of the Pelasgi, who dwells afar, you who hold wintry Dodona in your sway, where your prophets the Selli dwell around you with their feet unwashed and their beds made upon the ground—if you heard me when I prayed to you before, and did me honor while you sent disaster on the Achaeans, vouchsafe me now the fulfillment of yet this further prayer. I shall stay here where my ships are lying, but I shall send my comrade into battle at the head of many Myrmidons. Grant, O all-seeing Zeus, that victory may go with him; put your courage into his heart that Hector may learn whether my attendant is man enough to fight alone, or whether his might is only then so indomitable when I myself enter the turmoil of war. Afterwards when he has chased the fight and the cry of battle from the ships, grant that he may return unharmed, with his armor and his comrades, fighters in close combat."

Thus did he pray, and all-counselling Zeus heard his prayer. Part of it he did indeed vouchsafe him—but not the whole. He granted that Patroclus should thrust back war and battle from the ships, but refused to let him come safely out of the fight.

When he had made his drink-offering and had thus

prayed, Achilles went inside his tent and put it back into his chest.

Then he again came out, for he still loved upon the fierce fight that raged between the and Achaeans.

Meanwhile the armed band that was about clus marched on till they sprang high in hope the Trojans. They came swarming out like whose nests are by the roadside, and whom children love to tease, whereon anyone who happens passing may get stung—or again, if a wasp going along the road vexes them by accident will come flying out in a fury to defend themselves—even with such rage and courage did the Myrmidons swarm from their ships, and their cry arose heavenwards. Patroclus called out to his men at the top of his voice, "Myrmidons, follow Achilles, son of Peleus, be men my friends, fight with might and with main, that we may win glory for the son of Peleus, who is by far the foremost warrior of the Argives—he, and his close fight lowers. The son of Atreus, King Agamemnon, thus learn his folly in showing no respect for the bravest of the Achaeans."

With these words he put heart and soul into them all, and they fell in a body upon the Trojans. They ranged again with the cry which the Achaeans raised, and when the Trojans saw the brave son of Menelaus and his attendant all gleaming in their armor, they were daunted and their battalions were thrown into confusion, for they thought the fleet son of Peleus must now have put aside his anger, and have been reconciled with Agamemnon; every one, therefore, they looked around to see where he might flee for refuge.

Patroclus first aimed a spear into the middle of the press where men were packed most closely, and hit the stem of the ship of Protesilaus. He hit Pyraeus who had led his Paeonian horsemen from the land of the don and the broad waters of the river Axius; he struck him on the right shoulder, and with a groan he fell backwards in the dust; on this his men were thrown into confusion, for by killing their leader

30 I.e., Hermes, the god of trade and luck, often also the herald of the gods. Argus was a creature with a hundred eyes.

31 See previous note.

32 I.e., Meges, a Greek.

33 One of the chief Trojan warriors, and beloved son of Priam.

34 A resident of the land of Hades used to refer to the dead.

prayed, Achilles went inside his tent and put the cup back into his chest.

Then he again came out, for he still loved to look upon the fierce fight that raged between the Trojans and Achaeans.

Meanwhile the armed band that was about Patroclus marched on till they sprang high in hope upon the Trojans. They came swarming out like wasps whose nests are by the roadside, and whom silly children love to tease, whereon anyone who happens to be passing may get stung—or again, if a wayfarer going along the road vexes them by accident, every wasp will come flying out in a fury to defend his little ones—even with such rage and courage did the Myrmidons swarm from their ships, and their cry of battle rose heavenwards. Patroclus called out to his men at the top of his voice, “Myrmidons, followers of Achilles, son of Peleus, be men my friends, fight with might and with main, that we may win glory for the son of Peleus, who is by far the foremost man at the ships of the Argives—he, and his close fighting followers. The son of Atreus, King Agamemnon, will thus learn his folly in showing no respect to the bravest of the Achaeans.”

With these words he put heart and soul into them all, and they fell in a body upon the Trojans. The ships rang again with the cry which the Achaeans raised, and when the Trojans saw the brave son of Menoetius and his attendant all gleaming in their armor, they were daunted and their battalions were thrown into confusion, for they thought the fleet son of Peleus must now have put aside his anger, and have been reconciled with Agamemnon; every one, therefore, looked around to see where he might flee for safety.

Patroclus first aimed a spear into the middle of the press where men were packed most closely, by the stem of the ship of Protesilaus. He hit Pyraechmes who had led his Paeonian horsemen from the Amydon and the broad waters of the river Axios; the spear struck him on the right shoulder, and with a groan he fell backwards in the dust; on this his men were thrown into confusion, for by killing their leader, who

was the finest soldier among them, Patroclus struck panic into them all. He thus drove them from the ship and quenched the fire that was then blazing—leaving the half-burned ship to lie where it was. The Trojans were now driven back with a shout that rent the skies, while the Danaans poured after them from their ships, shouting also without ceasing. As when Zeus, gatherer of the thunder-cloud, spreads a dense canopy on the top of some lofty mountain, and all the peaks, the jutting headlands, and forest glades show out in the great light that flashes from the bursting heavens, even so when the Danaans had now driven back the fire from their ships, they took breath for a little while; but the fury of the fight was not yet over, for the Trojans were not driven back in utter rout, but still gave battle, and were ousted from their ground only by sheer fighting.

The fight then became more scattered, and the chieftains killed one another when and how they could. The valiant son of Menoetius first drove his spear into the thigh of Areilycus just as he was turning around; the point went clean through, and broke the bone so that he fell forward. Meanwhile Menelaus struck Thoas in the chest, where it was exposed near the rim of his shield, and he fell dead. The son of Phyleus<sup>32</sup> saw Amphiclus about to attack him, and before he could do so took aim at the upper part of his thigh, where the muscles are thicker than in any other part; the spear tore through all the sinews of the leg, and his eyes were closed in darkness. Of the sons of Nestor, one, Antilochus, speared Atymnius, driving the point of the spear through his throat, and down he fell. Maris then sprang on Antilochus in hand-to-hand fight to avenge his brother, and bestrode the body spear in hand; but valiant Thrasymedes was too quick for him, and in a moment had struck him in the shoulder before he could deal his blow; his aim was true, and the spear severed all the muscles at the root of his arm, and tore them right down to the bone, so he fell heavily to the ground and his eyes were closed in darkness. Thus did these two noble comrades of Sarpedon<sup>33</sup> go down to Erebus<sup>34</sup> slain by the two

32 I.e., Meges, a Greek.

33 One of the chief Trojan warriors, and beloved son of Zeus.

34 A resident of the land of Hades used to refer to the underworld itself.

sons of Nestor; they were the warrior sons of Amisodarus, who had reared the invincible Chimaera,<sup>35</sup> to the bane of many. Ajax,<sup>36</sup> son of Oileus, sprang on Cleobulus and took him alive as he was entangled in the crush; but he killed him then and there by a sword-blow on the neck. The sword reeked with his blood, while dark death and the strong hand of fate gripped him and closed his eyes.

Peneleos<sup>37</sup> and Lycon now met in close fight, for they had missed each other with their spears. They had both thrown without effect, so now they drew their swords. Lycon struck the plumed crest of Peneleos's helmet but his sword broke at the hilt, while Peneleos struck Lycon on the neck under the ear. The blade sank so deep that the head was held on by nothing but the skin, and there was no more life left in him. Meriones<sup>38</sup> gave chase to Acamas on foot and caught him up just as he was about to mount his chariot; he drove a spear through his right shoulder so that he fell headlong from the car, and his eyes were closed in darkness. Idomeneus speared Erymas in the mouth; the bronze point of the spear went clean through it beneath the brain, crashing in among the white bones and smashing them up. His teeth were all of them knocked out and the blood came gushing in a stream from both his eyes; it also came gurgling up from his mouth and nostrils, and the darkness of death enfolded him around.

Thus did these chieftains of the Danaans each of them kill his man. As ravening wolves seize on kids or lambs, fastening on them when they are alone on the hillsides and have strayed from the main flock through the carelessness of the shepherd—and when the wolves see this they pounce upon them at once because they cannot defend themselves—even so did the Danaans now fall on the Trojans, who fled with ill-omened cries in their panic and had no more fight left in them.

Meanwhile great Ajax kept on trying to drive a spear into Hector, but Hector was so skillful that he held his broad shoulders well under cover of his ox-

hide shield, ever on the lookout for the whizzing of the arrows and the heavy thud of the spears. He well knew that the fortunes of the day had changed, but still stood his ground and tried to protect his comrades.

As when a cloud goes up into heaven from Olympus, rising out of a clear sky when Zeus is brewing a gale—even with such panic-stricken rout did the Trojans now flee, and there was no order in their going. Hector's fleet horses bore him and his armor out of the fight, and he left the Trojan host penned in by the deep trench against their will. Many a yoke of horses snapped the pole of their chariots in the trench and left their master's car behind them. Patroclus gave chase, calling impetuously on the Danaans and full of fury against the Trojans, who, being now no longer in a body, filled all the ways with their cries of panic and rout; the air was darkened with the clouds of dust they raised, and the horses strained every nerve in their flight from the tents and ships towards the city.

Patroclus kept on heading his horses wherever he saw the most men fleeing in confusion, cheering on his men the while. Chariots were being smashed in all directions, and many a man came tumbling down from his own car to fall beneath the wheels of that of Patroclus, whose immortal steeds, given by the gods to Peleus, sprang over the trench at a bound as they sped onward. He was intent on trying to get near Hector, for he had set his heart on spearing him, but Hector's horses were now hurrying him away. As the whole dark earth bows before some tempest on an autumn day when Zeus rains his hardest to punish men for giving crooked judgment in their courts, and driving justice therefrom without heed to the decrees of heaven—all the rivers run full and the torrents tear many a new channel as they roar headlong from the mountains to the dark sea, and it fares ill with the works of men—even such was the stress and strain of the Trojan horses in their flight.

Patroclus now cut off the battalions that were nearest to him and drove them back to the ships. They

were doing their best to reach the city, but not let them, and bore down on them like a river and the ships and wall. Many a fall did he then avenge. First he hit Pronous on the chest where it was exposed near the shield, and he fell heavily to the ground. Patroclus sprang on Thestor, son of Enops, who was huddled up in his chariot, for he had lost the reins had been torn out of his hand. Patroclus went up to him and drove a spear into his chest; he thus hooked him by the teeth and the spear drove him over the rim of his car, as one who sits on a rock of some jutting rock and draws a strong fish line from the sea with a hook and a line—even so with Patroclus he pulled Thestor all gaping from his chariot and threw him down on his face and he died. On this, as Erylaus was coming on to attack, he struck him full on the head with a stone, and his brains were all battered inside his helmet, and he fell headlong to the ground and the pain took hold upon him. Then he laid low, like a log, other, Erymas, Amphoterus, Epaltes, Echiurus, son of Damastor, Pyris, Ipheus, and Polymelus, son of Argeas....

[*Patroclus continues to slay Trojans, including Zeus then has Sarpedon's body removed from care for.*]

Meanwhile Patroclus, with many a horse and to Automedon, pursued the Lycians in the pride and foolishness of his heart; he but obeyed the bidding of the son of Zeus, who would have escaped death and have been saved but the counsels of Zeus pass man's understanding; he will put even a brave man to flight and save him from his grasp, or again he will set him free when he now did when he put a high spirit into Patroclus.

Who then first, and who last, was slain by Patroclus, when the gods had now called for your doom? First Adrestus, Autonous, Epimachus, the son of Megas, Epistor, and Melanippus.

35 A terrible monster with the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a snake.

36 Also known as "little Ajax," and not to be confused with the other Ajax ("great Ajax"), son of Telemon.

37 A Greek.

38 A Greek.

were doing their best to reach the city, but he would not let them, and bore down on them between the river and the ships and wall. Many a fallen comrade did he then avenge. First he hit Pronous with a spear on the chest where it was exposed near the rim of his shield, and he fell heavily to the ground. Next he sprang on Thestor, son of Enops, who was sitting all huddled up in his chariot, for he had lost his head and the reins had been torn out of his hands. Patroclus went up to him and drove a spear into his right jaw; he thus hooked him by the teeth and the spear pulled him over the rim of his car, as one who sits at the end of some jutting rock and draws a strong fish out of the sea with a hook and a line—even so with his spear did he pull Thestor all gaping from his chariot; he then threw him down on his face and he died while falling. On this, as Erylaus was coming on to attack him, he struck him full on the head with a stone, and his brains were all battered inside his helmet, whereon he fell headlong to the ground and the pangs of death took hold upon him. Then he laid low, one after the other, Erymas, Amphoterus, Epaltes, Tlepolemus, Echius, son of Damastor, Pyris, Ipheus, Euippus, and Polymelus, son of Argeas....

[*Patroclus continues to slay Trojans, including Sarpedon. Zeus then has Sarpedon's body removed from the battle and cared for.*]

Meanwhile Patroclus, with many a shout to his horses and to Automedon, pursued the Trojans and Lycians in the pride and foolishness of his heart. Had he but obeyed the bidding of the son of Peleus, he would have escaped death and have been scatheless; but the counsels of Zeus pass man's understanding; he will put even a brave man to flight and snatch victory from his grasp, or again he will set him on to fight, as he now did when he put a high spirit into the heart of Patroclus.

Who then first, and who last, was slain by you, O Patroclus, when the gods had now called you to meet your doom? First Adrestus, Autonus, Echeclus, Perimus, the son of Megas, Epistor, and Melanippus; after

these he killed Elasmus, Mulus, and Pylartes. These he slew, but the rest saved themselves by flight.

The sons of the Achaeans would now have taken Troy by the hands of Patroclus, for his spear flew in all directions, had not Phoebus Apollo taken his stand upon the wall to defeat his purpose and to aid the Trojans. Three times did Patroclus charge at an angle of the high wall, and three times did Apollo beat him back, striking his shield with his own immortal hands. When Patroclus was coming on like a god for yet a fourth time, Apollo shouted to him with an awful voice and said, "Draw back, noble Patroclus, it is not your lot to sack the city of the Trojan chieftains, nor yet will it be that of Achilles who is a far better man than you are." On hearing this, Patroclus withdrew to some distance and avoided the anger of Apollo.

Meanwhile Hector was waiting with his horses inside the Scaean gates, in doubt whether to drive out again and go on fighting, or to call the army inside the gates. As he was thus doubting Phoebus Apollo drew near him in the likeness of a young and lusty warrior Asius, who was Hector's uncle, being own brother to Hecuba,<sup>39</sup> and son of Dymas who lived in Phrygia by the waters of the river Sangarius; in his likeness Zeus's son Apollo now spoke to Hector saying, "Hector, why have you left off fighting? It is ill done of you. If I were as much better a man than you, as I am worse, you would soon rue your slackness. Drive straight towards Patroclus, if it so be that Apollo may grant you a triumph over him, and you may kill him."

With this the god went back into the hurly-burly, and Hector bade Cebriones drive again into the fight. Apollo passed in among them, and struck panic into the Argives, while he gave triumph to Hector and the Trojans. Hector let the other Danaans alone and killed no man, but drove straight at Patroclus. Patroclus then sprang from his chariot to the ground, with a spear in his left hand, and in his right a jagged stone as large as his hand could hold. He stood still and threw it, nor did it go far without hitting someone; the cast was not in vain, for the stone struck Cebriones, Hector's charioteer, a bastard son of Priam, as he held the reins in his hands. The stone hit him on the forehead and

<sup>39</sup> Hector's mother.

drove his brows into his head, for the bone was smashed, and his eyes fell to the ground at his feet. He dropped dead from his chariot as though he were diving, and there was no more life left in him. Over him did you then mock, O rider Patroclus, saying, "Bless my heart, how active he is, and how well he dives. If we had been at sea this fellow would have dived from the ship's side and brought up as many oysters as the whole crew could stomach, even in rough water, for he has dived beautifully off his chariot onto the ground. It seems, then, that there are divers also among the Trojans."

As he spoke he flung himself on Cebriones with the spring, as it were, of a lion that while attacking a stockyard is himself struck in the chest, and his courage is his own bane—even so furiously, O Patroclus, did you then spring upon Cebriones. Hector sprang also from his chariot to the ground. The pair then fought over the body of Cebriones. As two famished lions fight fiercely on some high mountain over the body of a stag that they have killed, even so did these two mighty warriors, Patroclus, son of Menoetius, and brave Hector, hack and hew at one another over the corpse of Cebriones. Hector would not let him go when he had once got him by the head, while Patroclus kept fast hold of his feet, and a fierce fight raged between the other Danaans and Trojans. As the east and south wind buffet one another when they beat upon some dense forest on the mountains—there is beech and ash and spreading cornel trees; the tops of the trees roar as they beat on one another, and one can hear the boughs cracking and breaking—even so did the Trojans and Achaeans spring upon one another and lay about each other, and neither side would give way. Many a pointed spear fell to ground and many a winged arrow sped from its bow-string around the body of Cebriones; many a great stone, moreover, beat on many a shield as they fought around his body, but there he lay in the whirling clouds of dust, all huge and hugely, heedless of his driving now.

So long as the sun was still high in mid-heaven the weapons of either side were alike deadly, and the peo-

ple fell; but when he went down towards the time when men loose their oxen, the Achaeans proved to be beyond all forecast stronger, so that they drew Cebriones out of range of the darts and tumult of the Trojans, and stripped the armor from his shoulders. Then Patroclus sprang like Ares<sup>40</sup> with fierce intent and a terrific shout upon the Trojans, and three times did he kill nine men; but as he was coming on like a god for a fourth time, then, O Patroclus, was the hour of your end approaching, for Phoebus fought you in deadly earnest. Patroclus did not see him as he moved about in the crush, for he was enshrouded in thick darkness, and the god struck him from behind on his back and his broad shoulders with the flat of his hand, so that his eyes turned dizzy. Phoebus Apollo beat the helmet from off his head, and it rolled rattling off under the horses' feet, where its horse-hair plumes were all begrimed with dust and blood. Never indeed had that helmet fared so before, for it had served to protect the head and comely forehead of the godlike hero Achilles. Now, however, Zeus delivered it over to be worn by Hector. Nevertheless the end of Hector also was near. The bronze-shod spear, so great and so strong, was broken in the hand of Patroclus, while his shield that covered him from head to foot fell to the ground as did also the hand that held it, and Apollo undid the fastenings of his corslet.

On this his mind became clouded; his limbs failed him, and he stood as one dazed; whereon Euphorbus, son of Panthous, a Dardanian, the best spearman of his time, as also the finest horseman and fleetest runner, came behind him and struck him in the back with a spear, midway between the shoulders. This man as soon as ever he had come up with his chariot had dismounted 20 men, so proficient was he in all the arts of war—he it was, O rider Patroclus, that first drove a weapon into you, but he did not quite overpower you. Euphorbus then ran back into the crowd, after drawing his ashen spear out of the wound; he would not stand firm and wait for Patroclus, unarmed though he now was, to attack him; but Patroclus, unnerved alike by the blow the god had given him and by the spear-wound, drew back under cover of his men in fear for

his life. On this, Hector, seeing him to flinch and giving ground, forced his way through the crowd and when close up with him struck him in the part of the belly with a spear, driving the point right through it, so that he fell heavily to the ground to the great grief of the Achaeans. As when a hunter fought some fierce wild-boar and worsted him, he will fight furiously upon the mountains of Parnassus the fountain at which they would both drink, till the lion has beaten the boar till he can hardly stand, even so did Hector, son of Priam, take the part of the brave son of Menoetius who had killed so many, bringing him from close at hand, and vaunting in his heart while. "Patroclus," he said, "you deem that you should sack our city, rob our Trojan women of their freedom, and carry them off in your ships to your own country. Fool, Hector and his fleet horsemen are straining their utmost to defend them. I would have all of the Trojan warriors to stave the day for me from them; as for you, vultures shall devour you. Poor wretch, Achilles with all his bravery will do nothing; and yet I think when you left him you were not so strict, saying, 'Do not come back to me, O rider Patroclus, till you have rent the shirt of murderous Hector about his back, and I will think did he charge you, and your answer shall be, yes' within you."

Then, as the life ebbed out of you, you were still saying, O rider Patroclus, "Hector, glory as you wish, for you the son of Cronus and Apollo have won the day; you are victors; it is they who have vanquished me, and they who have stripped the armor from my shoulders; had 20 such men as you attack me, I and they would have fallen before my spear. I am the son of Leto have overpowered me, and are you men Euphorbus; you are yourself third best in the killing of me. I say further, and lay my hand on my heart, you too shall live but for a little space, and the day of your doom are close up with you; they will lay you low by the hand of Achilles Aeneas."

When he had thus spoken his eyes were closed, his death, his soul left his body and flitted to the house of Hades, mourning its sad fate, bidding a farewell to the youth and vigor of its manhood, though he was, Hector still spoke to I-

40 God of war.