BkI:1-11 Invocation to the Muse

I sing of arms and the man, he who, exiled by fate, first came from the coast of Troy to Italy, and to Lavinian shores – hurled about endlessly by land and sea, by the will of the gods, by cruel Juno’s remorseless anger, long suffering also in war, until he founded a city and brought his gods to Latium: from that the Latin people came, the lords of Alba Longa, the walls of noble Rome. Muse, tell me the cause: how was she offended in her divinity, how was she grieved, the Queen of Heaven, to drive a man, noted for virtue, to endure such dangers, to face so many trials? Can there be such anger in the minds of the gods?

BkI:12-49 The Anger of Juno

There was an ancient city, Carthage (held by colonists from Tyre), opposite Italy, and the far-off mouths of the Tiber, rich in wealth, and very savage in pursuit of war. They say Juno loved this one land above all others, even neglecting Samos: here were her weapons and her chariot, even then the goddess worked at, and cherished, the idea that it should have supremacy over the nations, if only the fates allowed. Yet she’d heard of offspring, derived from Trojan blood, that would one day overthrow the Tyrian stronghold: that from them a people would come, wide-ruling, and proud in war, to Libya’s ruin: so the Fates ordained. Fearing this, and remembering the ancient war she had fought before, at Troy, for her dear Argos, (and the cause of her anger and bitter sorrows had not yet passed from her mind: the distant judgement of Paris stayed deep in her heart, the injury to her scorned beauty, her hatred of the race, and abducted Ganymede’s honours) the daughter of Saturn, incited further by this, hurled the Trojans, the Greeks and pitiless Achilles had left, round the whole ocean, keeping them far from Latium: they wandered for many years, driven by fate over all the seas. Such an effort it was to found the Roman people. They were hardly out of sight of Sicily’s isle, in deeper water, joyfully spreading sail, bronze keel ploughing the brine,
when Juno, nursing the eternal wound in her breast,
spoke to herself: ‘Am I to abandon my purpose, conquered,
unable to turn the Teucrian king away from Italy!
Why, the fates forbid it. Wasn’t Pallas able to burn
the Argive fleet, to sink it in the sea, because of the guilt
and madness of one single man, Ajax, son of Oileus?
She herself hurled Jupiter’s swift fire from the clouds,
scattered the ships, and made the sea boil with storms:
She caught him up in a water-spout, as he breathed flame
from his pierced chest, and pinned him to a sharp rock:
yet I, who walk about as queen of the gods, wife
and sister of Jove, wage war on a whole race, for so many years.
Indeed, will anyone worship Juno’s power from now on,
or place offerings, humbly, on her altars?’

BkI:50-80 Juno Asks Aeolus for Help

So debating with herself, her heart inflamed, the goddess
came to Aeolia, to the country of storms, the place
of wild gales. Here in his vast cave, King Aeolus,
keeps the writhing winds, and the roaring tempests,
under control, curbs them with chains and imprisonment.
They moan angrily at the doors, with a mountain’s vast murmurs:
Aeolus sits, holding his sceptre, in his high stronghold,
softening their passions, tempering their rage: if not,
they’d surely carry off seas and lands and the highest heavens,
with them, in rapid flight, and sweep them through the air.
But the all-powerful Father, fearing this, hid them
in dark caves, and piled a high mountain mass over them
and gave them a king, who by fixed agreement, would know
how to give the order to tighten or slacken the reins.
Juno now offered these words to him, humbly:
‘Aeolus, since the Father of gods, and king of men,
gave you the power to quell, and raise, the waves with the winds,
there is a people I hate sailing the Tyrrhenian Sea,
bringing Troy’s conquered gods to Italy:
Add power to the winds, and sink their wrecked boats,
or drive them apart, and scatter their bodies over the sea.
I have fourteen Nymphs of outstanding beauty:
of whom I’ll name Deiopea, the loveliest in looks,
joined in eternal marriage, and yours for ever, so that,
for such service to me as yours, she’ll spend all her years with you, and make you the father of lovely children.’
Aeolus replied: ‘Your task, O queen, is to decide what you wish: my duty is to fulfil your orders. You brought about all this kingdom of mine, the sceptre, Jove’s favour, you gave me a seat at the feasts of the gods, and you made me lord of the storms and the tempests.’

**BkI:81-123 Aeolus Raises the Storm**

When he had spoken, he reversed his trident and struck the hollow mountain on the side: and the winds, formed ranks, rushed out by the door he’d made, and whirled across the earth. They settle on the sea, East and West wind, and the wind from Africa, together, thick with storms, stir it all from its furthest deeps, and roll vast waves to shore: follows a cry of men and a creaking of cables. Suddenly clouds take sky and day away from the Trojan’s eyes: dark night rests on the sea. It thunders from the pole, and the aether flashes thick fire, and all things threaten immediate death to men. Instantly Aeneas groans, his limbs slack with cold: stretching his two hands towards the heavens, he cries out in this voice: ‘Oh, three, four times fortunate were those who chanced to die in front of their father’s eyes under Troy’s high walls! O Diomede, son of Tydeus bravest of Greeks! Why could I not have fallen, at your hand, in the fields of Ilium, and poured out my spirit, where fierce Hector lies, beneath Achilles’s spear, and mighty Sarpedon: where Simois rolls, and sweeps away so many shields, helmets, brave bodies, of men, in its waves!’

Hurling these words out, a howling blast from the north, strikes square on the sail, and lifts the seas to heaven: the oars break: then the prow swings round and offers the beam to the waves: a steep mountain of water follows in a mass. Some ships hang on the breaker’s crest: to others the yawning deep shows land between the waves: the surge rages with sand. The south wind catches three, and whirls them onto hidden rocks (rocks the Italians call the Altars, in mid-ocean, a vast reef on the surface of the sea) three the east wind drives from the deep, to the shallows and quick-sands (a pitiful sight),
dashes them against the bottom, covers them with a gravel mound. A huge wave, toppling, strikes one astern, in front of his very eyes, one carrying faithful Orontes and the Lycians. The steersman’s thrown out and hurled headlong, face down: but the sea turns the ship three times, driving her round, in place, and the swift vortex swallows her in the deep. Swimmers appear here and there in the vast waste, men’s weapons, planking, Trojan treasure in the waves. Now the storm conquers Iloneus’s tough ship, now Achates, now that in which Abas sailed, and old Aletes’s: their timbers sprung in their sides, all the ships let in the hostile tide, and split open at the seams.

BkI:124-156 Neptune Intervenes

Neptune, meanwhile, greatly troubled, saw that the sea was churned with vast murmur, and the storm was loose and the still waters welled from their deepest levels: he raised his calm face from the waves, gazing over the deep. He sees Aeneas’s fleet scattered all over the ocean, the Trojans crushed by the breakers, and the plummeting sky. And Juno’s anger, and her stratagems, do not escape her brother. He calls the East and West winds to him, and then says: ‘Does confidence in your birth fill you so? Winds, do you dare, without my intent, to mix earth with sky, and cause such trouble, now? You whom I – ! But it’s better to calm the running waves: you’ll answer to me later for this misfortune, with a different punishment. Hurry, fly now, and say this to your king: control of the ocean, and the fierce trident, were given to me, by lot, and not to him. He owns the wild rocks, home to you, and yours, East Wind: let Aeolus officiate in his palace, and be king in the closed prison of the winds.’ So he speaks, and swifter than his speech, he calms the swollen sea, scatters the gathered cloud, and brings back the sun. Cymothoë and Triton, working together, thrust the ships from the sharp reef: Neptune himself raises them with his trident, parts the vast quicksand, tempers the flood, and glides on weightless wheels, over the tops of the waves. As often, when rebellion breaks out in a great nation, and the common rabble rage with passion, and soon stones
and fiery torches fly (frenzy supplying weapons),
if they then see a man of great virtue, and weighty service,
they are silent, and stand there listening attentively:
he sways their passions with his words and soothes their hearts:
so all the uproar of the ocean died, as soon as their father,
gazing over the water, carried through the clear sky, wheeled
his horses, and gave them their head, flying behind in his chariot.

BkI:157-222 Shelter on the Libyan Coast

The weary followers of Aeneas made efforts to set a course
for the nearest land, and tacked towards the Libyan coast.
There is a place there in a deep inlet: an island forms a harbour
with the barrier of its bulk, on which every wave from the deep
breaks, and divides into diminishing ripples.
On this side and that, vast cliffs and twin crags loom in the sky,
under whose summits the whole sea is calm, far and wide:
then, above that, is a scene of glittering woods,
and a dark grove overhangs the water, with leafy shade:
under the headland opposite is a cave, curtained with rock,
inside it, fresh water, and seats of natural stone,
the home of Nymphs. No hawsers moor the weary ships
here, no anchor, with its hooked flukes, fastens them.
Aeneas takes shelter here with seven ships gathered
from the fleet, and the Trojans, with a passion for dry land,
disembarking, take possession of the sands they longed for,
and stretch their brine-caked bodies on the shore.
At once Achates strikes a spark from his flint,
catches the fire in the leaves, places dry fuel round it,
and quickly has flames among the kindling.
Then, wearied by events, they take out wheat, damaged
by the sea, and implements of Ceres, and prepare to parch
the grain over the flames, and grind it on stone.
Aeneas climbs a crag meanwhile, and searches the whole prospect
far and wide over the sea, looking if he can see anything
of Antheus and his storm-tossed Phrygian galleys,
or Capys, or Caicus’s arms blazoned on a high stern.
There’s no ship in sight: he sees three stags wandering
on the shore: whole herds of deer follow at their back,
and graze in long lines along the valley.
He halts at this, and grasps in his hand his bow
and swift arrows, shafts that loyal Achates carries,
and first he shoots the leaders themselves, their heads,
with branching antlers, held high, then the mass, with his shafts,
and drives the whole crowd in confusion among the leaves:
The conqueror does not stop until he’s scattered seven huge
carcasses on the ground, equal in number to his ships.
Then he seeks the harbour, and divides them among all his friends.
Next he shares out the wine that the good Acestes had stowed
in jars, on the Trinacrian coast, and that hero had given them
on leaving: and speaking to them, calmed their sad hearts:
‘O friends (well, we were not unknown to trouble before)
O you who’ve endured worse, the god will grant an end to this too.
You’ve faced rabid Scylla, and her deep-sounding cliffs:
and you’ve experienced the Cyclopes’s rocks:
remember your courage and chase away gloomy fears:
perhaps one day you’ll even delight in remembering this.
Through all these misfortunes, these dangerous times,
we head for Latium, where the fates hold peaceful lives
for us: there Troy’s kingdom can rise again. Endure,
and preserve yourselves for happier days.’
So his voice utters, and sick with the weight of care, he pretends
hope, in his look, and stifles the pain deep in his heart.
They make ready the game, and the future feast:
they flay the hides from the ribs and lay the flesh bare:
some cut it in pieces, quivering, and fix it on spits,
others place cauldrons on the beach, and feed them with flames.
Then they revive their strength with food, stretched on the grass,
and fill themselves with rich venison and old wine.
When hunger is quenched by the feast, and the remnants cleared,
deep in conversation, they discuss their missing friends,
and, between hope and fear, question whether they live,
or whether they’ve suffered death and no longer hear their name.
Aeneas, the virtuous, above all mourns the lot of fierce Orontes,
then that of Amycus, together with Lycus’s cruel fate,
and those of brave Gyus, and brave Cloanthus.

BkI:223-256 Venus Intercedes with Jupiter

Now, all was complete, when Jupiter, from the heights of the air,
looked down on the sea with its flying sails, and the broad lands,
and the coasts, and the people far and wide, and paused,
at the summit of heaven, and fixed his eyes on the Libyan kingdom. And as he weighed such cares as he had in his heart, Venus spoke to him, sadder still, her bright eyes brimming with tears: ‘Oh you who rule things human, and divine, with eternal law, and who terrify them all with your lightning-bolt, what can my Aeneas have done to you that’s so serious, what have the Trojans done, who’ve suffered so much destruction, to whom the whole world’s closed, because of the Italian lands? Surely you promised that at some point, as the years rolled by, the Romans would rise from them, leaders would rise, restored from Teucer’s blood, who would hold power over the sea, and all the lands. Father, what thought has changed your mind? It consoled me for the fall of Troy, and its sad ruin, weighing one destiny, indeed, against opposing destinies: now the same misfortune follows these men driven on by such disasters. Great king, what end to their efforts will you give? Antenor could escape through the thick of the Greek army, and safely enter the Illyrian gulfs, and deep into the realms of the Liburnians, and pass the founts of Timavus, from which the river bursts, with a huge mountainous roar, through nine mouths, and buries the fields under its noisy flood. Here, nonetheless, he sited the city of Padua, and homes for Teucrians, and gave the people a name, and hung up the arms of Troy: now he’s calmly settled, in tranquil peace. But we, your race, to whom you permit the heights of heaven, lose our ships (shameful!), betrayed, because of one person’s anger, and kept far away from the shores of Italy. Is this the prize for virtue? Is this how you restore our rule? The father of men and gods, smiled at her with that look with which he clears the sky of storms, kissed his daughter’s lips, and then said this:

**BkI:257-296 Jupiter’s Prophecy**

‘Don’t be afraid, Cytherea, your child’s fate remains unaltered: You’ll see the city of Lavinium, and the walls I promised, and you’ll raise great-hearted Aeneas high, to the starry sky: No thought has changed my mind. This son of yours (since this trouble gnaws at my heart, I’ll speak, and unroll the secret scroll of destiny) will wage a mighty war in Italy, destroy proud peoples,
and establish laws, and city walls, for his warriors, until a third summer sees his reign in Latium, and three winter camps pass since the Rutulians were beaten. But the boy Ascanius, surnamed Iulus now (He was Ilus while the Ilian kingdom was a reality) will imperially complete thirty great circles of the turning months, and transfer his throne from its site at Lavinium, and mighty in power, will build the walls of Alba Longa. Here kings of Hector’s race will reign now for three hundred years complete, until a royal priestess, Ilia, heavy with child, shall bear Mars twins. Then Romulus will further the race, proud in his nurse the she-wolf’s tawny pelt, and found the walls of Mars, and call the people Romans, from his own name. I’ve fixed no limits or duration to their possessions: I’ve given them empire without end. Why, harsh Juno who now torments land, and sea and sky with fear, will respond to better judgement, and favour the Romans, masters of the world, and people of the toga, with me. So it is decreed. A time will come, as the years glide by, when the Trojan house of Assaracus will force Phthia into slavery, and be lords of beaten Argos. From this glorious source a Trojan Caesar will be born, who will bound the empire with Ocean, his fame with the stars, Augustus, a Julius, his name descended from the great Iulus. You, no longer anxious, will receive him one day in heaven, burdened with Eastern spoils: he’ll be called to in prayer. Then with wars abandoned, the harsh ages will grow mild: White haired Trust, and Vesta, Quirinus with his brother Remus will make the laws: the gates of War, grim with iron, and narrowed by bars, will be closed: inside impious Rage will roar frighteningly from blood-stained mouth, seated on savage weapons, hands tied behind his back, with a hundred knots of bronze.’

BkI:297-371 Venus Speaks to Aeneas

Saying this, he sends Mercury, Maia’s son, down from heaven, so that the country and strongholds of this new Carthage would open to the Trojans, as guests, and Dido, unaware of fate, would not keep them from her territory. He flies through the air with a beating of mighty wings and quickly lands on Libyan shore.
And soon does as commanded, and the Phoenicians set aside their savage instincts, by the god’s will: the queen above all adopts calm feelings, and kind thoughts, towards the Trojans. But Aeneas, the virtuous, turning things over all night, decides, as soon as kindly dawn appears, to go out and explore the place, to find what shores he has reached, on the wind, who owns them (since he sees desert) man or beast, and bring back the details to his friends. He conceals the boats in over-hanging woods under an arching cliff, enclosed by trees and leafy shadows: accompanied only by Achetes, he goes, swinging two broad-bladed spears in his hand. His mother met him herself, among the trees, with the face and appearance of a virgin, and a virgin’s weapons, a Spartan girl, or such as Harpalyce of Thrace, who wearies horses, and outdoes winged Hebrus in flight. For she’d slung her bow from her shoulders, at the ready, like a huntress, and loosed her hair for the wind to scatter, her knees bare, and her flowing tunic gathered up in a knot. And she cried first: ‘Hello, you young men, tell me, if you’ve seen my sister wandering here by any chance, wearing a quiver, and the hide of a dappled lynx, or shouting, hot on the track of a slavering boar?’ So Venus: and so Venus’s son began in answer: ‘I’ve not seen or heard any of your sisters, O Virgin – or how should I name you? Since your looks are not mortal and your voice is more than human: oh, a goddess for certain! Or Phoebus’s sister? Or one of the race of Nymphs? Be kind, whoever you may be, and lighten our labour, and tell us only what sky we’re under, and what shores we’ve landed on: we’re adrift here, driven by wind and vast seas, knowing nothing of the people or the country: many a sacrifice to you will fall at the altars, under our hand.’ Then Venus said: ‘I don’t think myself worthy of such honours: it’s the custom of Tyrian girls to carry a quiver, and lace our calves high up, over red hunting boots. You see the kingdom of Carthage, Tyrians, Agenor’s city: but bordered by Libyans, a people formidable in war. Dido rules this empire, having set out from Tyre, fleeing her brother. It’s a long tale of wrong, with many windings: but I’ll trace the main chapters of the story.
Sychaeus was her husband, wealthiest, in land, of Phoenicians
and loved with a great love by the wretched girl,
whose father gave her as a virgin to him, and wed them
with great solemnity. But her brother Pygmalion, savage
in wickedness beyond all others, held the kingdom of Tyre.
Madness came between them. The king, blinded by greed for gold,
killed the unwary Sychaeus, secretly, with a knife, impiously,
in front of the altars, indifferent to his sister’s affections.
He concealed his actions for a while, deceived the lovesick girl,
with empty hopes, and many evil pretences.
But the ghost of her unburied husband came to her in dream:
lifting his pale head in a strange manner, he laid bare the cruelty
at the altars, and his heart pierced by the knife,
and unveiled all the secret wickedness of that house.
Then he urged her to leave quickly and abandon her country,
and, to help her journey, revealed an ancient treasure
under the earth, an unknown weight of gold and silver.
Shaken by all this, Dido prepared her flight and her friends.
Those who had fierce hatred of the tyrant or bitter fear,
gathered together: they seized some ships that by chance
were ready, and loaded the gold: greedy Pygmalion’s riches
are carried overseas: a woman leads the enterprise.
The came to this place, and bought land, where you now see
the vast walls, and resurgent stronghold, of new Carthage,
as much as they could enclose with the strips of hide
from a single bull, and from that they called it Byrsa.
But who then are you? What shores do you come from?
What course do you take?’ He sighed as she questioned him,
and drawing the words from deep in his heart he replied:

**BkI:372-417 She Directs Him to Dido’s Palace**

‘O goddess, if I were to start my tale at the very beginning,
and you had time to hear the story of our misfortunes,
Vesper would have shut day away in the closed heavens.
A storm drove us at whim to Libya’s shores,
sailing the many seas from ancient Troy,
if by chance the name of Troy has come to your hearing.
I am that Aeneas, the virtuous, who carries my household gods
in my ship with me, having snatched them from the enemy,
my name is known beyond the sky.
I seek my country Italy, and a people born of Jupiter on high.
I embarked on the Phrygian sea with twenty ships,
following my given fate, my mother, a goddess, showing the way:
barely seven are left, wrenched from the wind and waves.
I myself wander, destitute and unknown, in the Libyan desert,
driven from Europe and Asia.’ Venus did not wait
for further complaint but broke in on his lament like this:
‘Whoever you are I don’t think you draw the breath of life
while hated by the gods, you who’ve reached a city of Tyre.
Only go on from here, and take yourself to the queen’s threshold,
since I bring you news that your friends are restored,
and your ships recalled, driven to safety by the shifting winds,
unless my parents taught me false prophecies, in vain.
See, those twelve swans in exultant line, that an eagle,
Jupiter’s bird, swooping from the heavens,
was troubling in the clear sky: now, in a long file, they seem
to have settled, or be gazing down now at those who already have.
As, returning, their wings beat in play, and they circle the zenith
in a crowd, and give their cry, so your ships and your people
are in harbour, or near its entrance under full sail.
Only go on, turn your steps where the path takes you.’
She spoke, and turning away she reflected the light
from her rose-tinted neck, and breathed a divine perfume
from her ambrosial hair: her robes trailed down to her feet,
and, in her step, showed her a true goddess. He recognised
his mother, and as she vanished followed her with his voice:
‘You too are cruel, why do you taunt your son with false
phantoms? Why am I not allowed to join hand
with hand, and speak and hear true words?’
So he accuses her, and turns his steps towards the city.
But Venus veiled them with a dark mist as they walked,
and, as a goddess, spread a thick covering of cloud around them,
so that no one could see them, or touch them,
or cause them delay, or ask them where they were going.
She herself soars high in the air, to Paphos, and returns to her home
with delight, where her temple and its hundred altars
steam with Sabean incense, fragrant with fresh garlands.

**BkI:418-463 The Temple of Juno**

Meanwhile they’ve tackled the route the path revealed.
And soon they climbed the hill that looms high over the city,
and looks down from above on the towers that face it.
Aeneas marvels at the mass of buildings, once huts,
marvels at the gates, the noise, the paved roads.
The eager Tyrians are busy, some building walls,
and raising the citadel, rolling up stones by hand,
some choosing the site for a house, and marking a furrow:
they make magistrates and laws, and a sacred senate:
here some are digging a harbour: others lay down
the deep foundations of a theatre, and carve huge columns
from the cliff, tall adornments for the future stage.
Just as bees in early summer carry out their tasks
among the flowery fields, in the sun, when they lead out
the adolescent young of their race, or cram the cells
with liquid honey, and swell them with sweet nectar,
or receive the incoming burdens, or forming lines
drive the lazy herd of drones from their hives:
the work glows, and the fragrant honey’s sweet with thyme.
‘O fortunate those whose walls already rise!’
Aeneas cries, and admires the summits of the city.
He enters among them, veiled in mist (marvellous to tell)
and mingles with the people seen by no one.
There was a grove in the centre of the city, delightful
with shade, where the wave and storm-tossed Phoenicians
first uncovered the head of a fierce horse, that regal Juno
showed them: so the race would be noted in war,
and rich in substance throughout the ages.
Here Sidonian Dido was establishing a great temple
to Juno, rich with gifts and divine presence,
with bronze entrances rising from stairways, and beams
jointed with bronze, and hinges creaking on bronze doors.
Here in the grove something new appeared that calmed his fears
for the first time, here for the first time Aeneas dared to hope
for safety, and to put greater trust in his afflicted fortunes.
While, waiting for the queen, in the vast temple, he looks
at each thing: while he marvels at the city’s wealth,
the skill of their artistry, and the products of their labours,
he sees the battles at Troy in their correct order,
the War, known through its fame to the whole world,
the sons of Atreus, of Priam, and Achilles angered with both.
He halted, and said, with tears: ‘What place is there,
Achates, what region of earth not full of our hardships?
See, Priam! Here too virtue has its rewards, here too there are tears for events, and mortal things touch the heart. Lose your fears: this fame will bring you benefit.’

Bk1:464-493 The Frieze

So he speaks, and feeds his spirit with the insubstantial frieze, sighing often, and his face wet with the streaming tears. For he saw how, here, the Greeks fled, as they fought round Troy, chased by the Trojan youth, and, there, the Trojans fled, with plumed Achilles pressing them close in his chariot. Not far away, through his tears, he recognises Rhesus’s white-canvassed tents, that blood-stained Diomede, Tydeus’s son, laid waste with great slaughter, betrayed in their first sleep, diverting the fiery horses to his camp, before they could eat Trojan fodder, or drink from the river Xanthus. Elsewhere Troilus, his weapons discarded in flight, unhappy boy, unequally matched in his battle with Achilles, is dragged by his horses, clinging face-up to the empty chariot, still clutching the reins: his neck and hair trailing on the ground, and his spear reversed furrowing the dust. Meanwhile the Trojan women with loose hair, walked to unjust Pallas’s temple carrying the sacred robe, mourning humbly, and beating their breasts with their hands. The goddess was turned away, her eyes fixed on the ground. Three times had Achilles dragged Hector round the walls of Troy, and now was selling the lifeless corpse for gold. Then Aeneas truly heaves a deep sigh, from the depths of his heart, as he views the spoils, the chariot, the very body of his friend, and Priam stretching out his unwarlike hands. He recognised himself as well, fighting the Greek princes, and the Ethiopian ranks and black Memnon’s armour. Raging Penthesilea leads the file of Amazons, with crescent shields, and shines out among her thousands, her golden girdle fastened beneath her exposed breasts, a virgin warrior daring to fight with men.

Bk1:494-519 The Arrival of Queen Dido

While these wonderful sights are viewed by Trojan Aeneas,
while amazed he hangs there, rapt, with fixed gaze,
Queen Dido, of loveliest form, reached the temple,
with a great crowd of youths accompanying her.
Just as Diana leads her dancing throng on Eurotas’s banks,
or along the ridges of Cynthus, and, following her,
a thousand mountain-nymphs gather on either side:
and she carries a quiver on her shoulder, and overtops
all the other goddesses as she walks: and delight
seizes her mother Latona’s silent heart:
such was Dido, so she carried herself, joyfully,
amongst them, furthering the work, and her rising kingdom.
Then, fenced with weapons, and resting on a high throne,
she took her seat, at the goddess’s doorway, under the central vault.
She was giving out laws and statutes to the people, and sharing
the workers labour out in fair proportions, or assigning it by lot:
when Aeneas suddenly saw Antheus, and Sergestus,
and brave Cloanthus, approaching, among a large crowd,
with others of the Trojans whom the black storm-clouds
had scattered over the sea and carried far off to other shores.
He was stunned, and Achates was stunned as well
with joy and fear: they burned with eagerness to clasp hands,
but the unexpected event confused their minds.
They stay concealed and, veiled in the deep mist, they watch
to see what happens to their friends, what shore they have left
the fleet on, and why they are here: the elect of every ship came
begging favour, and made for the temple among the shouting.

**BkI:520-560 Ilioneus Asks Her Assistance**

When they’d entered, and freedom to speak in person
had been granted, Ilioneus, the eldest, began calmly:
‘O queen, whom Jupiter grants the right to found
a new city, and curb proud tribes with your justice,
we unlucky Trojans, driven by the winds over every sea,
pray to you: keep the terror of fire away from our ships,
spare a virtuous race and look more kindly on our fate.
We have not come to despoil Libyan homes with the sword,
or to carry off stolen plunder to the shore: that violence
is not in our minds, the conquered have not such pride.
There’s a place called Hesperia by the Greeks,
an ancient land, strong in men, with a rich soil:
There the Oenotrians lived: now rumour has it that a later people has called it Italy, after their leader. We had set our course there when stormy Orion, rising with the tide, carried us onto hidden shoals, and fierce winds scattered us far, with the overwhelming surge, over the waves among uninhabitable rocks: we few have drifted here to your shores. What race of men is this? What land is so barbaric as to allow this custom, that we’re denied the hospitality of the sands? They stir up war, and prevent us setting foot on dry land. If you despise the human race and mortal weapons, still trust that the gods remember right and wrong. Aeneas was our king, no one more just than him in his duty, or greater in war and weaponry. If fate still protects the man, if he still enjoys the ethereal air, if he doesn’t yet rest among the cruel shades, there’s nothing to fear, and you’d not repent of vying with him first in kindness. Then there are cities and fields too in the region of Sicily, and famous Acestes, of Trojan blood. Allow us to beach our fleet, damaged by the storms, and cut planks from trees, and shape oars, so if our king’s restored and our friends are found we can head for Italy, gladly seek Italy and Latium: and if our saviour’s lost, and the Libyan seas hold you, Troy’s most virtuous father, if no hope now remains from Iulus, let us seek the Sicilian straits, from which we were driven, and the home prepared for us, and a king, Acestes.’

So Ilioneus spoke: and the Trojans all shouted with one voice.

BkI:561-585 Dido Welcomes the Trojans

Then, Dido, spoke briefly, with lowered eyes: ‘Trojans, free your hearts of fear: dispel your cares. Harsh events and the newness of the kingdom force me to effect such things, and protect my borders with guards on all sides. Who doesn’t know of Aeneas’s race, and the city of Troy, the bravery, the men, or so great a blaze of warfare, indeed, we Phoenicians don’t possess unfeeling hearts, the sun doesn’t harness his horses that far from this Tyrian city. Whether you opt for mighty Hesperia, and Saturn’s fields, or the summit of Eryx, and Acestes for king,
I’ll see you safely escorted, and help you with my wealth. 
Or do you wish to settle here with me, as equals in my kingdom? 
The city I build is yours: beach your ships: 
Trojans and Tyrians will be treated by me without distinction. 
I wish your king Aeneas himself were here, driven 
by that same storm! Indeed, I’ll send reliable men 
along the coast, and order them to travel the length of Libya, 
in case he’s driven aground, and wandering the woods and towns.’

Brave Achates, and our forefather Aeneas, their spirits raised 
by these words, had been burning to break free of the mist. 
Achates was first to speak, saying to Aeneas: ‘Son of the goddess, 
what intention springs to your mind? You see all’s safe, 
the fleet and our friends have been restored to us. 
Only one is missing, whom we saw plunged in the waves: 
all else is in accord with your mother’s words.’

**Bk1:586-612 Aeneas Makes Himself Known**

He’d scarcely spoken when the mist surrounding them 
suddenly parted, and vanished in the clear air. 
Aeneas stood there, shining in the bright daylight, 
like a god in shoulders and face: since his mother 
had herself imparted to her son beauty to his hair, 
a glow of youth, and a joyful charm to his eyes: 
like the glory art can give to ivory, or as when silver, 
or Parian marble, is surrounded by gold. 
Then he addressed the queen, suddenly, surprising them all, 
saying: ‘I am here in person, Aeneas the Trojan, 
him whom you seek, saved from the Libyan waves. 
O Dido, it is not in our power, nor those of our Trojan race, 
wherever they may be, scattered through the wide world, 
to pay you sufficient thanks, you who alone have pitied 
Troy’s unspeakable miseries, and share your city and home 
with us, the remnant left by the Greeks, wearied 
by every mischance, on land and sea, and lacking everything. 
May the gods, and the mind itself conscious of right, 
bring you a just reward, if the gods respect the virtuous, 
if there is justice anywhere. What happy age gave birth 
to you? What parents produced such a child? 
Your honour, name and praise will endure forever, 
whatever lands may summon me, while rivers run
to the sea, while shadows cross mountain slopes,  
while the sky nourishes the stars.’ So saying he grasps  
his friend Iloneus by the right hand, Serestus with the left,  
then others, brave Gyus and brave Cloanthus.

**BkI:613-656 Dido Receives Aeneas**

Sidonian Dido was first amazed at the hero’s looks  
then at his great misfortunes, and she spoke, saying:  
‘Son of a goddess, what fate pursues you through all  
these dangers? What force drives you to these barbarous shores?  
Are you truly that Aeneas whom kindly Venus bore  
to Trojan Anchises, by the waters of Phrygian Simois?  
Indeed, I myself remember Teucer coming to Sidon,  
exiled from his country’s borders, seeking a new kingdom  
with Belus’s help: Belus, my father, was laying waste  
rich Cyprus, and, as victor, held it by his authority.  
Since then the fall of the Trojan city is known to me,  
and your name, and those of the Greek kings.  
Even their enemy granted the Teurcians high praise,  
maintaining they were born of the ancient Teurcian stock.  
So come, young lords, and enter our palace.  
Fortune, pursuing me too, through many similar troubles,  
willed that I would find peace at last in this land.  
Not being unknown to evil, I’ve learned to aid the unhappy.’  
So she speaks, and leads Aeneas into the royal house,  
and proclaims, as well, offerings at the god’s temples.  
She sends no less than twenty bulls to his friends  
on the shore, and a hundred of her largest pigs with  
bristling backs, a hundred fat lambs with the ewes,  
and joyful gifts of wine, but the interior of the palace  
is laid out with royal luxury, and they prepare  
a feast in the centre of the palace: covers worked  
skilfully in princely purple, massive silverware  
on the tables, and her forefathers’ heroic deeds  
engraved in gold, a long series of exploits traced  
through many heroes, since the ancient origins of her people.  
Aeneas quickly sends Achates to the ships  
to carry the news to Ascanius (since a father’s love  
won’t let his mind rest) and bring him to the city:  
on Ascanius all the care of a fond parent is fixed.
He commands him to bring gifts too, snatched from the ruins of Troy, a figured robe stiff with gold, and a cloak fringed with yellow acanthus, worn by Helen of Argos, brought from Mycenae when she sailed to Troy and her unlawful marriage, a wonderful gift from her mother Leda: and the sceptre that Ilione, Priam’s eldest daughter, once carried, and a necklace of pearls, and a double-coronet of jewels and gold. Achates, hastening to fulfil these commands, took his way towards the ships.

BkI:657-694 Cupid Impersonates Ascanius

But Venus was planning new wiles and stratagems in her heart: how Cupid, altered in looks, might arrive in place of sweet Ascanius, and arouse the passionate queen by his gifts, and entwine the fire in her bones: truly she fears the unreliability of this house, and the duplicitous Tyrians: unyielding Juno angers her, and her worries increase with nightfall. So she speaks these words to winged Cupid:
‘My son, you who alone are my great strength, my power, a son who scorns mighty Jupiter’s Typhoean thunderbolts, I ask your help, and humbly call on your divine will. It’s known to you how Aeneas, your brother, is driven over the sea, round all the shores, by bitter Juno’s hatred, and you have often grieved with my grief. Phoenician Dido holds him there, delaying him with flattery, and I fear what may come of Juno’s hospitality: at such a critical turn of events she’ll not be idle. So I intend to deceive the queen with guile, and encircle her with passion, so that no divine will can rescue her, but she’ll be seized, with me, by deep love for Aeneas. Now listen to my thoughts on how you can achieve this. Summoned by his dear father, the royal child, my greatest concern, prepares to go to the Sidonian city, carrying gifts that survived the sea, and the flames of Troy. I’ll lull him to sleep and hide him in my sacred shrine on the heights of Cythera or Idalium, so he can know nothing of my deceptions, or interrupt them mid-way. For no more than a single night imitate his looks by art, and, a boy yourself, take on the known face of a boy,
so that when Dido takes you to her breast, joyfully, 
amongst the royal feast, and the flowing wine, 
when she embraces you, and plants sweet kisses on you, 
you’ll breathe hidden fire into her, deceive her with your poison.’
Cupid obeys his dear mother’s words, sets aside his wings, 
and laughingly trips along with Iulus’s step.
But Venus pours gentle sleep over Ascanius’s limbs, 
and warming him in her breast, carries him, with divine power, 
to Idalia’s high groves, where soft marjoram smothers him 
in flowers, and the breath of its sweet shade.

BkI:695-722 Cupid Deceives Dido

Now, obedient to her orders, delighting in Achetes as guide, 
Cupid goes off carrying royal gifts for the Tyrians. 
When he arrives the queen has already settled herself 
in the centre, on her golden couch under royal canopies. 
Now our forefather Aeneas and the youth of Troy 
gather there, and recline on cloths of purple. 
Servants pour water over their hands: serve bread 
from baskets: and bring napkins of smooth cloth. 
Inside there are fifty female servants, in a long line, 
whose task it is to prepare the meal, and tend the hearth fires: 
a hundred more, and as many pages of like age, 
to load the tables with food, and fill the cups. 
And the Tyrians too are gathered in crowds through the festive 
halls, summoned to recline on the embroidered couches. 
They marvel at Aeneas’s gifts, marvel at Iulus, 
the god’s brilliant appearance, and deceptive words, 
at the robe, and the cloak embroidered with yellow acanthus. 
The unfortunate Phoenician above all, doomed to future ruin, 
cannot pacify her feelings, and catches fire with gazing, 
stirred equally by the child and by the gifts. 
He, having hung in an embrace round Aeneas’s neck, 
and sated the deceived father’s great love, 
seeks out the queen. Dido, clings to him with her eyes 
and with her heart, taking him now and then on her lap, 
under aware how great a god is entering her, to her sorrow. 
But he, remembering his Cyprian mother’s wishes, 
begins gradually to erase all thought of Sychaeus, 
and works at seducing her mind, so long unstirred,
and her heart unused to love, with living passion.

**BkI:723-756 Dido Asks for Aeneas’s Story**

At the first lull in the feasting, the tables were cleared, and they set out vast bowls, and wreathed the wine with garlands. Noise filled the palace, and voices rolled out across the wide halls: bright lamps hung from the golden ceilings, and blazing candles dispelled the night. Then the queen asked for a drinking-cup, heavy with gold and jewels, that Belus and all Belus’s line were accustomed to use, and filled it with wine. Then the halls were silent. She spoke: ‘Jupiter, since they say you’re the one who creates the laws of hospitality, let this be a happy day for the Tyrians and those from Troy, and let it be remembered by our children. Let Bacchus, the joy-bringer, and kind Juno be present, and you, O Phoenicians, make this gathering festive.’ She spoke and poured an offering of wine onto the table, and after the libation was the first to touch the bowl to her lips, then she gave it to Bitias, challenging him: he briskly drained the brimming cup, drenching himself in its golden fullness, then other princes drank. Iolas, the long-haired, made his golden lyre resound, he whom great Atlas taught. He sang of the wandering moon and the sun’s labours, where men and beasts came from, and rain and fire, of Arcturus, the rainy Hyades, the two Bears: why the winter suns rush to dip themselves in the sea, and what delay makes the slow nights linger. The Tyrians redoubled their applause, the Trojans too. And unfortunate Dido, she too spent the night in conversation, and drank deep of her passion, asking endlessly about Priam and Hector: now about the armour that Memnon, son of the Dawn, came with to Troy, what kind were Diomed’s horses, how great was Achilles. ‘But come, my guest, tell us from the start all the Greek trickery, your men’s mishaps, and your wanderings: since it’s the seventh summer now that brings you here, in your journey, over every land and sea.’
They were all silent, and turned their faces towards him intently. Then from his high couch our forefather Aeneas began: ‘O queen, you command me to renew unspeakable grief, how the Greeks destroyed the riches of Troy, and the sorrowful kingdom, miseries I saw myself, and in which I played a great part. What Myrmidon, or Dolopian, or warrior of fierce Ulysses, could keep from tears in telling such a story? Now the dew-filled night is dropping from the sky, and the setting stars urge sleep. But if you have such desire to learn of our misfortunes, and briefly hear of Troy’s last agonies, though my mind shudders at the memory, and recoils in sorrow, I’ll begin. ‘After many years have slipped by, the leaders of the Greeks, opposed by the Fates, and damaged by the war, build a horse of mountainous size, through Pallas’s divine art, and weave planks of fir over its ribs: they pretend it’s a votive offering: this rumour spreads. They secretly hide a picked body of men, chosen by lot, there, in the dark body, filling the belly and the huge cavernous insides with armed warriors. Tenedos is within sight, an island known to fame, rich in wealth when Priam’s kingdom remained, now just a bay and an unsafe anchorage for boats: they sail there, and hide themselves, on the lonely shore. We thought they had gone, and were seeking Mycenae with the wind. So all the Trojan land was free of its long sorrow. The gates were opened: it was a joy to go and see the Greek camp, the deserted site and the abandoned shore. Here the Dolopians stayed, here cruel Achilles, here lay the fleet, here they used to meet us in battle. Some were amazed at virgin Minerva’s fatal gift, and marvel at the horse’s size: and at first Thymoetes, whether through treachery, or because Troy’s fate was certain, urged that it be dragged inside the walls and placed on the citadel. But Capys, and those of wiser judgement, commanded us to either hurl this deceit of the Greeks, this suspect gift, into the sea, or set fire to it from beneath, or pierce its hollow belly, and probe for hiding places. The crowd, uncertain, was split by opposing opinions.
Then Laocoön rushes down eagerly from the heights
of the citadel, to confront them all, a large crowd with him,
and shouts from far off: ‘O unhappy citizens, what madness?
Do you think the enemy’s sailed away? Or do you think
any Greek gift’s free of treachery? Is that Ulysses’s reputation?
Either there are Greeks in hiding, concealed by the wood,
or it’s been built as a machine to use against our walls,
or spy on our homes, or fall on the city from above,
or it hides some other trick: Trojans, don’t trust this horse.
Whatever it is, I’m afraid of Greeks even those bearing gifts.’
So saying he hurled his great spear, with extreme force,
at the creature’s side, and into the frame of the curved belly.
The spear stuck quivering, and at the womb’s reverberation
the cavity rang hollow and gave out a groan.

And if the gods’ fate, if our minds, had not been ill-omened,
he’d have incited us to mar the Greeks hiding-place with steel:
Troy would still stand: and you, high tower of Priam would remain.

**BkII:57-144 Sinon’s Tale**

See, meanwhile, some Trojan shepherds, shouting loudly,
dragging a youth, his hands tied behind his back, to the king.
In order to contrive this, and lay Troy open to the Greeks,
he had placed himself in their path, calm in mind, and ready
for either course: to engage in deception, or find certain death.
The Trojan youth run, crowding round, from all sides,
to see him, and compete in mocking the captive.
Listen now to Greek treachery, and learn of all their crimes
from just this one. Since, as he stood, looking troubled,
unarmed, amongst the gazing crowd,
and cast his eyes around the Phrygian ranks,
he said: ‘Ah! What land, what seas would accept me now?
What’s left for me at the last in my misery, I who have
no place among the Greeks, when the hostile Trojans,
themselves, demand my punishment and my blood?

At this the mood changed and all violence was checked.
We urged him to say what blood he was sprung from,
and why he suffered: and tell us what trust could be placed
in him as a captive. Setting fear aside at last he speaks:
“O king, I’ll tell you the whole truth, whatever happens,
and indeed I’ll not deny that I’m of Argive birth:
this first of all: if Fortune has made me wretched,
she’ll not also wrongly make me false and a liar.
If by any chance some mention of Palamedes’s name
has reached your ears, son of Belus, and talk
of his glorious fame, he whom the Pelasgians,
on false charges of treason, by atrocious perjury,
because he opposed the war, sent innocent to his death,
and who they mourn, now he’s taken from the light:
well my father, being poor, sent me here to the war
when I was young, as his friend, as we were blood relatives.
While Palamades was safe in power, and prospered
in the kings’ council, I also had some name and respect.
But when he passed from this world above, through
the jealousy of plausible Ulysses (the tale’s not unknown)
I was ruined, and spent my life in obscurity and grief,
inwardly angry at the fate of my innocent friend.
Maddened I could not be silent, and I promised, if chance allowed,
and if I ever returned as a victor to my native Argos,
to avenge him, and with my words stirred bitter hatred.
The first hint of trouble came to me from this, because of it
Ulysses was always frightening me with new accusations,
spreading veiled rumours among the people, and guiltily
seeking to defend himself. He would not rest till, with Calchas
as his instrument – but why I do unfold this unwelcome story?
Why hinder you? If you consider all Greeks the same,
and that’s sufficient, take your vengeance now: that’s what
the Ithacan wants, and the sons of Atreus would pay dearly for.”
Then indeed we were on fire to ask, and seek the cause,
ignorant of such wickedness and Pelasgian trickery.
Trembling with fictitious feelings he continued, saying:
“The Greeks, weary with the long war, often longed
to leave Troy and execute a retreat: if only they had!
Often a fierce storm from the sea land-locked them,
and the gale terrified them from leaving:
once that horse, made of maple-beams, stood there,
especially then, storm-clouds thundered in the sky.
Anxious, we send Eurypylus to consult Phoebus’s oracle,
and he brings back these dark words from the sanctuary:
‘With blood, and a virgin sacrifice, you calmed the winds,
O Greeks, when you first came to these Trojan shores, seek your
return in blood, and the well-omened sacrifice of an Argive life.’
When this reached the ears of the crowd, their minds were stunned, and an icy shudder ran to their deepest marrow:
who readies this fate, whom does Apollo choose?
At this the Ithacan thrust the seer, Calchas, into their midst, demanding to know what the god’s will might be, among the uproar. Many were already cruelly prophesying that ingenious man’s wickedness towards me, and silently saw what was coming. For ten days the seer kept silence, refusing to reveal the secret by his words, or condemn anyone to death. But at last, urged on by Ulysses’s loud clamour, he broke into speech as agreed, and doomed me to the altar. All acclaimed it, and what each feared himself, they endured when directed, alas, towards one man’s destruction.
Now the terrible day arrived, the rites were being prepared for me, the salted grain, and the headbands for my forehead. I confess I saved myself from death, burst my bonds, and all that night hid by a muddy lake among the reeds, till they set sail, if as it happened they did.
And now I’ve no hope of seeing my old country again, or my sweet children or the father I long for: perhaps they’ll seek to punish them for my flight, and avenge my crime through the death of these unfortunates. But I beg you, by the gods, by divine power that knows the truth, by whatever honour anywhere remains pure among men, have pity on such troubles, pity the soul that endures undeserved suffering.”

BkII:145-194 Sinon Deludes the Trojans

With these tears we grant him his life, and also pity him. Priam himself is the first to order his manacles and tight bonds removed, and speaks these words of kindness to him:
“From now on, whoever you are, forget the Greeks, lost to you: you’ll be one of us. And explain to me truly what I ask: Why have they built this huge hulk of a horse? Who created it? What do they aim at? What religious object or war machine is it?” He spoke: the other, schooled in Pelasgian art and trickery, raised his unbound palms towards the stars, saying: “You, eternal fires, in your invulnerable power, be witness, you altars and impious swords I escaped, you sacrificial ribbons of the gods that I wore as victim: with right I break the Greek’s solemn oaths,
with right I hate them, and if things are hidden
bring them to light: I’m bound by no laws of their country.
Only, Troy, maintain your assurances, if I speak truth, if I repay
you handsomely: kept intact yourself, keep your promises intact.
All the hopes of the Greeks and their confidence to begin the war
always depended on Pallas’s aid. But from that moment
when the impious son of Tydeus, Diomede, and Ulysses
inventor of wickedness, approached the fateful Palladium to snatch
it from its sacred temple, killing the guards on the citadel’s heights,
and dared to seize the holy statue, and touch the sacred ribbons
of the goddess with blood-soaked hands: from that moment
the hopes of the Greeks receded, and slipping backwards ebbed:
their power fragmented, and the mind of the goddess opposed them.
Pallas gave sign of this, and not with dubious portents,
for scarcely was the statue set up in camp, when glittering flames
shone from the upturned eyes, a salt sweat ran over its limbs,
and (wonderful to tell) she herself darted from the ground
with shield on her arm, and spear quivering.
Calchas immediately proclaimed that the flight by sea must be
attempted, and that Troy cannot be uprooted by Argive weapons,
unless they renew the omens at Argos, and take the goddess home,
whom they have indeed taken by sea in their curved ships.
And now they are heading for their native Mycenae with the wind,
obtaining weapons and the friendship of the gods, re-crossing
the sea to arrive unexpectedly, So Calchas reads the omens.
Warned by him, they’ve set up this statue of a horse
for the wounded goddess, instead of the Palladium,
to atone severely for their sin. And Calchas ordered them
to raise the huge mass of woven timbers, raised to the sky,
so the gates would not take it, nor could it be dragged
inside the walls, or watch over the people in their ancient rites.
Since if your hands violated Minerva’s gift,
then utter ruin (may the gods first turn that prediction
on themselves!) would come to Priam and the Trojans:
yet if it ascended into your citadel, dragged by your hands,
Asia would come to the very walls of Pelops, in mighty war,
and a like fate would await our children.”

BkII:195-227 Laocoön and the Serpents

Through these tricks and the skill of perjured Sinon, the thing was
credited, and we were trapped, by his wiliness, and false tears, we, who were not conquered by Diomede, or Larissan Achilles, nor by the ten years of war, nor those thousand ships. Then something greater and more terrible befalls us wretches, and stirs our unsuspecting souls. Laocoön, chosen by lot as priest of Neptune, was sacrificing a huge bull at the customary altar. See, a pair of serpents with huge coils, snaking over the sea from Tenedos through the tranquil deep (I shudder to tell it), and heading for the shore side by side: their fronts lift high over the tide, and their blood-red crests top the waves, the rest of their body slides through the ocean behind, and their huge backs arch in voluminous folds. There’s a roar from the foaming sea: now they reach the shore, and with burning eyes suffused with blood and fire, lick at their hissing jaws with flickering tongues. Blanching at the sight we scatter. They move on a set course towards Laocoön: and first each serpent entwines the slender bodies of his two sons, and biting at them, devours their wretched limbs: then as he comes to their aid, weapons in hand, they seize him too, and wreathe him in massive coils: now encircling his waist twice, twice winding their scaly folds around his throat, their high necks and heads tower above him. He strains to burst the knots with his hands, his sacred headband drenched in blood and dark venom, while he sends terrible shouts up to the heavens, like the bellowing of a bull that has fled wounded, from the altar, shaking the useless axe from its neck. But the serpent pair escape, slithering away to the high temple, and seek the stronghold of fierce Pallas, to hide there under the goddess’s feet, and the circle of her shield.

BkII:228-253 The Horse Enters Troy

Then in truth a strange terror steals through each shuddering heart, and they say that Laocoön has justly suffered for his crime in wounding the sacred oak-tree with his spear, by hurling its wicked shaft into the trunk.

“Pull the statue to her house”, they shout, “and offer prayers to the goddess’s divinity.”
We breached the wall, and opened up the defences of the city.
All prepare themselves for the work and they set up wheels
allowing movement under its feet, and stretch hemp ropes
round its neck. That engine of fate mounts our walls
pregnant with armed men. Around it boys, and virgin girls,
sing sacred songs, and delight in touching their hands to the ropes:
Up it glides and rolls threateningly into the midst of the city.
O my country, O Ilium house of the gods, and you,
Trojan walls famous in war! Four times it sticks at the threshold
of the gates, and four times the weapons clash in its belly:
yet we press on regardless, blind with frenzy,
and site the accursed creature on top of our sacred citadel.
Even then Cassandra, who, by the god’s decree, is never
to be believed by Trojans, reveals our future fate with her lips.
We unfortunate ones, for whom that day is our last,
clothe the gods’ temples, throughout the city, with festive branches.
Meanwhile the heavens turn, and night rushes from the Ocean,
wrapping the earth, and sky, and the Myrmidons’ tricks,
in its vast shadow: through the city the Trojans
fall silent: sleep enfolds their weary limbs.

BkII:254-297 The Greeks Take the City

And now the Greek phalanx of battle-ready ships sailed
from Tenedos, in the benign stillness of the silent moon,
seeking the known shore, when the royal galley raised
a torch, and Sinon, protected by the gods’ unjust doom,
sets free the Greeks imprisoned by planks of pine,
in the horses’ belly. Opened, it releases them to the air,
and sliding down a lowered rope, Thessandrus, and Sthenelus,
the leaders, and fatal Ulysses, emerge joyfully
from their wooden cave, with Acamas, Thoas,
Peleus’s son Neoptolemus, the noble Machaon,
Menelaus, and Epeus who himself devised this trick.
They invade the city that’s drowned in sleep and wine,
kill the watchmen, welcome their comrades
at the open gates, and link their clandestine ranks.
It was the hour when first sleep begins for weary mortals,
and steals over them as the sweetest gift of the gods.
See, in dream, before my eyes, Hector seemed to stand there,
saddest of all and pouring out great tears,
torn by the chariot, as once he was, black with bloody dust, and his swollen feet pierced by the thongs. Ah, how he looked! How changed he was from that Hector who returned wearing Achilles’s armour, or who set Trojan flames to the Greek ships! His beard was ragged, his hair matted with blood, bearing those many wounds he received dragged around the walls of his city. And I seemed to weep myself, calling out to him, and speaking to him in words of sorrow: “Oh light of the Troad, surest hope of the Trojans, what has so delayed you? What shore do you come from Hector, the long-awaited? Weary from the many troubles of our people and our city I see you, oh, after the death of so many of your kin! What shameful events have marred that clear face? And why do I see these wounds?” He does not reply, nor does he wait on my idle questions, but dragging heavy sighs from the depths of his heart, he says: “Ah! Son of the goddess, fly, tear yourself from the flames. The enemy has taken the walls: Troy falls from her high place. Enough has been given to Priam and your country: if Pergama could be saved by any hand, it would have been saved by this. Troy entrusts her sacred relics and household gods to you: take them as friends of your fate, seek mighty walls for them, those you will found at last when you have wandered the seas.” So he speaks, and brings the sacred headbands in his hands from the innermost shrine, potent Vesta, and the undying flame.

BkII:298-354 Aeneas Gathers his Comrades

Meanwhile the city is confused with grief, on every side, and though my father Anchises’s house is remote, secluded and hidden by trees, the sounds grow clearer and clearer, and the terror of war sweeps upon it. I shake off sleep, and climb to the highest roof-top, and stand there with ears strained: as when fire attacks a wheat-field when the south-wind rages, or the rushing torrent from a mountain stream covers the fields, drowns the ripe crops, the labour of oxen, and brings down the trees headlong, and the dazed shepherd, unaware, hears the echo from a high rocky peak. Now the truth is obvious, and the Greek plot revealed.
Now the vast hall of Deiphobus is given to ruin
the fire over it: now Ucalegon’s nearby blazes:
the wide Sigean straits throw back the glare.
Then the clamour of men and the blare of trumpets rises.
Frantically I seize weapons: not because there is much use
for weapons, but my spirit burns to gather men for battle
and race to the citadel with my friends: madness and anger
hurl my mind headlong, and I think it beautiful to die fighting.
Now, see, Panthus escaping the Greek spears,
Panthus, son of Othrys, Apollo’s priest on the citadel,
dragging along with his own hands the sacred relics,
the conquered gods, his little grandchild, running frantically
to my door: “Where’s the best advantage, Panthus, what position
should we take?” I’d barely spoken, when he answered
with a groan: “The last day comes, Troy’s inescapable hour.
Troy is past, Ilium is past, and the great glory of the Trojans:
Jupiter carries all to Argos: the Greeks are lords of the burning city.
The horse, standing high on the ramparts, pours out warriors,
and Sinon the conqueror exultantly stirs the flames.
Others are at the wide-open gates, as many thousands
as ever came from great Mycenae: more have blocked
the narrow streets with hostile weapons:
a line of standing steel with naked flickering blades
is ready for the slaughter: barely the first few guards
at the gates attempt to fight, and they resist in blind conflict.”
By these words from Othrys’ son, and divine will, I’m thrust
amongst the weapons and the flames, where the dismal Fury
sounds, and the roar, and the clamour rising to the sky.
Friends joined me, visible in the moonlight, Ripheus,
and Epytus, mighty in battle, Hypanis and Dymas,
gathered to my side, and young Coroebus, Mygdon’s son:
by chance he’d arrived in Troy at that time,
burning with mad love for Cassandra, and brought help,
as a potential son-in-law, to Priam, and the Trojans,
unlucky man, who didn’t listen to the prophecy
of his frenzied bride! When I saw them crowded there
eager for battle, I began as follows: “Warriors, bravest
of frustrated spirits, if your ardent desire is fixed
on following me to the end, you can see our cause’s fate.
All the gods by whom this empire was supported
have departed, leaving behind their temples and their altars:
you aid a burning city: let us die and rush into battle.
The beaten have one refuge, to have no hope of refuge.”

**BkII:355-401 Aeneas and his Friends Resist**

So their young spirits were roused to fury. Then, like ravaging wolves in a dark mist, driven blindly by the cruel rage of their bellies, leaving their young waiting with thirsty jaws, we pass through our enemies, to certain death, and make our way to the heart of the city: dark night envelops us in deep shadow. Who could tell of that destruction in words, or equal our pain with tears? The ancient city falls, she who ruled for so many years: crowds of dead bodies lie here and there in the streets, among the houses, and on the sacred thresholds of the gods. Nor is it Trojans alone who pay the penalty with their blood: courage returns at times to the hearts of the defeated and the Greek conquerors die. Cruel mourning is everywhere, everywhere there is panic, and many a form of death. First, Androgeos, meets us, with a great crowd of Greeks around him, unknowingly thinking us allied troops, and calls to us in friendly speech as well: “Hurry, men! What sluggishness makes you delay so? The others are raping and plundering burning Troy: are you only now arriving from the tall ships?” He spoke, and straight away (since no reply given was credible enough) he knew he’d fallen into the enemy fold. He was stunned, drew back, and stifled his voice. Like a man who unexpectedly treads on a snake in rough briars, as he strides over the ground, and shrinks back in sudden fear as it rears in anger and swells its dark-green neck, so Androgeos, shuddering at the sight of us, drew back. We charge forward and surround them closely with weapons, and ignorant of the place, seized by terror, as they are, we slaughter them wholesale. Fortune favours our first efforts. And at this Coroebus, exultant with courage and success, cries: “Oh my friends, where fortune first points out the path to safety, and shows herself a friend, let us follow. Let’s change our shields adopt Greek emblems. Courage or deceit: who’ll question it in war? They’ll arm us themselves.” With these words, he takes up Androgeos’s plumed helmet, his shield with its noble markings,
and straps the Greek’s sword to his side. Ripheus does likewise, Dymas too, and all the warriors delight in it. Each man arms himself with the fresh spoils. We pass on mingling with the Greeks, with gods that are not our known, and clash, in many an armed encounter, in the blind night, and we send many a Greek down to Orcus. Some scatter to the ships, and run for safer shores, some, in humiliated terror, climb the vast horse again and hide in the womb they know.

BkII:402-437 Cassandra is Taken

“Ah, put no faith in anything the will of the gods opposes! See, Priam’s virgin daughter dragged, with streaming hair, from the sanctuary and temple of Minerva, lifting her burning eyes to heaven in vain: her eyes, since cords restrained her gentle hands. Coroebus could not stand the sight, maddened in mind, and hurled himself among the ranks, seeking death.
We follow him, and, weapons locked, charge together. Here, at first, we were overwhelmed by Trojan spears, hurled from the high summit of the temple, and wretched slaughter was caused by the look of our armour, and the confusion arising from our Greek crests. Then the Danaans, gathering from all sides, groaning with anger at the girl being pulled away from them, rush us, Ajax the fiercest, the two Atrides, all the Greek host: just as, at the onset of a tempest, conflicting winds clash, the west, the south, and the east that joys in the horses of dawn: the forest roars, brine-wet Nereus rages with his trident, and stirs the waters from their lowest depths. Even those we have scattered by a ruse, in the dark of night, and driven right through the city, re-appear: for the first time they recognise our shields and deceitful weapons, and realise our speech differs in sound to theirs. In a moment we’re overwhelmed by weight of numbers: first Coroebus falls, by the armed goddess’s altar, at the hands of Peneleus: and Ripheus, who was the most just of all the Trojans, and keenest for what was right (the gods’ vision was otherwise): Hypanis and Dymas die at the hands of allies: and your great piety, Panthus, and Apollo’s sacred headband
can not defend you in your downfall.
Ashes of Ilium, death flames of my people, be witness
that, at your ruin, I did not evade the Danaan weapons,
nor the risks, and, if it had been my fate to die,
I earned it with my sword. Then we are separated,
Iphitus and Pelias with me, Iphitus weighed down by the years,
and Pelias, slow-footed, wounded by Ulysses:
immediately we’re summoned to Priam’s palace by the clamour.

BkII:438-485 The Battle for the Palace

Here’s a great battle indeed, as if the rest of the war were nothing,
as if others were not dying throughout the whole city,
so we see wild War and the Greeks rushing to the palace,
and the entrance filled with a press of shields.
Ladders cling to the walls: men climb the stairs under the very
doorposts, with their left hands holding defensive shields
against the spears, grasping the sloping stone with their right.
In turn, the Trojans pull down the turrets and roof-tiles
of the halls, prepared to defend themselves even in death,
seeing the end near them, with these as weapons:
and send the gilded roof-beams down, the glory
of their ancient fathers. Others with naked swords block
the inner doors: these they defend in massed ranks.
Our spirits were reinspired, to bring help to the king’s palace,
to relieve our warriors with our aid, and add power to the beaten.
There was an entrance with hidden doors, and a passage in use
between Priam’s halls, and a secluded gateway beyond,
which the unfortunate Andromache, while the kingdom stood,
often used to traverse, going, unattended, to her husband’s parents,
taking the little Astyanax to his grandfather.
I reached the topmost heights of the pediment from which
the wretched Trojans were hurling their missiles in vain.
A turret standing on the sloping edge, and rising from the roof
to the sky, was one from which all Troy could be seen,
the Danaan ships, and the Greek camp: and attacking its edges
with our swords, where the upper levels offered weaker mortar,
we wrenched it from its high place, and sent it flying:
falling suddenly it dragged all to ruin with a roar,
and shattered far and wide over the Greek ranks.
But more arrived, and meanwhile neither the stones
nor any of the various missiles ceased to fly.  
In front of the courtyard itself, in the very doorway of the palace,  
Pyrrhus exults, glittering with the sheen of bronze:  
like a snake, fed on poisonous herbs, in the light,  
that cold winter has held, swollen, under the ground,  
and now, gleaming with youth, its skin sloughed,  
ripples its slimy back, lifts its front high towards the sun,  
and darts its triple-forked tongue from its jaws.  
Huge Periphas, and Automedon the armour-bearer,  
driver of Achilles’s team, and all the Scyrian youths,  
advance on the palace together and hurl firebrands onto the roof.  
Pyrrhus himself among the front ranks, clutching a double-axe,  
breaks through the stubborn gate, and pulls the bronze doors  
from their hinges: and now, hewing out the timber, he breaches  
the solid oak and opens a huge window with a gaping mouth.  
The palace within appears, and the long halls are revealed:  
the inner sanctums of Priam, and the ancient kings, appear,  
and armed men are seen standing on the very threshold.

BkII:486-558 Priam’s Fate

But, inside the palace, groans mingle with sad confusion,  
and, deep within, the hollow halls howl  
with women’s cries: the clamour strikes the golden stars.  
Trembling mothers wander the vast building, clasping  
the doorposts, and placing kisses on them. Pyrrhus drives forward,  
with his father Achilles’s strength, no barricades nor the guards  
themselves can stop him: the door collapses under the ram’s blows,  
and the posts collapse, wrenched from their sockets.  
Strength makes a road: the Greeks, pour through, force a passage,  
slaughter the front ranks, and fill the wide space with their men.  
A foaming river is not so furious, when it floods,  
bursting its banks, overwhelms the barriers against it,  
and rages in a mass through the fields, sweeping cattle and stables  
across the whole plain. I saw Pyrrhus myself, on the threshold,  
mad with slaughter, and the two sons of Atreus:  
I saw Hecuba, her hundred women, and Priam at the altars,  
polluting with blood the flames that he himself had sanctified.  
Those fifty chambers, the promise of so many offspring,  
the doorposts, rich with spoils of barbarian gold,  
crash down: the Greeks possess what the fire spares.
And maybe you ask, what was Priam’s fate.  
When he saw the end of the captive city, the palace doors wrenched away, and the enemy among the inner rooms, the aged man clasped his long-neglected armour on his old, trembling shoulders, and fastened on his useless sword, and hurried into the thick of the enemy seeking death.  
In the centre of the halls, and under the sky’s naked arch, was a large altar, with an ancient laurel nearby, that leant on the altar, and clothed the household gods with shade.  
Here Hecuba, and her daughters, like doves driven by a dark storm, crouched uselessly by the shrines, huddled together, clutching at the statues of the gods.  
And when she saw Priam himself dressed in youthful armour she cried: “What mad thought, poor husband, urges you to fasten on these weapons? Where do you run? The hour demands no such help, nor defences such as these, not if my own Hector were here himself. Here, I beg you, this altar will protect us all or we’ll die together.”  
So she spoke and drew the old man towards her, and set him down on the sacred steps.  
See, Polites, one of Priam’s sons, escaping Pyrrhus’s slaughter, runs down the long hallways, through enemies and spears, and, wounded, crosses the empty courts.  
Pyrrhus chases after him, eager to strike him, and grasps at him now, and now, with his hand, at spear-point.  
When finally he reached the eyes and gaze of his parents, he fell, and poured out his life in a river of blood.  
Priam, though even now in death’s clutches, did not spare his voice at this, or hold back his anger: “If there is any justice in heaven, that cares about such things, may the gods repay you with fit thanks, and due reward for your wickedness, for such acts, you who have made me see my own son’s death in front of my face, and defiled a father’s sight with murder.  
Yet Achilles, whose son you falsely claim to be, was no such enemy to Priam: he respected the suppliant’s rights, and honour, and returned Hector’s bloodless corpse to its sepulchre, and sent me home to my kingdom.”  
So the old man spoke, and threw his ineffectual spear without strength, which immediately spun from the clanging bronze and hung uselessly from the centre of the shield’s boss.
Pyrrhus spoke to him: “Then you can be messenger, carry the news to my father, to Peleus’s son: remember to tell him of degenerate Pyrrhus, and of my sad actions: now die.” Saying this he dragged him, trembling, and slithering in the pool of his son’s blood, to the very altar, and twined his left hand in his hair, raised the glittering sword in his right, and buried it to the hilt in his side. This was the end of Priam’s life: this was the death that fell to him by lot, seeing Troy ablaze and its citadel toppled, he who was once the magnificent ruler of so many Asian lands and peoples. A once mighty body lies on the shore, the head shorn from its shoulders, a corpse without a name.

BkII:559-587 Aeneas Sees Helen

Then for the first time a wild terror gripped me. I stood amazed: my dear father’s image rose before me as I saw a king, of like age, with a cruel wound, breathing his life away: and my Creusa, forlorn, and the ransacked house, and the fate of little Iulus. I looked back, and considered the troops that were round me. They had all left me, wearied, and hurled their bodies to earth, or sick with misery dropped into the flames. So I was alone now, when I saw the daughter of Tyndareus, Helen, close to Vesta’s portal, hiding silently in the secret shrine: the bright flames gave me light, as I wandered, gazing everywhere, randomly. Afraid of Trojans angered at the fall of Troy, Greek vengeance, and the fury of a husband she deserted, she, the mutual curse of Troy and her own country, had concealed herself and crouched, a hated thing, by the altars. Fire blazed in my spirit: anger rose to avenge my fallen land, and to exact the punishment for her wickedness. “Shall she, unharmed, see Sparta again and her native Mycenae, and see her house and husband, parents and children, and go in the triumphant role of a queen, attended by a crowd of Trojan women and Phrygian servants? When Priam has been put to the sword? Troy consumed with fire? The Dardanian shore soaked again and again with blood? No. Though there’s no great glory in a woman’s punishment, and such a conquest wins no praise, still I will be praised
for extinguishing wickedness and exacting well-earned
punishment, and I’ll delight in having filled my soul
with the flame of revenge, and appeased my people’s ashes.”

BkII:588-623 Aeneas is Visited by his Mother Venus

I blurted out these words, and was rushing on with raging mind,
when my dear mother came to my vision, never before so bright
to my eyes, shining with pure light in the night,
goddess for sure, such as she may be seen by the gods,
and taking me by the right hand, stopped me, and, then,
impacted these words to me from her rose-tinted lips:
“My son, what pain stirs such uncontrollable anger?
Why this rage? Where has your care for what is ours vanished?
First will you not see whether Creusa, your wife, and your child
Ascanius still live, and where you have left your father Anchises
worn-out with age? The Greek ranks surround them on all sides,
and if my love did not protect them, the flames would have caught
them before now, and the enemy swords drunk of their blood.
You do not hate the face of the Spartan daughter of Tyndareus,
nor is Paris to blame: the ruthlessness of the gods, of the gods,
brought down this power, and toppled Troy from its heights.
See (for I’ll tear away all the mist that now, shrouding your sight,
dims your mortal vision, and darkens everything with moisture:
don’t be afraid of what your mother commands, or refuse to obey
her wisdom): here, where you see shattered heaps of stone
torn from stone, and smoke billowing mixed with dust,
Neptune is shaking the walls, and the foundations, stirred
by his mighty trident, and tearing the whole city up by it roots.
There, Juno, the fiercest, is first to take the Scaean Gate, and,
sword at her side, calls on her troops from the ships, in rage.
Now, see, Tritonian Pallas, standing on the highest towers,
sending lightning from the storm-cloud, and her grim Gorgon
breastplate. Father Jupiter himself supplies the Greeks with
courage, and fortunate strength, himself excites the gods against
the Trojan army. Hurry your departure, son, and put an end
to your efforts. I will not leave you, and I will place you
safe at your father’s door.” She spoke, and hid herself
in the dense shadows of night. Dreadful shapes appeared,
and the vast powers of gods opposed to Troy.
Then in truth all Ilium seemed to me to sink in flames, and Neptune’s Troy was toppled from her base: just as when foresters on the mountain heights compete to uproot an ancient ash tree, struck time and again by axe and blade, it threatens continually to fall, with trembling foliage and shivering crown, till gradually vanquished by the blows it groans at last, and torn from the ridge, crashes down in ruin. I descend, and, led by a goddess, am freed from flames and enemies: the spears give way, and the flames recede. And now, when I reached the threshold of my father’s house, and my former home, my father, whom it was my first desire to carry into the high mountains, and whom I first sought out, refused to extend his life or endure exile, since Troy had fallen. “Oh, you,” he cried, “whose blood has the vigour of youth, and whose power is unimpaired in its force, it’s for you to take flight. As for me, if the gods had wished to lengthen the thread of my life, they’d have spared my house. It is more than enough that I saw one destruction, and survived one taking of the city. Depart, saying farewell to my body lying here so, yes so. I shall find death with my own hand: the enemy will pity me, and look for plunder. The loss of my burial is nothing. Clinging to old age for so long, I am useless, and hated by the gods, ever since the father of the gods and ruler of men breathed the winds of his lightning-bolt onto me, and touched me with fire.” So he persisted in saying, and remained adamant. We, on our side, Creusa, my wife, and Ascanius, all our household, weeping bitterly, determined that he should not destroy everything along with himself, and crush us by urging our doom. He refused and clung to his place and his purpose. I hurried to my weapons again, and, miserably, longed for death, since what tactic or opportunity was open to us now? “Did you think I could leave you, father, and depart? Did such sinful words fall from your lips? If it pleases the gods to leave nothing of our great city standing, if this is set in your mind, if it delights you to add yourself and all that’s yours to the ruins of Troy, the door is open to that death: soon Pyrrhus comes, drenched in Priam’s blood,
he who butchers the son in front of the father, the father at the altar.
Kind mother, did you rescue me from fire and sword
for this, to see the enemy in the depths of my house,
and Ascanius, and my father, and Creusa, slaughtered,
thrown together in a heap, in one another’s blood?
Weapons men, bring weapons: the last day calls to the defeated.
Lead me to the Greeks again: let me revisit the battle anew.
This day we shall not all perish unavenged.”

BkII:671-704 The Omen

So, again, I fasten on my sword, slip my left arm
into the shield’s strap, adjust it, and rush from the house.
But see, my wife clings to the threshold, clasps my foot,
and holds little Iulus up towards his father:
“If you go to die, take us with you too, at all costs: but if
as you’ve proved you trust in the weapons you wear,
defend this house first. To whom do you abandon little Iulus,
and your father, and me, I who was once spoken of as your wife?”
Crying out like this she filled the whole house with her groans,
when suddenly a wonder, marvellous to speak of, occurred.
See, between the hands and faces of his grieving parents,
a gentle light seemed to shine from the crown
of Iulus’s head, and a soft flame, harmless in its touch,
licked at his hair, and grazed his forehead.
Trembling with fear, we hurry to flick away the blazing strands,
and extinguish the sacred fires with water.
But Anchises, my father, lifts his eyes to the heavens, in delight,
and raises his hands and voice to the sky:
“All-powerful Jupiter, if you’re moved by any prayers,
see us, and, grant but this: if we are worthy through our virtue,
show us a sign of it, Father, and confirm your omen.”
The old man had barely spoken when, with a sudden crash,
it thundered on the left, and a star, through the darkness,
slid from the sky, and flew, trailing fire, in a burst of light.
We watched it glide over the highest rooftops,
and bury its brightness, and the sign of its passage,
in the forests of Mount Ida: then the furrow of its long track
gave out a glow, and, all around, the place smoked with sulphur.
At this my father, truly overcome, raised himself towards the sky,
and spoke to the gods, and proclaimed the sacred star.
“Now no delay: I follow, and where you lead, there am I. Gods of my fathers, save my line, save my grandson. This omen is yours, and Troy is in your divine power. I accept, my son, and I will not refuse to go with you.”

**BkII:705-729 Aeneas and his Family Leave Troy**

He speaks, and now the fire is more audible, through the city, and the blaze rolls its tide nearer. “Come then, dear father, clasp my neck: I will carry you on my shoulders: that task won’t weigh on me. Whatever may happen, it will be for us both, the same shared risk, and the same salvation. Let little Iulus come with me, and let my wife follow our footsteps at a distance. You servants, give your attention to what I’m saying. At the entrance to the city there’s a mound, an ancient temple of forsaken Ceres, and a venerable cypress nearby, protected through the years by the reverence of our fathers: let’s head to that one place by diverse paths. You, father, take the sacred objects, and our country’s gods, in your hands: until I’ve washed in running water, it would be a sin for me, coming from such fighting and recent slaughter, to touch them.” So saying, bowing my neck, I spread a cloak made of a tawny lion’s hide over my broad shoulders, and bend to the task: little Iulus clasps his hand in mine, and follows his father’s longer strides. My wife walks behind. We walk on through the shadows of places, and I whom till then no shower of spears, nor crowd of Greeks in hostile array, could move, now I’m terrified by every breeze, and startled by every noise, anxious, and fearful equally for my companion and my burden.
And now I was near the gates, and thought I had completed my journey, when suddenly the sound of approaching feet filled my hearing, and, peering through the darkness, my father cried: “My son, run my son, they are near us: I see their glittering shields and gleaming bronze.” Some hostile power, at this, scattered my muddled wits. for while I was following alleyways, and straying from the region of streets we knew, did my wife Creusa halt, snatched away from me by wretched fate? Or did she wander from the path or collapse with weariness? Who knows? She was never restored to our sight, nor did I look back for my lost one, or cast a thought behind me, until we came to the mound, and ancient Ceres’s sacred place. Here when all were gathered together at last, one was missing, and had escaped the notice of friends, child and husband. What man or god did I not accuse in my madness: what did I know of in the city’s fall crueller than this? I place Ascanius, and my father Anchises, and the gods of Troy, in my companions’ care, and conceal them in a winding valley: I myself seek the city once more, and take up my shining armour. I’m determined to incur every risk again, and retrace all Troy, and once more expose my life to danger. First I look for the wall, and the dark threshold of the gate from which my path led, and I retrace the landmarks of my course in the night, scanning them with my eye. Everywhere the terror in my heart, and the silence itself, dismay me. Then I take myself homewards, in case by chance, by some chance, she has made her way there. The Greeks have invaded, and occupied, the whole house. Suddenly eager fire, rolls over the rooftop, in the wind: the flames take hold, the blaze rages to the heavens. I pass by and see again Priam’s palace and the citadel. Now Phoenix, and fatal Ulysses, the chosen guards, watch over the spoils, in the empty courts of Juno’s sanctuary. Here the Trojan treasures are gathered from every part, ripped from the blazing shrines, tables of the gods, solid gold bowls, and plundered robes. Mothers and trembling sons stand round in long ranks.
I even dared to hurl my shouts through the shadows, filling the streets with my clamour, and in my misery, redoubling my useless cries, again and again. Searching, and raging endlessly among the city roofs, the unhappy ghost and true shadow of Creusa appeared before my eyes, in a form greater than I’d known. I was dumbfounded, my hair stood on end, and my voice stuck in my throat. Then she spoke and with these words mitigated my distress: “Oh sweet husband, what use is it to indulge in such mad grief? This has not happened without the divine will: neither its laws nor the ruler of great Olympus let you take Creusa with you, away from here. Yours is long exile, you must plough a vast reach of sea: and you will come to Hesperia’s land, where Lydian Tiber flows in gentle course among the farmers’ rich fields. There, happiness, kingship and a royal wife will be yours. Banish these tears for your beloved Creusa. I, a Trojan woman, and daughter-in-law to divine Venus, shall never see the noble halls of the Dolopians, or Myrmidons, or go as slave to some Greek wife: instead the great mother of the gods keeps me on this shore. Now farewell, and preserve your love for the son we share.” When she had spoken these words, leaving me weeping and wanting to say so many things, she faded into thin air. Three times I tried to throw my arms about her neck: three times her form fled my hands, clasped in vain, like the light breeze, most of all like a winged dream. So at last when night was done, I returned to my friends.

BkII:796-804 Aeneas Leaves Troy

And here, amazed, I found that a great number of new companions had streamed in, women and men, a crowd gathering for exile, a wretched throng. They had come from all sides, ready, with courage and wealth, for whatever land I wished to lead them to, across the seas. And now Lucifer was rising above the heights of Ida, bringing the dawn, and the Greeks held the barricaded entrances to the gates, nor was there any hope of rescue. I desisted, and, carrying my father, took to the hills.
BkIV:1-53 Dido and Anna Discuss Aeneas

But the queen, wounded long since by intense love, feeds the hurt with her life-blood, weakened by hidden fire. The hero’s courage often returns to mind, and the nobility of his race: his features and his words cling fixedly to her heart, and love will not grant restful calm to her body. The new day’s Dawn was lighting the earth with Phoebus’s brightness, and dispelling the dew-wet shadows from the sky, when she spoke ecstatically to her sister, her kindred spirit: “Anna, sister, how my dreams terrify me with anxieties! Who is this strange guest who has entered our house, with what boldness he speaks, how resolute in mind and warfare! Truly I think – and it’s no idle saying – that he’s born of a goddess. Fear reveals the ignoble spirit. Alas! What misfortunes test him! What battles he spoke of, that he has undergone! If my mind was not set, fixedly and immovably, never to join myself with any man in the bonds of marriage, because first-love betrayed me, cheated me through dying: if I were not wearied by marriage and bridal-beds, perhaps I might succumb to this one temptation. Anna, yes I confess, since my poor husband Sychaeus’s death when the altars were blood-stained by my murderous brother, he’s the only man who’s stirred my senses, troubled my wavering mind. I know the traces of the ancient flame. But I pray rather that earth might gape wide for me, to its depths, or the all-powerful father hurl me with his lightning-bolt down to the shadows, to the pale ghosts, and deepest night of Erebus, before I violate you, Honour, or break your laws. He who first took me to himself has stolen my love: let him keep it with him, and guard it in his grave.” So saying her breast swelled with her rising tears. Anna replied: “O you, who are more beloved to your sister than the light, will you wear your whole youth away in loneliness and grief, and not know Venus’s sweet gifts or her children? Do you think that ashes or sepulchral spirits care? Granted that in Libya or Tyre before it, no suitor ever dissuaded you from sorrowing: and Iarbas and the other lords whom the African soil, rich in fame, bears, were scorned: will you still struggle against a love that pleases? Do you not recall to mind in whose fields you settled?
Here Gaetulian cities, a people unsurpassed in battle, unbridled Numidians, and inhospitable Syrtis, surround you: there, a region of dry desert, with Barcaeans raging around. And what of your brother’s threats, and war with Tyre imminent? The Trojan ships made their way here with the wind, with gods indeed helping them I think, and with Juno’s favour. What a city you’ll see here, sister, what a kingdom rise, with such a husband! With a Trojan army marching with us, with what great actions Punic glory will soar! Only ask the gods for their help, and, propitiating them with sacrifice, indulge your guest, spin reasons for delay, while winter, and stormy Orion, rage at sea, while the ships are damaged, and the skies are hostile.”

BkIV:54-89 Dido in Love

By saying this she inflames the queen’s burning heart with love and raises hopes in her anxious mind, and weakens her sense of shame. First they visit the shrines and ask for grace at the altars: they sacrifice chosen animals according to the rites, to Ceres, the law-maker, and Phoebus, and father Lycaeus, and to Juno above all, in whose care are the marriage ties: Dido herself, supremely lovely, holding the cup in her hand, pours the libation between the horns of a white heifer or walks to the rich altars, before the face of the gods, celebrates the day with gifts, and gazes into the opened chests of victims, and reads the living entrails. Ah, the unknowing minds of seers! What use are prayers or shrines to the impassioned? Meanwhile her tender marrow is aflame, and a silent wound is alive in her breast. Wretched Dido burns, and wanders frenzied through the city, like an unwary deer struck by an arrow, that a shepherd hunting with his bow has fired at from a distance, in the Cretan woods, leaving the winged steel in her, without knowing. She runs through the woods and glades of Dicte: the lethal shaft hangs in her side. Now she leads Aeneas with her round the walls showing her Sidonian wealth and the city she’s built: she begins to speak, and stops in mid-flow: now she longs for the banquet again as day wanes, yearning madly to hear about the Trojan adventures once more
and hangs once more on the speaker’s lips. 
Then when they have departed, and the moon in turn 
has quenched her light and the setting constellations urge sleep, 
she grieves, alone in the empty hall, and lies on the couch 
he left. Absent she hears him absent, sees him, 
or hugs Ascanius on her lap, taken with this image 
of his father, so as to deceive her silent passion. 
The towers she started no longer rise, the young men no longer 
carry out their drill, or work on the harbour and the battlements 
for defence in war: the interrupted work is left hanging, 
the huge threatening walls, the sky-reaching cranes.

BkIV:90-128 Juno and Venus

As soon as Juno, Jupiter’s beloved wife, saw clearly that Dido 
was gripped by such heart-sickness, and her reputation 
no obstacle to love, she spoke to Venus in these words: 
“You and that son of yours, certainly take the prize, and plenty 
of spoils: a great and memorable show of divine power, 
whereby one woman’s trapped by the tricks of two gods. 
But the truth’s not escaped me, you’ve always held the halls 
of high Carthage under suspicion, afraid of my city’s defences. 
But where can that end? Why such rivalry, now? 
Why don’t we work on eternal peace instead, and a wedding pact? 
You’ve achieved all that your mind was set on: 
Dido’s burning with passion, and she’s drawn the madness 
into her very bones. Let’s rule these people together 
with equal sway: let her be slave to a Trojan husband, 
and entrust her Tyrians to your hand, as the dowry.”
Venus began the reply to her like this (since she knew 
she’d spoken with deceit in her mind to divert the empire 
from Italy’s shores to Libya’s): “Who’d be mad enough 
to refuse such an offer or choose to make war on you, 
so long as fate follows up what you say with action? 
But fortune makes me uncertain, as to whether Jupiter wants 
a single city for Tyrians and Trojan exiles, and approves 
the mixing of races and their joining in league together. 
You’re his wife: you can test his intent by asking. 
Do it: I’ll follow.” Then royal Juno replied like this: 
“That task’s mine. Now listen and I’ll tell you briefly 
how the purpose at hand can be achieved.
Aeneas and poor Dido plan to go hunting together in the woods, when the sun first shows tomorrow’s dawn, and reveals the world in his rays. While the lines are beating, and closing the thickets with nets, I’ll pour down dark rain mixed with hail from the sky, and rouse the whole heavens with my thunder. They’ll scatter, and be lost in the dark of night: Dido and the Trojan leader will reach the same cave. I’ll be there, and if I’m assured of your good will, I’ll join them firmly in marriage, and speak for her as his own: this will be their wedding-night.” Not opposed to what she wanted, Venus agreed, and smiled to herself at the deceit she’d found.

**BkIV:129-172 The Hunt and the Cave**

Meanwhile Dawn surges up and leaves the ocean. Once she has risen, the chosen men pour from the gates: Massylian horsemen ride out, with wide-meshed nets, snares, broad-headed hunting spears, and a pack of keen-scented hounds. The queen lingers in her rooms, while Punic princes wait at the threshold: her horse stands there, bright in purple and gold, and champs fiercely at the foaming bit. At last she appears, with a great crowd around her, dressed in a Sidonian robe with an embroidered hem. Her quiver’s of gold, her hair knotted with gold, a golden brooch fastens her purple tunic. Her Trojan friends and joyful Iulus are with her: Aeneas himself, the most handsome of them all, moves forward and joins his friendly troop with hers. Like Apollo, leaving behind the Lycian winter, and the streams of Xanthus, and visiting his mother’s Delos, to renew the dancing, Cretans and Dryopes and painted Agathysrians, mingling around his altars, shouting: he himself striding over the ridges of Cynthus, his hair dressed with tender leaves, and clasped with gold, the weapons rattling on his shoulder: so Aeneas walks, as lightly, beauty like the god’s shining from his noble face. When they reach the mountain heights and pathless haunts, see the wild goats, disturbed on their stony summits, course down the slopes: in another place deer speed over the open field, massing together in a fleeing herd
among clouds of dust, leaving the hillsides behind. But the young Ascanius among the valleys, delights in his fiery horse, passing this rider and that at a gallop, hoping that amongst these harmless creatures a boar, with foaming mouth, might answer his prayers, or a tawny lion, down from the mountain. Meanwhile the sky becomes filled with a great rumbling: rain mixed with hail follows, and the Tyrian company and the Trojan men, with Venus’s Dardan grandson, scatter here and there through the fields, in their fear, seeking shelter: torrents stream down from the hills. Dido and the Trojan leader reach the very same cave. Primeval Earth and Juno of the Nuptials give their signal: lightning flashes, the heavens are party to their union, and the Nymphs howl on the mountain heights. That first day is the source of misfortune and death. Dido’s no longer troubled by appearances or reputation, she no longer thinks of a secret affair: she calls it marriage: and with that name disguises her sin.

BkIV:173-197 Rumour Reaches Iarbas

Rumour raced at once through Libya’s great cities, Rumour, compared with whom no other is as swift. She flourishes by speed, and gains strength as she goes: first limited by fear, she soon reaches into the sky, walks on the ground, and hides her head in the clouds. Earth, incited to anger against the gods, so they say, bore her last, a monster, vast and terrible, fleet-winged and swift-footed, sister to Coeus and Enceladus, who for every feather on her body has as many watchful eyes below (marvellous to tell), as many tongues speaking, as many listening ears. She flies, screeching, by night through the shadows between earth and sky, never closing her eyelids in sweet sleep: by day she sits on guard on tall roof-tops or high towers, and scares great cities, as tenacious of lies and evil, as she is messenger of truth. Now in delight she filled the ears of the nations with endless gossip, singing fact and fiction alike: Aeneas has come, born of Trojan blood, a man whom lovely Dido deigns to unite with: now they’re spending
the whole winter together in indulgence, forgetting
their royalty, trapped by shameless passion.
The vile goddess spread this here and there on men’s lips.
Immediately she slanted her course towards King Iarbas
and inflamed his mind with words and fuelled his anger.

**BkIV:198-218 Iarbas Prays to Jupiter**

He, a son of Jupiter Ammon, by a raped Garamantian Nymph,
had set up a hundred great temples, a hundred altars, to the god,
in his broad kingdom, and sanctified ever-living fires, the gods’
 eternal guardians: the floors were soaked with sacrificial blood,
and the thresholds flowery with mingled garlands.
They say he often begged Jove humbly with upraised hands,
in front of the altars, among the divine powers,
maddened in spirit and set on fire by bitter rumour:
“All-powerful Jupiter, to whom the Moors, on their embroidered
divans, banqueting, now pour a Bacchic offering,
do you see this? Do we shudder in vain when you hurl
your lightning bolts, father, and are those idle fires in the clouds
that terrify our minds, and flash among the empty rumblings?
A woman, wandering within my borders, who paid to found
a little town, and to whom we granted coastal lands
to plough, to hold in tenure, scorns marriage with me,
and takes Aeneas into her country as its lord.
And now like some Paris, with his pack of eunuchs,
a Phrygian cap, tied under his chin, on his greasy hair,
he’s master of what he’s snatched: while I bring gifts indeed
to temples, said to be yours, and cherish your empty reputation.

**BkIV:219-278 Jupiter Sends Mercury to Aeneas**

As he gripped the altar, and prayed in this way,
the All-powerful one listened, and turned his gaze towards
the royal city, and the lovers forgetful of their true reputation.
Then he spoke to Mercury and commanded him so:
“Off you go, my son, call the winds and glide on your wings,
and talk to the Trojan leader who malingers in Tyrian Carthage
now, and gives no thought to the cities the fates will grant him,
and carry my words there on the quick breeze.
This is not what his loveliest of mothers suggested to me,
nor why she rescued him twice from Greek armies:
he was to be one who’d rule Italy, pregnant with empire,
and crying out for war, he’d produce a people of Teucer’s
high blood, and bring the whole world under the rule of law.
If the glory of such things doesn’t inflame him,
and he doesn’t exert himself for his own honour,
does he begrudge the citadels of Rome to Ascanius?
What does he plan? With what hopes does he stay
among alien people, forgetting Ausonia and the Lavinian fields?
Let him sail: that’s it in total, let that be my message.”
He finished speaking. The god prepared to obey his great
father’s order, and first fastened the golden sandals to his feet
that carry him high on the wing over land and sea, like the storm.
Then he took up his wand: he calls pale ghosts from Orcus
with it, sending others down to grim Tartarus,
gives and takes away sleep, and opens the eyes of the dead.
Relying on it, he drove the winds, and flew through
the stormy clouds. Now in his flight he saw the steep flanks
and the summit of strong Atlas, who holds the heavens
on his head, Atlas, whose pine-covered crown is always wreathed
in dark clouds and lashed by the wind and rain:
fallen snow clothes his shoulders: while rivers fall
from his ancient chin, and his rough beard bristles with ice.
There Cyllenian Mercury first halted, balanced on level wings:
from there, he threw his whole body headlong
towards the waves, like a bird that flies low close
to the sea, round the coasts and the rocks rich in fish.
So the Cyllenian-born flew between heaven and earth
to Libya’s sandy shore, cutting the winds, coming
from Atlas, his mother Maia’s father.
As soon as he reached the builders’ huts, on his winged feet,
he saw Aeneas establishing towers and altering roofs.
His sword was starred with tawny jasper,
and the cloak that hung from his shoulder blazed
with Tyrian purple, a gift that rich Dido had made,
weaving the cloth with golden thread.
Mercury challenged him at once: “For love of a wife
are you now building the foundations of high Carthage
and a pleasing city? Alas, forgetful of your kingdom and fate!
The king of the gods himself, who bends heaven and earth
to his will, has sent me down to you from bright Olympus:
he commanded me himself to carry these words through the swift breezes. What do you plan? With what hopes do you waste idle hours in Libya’s lands? If you’re not stirred by the glory of destiny, and won’t exert yourself for your own fame, think of your growing Ascanius, and the expectations of him, as Iulus your heir, to whom will be owed the kingdom of Italy, and the Roman lands.” So Mercury spoke, and, while speaking, vanished from mortal eyes, and melted into thin air far from their sight.

BkIV:279-330 Dido Accuses Aeneas

Aeneas, stupefied at the vision, was struck dumb, and his hair rose in terror, and his voice stuck in his throat. He was eager to be gone, in flight, and leave that sweet land, shocked by the warning and the divine command. Alas! What to do? With what speech dare he tackle the love-sick queen? What opening words should he choose? And he cast his mind back and forth swiftly, considered the issue from every aspect, and turned it every way. This seemed the best decision, given the alternatives: he called Mnestheus, Sergestus and brave Serestus, telling them to fit out the fleet in silence, gather the men on the shore, ready the ships’ tackle, and hide the reason for these changes of plan. He in the meantime, since the excellent Dido knew nothing, and would not expect the breaking off of such a love, would seek an approach, the tenderest moment to speak, and a favourable means. They all gladly obeyed his command at once, and did his bidding. But the queen sensed his tricks (who can deceive a lover?) and was first to anticipate future events, fearful even of safety. That same impious Rumour brought her madness: they are fitting out the fleet, and planning a journey. Her mind weakened, she raves, and, on fire, runs wild through the city: like a Maenad, thrilled by the shaken emblems of the god, when the biennial festival rouses her, and, hearing the Bacchic cry, Mount Cithaeron summons her by night with its noise. Of her own accord she finally reproaches Aeneas in these words: “Faithless one, did you really think you could hide such wickedness, and vanish from my land in silence?
Will my love not hold you, nor the pledge I once gave you,
nor the promise that Dido will die a cruel death?
Even in winter do you labour over your ships, cruel one,
so as to sail the high seas at the height of the northern gales?
Why? If you were not seeking foreign lands and unknown
settlements, but ancient Troy still stood, would Troy
be sought out by your ships in wave-torn seas?
Is it me you run from? I beg you, by these tears, by your own
right hand (since I’ve left myself no other recourse in my misery),
by our union, by the marriage we have begun,
if ever I deserved well of you, or anything of me
was sweet to you, pity this ruined house, and if
there is any room left for prayer, change your mind.
The Libyan peoples and Numidian rulers hate me because of you:
my Tyrians are hostile: because of you all shame too is lost,
the reputation I had, by which alone I might reach the stars.
My guest, since that’s all that is left me from the name of husband,
to whom do you relinquish me, a dying woman?
Why do I stay? Until Pygmalion, my brother, destroys
the city, or Iarbas the Gaetulian takes me captive?
If I’d at least conceived a child of yours
before you fled, if a little Aeneas were playing
about my halls, whose face might still recall yours,
I’d not feel myself so utterly deceived and forsaken.”

BkIV:331-361 Aeneas Justifies Himself

She had spoken. He set his gaze firmly on Jupiter’s
warnings, and hid his pain steadfastly in his heart.
He replied briefly at last: “O queen, I will never deny
that you deserve the most that can be spelt out in speech,
nor will I regret my thoughts of you, Elissa,
while memory itself is mine, and breath controls these limbs.
I’ll speak about the reality a little. I did not expect to conceal
my departure by stealth (don’t think that), nor have I ever
held the marriage torch, or entered into that pact.
If the fates had allowed me to live my life under my own
auspices, and attend to my own concerns as I wished,
I should first have cared for the city of Troy and the sweet relics
of my family, Priam’s high roofs would remain, and I’d have
recreated Pergama, with my own hands, for the defeated.
But now it is Italy that Apollo of Grynium,  
Italy, that the Lycian oracles, order me to take: 
that is my desire, that is my country. If the turrets of Carthage  
and the sight of your Libyan city occupy you, a Phoenician,  
why then begrudge the Trojans their settling of Ausonia’s lands? 
It is right for us too to search out a foreign kingdom. 
As often as night cloaks the earth with dew-wet shadows,  
as often as the burning constellations rise, the troubled image  
of my father Anchises warns and terrifies me in dream:  
about my son Ascanius and the wrong to so dear a person,  
whom I cheat of a Hesperian kingdom, and pre-destined fields. 
Now even the messenger of the gods, sent by Jupiter himself,  
(I swear it on both our heads), has brought the command  
on the swift breeze: I saw the god himself in broad daylight 
enter the city and these very ears drank of his words. 
Stop rousing yourself and me with your complaints. 
I do not take course for Italy of my own free will.”

BkIV:362-392 Dido’s Reply

As he was speaking she gazed at him with hostility,  
casting her eyes here and there, considering the whole man  
with a silent stare, and then, incensed, she spoke:  
“Deceiver, your mother was no goddess, nor was Dardanus  
the father of your race: harsh Caucasus engendered you  
on the rough crags, and Hyrcanian tigers nursed you.  
Why pretend now, or restrain myself waiting for something worse?  
Did he groan at my weeping? Did he look at me?  
Did he shed tears in defeat, or pity his lover?  
What is there to say after this? Now neither greatest Juno, indeed,  
nor Jupiter, son of Saturn, are gazing at this with friendly eyes.  
Nowhere is truth safe. I welcomed him as a castaway on the shore,  
a beggar, and foolishly gave away a part of my kingdom:  
I saved his lost fleet, and his friends from death.  
Ah! Driven by the Furies, I burn: now prophetic Apollo,  
now the Lycian oracles, now even a divine messenger sent  
by Jove himself carries his orders through the air.  
This is the work of the gods indeed, this is a concern to trouble  
their calm. I do not hold you back, or refute your words:  
go, seek Italy on the winds, find your kingdom over the waves. 
Yet if the virtuous gods have power, I hope that you
will drain the cup of suffering among the reefs, and call out Dido’s name again and again. Absent, I’ll follow you with dark fires, and when icy death has divided my soul and body, my ghost will be present everywhere. Cruel one, you’ll be punished. I’ll hear of it: that news will reach me in the depths of Hades.” Saying this, she broke off her speech mid-flight, and fled the light in pain, turning from his eyes, and going, leaving him fearful and hesitant, ready to say more. Her servants received her and carried her failing body to her marble chamber, and laid her on her bed.

BkIV:393-449 Aeneas Departs

But dutiful Aeneas, though he desired to ease her sadness by comforting her and to turn aside pain with words, still, with much sighing, and a heart shaken by the strength of her love, followed the divine command, and returned to the fleet. Then the Trojans truly set to work and launched the tall ships all along the shore. They floated the resinous keels, and ready for flight, they brought leafy branches and untrimmed trunks, from the woods, as oars. You could see them hurrying and moving from every part of the city. Like ants that plunder a vast heap of grain, and store it in their nest, mindful of winter: a dark column goes through the fields, and they carry their spoils along a narrow track through the grass: some heave with their shoulders against a large seed, and push, others tighten the ranks and punish delay, the whole path’s alive with work. What were your feelings Dido at such sights, what sighs did you give, watching the shore from the heights of the citadel, everywhere alive, and seeing the whole sea, before your eyes, confused with such cries! Cruel Love, to what do you not drive the human heart: to burst into tears once more, to see once more if he can be compelled by prayers, to humbly submit to love, lest she leave anything untried, dying in vain. “Anna, you see them scurrying all round the shore: they’ve come from everywhere: the canvas already invites the breeze, and the sailors, delighted, have set garlands on the sterns. If I was able to foresee this great grief, sister, then I’ll be able to endure it too. Yet still do one thing
for me in my misery, Anna: since the deceiver cultivated only you, even trusting you with his private thoughts: and only you know the time to approach the man easily. Go, sister, and speak humbly to my proud enemy. I never took the oath, with the Greeks at Aulis, to destroy the Trojan race, or sent a fleet to Pergama, or disturbed the ashes and ghost of his father Anchises: why does he pitilessly deny my words access to his hearing? Where does he run to? Let him give his poor lover this last gift: let him wait for an easy voyage and favourable winds. I don’t beg now for our former tie, that he has betrayed, nor that he give up his beautiful Latium, and abandon his kingdom: I ask for insubstantial time: peace and space for my passion, while fate teaches my beaten spirit to grieve. I beg for this last favour (pity your sister): when he has granted it me, I’ll repay all by dying.” Such are the prayers she made, and such are those her unhappy sister carried and re-carried. But he was not moved by tears, and listened to no words receptively: Fate barred the way, and a god sealed the hero’s gentle hearing. As when northerly blasts from the Alps blowing here and there vie together to uproot an oak tree, tough with the strength of years: there’s a creak, and the trunk quivers and the topmost leaves strew the ground: but it clings to the rocks, and its roots stretch as far down to Tartarus as its crown does towards the heavens: so the hero was buffeted by endless pleas from this side and that, and felt the pain in his noble heart. His purpose remained fixed: tears fell uselessly.

**BkIV:450-503 Dido Resolves to Die**

Then the unhappy Dido, truly appalled by her fate, prayed for death: she was weary of gazing at the vault of heaven. And that she might complete her purpose, and relinquish the light more readily, when she placed her offerings on the altar alight with incense, she saw (terrible to speak of!) the holy water blacken, and the wine she had poured change to vile blood. She spoke of this vision to no one, not even her sister. There was a marble shrine to her former husband in the palace, that she’d decked out, also, with marvellous beauty, with snow-white fleeces, and festive greenery:
from it she seemed to hear voices and her husband’s words
calling her, when dark night gripped the earth:
and the lonely owl on the roofs often grieved
with ill-omened cries, drawing out its long call in a lament:
and many a prophecy of the ancient seers terrified her
with its dreadful warning. Harsh Aeneas himself persecuted
her, in her crazed sleep: always she was forsaken, alone with
herself, always she seemed to be travelling companionless on some
long journey, seeking her Tyrian people in a deserted landscape:
like Pentheus, deranged, seeing the Furies file past,
and twin suns and a twin Thebes revealed to view,
or like Agamemnon’s son Orestes driven across the stage when he
flees his mother’s ghost armed with firebrands and black snakes,
while the avenging Furies crouch on the threshold.
So that when, overcome by anguish, she harboured the madness,
and determined on death, she debated with herself over the time
and the method, and going to her sorrowful sister with a face
that concealed her intent, calm, with hope on her brow, said:
“Sister, I’ve found a way (rejoice with your sister)
that will return him to me, or free me from loving him.
Near the ends of the Ocean and where the sun sets
Ethiopia lies, the furthest of lands, where Atlas,
mightiest of all, turns the sky set with shining stars:
I’ve been told of a priestess, of Massylian race, there,
a keeper of the temple of the Hesperides, who gave
the dragon its food, and guarded the holy branches of the tree,
scattering the honeydew and sleep-inducing poppies.
With her incantations she promises to set free
what hearts she wishes, but bring cruel pain to others:
to stop the rivers flowing, and turn back the stars:
she wakes nocturnal Spirits: you’ll see earth yawn
under your feet, and the ash trees march from the hills.
You, and the gods, and your sweet life, are witness,
dear sister, that I arm myself with magic arts unwillingly.
Build a pyre, secretly, in an inner courtyard, open to the sky,
and place the weapons on it which that impious man left
hanging in my room, and the clothes, and the bridal bed
that undid me: I want to destroy all memories
of that wicked man, and the priestess commends it.”
Saying this she fell silent: at the same time a pallor spread
over her face. Anna did not yet realise that her sister
was disguising her own funeral with these strange rites,  
her mind could not conceive of such intensity,  
and she feared nothing more serious than when  
Sychaeus died. So she prepared what was demanded.

**BkIV:504-553 Dido Laments**

But when the pyre of cut pine and oak was raised high,  
in an innermost court open to the sky, the queen  
hung the place with garlands, and wreathed it  
with funereal foliage: she laid his sword and clothes  
and picture on the bed, not unmindful of the ending.  
Altars stand round about, and the priestess, with loosened hair,  
intoned the names of three hundred gods, of Erebus, Chaos,  
and the triple Hecate, the three faces of virgin Diana.  
And she sprinkled water signifying the founts of Avernus:  
there were herbs too acquired by moonlight, cut  
with a bronze sickle, moist with the milk of dark venom:  
and a caul acquired by tearing it from a newborn colt’s brow,  
forestalling the mother’s love. She herself, near the altars,  
with sacred grain in purified hands, one foot free of constraint,  
her clothing loosened, called on the gods to witness  
her coming death, and on the stars conscious of fate:  
then she prayed to whatever just and attentive power  
there might be, that cares for unrequited lovers.  
It was night, and everywhere weary creatures were enjoying  
peaceful sleep, the woods and the savage waves were resting,  
while stars wheeled midway in their gliding orbit,  
while all the fields were still, and beasts and colourful birds,  
those that live on wide scattered lakes, and those that live  
in rough country among the thorn-bushes, were sunk in sleep  
in the silent night. But not the Phoenician, unhappy in spirit,  
she did not relax in sleep, or receive the darkness into her eyes  
and breast: her cares redoubled, and passion, alive once more,  
raged, and she swelled with a great tide of anger.  
So she began in this way turning it over alone in her heart:  
“See, what can I do? Be mocked trying my former suitors,  
seeking marriage humbly with Numidians whom I  
have already disdained so many times as husbands?  
Shall I follow the Trojan fleet then and that Teucrian’s  
every whim? Because they might delight in having been
helped by my previous aid, or because gratitude
for past deeds might remain truly fixed in their memories?
Indeed who, given I wanted to, would let me, or would take
one they hate on board their proud ships? Ah, lost girl,
do you not know or feel yet the treachery of Laomedon’s race?
What then? Shall I go alone, accompanying triumphant sailors?
Or with all my band of Tyrians clustered round me?
Shall I again drive my men to sea in pursuit, those
whom I could barely tear away from their Sidonian city,
and order them to spread their sails to the wind?
Rather die, as you deserve, and turn away sorrow with steel.
You, my sister, conquered by my tears, in my madness, you
first burdened me with these ills, and exposed me to my enemy.
I was not allowed to pass my life without blame, free of marriage,
in the manner of some wild creature, never knowing such pain:
I have not kept the vow I made to Sychaeus’s ashes.”
Such was the lament that burst from her heart.

BkIV:554-583 Mercury Visits Aeneas Again

Now that everything was ready, and he was resolved on going,
Aeneas was snatching some sleep, on the ship’s high stern.
That vision appeared again in dream admonishing him,
similar to Mercury in every way, voice and colouring,
golden hair, and youth’s graceful limbs:
“Son of the Goddess, can you consider sleep in this disaster,
can’t you see the danger of it that surrounds you, madman
or hear the favourable west winds blowing?
Determined to die, she broods on mortal deceit and sin,
and is tossed about on anger’s volatile flood.
Won’t you flee from here, in haste, while you can hasten?
Soon you’ll see the water crowded with ships,
cruel firebrands burning, soon the shore will rage with flame,
if the Dawn finds you lingering in these lands. Come, now,
end your delay! Woman is ever fickle and changeable.”
So he spoke, and blended with night’s darkness.
Then Aeneas, terrified indeed by the sudden apparition,
roused his body from sleep, and called to his friends:
“Quick, men, awake, and man the rowing-benches: run
and loosen the sails. Know that a god, sent from the heavens,
urges us again to speed our flight, and cut the twisted hawsers.
We follow you, whoever you may be, sacred among the gods, and gladly obey your commands once more. Oh, be with us, calm one, help us, and show stars favourable to us in the sky.” He spoke, and snatched his shining sword from its sheath, and struck the cable with the naked blade. All were possessed at once with the same ardour: They snatched up their goods, and ran: abandoning the shore: the water was clothed with ships: setting to, they churned the foam and swept the blue waves.

BkIV:584-629 Dido’s Curse

And now, at dawn, Aurora, leaving Tithonus’s saffron bed, was scattering fresh daylight over the earth. As soon as the queen saw the day whiten, from her tower, and the fleet sailing off under full canvas, and realised the shore and harbour were empty of oarsmen, she struck her lovely breast three or four times with her hand, and tearing at her golden hair, said: “Ah, Jupiter, is he to leave, is a foreigner to pour scorn on our kingdom? Shall my Tyrians ready their armour, and follow them out of the city, and others drag our ships from their docks? Go, bring fire quickly, hand out the weapons, drive the oars! What am I saying? Where am I? What madness twists my thoughts? Wretched Dido, is it now that your impious actions hurt you? The right time was then, when you gave him the crown. So this is the word and loyalty of the man whom they say bears his father’s gods around, of the man who carried his age-worn father on his shoulders? Couldn’t I have seized hold of him, torn his body apart, and scattered him on the waves? And put his friends to the sword, and Ascanius even, to feast on, as a course at his father’s table? True the fortunes of war are uncertain. Let them be so: as one about to die, whom had I to fear? I should have set fire to his camp, filled the decks with flames, and extinguishing father and son, and their whole race, given up my own life as well. O Sun, you who illuminate all the works of this world, and you Juno, interpreter and knower of all my pain, and Hecate howled to, in cities, at midnight crossroads, you, avenging Furies, and you, gods of dying Elissa, acknowledge this, direct your righteous will to my troubles, and hear my prayer. If it must be that the accursed one should reach the harbour, and sail to the shore:
if Jove’s destiny for him requires it, there his goal:
still, troubled in war by the armies of a proud race,
exiled from his territories, torn from Iulus’s embrace,
let him beg help, and watch the shameful death of his people:
then, when he has surrendered, to a peace without justice,
may he not enjoy his kingdom or the days he longed for,
but let him die before his time, and lie unburied on the sand.
This I pray, these last words I pour out with my blood.
Then, O Tyrians, pursue my hatred against his whole line
and the race to come, and offer it as a tribute to my ashes.
Let there be no love or treaties between our peoples.
Rise, some unknown avenger, from my dust, who will pursue
the Trojan colonists with fire and sword, now, or in time
to come, whenever the strength is granted him.
I pray that shore be opposed to shore, water to wave,
weapon to weapon: let them fight, them and their descendants.”

**BkIV:630-705 The Death of Dido**

She spoke, and turned her thoughts this way and that,
considering how to destroy her hateful life.
Then she spoke briefly to Barce, Sychaeus’s nurse,
since dark ashes concealed her own, in her former country:
“Dear nurse, bring my sister Anna here: tell her
to hurry, and sprinkle herself with water from the river,
and bring the sacrificial victims and noble offerings.
Let her come, and you yourself veil your brow with sacred ribbons.
My purpose is to complete the rites of Stygian Jupiter,
that I commanded, and have duly begun, and put an end
to sorrow, and entrust the pyre of that Trojan leader to the flames.”
So she said. The old woman zealously hastened her steps.
But Dido restless, wild with desperate purpose,
rolling her bloodshot eyes, her trembling cheeks
stained with red flushes, yet pallid at approaching death,
rushed into the house through its inner threshold, furiously
climbed the tall funeral pyre, and unsheathed
a Trojan sword, a gift that was never acquired to this end.
Then as she saw the Ilian clothing and the familiar couch,
she lingered a while, in tears and thought, then
cast herself on the bed, and spoke her last words:
“Reminders, sweet while fate and the god allowed it,
accept this soul, and loose me from my sorrows.
I have lived, and I have completed the course that Fortune granted,
and now my noble spirit will pass beneath the earth.
I have built a bright city: I have seen its battlements,
avenging a husband I have exacted punishment
on a hostile brother, happy, ah, happy indeed
if Trojan keels had never touched my shores!”
She spoke, and buried her face in the couch.
“I shall die un-avenged, but let me die,” she cried.
“So, so I joy in travelling into the shadows.
Let the cruel Trojan’s eyes drink in this fire, on the deep,
and bear with him the evil omen of my death.”
She had spoken, and in the midst of these words,
her servants saw she had fallen on the blade,
the sword frothed with blood, and her hands were stained.
A cry rose to the high ceiling: Rumour, run riot, struck the city.
The houses sounded with weeping and sighs and women’s cries,
the sky echoed with a mighty lamentation,
as if all Carthage or ancient Tyre were falling
to the invading enemy, and raging flames were rolling
over the roofs of men and gods.
Her sister, terrified, heard it, and rushed through the crowd,
tearing her cheeks with her nails, and beating her breast,
and called out to the dying woman in accusation:
“So this was the meaning of it, sister? Did you aim to cheat me?
This pyre of yours, this fire and altar were prepared for my sake?
What shall I grieve for first in my abandonment? Did you scorn
your sister’s company in dying? You should have summoned me
to the same fate: the same hour the same sword’s hurt should have
taken us both. I even built your pyre with these hands,
and was I calling aloud on our father’s gods,
so that I would be absent, cruel one, as you lay here?
You have extinguished yourself and me, sister: your people,
your Sidonian ancestors, and your city. I should bathe
your wounds with water and catch with my lips
whatever dying breath still hovers.” So saying she climbed
the high levels, and clasped her dying sister to her breast,
sighing, and stemming the dark blood with her dress.
Dido tried to lift her heavy eyelids again, but failed:
and the deep wound hissed in her breast.
Lifting herself three times, she struggled to rise on her elbow:
three times she fell back onto the bed, searching for light in
the depths of heaven, with wandering eyes, and, finding it, sighed.
Then all-powerful Juno, pitying the long suffering
of her difficult death, sent Iris from Olympus, to release
the struggling spirit, and captive body. For since
she had not died through fate, or by a well-earned death,
but wretchedly, before her time, inflamed with sudden madness,
Proserpine had not yet taken a lock of golden hair
from her head, or condemned her soul to Stygian Orcus.
So dew-wet Iris flew down through the sky, on saffron wings,
trailing a thousand shifting colours across the sun,
and hovered over her head. “I take this offering, sacred to Dis,
as commanded, and release you from the body that was yours.”
So she spoke, and cut the lock of hair with her right hand.
All the warmth ebbed at once, and life vanished on the breeze.

BkVI:1-55 The Temple at Cumae

So Aeneas spoke, weeping, gave his fleet full rein, and glided
at last to the shores of Euboean Cumae. They turned
their prows to the sea, secured the ships’ anchors,
by the grip of their flukes, and the curved boats
lined the beach. The youthful band leapt eagerly
to the Hesperian shore: some sought the means of fire
contained in veins of flint, some raided the woods
the dense coverts of game, pointing out streams they found.
But pious Aeneas sought the summits, where Apollo
rules on high, and the vast cavern nearby, the secret place
of the terrifying Sibyl, in whom the Delian prophet
inspires greatness of mind and spirit, and reveals the future.
Soon they entered the grove of Diana, and the golden house.
Daedalus, so the story goes, fleeing from Minos’s kingdom,
dared to trust himself to the air on swift wings,
and, gliding on unknown paths to the frozen North,
hovered lightly at last above the Chalcidian hill.
First returning to earth here, he dedicated his oar-like wings
to you Phoebus, and built a gigantic temple.
On the doors the Death of Androgeos: then the Athenians,
Crecrops’s descendants, commanded, sadly, to pay annual tribute
of seven of their sons: there the urn stands with the lots drawn.
Facing it, rising from the sea, the Cretan land is depicted:
and here the bull’s savage passion, Pasiphae’s
secret union, and the Minotaur, hybrid offspring,
that mixture of species, proof of unnatural relations:
the artwork here is that palace, and its inextricable maze:
and yet Daedalus himself, pitying the noble princess
Ariadne’s love, unravelled the deceptive tangle of corridors,
guiding Theseus’s blind footsteps with the clue of thread.
You’d have shared largely in such a work, Icarus, if grief
had allowed, he’d twice attempted to fashion your fate
in gold, twice your father’s hands fell. Eyes would have read
the whole continuously, if Achetes had not arrived
from his errand, with Deiophobe, Glaucus’s daughter,
the priestess of Phoebus and Diana, who spoke to the leader:
‘This moment doesn’t require your sightseeing: it would
be better to sacrifice seven bullocks from a virgin herd,
and as many carefully chosen two-year old sheep.’
Having spoken to Aeneas in this way (without delay they sacrificed
as ordered) the priestess called the Trojans to her high shrine.
The vast flank of the Euboean cliff is pitted with caves,
from which a hundred wide tunnels, a hundred mouths lead,
from which as many voices rush: the Sibyl’s replies.
They had come to the threshold, when the virgin cried out:
‘It is time to question the Oracle, behold, the god, the god!’
As she so spoke in front of the doors, suddenly neither her face
nor colour were the same, nor did her hair remain bound,
but her chest heaved, her heart swelled with wild frenzy,
she seemed taller, and sounded not-human, for now
the power of the god is closer. ‘Are you slow with your
vows and prayers, Aeneas of Troy, are you slow?’
she cried. ‘The great lips of the House of Inspiration
will not open without.’ And so saying she fell silent.
An icy shudder ran to the Trojans’ very spines,
and their leader poured out heartfelt prayers:

**BkVI:56-97 The Sibyl’s Prophecy**

‘Phoebus, you who always pitied Troy’s intense suffering,
who guided the hand of Paris, and the Dardan arrow,
against Achilles’s body, with you as leader I entered
all those seas, encircling vast lands, and penetrated
the remote Massilian tribes and the fields edged by Syrtes: now at last we have the coast of elusive Italy in our grasp: Troy’s ill fortune only followed us as far as here. You too with justice can spare the Trojan race, and all you gods and goddesses to whom the great glory of Ilium and Dardania was an offence. O most sacred of prophetesses, you who see the future, (I ask for no lands not owed me by my destiny) grant that we Trojans may settle Latium, with the exiled gods and storm-tossed powers of Troy. Then I’ll dedicate a temple of solid marble to Phoebus and Diana Trivia, and sacred days in Phoebus’s name. A noble inner shrine waits for you too in our kingdom. There, gracious one, I will place your oracles, and mystic utterances spoken to my people, and consecrate picked men. Only do not write your verses on the leaves, lest they fly, disordered playthings of the rushing winds: chant them from your own mouth.’ He put an end to his mouth’s speaking. But the wild prophetess raged in her cavern, not yet submitting to Phoebus, as if she might shake the great god from her spirit: yet he exhausted her raving mouth all the more, taming her wild heart, shaping her by constraint. And now the shrine’s hundred mighty lips have opened of themselves, and carry the seer’s answer through the air: ‘Oh, you who are done with all the perils of the sea, (yet greater await you on land) the Trojans will come to the realm of Lavinium (put that care from your heart): but will not enjoy their coming. War, fierce war, I see: and the Tiber foaming with much blood. You will not lack a Simois, a Xanthus, a Greek camp: even now another Achilles is born in Latium, he too the son of a goddess: nor will Juno, the Trojans’ bane, be ever far away, while you, humbled and destitute, what races and cities of Italy will you not beg in! Once again a foreign bride is the cause of all these Trojan ills, once more an alien marriage. Do not give way to misfortunes, meet them more bravely, as your destiny allows. The path of safety will open up for you from where you least imagine it, a Greek city.’

BkVI:98-155 Aeneas Asks Entry to Hades
With such words, the Sibyl of Cumae chants fearful enigmas, from her shrine, echoing from the cave, tangling truths and mysteries: as she raves, Apollo thrashes the reins, and twists the spur under her breast. When the frenzy quiets, and the mad mouth hushes, Aeneas, the Hero, begins: ‘O Virgin, no new, unexpected kind of suffering appears: I’ve foreseen them all and travelled them before, in my own spirit. One thing I ask: for they say the gate of the King of Darkness is here, and the shadowy marsh, Acheron’s overflow: let me have sight of my dear father, his face: show me the way, open wide the sacred doors. I saved him, brought him out from the thick of the enemy, through the flames, on these shoulders, with a thousand spears behind me: companion on my journey, he endured with me all the seas, all the threats of sky and ocean, weak, beyond his power, and his allotted span of old age. He ordered me, with prayers, to seek you out, humbly, and approach your threshold: I ask you, kindly one, pity both father and son: since you are all power, not for nothing has Hecate set you to rule the groves of Avernus. If Orpheus could summon the shade of his wife, relying on his Thracian lyre, its melodious strings: if Pollux, crossing his brother by dying in turn – and great Theseus, what of him, or Hercules? – well, my race too is Jupiter’s on high.’ With these words he prayed, and grasped the altar, as the priestess began to speak: ‘Trojan son of Anchises, sprung from the blood of the gods, the path to hell is easy: black Dis’s door is open night and day: but to retrace your steps, and go out to the air above, that is work, that is the task. Some sons of the gods have done it, whom favouring Jupiter loved, or whom burning virtue lifted to heaven. Woods cover all the middle part, and Cocytus is round it, sliding in dark coils. But if such desire is in your mind, such a longing to sail the Stygian lake twice, and twice see Tartarus, and if it delights you to indulge in insane effort, listen to what you must first undertake. Hidden in a dark tree is a golden bough, golden in leaves and pliant stem, sacred to Persephone, the underworld’s Juno, all the groves
shroud it, and shadows enclose the secret valleys.
But only one who’s taken a gold-leaved fruit from the tree
is allowed to enter earth’s hidden places.
This lovely Proserpine has commanded to be brought to her
as a gift: a second fruit of gold never fails to appear
when the first one’s picked, the twig’s leafed with the same metal.
So look for it up high, and when you’ve found it with your eyes,
take it, of right, in your hand: since, if the Fates have chosen you,
it will come away easily, freely of itself: otherwise you
won’t conquer it by any force, or cut it with the sharpest steel.
And the inanimate body of your friend lies there
(Ah! You do not know) and taints your whole fleet with death,
while you seek advice and hang about our threshold.
Carry him first to his place and bury him in the tomb.
Lead black cattle there: let those be your first offerings of atonement.
Only then can you look on the Stygian groves, and the realms
forbidden to the living.’ She spoke and with closed lips fell silent.

BkVI:156-182 The Finding of Misenus’s Body

Leaving the cave, Aeneas walked away,
with sad face and downcast eyes, turning their dark fate
over in his mind. Loyal Achates walked at his side
and fashioned his steps with similar concern.
They engaged in intricate discussion between them,
as to who the dead friend, the body to be interred, was,
whom the priestess spoke of. And as they passed along
they saw Misenus, ruined by shameful death, on the dry sand,
Misenus, son of Aeolus, than whom none was more outstanding
in rousing men with the war-trumpet, kindling conflict with music.
He was great Hector’s friend: with Hector
he went to battle, distinguished by his spear and trumpet.
When victorious Achilles despoiled Hector of life,
this most courageous hero joined the company
of Trojan Aeneas, serving no lesser a man. But when,
by chance, he foolishly made the ocean sound
to a hollow conch-shell, and called gods to compete
in playing, if the tale can be believed, Triton overheard him
and drowned him in the foaming waves among the rocks.
So, with pious Aeneas to the fore, they all mourned
round the body with loud clamour. Then, without delay, weeping,
they hurried to carry out the Sibyl’s orders, and laboured to pile
tree-trunks as a funeral pyre, raising it to the heavens.
They enter the ancient wood, the deep coverts of wild creatures:
the pine-trees fell, the oaks rang to the blows of the axe,
ash trunks and fissile oak were split with wedges,
and they rolled large rowan trees down from the hills.

BkVI:183-235 The Funeral Pyre

Aeneas was no less active in such efforts, encouraging
his companions, and employing similar tools.
And he turned things over in his own saddened mind,
gazing at the immense forest, and by chance prayed so:
‘If only that golden bough would show itself to us
now, on some such tree, among the woods! For the prophetess
spoke truly of you Misenus, alas, only too truly.’
He had barely spoken when by chance a pair of doves
came flying down from the sky, beneath his very eyes,
and settled on the green grass. Then the great hero knew
they were his mother’s birds, and prayed in his joy:
‘O be my guides, if there is some way, and steer a course
through the air, to that grove where the rich branch
casts its shadow on fertile soil. And you mother, O goddess,
don’t fail me in time of doubt.’ So saying he halted his footsteps,
observing what signs the doves might give, and which direction
they might take. As they fed they went forward in flight
just as far as, following, his eyes could keep them in sight.
Then, when they reached the foul jaws of stinking Avernus,
they quickly rose and, gliding through the clear air,
perched on the longed-for dual-natured tree, from which
the alien gleam of gold shone out, among the branches.
Just as mistletoe, that does not form a tree of its own,
grows in the woods in the cold of winter, with a foreign leaf,
and surrounds a smooth trunk with yellow berries:
such was the vision of this leafy gold in the dark
oak-tree, so the foil tinkled in the light breeze.
Aeneas immediately plucked it, eagerly breaking the tough
bough, and carried it to the cave of the Sibylline prophetess.
Meanwhile, on the shore, the Trojans were weeping bitterly
for Misenus and paying their last respects to his senseless ashes.
First they raised a huge pyre, heavy with cut oak and pine,
weaving the sides with dark foliage, set funereal cypress in front, and decorated it above with shining weapons. Some heated water, making the cauldrons boil on the flames, and washed and anointed the chill corpse. They made lament. Then, having wept, they placed his limbs on the couch, and threw purple robes over them, his usual dress. Some raised the great bier, a sad duty, and, with averted faces, set a torch below, in ancestral fashion. Gifts were heaped on the flames, of incense, foodstuffs, bowls brimming with olive-oil. When the ashes collapsed, and the blaze died, they washed the remains of the parched bones in wine, and Corynaeus, collecting the fragments, closed them in a bronze urn. Also he circled his comrades three times with pure water to purify them, sprinkling fine dew from a full olive branch, and spoke the words of parting. And virtuous Aeneas heaped up a great mound for his tomb, with the hero’s own weapons, his trumpet and oar, beneath a high mountain which is called Misenus now after him, and preserves his ever-living name throughout the ages.

BkVI:236-263 The Sacrifice to Hecate

This done, he quickly carried out the Sibyl’s orders. There was a deep stony cave, huge and gaping wide, sheltered by a dark lake and shadowy woods, over which nothing could extend its wings in safe flight, since such a breath flowed from those black jaws, and was carried to the over-arching sky, that the Greeks called it by the name Aornos, that is Avernus, or the Bird-less. Here the priestess first of all tethered four black heifers, poured wine over their foreheads, and placed the topmost bristles that she plucked, growing between their horns, in the sacred fire, as a first offering, calling aloud to Hecate, powerful in Heaven and Hell. Others slit the victim’s throats and caught the warm blood in bowls. Aeneas himself sacrificed a black-fleeced lamb to Night, mother of the Furies, and Earth, her mighty sister, and a barren heifer to you, Persephone. Then he kindled the midnight altars for the Stygian King, and placed whole carcasses of bulls on the flames,
pouring rich oil over the blazing entrails. 
See now, at the dawn light of the rising sun, 
the ground bellowed under their feet, the wooded hills began 
to move, and, at the coming of the Goddess, dogs seemed to howl 
in the shadows. ‘Away, stand far away, O you profane ones,’ 
the priestess cried, ‘absent yourselves from all this grove: 
and you now, Aeneas, be on your way, and tear your sword 
from the sheathe: you need courage, and a firm mind, now.’ 
So saying, she plunged wildly into the open cave: 
he, fearlessly, kept pace with his vanishing guide.

BkVI:264-294 The Entrance to Hades

You gods, whose is the realm of spirits, and you, dumb shadows, 
and Chaos, Phlegethon, wide silent places of the night, 
let me tell what I have heard: by your power, let me 
reveal things buried in the deep earth, and the darkness. 
On they went, hidden in solitary night, through gloom, 
through Dis’s empty halls, and insubstantial kingdom, 
like a path through a wood, in the faint light 
under a wavering moon, when Jupiter has buried the sky 
in shadow, and black night has stolen the colour from things. 
Right before the entrance, in the very jaws of Orcus, 
Grief and vengeful Care have made their beds, 
and pallid Sickness lives there, and sad Old Age, 
and Fear, and persuasive Hunger, and vile Need, 
forms terrible to look on, and Death and Pain: 
then Death’s brother Sleep, and Evil Pleasure of the mind, 
and, on the threshold opposite, death-dealing War, 
and the steel chambers of the Furies, and mad Discord, 
her snaky hair entwined with blood-wet ribbons. 
In the centre a vast shadowy elm spreads its aged trunks 
and branches: the seat, they say, that false Dreams hold, 
thronging, clinging beneath every leaf. 
And many other monstrous shapes of varied creatures, 
are stabled by the doors, Centaurs and bi-formed Scylla, 
and hundred-armed Briareus, and the Lernean Hydra, 
hissing fiercely, and the Chimaera armed with flame, 
Gorgons, and Harpies, and the triple bodied shade, Geryon. 
At this, trembling suddenly with terror, Aeneas grasped 
his sword, and set the naked blade against their approach:
and, if his knowing companion had not warned him
that these were tenuous bodiless lives flitting about
with a hollow semblance of form, he would have rushed at them,
and hacked at the shadows uselessly with his sword.

BkVI:295-336 The Shores of Acheron

From here there is a road that leads to the waters
of Tartarean Acheron. Here thick with mud a whirlpool seethes
in the vast depths, and spews all its sands into Cocytus.
A grim ferryman watches over the rivers and streams,
Charon, dreadful in his squalor, with a mass of unkempt
white hair straggling from his chin: flames glow in his eyes,
a dirty garment hangs, knotted from his shoulders.
He poles the boat and trims the sails himself,
and ferries the dead in his dark skiff,
old now, but a god’s old age is fresh and green.
Here all the crowd streams, hurrying to the shores,
women and men, the lifeless bodies of noble heroes,
boys and unmarried girls, sons laid on the pyre
in front of their father’s eyes: as many as the leaves that fall
in the woods at the first frost of autumn, as many as the birds
that flock to land from ocean deeps, when the cold of the year
drives them abroad and despatches them to sunnier countries.
They stood there, pleading to be first to make the crossing,
stretching out their hands in longing for the far shore.
But the dismal boatman accepts now these, now those,
but driving others away, keeps them far from the sand.
Then Aeneas, stirred and astonished at the tumult, said:
‘O virgin, tell me, what does this crowding to the river mean?
What do the souls want? And by what criterion do these leave
the bank, and those sweep off with the oars on the leaden stream?
The ancient priestess spoke briefly to him, so:
‘Son of Anchises, true child of the gods, you see
the deep pools of Cocytus, and the Marsh of Styx,
by whose name the gods fear to swear falsely.
All this crowd, you see, were destitute and unburied:
that ferryman is Charon: those the waves carry were buried:
he may not carry them from the fearful shore on the harsh waters
before their bones are at rest in the earth. They roam
for a hundred years and flit around these shores: only then
are they admitted, and revisit the pools they long for.’
The son of Anchises halted, and checked his footsteps,
thinking deeply, and pitying their sad fate in his heart.
He saw Leucaspis and Orontes, captain of the Lycian fleet,
there, grieving and lacking honour in death, whom a Southerly
overwhelmed, as they sailed together from Troy on the windswept
waters, engulfing both the ship and crew in the waves.

**BkVI:337-383 The Shade of Palinurus**

Behold, there came the helmsman, Palinurus,
who fell from the stern on the Libyan passage,
flung into the midst of the waves, as he watched the stars.
When Aeneas had recognised him with difficulty
sorrowing among the deep shadows, he spoke first, saying:
‘What god tore you from us, Palinurus, and drowned you
mid-ocean? For in this one prophecy Apollo has misled me,
he whom I never found false before, he said that you would be safe
at sea and reach Ausonia’s shores. Is this the truth of his promise?’
But he replied: ‘Phoebus’s tripod did not fail you, Anchises,
my captain, nor did a god drown me in the deep.
By chance the helm was torn from me with violence,
as I clung there, on duty as ordered, steering our course,
and I dragged it headlong with me. I swear by the cruel sea
that I feared less for myself than for your ship,
lest robbed of its gear, and cleared of its helmsman,
it might founder among such surging waves.
The Southerly drove me violently through the vast seas
for three stormy nights: high on the crest of a wave,
in the fourth dawn, I could just make out Italy.
Gradually I swam to shore: grasped now at safety,
but as I caught at the sharp tips of the rocks, weighed down
by my water-soaked clothes, the savage people
attacked me with knives, ignorantly thinking me a prize.
Now the waves have me, and the winds roll me along the shore.
Unconquered one, I beg you, by the sweet light and air of heaven,
by your father, and your hopes in Iulus to come,
save me from this evil: either find Velia’s harbour again
(for you can) and sprinkle earth on me, or if there is some way,
if your divine mother shows you one (since you’d not attempt to sail
such waters, and the Stygian marsh, without a god’s will, I think)
then give this wretch your hand and take me with you through the waves
that at least I might rest in some quiet place in death.’
So he spoke, and the priestess began to reply like this:
‘Where does this dire longing of yours come from, O Palinurus?
Can you see the Stygian waters, unburied, or the grim
river of the Furies, Cocytus, or come unasked to the shore?
Cease to hope that divine fate can be tempered by prayer.
But hold my words in your memory, as a comfort in your hardship:
the nearby peoples, from cities far and wide, will be moved
by divine omens to worship your bones, and build a tomb,
and send offerings to the tomb, and the place will have
Palinurus as its everlasting name.’ His anxiety was quelled
by her words, and, for a little while, grief was banished
from his sad heart: he delighted in the land being so named.

BkVI:384-416 Charon the Ferryman

So they pursued their former journey, and drew near the river.
Now when the Boatman saw them from the Stygian wave
walking through the silent wood, and directing their footsteps
towards its bank, he attacked them verbally, first, and unprompted,
rebuking them: ‘Whoever you are, who come armed to my river,
tell me, from over there, why you’re here, and halt your steps.
This is a place of shadows, of Sleep and drowsy Night:
I’m not allowed to carry living bodies in the Stygian boat.
Truly it was no pleasure for me to take Hercules on his journey
over the lake, nor Theseus and Pirithous, though they may
have been children of gods, unrivalled in strength.
The first came for Cerberus the watchdog of Tartarus,
and dragged him away quivering from under the king’s throne:
the others were after snatching our Queen from Dis’s chamber.’
To this the prophetess of Amphrysian Apollo briefly answered:
‘There’s no such trickery here (don’t be disturbed),
our weapons offer no affront: your huge guard-dog
can terrify the bloodless shades with his eternal howling:
chaste Proserpine can keep to her uncle’s threshold.
Aeneas the Trojan, renowned in piety and warfare,
goes down to the deepest shadows of Erebus, to his father.
If the idea of such affection does not move you, still you
must recognise this bough.’ (She showed the branch, hidden
in her robes.) Then the anger in his swollen breast subsided.
No more was said. Marvelling at the revered offering, of fateful twigs, seen again after so long, he turned the stern of the dark skiff towards them and neared the bank. Then he turned off the other souls who sat on the long benches, cleared the gangways: and received mighty Aeneas on board. The seamed skiff groaned with the weight and let in quantities of marsh-water through the chinks. At last, the river crossed, he landed the prophetess and the hero safe, on the unstable mud, among the blue-grey sedge.

BkVI:417-439 Beyond the Acheron

Huge Cerberus sets these regions echoing with his triple-throated howling, crouching monstrously in a cave opposite. Seeing the snakes rearing round his neck, the prophetess threw him a pellet, a soporific of honey and drugged wheat. Opening his three throats, in rabid hunger, he seized what she threw and, flexing his massive spine, sank to earth spreading his giant bulk over the whole cave-floor. With the guard unconscious Aeneas won to the entrance, and quickly escaped the bank of the river of no return. Immediately a loud crying of voices was heard, the spirits of weeping infants, whom a dark day stole at the first threshold of this sweet life, those chosen to be torn from the breast, and drowned in bitter death. Nearby are those condemned to die on false charges. Yet their place is not ordained without the allotted jury: Minos, the judge, shakes the urn: he convenes the voiceless court, and hears their lives and sins. Then the next place is held by those gloomy spirits who, innocent of crime, died by their own hand, and, hating the light, threw away their lives. How willingly now they’d endure poverty and harsh suffering, in the air above! Divine Law prevents it, and the sad marsh and its hateful waters binds them, and nine-fold Styx confines them.

BkVI:440-476 The Shade of Dido

Not far from there the Fields of Mourning are revealed, spread out on all sides: so they name them. There, those whom harsh love devours with cruel pining
are concealed in secret walkways, encircled by a myrtle grove:
even in death their troubles do not leave them.
Here Aeneas saw Phaedra, and Procris, and sad Eriphyle,
displaying the wounds made by her cruel son,
Evadne, and Pasiphae: with them walked Laodamia,
and Caeneus, now a woman, once a young man,
returned by her fate to her own form again.
Among them Phoenician Dido wandered, in the great wood,
er her wound still fresh. As soon as the Trojan hero stood near her
and knew her, shadowy among the shadows, like a man who sees,
or thinks he sees, the new moon rising through a cloud, as its month
begins, he wept tears and spoke to her with tender affection:
‘Dido, unhappy spirit, was the news, that came to me
of your death, true then, taking your life with a blade?
Alas, was I the cause of your dying? I swear by the stars,
by the gods above, by whatever truth may be in the depths
of the earth, I left your shores unwillingly, my queen.
I was commanded by gods, who drove me by their decrees,
that now force me to go among the shades, through places
thorny with neglect, and deepest night: nor did I think
my leaving there would ever bring such grief to you.
Halt your footsteps and do not take yourself from my sight.
What do you flee? This is the last speech with you that fate allows.’
With such words Aeneas would have calmed
her fiery spirit and wild looks, and provoked her tears.
She turned away, her eyes fixed on the ground,
no more altered in expression by the speech he had begun
than if hard flint stood there, or a cliff of Parian marble.
At the last she tore herself away, and, hostile to him,
fled to the shadowy grove where Sychaeus, her husband
in former times, responded to her suffering, and gave her
love for love. Aeneas, no less shaken by the injustice of fate,
followed her, far off, with his tears, and pitied her as she went.

**BkVI:477-534 The Shade of Deiphobus**

From there he laboured on the way that was granted them.
And soon they reached the most distant fields,
the remote places where those famous in war
crowd together. Here Tydeus met him, Parthenopaeus
glorious in arms, and the pale form of Adrastus:
here were the Trojans, wept for deeply above, fallen in war, whom, seeing them all in their long ranks, he groaned at, Glaucus, Medon and Thersilochus, the three sons of Antenor, Polyboetes, the priest of Ceres, and Idaeus still with his chariot, and his weapons. The spirits stand there in crowds to left and right. They are not satisfied with seeing him only once: they delight in lingering on, walking beside him, and learning the reason for his coming. But the Greek princes and Agamemnon’s phalanxes, trembled with great fear, when they saw the hero, and his gleaming weapons, among the shades: some turned to run, as they once sought their ships: some raised a faint cry, the noise they made belying their gaping mouths. And he saw Deiphobus there, Priam’s son, his whole body mutilated, his face brutally torn, his face and hands both, the ears ripped from his ruined head, his nostrils sheared by an ugly wound. Indeed Aeneas barely recognised the quivering form, hiding its dire punishment, even as he called to him, unprompted, in familiar tones: ‘Deiphobus, powerful in war, born of Teucer’s noble blood, who chose to work such brutal punishment on you? Who was allowed to treat you so? Rumour has it that on that final night, wearied by endless killing of Greeks, you sank down on a pile of the slaughtered. Then I set up an empty tomb on the Rhoetean shore, and called on your spirit three times in a loud voice. Your name and weapons watch over the site: I could not see you, friend, to set you, as I left, in your native soil.’ To this Priam’s son replied: ‘O my friend, you’ve neglected nothing: you’ve paid all that’s due to Deiophobus and a dead man’s spirit. My own destiny, and that Spartan woman’s deadly crime, drowned me in these sorrows: she left me these memorials. You know how we passed that last night in illusory joy: and you must remember it only too well. When the fateful Horse came leaping the walls of Troy, pregnant with the armed warriors it carried in its womb, she led the Trojan women about, wailing in dance, aping the Bacchic rites: she held a huge torch in their midst, signalling to the Greeks from the heights of the citadel. I was then in our unlucky marriage-chamber, worn out with care,
and heavy with sleep, a sweet deep slumber weighing on me as I lay there, the very semblance of peaceful death.

Meanwhile that illustrious wife of mine removed every weapon from the house, even stealing my faithful sword from under my head: she calls Menelaus into the house and throws open the doors, hoping I suppose it would prove a great gift for her lover, and in that way the infamy of her past sins might be erased. Why drag out the tale? They burst into the room, and with them Ulysses the Aeolid, their co-inciter to wickedness. Gods, so repay the Greeks, if these lips I pray for vengeance with are virtuous. But you, in turn, tell what fate has brought you here, living. Do you come here, driven by your wandering on the sea, or exhorted by the gods? If not, what misfortune torments you, that you enter these sad sunless houses, this troubled place?’

**BkVI:535-627 The Sibyl Describes Tartarus**

While they spoke Aurora and her rosy chariot had passed the zenith of her ethereal path, and they might perhaps have spent all the time allowed in such talk, but the Sibyl, his companion, warned him briefly saying:

‘Night approaches, Aeneas: we waste the hours with weeping. This is the place where the path splits itself in two: there on the right is our road to Elysium, that runs beneath the walls of mighty Dis: but the left works punishment on the wicked, and sends them on to godless Tartarus.’

Deiophobus replied: ‘Do not be angry, great priestess: I will leave: I will make up the numbers, and return to the darkness. Go now glory of our race: enjoy a better fate.’

So he spoke, and in speaking turned away. Aeneas suddenly looked back, and, below the left hand cliff, he saw wide battlements, surrounded by a triple wall, and encircled by a swift river of red-hot flames, the Tartarean Phlegethon, churning with echoing rocks. A gate fronts it, vast, with pillars of solid steel, that no human force, not the heavenly gods themselves, can overturn by war: an iron tower rises into the air, and seated before it, Tisiphone, clothed in a blood-wet dress, keeps guard of the doorway, sleeplessly, night and day. Groans came from there, and the cruel sound of the lash, then the clank of iron, and dragging chains.
Aeneas halted, and stood rooted, terrified by the noise.
‘What evil is practised here? O Virgin, tell me: by what torments
are they oppressed? Why are there such sounds in the air?’
Then the prophetess began to speak as follows: ‘Famous leader
of the Trojans, it is forbidden for the pure to cross the evil threshold:
but when Hecate appointed me to the wood of Avernus,
she taught me the divine torments, and guided me through them all.
Cretan Rhadamanthus rules this harshest of kingdoms,
and hears their guilt, extracts confessions, and punishes
whoever has deferred atonement for their sins too long
till death, delighting in useless concealment, in the world above.
Tisiphone the avenger, armed with her whip, leaps on the guilty immediately,
lashes them, and threatening them with the fierce
snakes in her left hand, calls to her savage troop of sisters.
Then at last the accursed doors open, screeching on jarring hinges.
You comprehend what guardian sits at the door, what shape watches
the threshold? Well still fiercer is the monstrous Hydra inside,
with her fifty black gaping jaws. There Tartarus itself
falls sheer, and stretches down into the darkness:
twice as far as we gaze upwards to heavenly Olympus.
Here the Titanic race, the ancient sons of Earth,
hurled down by the lightning-bolt, writhe in the depths.
And here I saw the two sons of Aloeus, giant forms,
who tried to tear down the heavens with their hands,
and topple Jupiter from his high kingdom.
And I saw Salmoneus paying a savage penalty
for imitating Jove’s lightning, and the Olympian thunder.
Brandishing a torch, and drawn by four horses
he rode in triumph among the Greeks, through Elis’s city,
claiming the gods’ honours as his own, a fool,
who mimicked the storm-clouds and the inimitable thunderbolt
with bronze cymbals and the sound of horses’ hoof-beats.
But the all-powerful father hurled his lightning from dense cloud,
not for him fiery torches, or pine-branches’ smoky light
and drove him headlong with the mighty whirlwind.
And Tityus was to be seen as well, the foster-child
of Earth, our universal mother, whose body stretches
over nine acres, and a great vulture with hooked beak
feeds on his indestructible liver, and his entrails ripe
for punishment, lodged deep inside the chest, groping
for his feast, no respite given to the ever-renewing tissue.
Shall I speak of the Lapiths, Ixion, Pirithous,  
over whom hangs a dark crag that seems to slip and fall?  
High couches for their feast gleam with golden frames,  
and a banquet of royal luxury is spread before their eyes:  
nearby the eldest Fury, crouching, prevents their fingers touching  
the table: rising up, and brandishing her torch, with a voice of thunder.  
Here are those who hated their brothers, in life,  
or struck a parent, or contrived to defraud a client,  
or who crouched alone over the riches they’d made,  
without setting any aside for their kin (their crowd is largest),  
those who were killed for adultery, or pursued civil war,  
not fearing to break their pledges to their masters:  
shut in they see their punishment. Don’t ask to know  
that punishment, or what kind of suffering drowns them.  
Some roll huge stones, or hang spread-eagled  
on wheel-spokes: wretched Theseus sits still, and will sit  
for eternity: Phlegyas, the most unfortunate, warns them all  
and bears witness in a loud voice among the shades:  
“Learn justice: be warned, and don’t despise the gods.”  
Here’s one who sold his country for gold, and set up  
a despotic lord: this one made law and remade it for a price:  
he entered his daughter’s bed and a forbidden marriage:  
all of them dared monstrous sin, and did what they dared.  
Not if I had a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths,  
a voice of iron, could I tell all the forms of wickedness  
or spell out the names of every torment.’

BkVI:628-678 The Fields of Elysium

When she had spoken of this, the aged priestess of Apollo said:  
‘But come now, travel the road, and complete the task set for you:  
let us hurry, I see the battlements that were forged  
in the Cyclopean fires, and the gates in the arch opposite us  
where we are told to set down the gifts as ordered.’  
She spoke and keeping step they hastened along the dark path  
crossing the space between and arriving near the doors.  
Aeneas gained the entrance, sprinkled fresh water  
over his body, and set up the branch on the threshold before him.  
Having at last achieved this, the goddess’s task fulfilled,  
they came to the pleasant places, the delightful grassy turf  
of the Fortunate Groves, and the homes of the blessed.
Here freer air and radiant light clothe the plain,
and these have their own sun, and their own stars.
Some exercise their bodies in a grassy gymnasium,
compete in sports and wrestle on the yellow sand:
others tread out the steps of a dance, and sing songs.
There Orpheus too, the long-robed priest of Thrace,
accompanies their voices with the seven-note scale,
playing now with fingers, now with the ivory quill.
Here are Teucer’s ancient people, loveliest of children,
great-hearted heroes, born in happier years,
Ilus, Assaracus, and Dardanus founder of Troy.
Aeneas marvels from a distance at their idle chariots
and their weapons: their spears fixed in the ground,
and their horses scattered freely browsing over the plain:
the pleasure they took in chariots and armour while alive,
the care in tending shining horses, follows them below the earth.
Look, he sees others on the grass to right and left, feasting,
and singing a joyful paean in chorus, among the fragrant
groves of laurel, out of which the Eridanus’s broad river
flows through the woodlands to the world above.
Here is the company of those who suffered wounds fighting
for their country: and those who were pure priests, while they lived,
and those who were faithful poets, singers worthy of Apollo,
and those who improved life, with discoveries in Art or Science,
and those who by merit caused others to remember them:
the brows of all these were bound with white headbands.
As they crowded round, the Sibyl addressed them,
Musaeus above all: since he holds the centre of the vast crowd,
all looking up to him, his tall shoulders towering above:
‘Blessed spirits, and you, greatest of Poets,
say what region or place contains Anchises. We have
come here, crossing the great rivers of Erebus, for him.’
And the hero replied to her briefly in these words:
‘None of us have a fixed abode: we live in the shadowy woods,
and make couches of river-banks, and inhabit fresh-water meadows.
But climb this ridge, if your hearts-wish so inclines,
and I will soon set you on an easy path.’
He spoke and went on before them, and showed them
the bright plains below: then they left the mountain heights.
But deep in a green valley his father Anchises
was surveying the spirits enclosed there, destined
for the light above, thinking carefully, and was reviewing
as it chanced the numbers of his own folk, his dear grandsons,
and their fate and fortunes as men, and their ways and works.
And when he saw Aeneas heading towards him over the grass
he stretched out both his hands eagerly, his face
streaming with tears, and a cry issued from his lips:
‘Have you come at last, and has the loyalty your father expected
conquered the harsh road? Is it granted me to see your face,
my son, and hear and speak in familiar tones?
I calculated it in my mind, and thought it would be so,
counting off the hours, nor has my trouble failed me.
From travel over what lands and seas, do I receive you!
What dangers have hurled you about, my son!
How I feared the realms of Libya might harm you!’
He answered: ‘Father, your image, yours, appearing to me
so often, drove me to reach this threshold:
My ships ride the Etruscan waves. Father, let me clasp
your hand, let me, and do not draw away from my embrace.’
So speaking, his face was also drowned in a flood of tears.
Three times he tries to throw his arms round his father’s neck,
three times, clasped in vain, that semblance slips though his hands,
like the light breeze, most of all like a winged dream.

And now Aeneas saw a secluded grove
in a receding valley, with rustling woodland thickets,
and the river of Lethe gliding past those peaceful places.
Innumerable tribes and peoples hovered round it:
just as, in the meadows, on a cloudless summer’s day,
the bees settle on the multifarious flowers, and stream
round the bright lilies, and all the fields hum with their buzzing.
Aeneas was thrilled by the sudden sight, and, in ignorance,
asked the cause: what the river is in the distance,
who the men are crowding the banks in such numbers.
Then his father Anchises answered: ‘They are spirits,
owed a second body by destiny, and they drink
the happy waters, and a last forgetting, at Lethe’s stream. Indeed, for a long time I’ve wished to tell you of them, and show you them face to face, to enumerate my children’s descendants, so you might joy with me more at finding Italy.’

‘O father, is it to be thought that any spirits go from here to the sky above, returning again to dull matter?’

‘Indeed I’ll tell you, son, not keep you in doubt,’ Anchises answered, and revealed each thing in order.

**BkVI:724-751 The Transmigration of Souls**

‘Firstly, a spirit within them nourishes the sky and earth, the watery plains, the shining orb of the moon, and Titan’s star, and Mind, flowing through matter, vivifies the whole mass, and mingles with its vast frame. From it come the species of man and beast, and winged lives, and the monsters the sea contains beneath its marbled waves. The power of those seeds is fiery, and their origin divine, so long as harmful matter doesn’t impede them and terrestrial bodies and mortal limbs don’t dull them. Through those they fear and desire, and grieve and joy, and enclosed in night and a dark dungeon, can’t see the light. Why, when life leaves them at the final hour, still all of the evil, all the plagues of the flesh, alas, have not completely vanished, and many things, long hardened deep within, must of necessity be ingrained, in strange ways. So they are scourged by torments, and pay the price for former sins: some are hung, stretched out, to the hollow winds, the taint of wickedness is cleansed for others in vast gulfs, or burned away with fire: each spirit suffers its own: then we are sent through wide Elysium, and we few stay in the joyous fields, for a length of days, till the cycle of time, complete, removes the hardened stain, and leaves pure ethereal thought, and the brightness of natural air. All these others the god calls in a great crowd to the river Lethe, after they have turned the wheel for a thousand years, so that, truly forgetting, they can revisit the vault above, and begin with a desire to return to the flesh.’
BkVI:752-776 The Future Race – The Alban Kings

Anchises had spoken, and he drew the Sibyl and his son, both together, into the middle of the gathering and the murmuring crowd, and chose a hill from which he could see all the long ranks opposite, and watch their faces as they came by him.

‘Come, I will now explain what glory will pursue the children of Dardanus, what descendants await you of the Italian race, illustrious spirits to march onwards in our name, and I will teach you your destiny. See that boy, who leans on a headless spear, he is fated to hold a place nearest the light, first to rise to the upper air, sharing Italian blood, Silvius, of Alban name, your last-born son, who your wife Lavinia, late in your old age, will give birth to in the wood, a king and the father of kings, through whom our race will rule in Alba Longa.

Next to him is Procas, glory of the Trojan people, and Capys and Numitor, and he who’ll revive your name, Silvius Aeneas, outstanding like you in virtue and arms, if he might at last achieve the Alban throne. What men! See what authority they display, their foreheads shaded by the civic oak-leaf crown!

They will build Nomentum, Gabii, and Fidenae’s city: Collatia’s fortress in the hills, Pometii and the Fort of Inus, and Bola, and Cora. Those will be names that are now nameless land.

BkVI:777-807 The Future Race – Romulus and the Caesars

Yes, and a child of Mars will join his grandfather to accompany him, Romulus, whom his mother Ilia will bear, of Assaracus’s line. See how Mars’s twin plumes stand on his crest, and his father marks him out for the world above with his own emblems?

Behold, my son, under his command glorious Rome will match earth’s power and heaven’s will, and encircle seven hills with a single wall, happy in her race of men: as Cybele, the Berecynthian ‘Great Mother’, crowned with turrets, rides through the Phrygian cities, delighting in her divine children, clasping a hundred descendants, all gods, all dwelling in the heights above. Now direct your eyes here, gaze at this people, your own Romans. Here is Caesar, and all the offspring
of Iulus destined to live under the pole of heaven. This is the man, this is him, whom you so often hear promised you, Augustus Caesar, son of the Deified, who will make a Golden Age again in the fields where Saturn once reigned, and extend the empire beyond the Libyans and the Indians (to a land that lies outside the zodiac’s belt, beyond the sun’s ecliptic and the year’s, where sky-carrying Atlas turns the sphere, inset with gleaming stars, on his shoulders): Even now the Caspian realms, and Maeotian earth, tremble at divine prophecies of his coming, and the restless mouths of the seven-branched Nile are troubled. Truly, Hercules never crossed so much of the earth, though he shot the bronze-footed Arcadian deer, brought peace to the woods of Erymanthus, made Lerna tremble at his bow: nor did Bacchus, who steers his chariot, in triumph, with reins made of vines, guiding his tigers down from Nysa’s high peak. Do we really hesitate still to extend our power by our actions, and does fear prevent us settling the Italian lands?

**BkVI:808-853 The Future Race – Republic and Beyond**

Who is he, though, over there, distinguished by his olive branches, carrying offerings? I know the hair and the white-bearded chin of a king of Rome, Numa, called to supreme authority from little Cures’s poverty-stricken earth, who will secure our first city under the rule of law. Then Tullus will succeed him who will shatter the country’s peace, and call to arms sedentary men, ranks now unused to triumphs. The over-boastful Ancus follows him closely, delighting too much even now in the people’s opinion. Will you look too at Tarquin’s dynasty, and the proud spirit of Brutus the avenger, the rods of office reclaimed? He’ll be the first to win a consul’s powers and the savage axes, and when the sons foment a new civil war, the father will call them to account, for lovely freedom’s sake: ah, to be pitied, whatever posterity says of his actions: his love of country will prevail, and great appetite for glory. Ah, see over there, the Decii and Drusi, and Torquatus brutal with the axe, and Camillus rescuing the standards. But those others, you can discern, shining in matching armour, souls in harmony now, while they are cloaked in darkness,
ah, if they reach the light of the living, what civil war
what battle and slaughter, they’ll cause, Julius Caesar,
the father-in-law, down from the Alpine ramparts, from the fortress
of Monoecus: Pompey, the son-in-law, opposing with Eastern forces.
My sons, don’t inure your spirits to such wars,
ever turn the powerful forces of your country on itself:
You be the first to halt, you, who derive your race from heaven:
hurl the sword from your hand, who are of my blood!
There’s Mummius: triumphing over Corinth, he’ll drive his chariot,
victorious, to the high Capitol, famed for the Greeks he’s killed:
and Aemilius Paulus, who, avenging his Trojan ancestors, and Minerva’s
desecrated shrine, will destroy Agamemnon’s Mycenae, and Argos,
and Perseus the Aeacid himself, descendant of war-mighty Achilles.
Who would pass over you in silence, great Cato, or you Cossus,
or the Gracchus’s race, or the two Scipios, war’s lightning bolts,
the scourges of Libya, or you Fabricius, powerful in poverty,
or you, Regulus Serranus, sowing your furrow with seed?
Fabii, where do you hurry my weary steps? You, Fabius
Maximus, the Delayer, are he who alone renew our State.
Others (I can well believe) will hammer out bronze that breathes
with more delicacy than us, draw out living features
from the marble: plead their causes better, trace with instruments
the movement of the skies, and tell the rising of the constellations:
remember, Roman, it is for you to rule the nations with your power,
(that will be your skill) to crown peace with law,
to spare the conquered, and subdue the proud.’

BkVI:854-885 The Future Race – Marcellus

So father Anchises spoke, and while they marvelled, added:
‘See, how Claudius Marcellus, distinguished by the Supreme Prize,
comes forward, and towers, victorious, over other men.
As a knight, he’ll support the Roman State, turbulent
with fierce confusion, strike the Cathaginians and rebellious Gauls,
and dedicate captured weapons, a third time, to father Quirinus.’
And, at this, Aeneas said (since he saw a youth of outstanding
beauty with shining armour, walking with Marcellus,
but his face lacking in joy, and his eyes downcast):
‘Father, who is this who accompanies him on his way?
His son: or another of his long line of descendants?
What murmuring round them! What presence he has!
But dark night, with its sad shadows, hovers round his head.’
Then his father Aeneas, with welling tears, replied:
‘O, do not ask about your people’s great sorrow, my son.
The Fates will only show him to the world, not allow him
to stay longer. The Roman people would seem
too powerful to you gods, if this gift were lasting.
What mourning from mankind that Field of Mars will
deliver to the mighty city! And what funeral processions
you, Tiber, will see, as you glide past his new-made tomb!
No boy of the line of Ilius shall so exalt his Latin
ancestors by his show of promise, nor will Romulus’s
land ever take more pride in one of its sons.
Alas for virtue, alas for the honour of ancient times,
and a hand invincible in war! No one might have attacked him
safely when armed, whether he met the enemy on foot,
or dug his spurs into the flank of his foaming charger.
Ah, boy to be pitied, if only you may shatter harsh fate,
you’ll be a Marcellus! Give me handfuls of white lilies,
let me scatter radiant flowers, let me load my scion’s spirit
with those gifts at least, in discharging that poor duty.’

BkVI:886-901 The Gates of Sleep

So they wander here and there through the whole region,
over the wide airy plain, and gaze at everything.
And when Anchises has led his son through each place,
and inflamed his spirit with love of the glory that is to come,
he tells him then of the wars he must soon fight,
and teaches him about the Laurentine peoples,
and the city of Latinus, and how to avoid or face each trial.
There are two gates of Sleep: one of which is said to be of horn,
through which an easy passage is given to true shades, the other
gleams with the whiteness of polished ivory, but through it
the Gods of the Dead send false dreams to the world above.
After his words, Anchises accompanies his son there, and,
frees him, together with the Sibyl, through the ivory gate.
Aeneas makes his way to the ships and rejoins his friends:
then coasts straight to Caieta’s harbour along the shore.
The anchors are thrown from the prows: on the shore the sterns rest.
BkVIII:1-25 The Situation in Latium

When Turnus raised the war-banner on the Laurentine citadel, and the trumpets blared out their harsh music, when he roused his fiery horses and clashed his weapons, hearts were promptly stirred, all Latium together swore allegiance in restless commotion, and young men raged wildly. The main leaders, Messapus, Ufens and Mezentius, scorners of gods, gathered their forces from every side, stripping the broad acres of farmers. And Venulus was sent to great Diomedes’s city, Arpi, to seek help, and explain that the Trojans were planted in Latium, Aeneas had arrived with his fleet, carrying his vanquished gods, and pronouncing himself a king summoned by destiny, that many tribes were joining the Trojan hero, and his name was spreading far and wide in Latium. What Aeneas was intending given these beginnings, what outcome he desired from the war, if fortune followed him, might be seen more clearly by Diomedes, himself, than by King Turnus or King Latinus. So it was in Latium. Meanwhile the Trojan hero of Laomedon’s line, seeing all this, tosses on a vast sea of cares, and swiftly casts his mind this way and that, seizing on various ideas, turning everything over: as when tremulous light from the water in a bronze bowl, thrown back by sunshine, or the moon’s radiant image, flickers far and wide over everything, then angles upwards, and strikes the panelled ceiling overhead.

BkVIII:26-65 Aeneas’s Dream of Tiberinus

It was night, and through all the land, deep sleep gripped weary creatures, bird and beast, when Aeneas, the leader, lay down on the river-bank, under the cold arch of the heavens, his heart troubled by war’s sadness, and at last allowed his body to rest. Old Tiberinus himself, the god of the place, appeared to him, rising from his lovely stream, among the poplar leaves (fine linen cloaked him in a blue-grey mantle, and shadowy reeds hid his hair), Then he spoke, and with his words removed all cares: ‘O seed of the race of gods, who bring our Trojan city
back from the enemy, and guard the eternal fortress, 
long looked-for on Laurentine soil, and in Latin fields, 
here is your house, and your house’s gods, for sure 
(do not desist), don’t fear the threat of war, 
the gods’ swollen anger has died away. 
And now, lest you think this sleep’s idle fancy, you’ll find 
a huge sow lying on the shore, under the oak trees, 
that has farrowed a litter of thirty young, a white sow, 
lying on the ground, with white piglets round her teats, 
That place shall be your city, there’s true rest from your labours.
By this in a space of thirty years Ascanius 
will found the city of Alba, bright name. 
I do not prophesy unsurely. Now (attend), in a few words 
I’ll explain how you can emerge the victor from what will come. 
Arcadians have chosen a site on this coast, a race descended 
from Pallas, friends of King Evander, who followed 
his banner, and located their city in the hills, 
named, from their ancestor Pallas, Pallantium. 
They wage war endlessly with the Latin race: summon them 
as allies to your camp, and join in league with them. 
I’ll guide you myself along the banks by the right channels, 
so you can defeat the opposing current with your oars. 
Rise, now, son of the goddess, and, as the first stars set, 
offer the prayers due to Juno, and with humble vows 
overcome her anger and her threats. Pay me honour as victor. 
I am him whom you see scouring the banks, 
with my full stream, and cutting through rich farmlands, 
blue Tiber, the river most dear to heaven. Here is 
my noble house, my fount flows through noble cities.’
He spoke: then the river plunged into a deep pool, seeking its floor: night and sleep left Aeneas. He rose and, looking towards the heavenly sun’s eastern light, raised water from the stream in his cupped hands, and poured out this prayer to heaven: ‘Nymphs, Laurentine Nymphs, from whom come the tribe of rivers, and you, O Father Tiber, and your sacred stream, receive Aeneas, and shield him at last from danger. In whatever fountain the water holds you, pitying our trials, from whatever soil you flow in your supreme beauty, you will always be honoured by my tributes, by my gifts, horned river, ruler of the Hesperian waters. O, only be with me and prove your will by your presence.’ So he spoke, and chose two galleys from his fleet, manned them with oarsmen, and also equipped his men with weapons. But behold a sudden wonder, marvellous to the sight, gleaming white through the trees, a sow the same colour as her white litter, seen lying on the green bank: dutiful Aeneas, carrying the sacred vessel, sets her with her young before the altar and sacrifices her to you, to you indeed, most powerful Juno. Tiber calmed his swelling flood all that night long, and flowing backwards stilled his silent wave, so that he spread his watery levels as in a gentle pool, or placid swamp, so it would be effortless for the oars. Therefore they sped on the course begun, with happy murmurs, the oiled pine slipped through the shallows: the waves marvelled, the woods marvelled, unused to the far-gleaming shields of heroes, and the painted ships floating in the river. They wore out a night and a day with their rowing navigated long bends, were shaded by many kinds of trees, and cut through the green woods, over the calm levels. The fiery sun had climbed to the mid-point of the sky’s arc, when they saw walls and a fort in the distance, and the scattered roofs of houses, which Roman power has now raised heavenwards: then Evander owned a poor affair. They turned the prows quickly towards land, and approached the town.
BkVIII:102-151 Aeneas Meets Evander

By chance that day the Arcadian king was making solemn offering to Hercules, Amphitryon’s mighty son, and other gods in a grove in front of the city. His son Pallas was with him, and with him were all the leading young men, and his impoverished senate offering incense, and the warm blood smoked on the altars. When they saw the noble ships: that they were gliding through the shadowy woods, rowing with silent oars: they were alarmed at the sudden sight and rose together, leaving the tables. But proud Pallas ordered them not to break off the rites, and seizing his spear flew off to meet the strangers himself, and at some distance shouted from a hillock: ‘Warriors what motive drives you to try unknown paths? Where are you heading? What people are you? Where from? Do you bring peace or war?’ Then Aeneas the leader spoke from the high stern, holding out a branch of olive in peace: ‘You are looking at men of Trojan birth, and spears hostile to the Latins, men whom they force to flee through arrogant warfare. We seek Evander. Take my message and say that the chosen leaders of Troy have come, asking for armed alliance.’ Pallas was amazed, awestruck by that great name: ‘O whoever you may be, disembark, and speak to my father face to face, and come beneath our roof as a guest.’ And he took his hand and gripped it tight in welcome: they left the river, and went on into the grove. Then Aeneas spoke to King Evander, in words of friendship: ‘Noblest of the sons of Greece, whom Fortune determines me to make request of, offering branches decked with sacred ribbons: indeed I did not fear your being a leader of Greeks, an Arcadian, and joined to the race of the twin sons of Atreus, since my own worth, and the god’s holy oracles, our fathers being related, your fame known throughout the world, connect me to you, and bring me here willingly, through destiny. Dardanus, our early ancestor, and leader of Troy’s city, born of Atlantean Electra, as the Greeks assert, voyaged to Troy’s Teucrion people: and mightiest Atlas begot Electra, he who supports the heavenly spheres on his shoulders. Your ancestor is Mercury, whom lovely Maia conceived, and gave birth to on Cyllene’s cold heights: and Atlas, if we credit what we hear, begot Maia,
that same Atlas who lifts the starry sky.
So both our races branch from the one root.
Relying on this, I decided on no envoys, no prior attempts
through diplomacy: myself, I set before you, myself
and my own life, and come humbly to your threshold.
The same Daunian race pursues us with war, as you yourself,
indeed they think if they drive us out, nothing will stop them
bringing all Hesperia completely under their yoke,
and owning the seas that wash the eastern and western shores.
Accept and offer friendship. We have brave hearts
in battle, soldiers and spirits proven in action.’

**BkVIII:152-183 Evander Offers Alliance**

Aeneas spoke. Evander scanned his face, eyes
and form, for a long time with his gaze, as he was speaking.
Then he replied briefly, so: ‘How gladly I know, and
welcome you, bravest of Trojans! How it brings back
your father’s speech, the voice and features of noble Anchises!
For I recall how Priam, son of Laomedon, visiting the realms
of his sister, Hesione, and seeking Salamis,
came on further to see the chill territories of Arcadia.
In those days first youth clothed my cheeks with bloom,
and I marvelled at the Trojan leaders, and marvelled
at the son of Laomedon himself: but Anchises as he walked
was taller than all. My mind burned with youthful desire
to address the hero, and clasp his hand in mine:
I approached and led him eagerly inside the walls of Pheneus.
On leaving he gave me a noble quiver
of Lycian arrows, a cloak woven with gold,
and a pair of golden bits, that my Pallas now owns.
So the hand of mine you look for is joined in alliance,
and when tomorrow’s dawn returns to the earth,
I’ll send you off cheered by my help, and aid you with stores.
Meanwhile, since you come to us as friends, favour us
by celebrating this annual festival, which it is wrong
to delay, and become accustomed to your friends’ table.’
When he had spoken he ordered the food and drink
that had been removed to be replaced, and seated
the warriors himself on the turf benches.
He welcomed Aeneas as the principal guest, and invited him
to a maple-wood throne covered by a shaggy lion’s pelt. Then the altar priest with young men he had chosen competed to bring on the roast meat from the bulls, pile the baked bread in baskets, and serve the wine. Aeneas and the men of Troy feasted on an entire chine of beef, and the sacrificial organs.

BkVIII:184-305 The Tale of Hercules and Cacus

When hunger had been banished, and desire for food sated, King Evander said: ‘No idle superstition, or ignorance of the ancient gods, forced these solemn rites of ours, this ritual banquet, this altar to so great a divinity, upon us. We perform them, and repeat the honours due, Trojan guest, because we were saved from cruel perils. Now look first at this rocky overhanging cliff, how its bulk is widely shattered, and the mountain lair stands deserted, and the crags have been pulled down in mighty ruin. There was a cave here, receding to vast depths, untouched by the sun’s rays, inhabited by the fell shape of Cacus, the half-human, and the ground was always warm with fresh blood, and the heads of men, insolently nailed to the doors, hung there pallid with sad decay. Vulcan was father to this monster: and, as he moved his massive bulk, he belched out his dark fires. Now at last time brought what we wished, the presence and assistance of a god. Hercules, the greatest of avengers, appeared, proud of the killing and the spoils of three-fold Geryon, driving his great bulls along as victor, and his cattle occupied the valley and the river. And Cacus, his mind mad with frenzy, lest any wickedness or cunning be left un-dared or un-tried drove off four bulls of outstanding quality, and as many heifers of exceptional beauty, from their stalls. and, so there might be no forward-pointing spoor, the thief dragged them into his cave by the tail, and, reversing the signs of their tracks, hid them in the stony dark: no one seeking them would find a trail to the cave. Meanwhile, as Hercules, Amphitryon’s son, was moving the well-fed herd from their stalls, and preparing to leave, the cattle lowed as they went out, all the woods were filled
with their complaining, and the sound echoed from the hills.
One heifer returned their call, and lowed from the deep cave,
and foiled Cacus’s hopes from her prison.
At this Hercules’s indignation truly blazed, with a venomous
dark rage: he seized weapons in his hand, and his heavy
knotted club, and quickly sought the slopes of the high mountain.
Then for the first time my people saw Cacus afraid, confusion
in his eyes: he fled at once, swifter than the East Wind,
heading for his cave: fear lent wings to his feet.
As he shut himself in, and blocked the entrance securely,
throwing against it a giant rock, hung there in chains
by his father’s craft, by shattering the links, behold
Hercules arrived in a tearing passion, turning his head
this way and that, scanning every approach, and gnashing
his teeth. Hot with rage, three times he circled the whole
Aventine Hill, three times he tried the stony doorway in vain,
three times he sank down, exhausted, in the valley.
A sharp pinnacle of flint, the rock shorn away
on every side, stood, tall to see, rising behind
the cave, a suitable place for vile birds to nest.
He shook it, where it lay, it’s ridge sloping towards the river
on the left, straining at it from the right, loosening its deepest
roots, and tearing it out, then suddenly hurling it away,
the highest heavens thundered with the blow,
the banks broke apart, and the terrified river recoiled.
But Cacus’s den and his vast realm stood revealed,
and the shadowy caverns within lay open,
no differently than if earth, gaping deep within,
were to unlock the infernal regions by force, and disclose
the pallid realms, hated by the gods, and the vast abyss
be seen from above, and the spirits tremble at incoming light.
So Hercules, calling upon all his weapons, hurled missiles
at Cacus from above, caught suddenly in unexpected daylight,
penned in the hollow rock, with unaccustomed howling,
and rained boughs and giant blocks of stone on him.
He on the other hand, since there was no escape now
from the danger, belched thick smoke from his throat
(marvellous to tell) and enveloped the place in blind darkness,
blotting the view from sight, and gathering
smoke-laden night in the cave, a darkness mixed with fire.
Hercules in his pride could not endure it, and he threw himself,
with a headlong leap, through the flames, where the smoke
gave out its densest billows, and black mist heaved in the great cavern.
Here, as Cacus belched out useless flame in the darkness,
Hercules seized him in a knot-like clasp, and, clinging, choked him
the eyes squeezed, and the throat drained of blood.
Immediately the doors were ripped out, and the dark den exposed,
the stolen cattle, and the theft Cacus denied, were revealed
to the heavens, and the shapeless carcass dragged out
by the feet. The people could not get their fill of gazing
at the hideous eyes, the face, and shaggy bristling chest
of the half-man, and the ashes of the jaw’s flames.
Because of that this rite is celebrated, and happy posterity
remembers the day: and Potitius, the first, the founder, with
the Pinarian House as guardians of the worship of Hercules,
set up this altar in the grove, which shall be spoken of for ever
by us as ‘The Mightiest’, and the mightiest it shall be for ever.
Come now, O you young men, wreathe your hair with leaves,
hold out wine-cups in your right hands, in honour of such great glory,
and call on the god we know, and pour out the wine with a will.’
He spoke, while grey-green poplar veiled his hair
with Hercules’s own shade, hanging down in a knot of leaves,
and the sacred cup filled his hand. Quickly they all poured
a joyful libation on the table, and prayed to the gods.
Meanwhile, evening drew nearer in the heavens,
and now the priests went out, Potitius leading,
clothed in pelts as customary, and carrying torches.
They restarted the feast, bringing welcome offerings
as a second course, and piled the altars with heaped plates.
Then the Salii, the dancing priests, came to sing round
the lighted altars, their foreheads wreathed with sprays
of poplar, one band of youths, another of old men, who praised
the glories and deeds of Hercules in song: how as an infant he strangled
the twin snakes in his grip, monsters sent by Juno his stepmother:
how too he destroyed cities incomparable in war,
Troy and Oechalia: how he endured a thousand hard labours
destined for him by cruel Juno, through King Eurystheus:
‘You, unconquerable one, you slew the cloud-born Centaurs,
bi-formed Hylaeus and Pholus, with your hand: the monstrous
Cretan Bull: and the huge lion below the cliffs of Nemea.
The Stygian Lake trembled before you: Cerberus, Hell’s guardian,
lying on half-eaten bones in his blood-drenched cave:
No shape, not Tytpeus himself, armed and towering upwards, daunted you: your brains were not lacking when Lerna’s Hydra surrounded you with its swarm of heads. Hail, true child of Jove, a glory added to the gods, visit us and your rites with grace and favouring feet.’ Such things they celebrated in song, adding to all this Cacus’s cave, and the fire-breather himself. All the grove rang with sound, and the hills echoed.

**BkVIII:306-369 Pallanteum – the Site of Rome**

Then they all returned to the city, the sacred rites complete. The king walked clothed with years, and kept Aeneas and his son near him for company, lightening the road with various talk. Aeneas marvelled, and scanned his eyes about eagerly, captivated by the place, and delighted to enquire about and learn each tale of the men of old. So King Evander, founder of Rome’s citadel, said: ‘The local Nymphs and Fauns once lived in these groves, and a race of men born of trees with tough timber, who had no laws or culture, and didn’t know how to yoke oxen or gather wealth, or lay aside a store, but the branches fed them, and the hunter’s wild fare. Saturn was the first to come down from heavenly Olympus, fleeing Jove’s weapons, and exiled from his lost realm. He gathered together the untaught race, scattered among the hills, and gave them laws, and chose to call it Latium, from *latere*, ‘to hide’, since he had hidden in safety on these shores. Under his reign was the Golden Age men speak of: in such tranquil peace did he rule the nations, until little by little an inferior, tarnished age succeeded, with war’s madness, and desire for possessions. Then the Ausonian bands came, and the Siconian tribes, while Saturn’s land of Latium often laid aside her name: then the kings, and savage Thybris, of vast bulk, after whom we Italians call our river by the name of Tiber: the ancient Albula has lost her true name. As for me, exiled from my country and seeking the limits of the ocean, all-powerful Chance, and inescapable fate, settled me in this place, driven on by my mother the Nymph Carmentis’s
dire warnings, and my guardian god Apollo.’
He had scarcely spoken when advancing he pointed out
the altar and what the Romans call the Carmental Gate,
in ancient tribute to the Nymph Carmentis,
the far-seeing prophetess, who first foretold
the greatness of Aeneas’s sons, the glory of Pallanteum.
Next he pointed to a vast grove, which brave Romulus would restore
as a sanctuary, and the Lupercal, the Wolf’s Cave, under a cold cliff,
named in the Arcadian way for the wolf-god, Lycaean Pan.
And he also pointed out the grove of sacred Argiletum
calling the place to witness, relating the death of Argus his guest.
He leads him from here to the Tarpeian Rock and the Capitol,
now all gold, once bristling with wild thorns.
Even then the dreadful holiness of the place awed the fearful
country folk, even then they trembled at the wood and the rock.
‘A god inhabits this grove,’ he said, ‘and this hill with its leafy summit,
(which god is unknown): my Arcadians believe they have seen
Jove himself, as his right hand has often shaken
his darkening shield, and called up the storm clouds.
Moreover you can see in these two townships
with broken walls, the memorials and relics of men of old.
Father Janus built this fort, Saturn that:
this was named the Janiculum, that the Saturnia.’
Talking among themselves they came to the house
of the impoverished Evander, and saw cattle here and there, lowing
where the Roman Forum and the fashionable Carinae would be.
When they reached the house, Evander said: ‘Victorious Hercules
stooped to entering this doorway, this palace charmed him.
My guest, dare to scorn wealth, and make yourself worthy too
to be a god: don’t be scathing about the lack of possessions.’
He spoke, and led mighty Aeneas beneath the confines
of his sloping roof, and allotted him a mattress
stuffed with leaves, and the pelt of a Libyan bear:
Night fell, and embraced the earth with her darkening wings.

BkVIII:370-406 Venus Seeks Weapons from Vulcan

Now Venus, a mother fearful, and not without reason, in her mind,
troubled by the Laurentine threats, and fierce uprising,
spoke to Vulcan, her husband, in their golden bridal chamber,
beginning this way, breathing divine passion into her words:
‘I didn’t ask weapons of your skill or power, dearest husband, 
or any help for my poor people, while the Argive kings 
destroyed doomed Troy in the war, her citadel fated 
to fall to hostile flames: no, I didn’t want to exercise 
you or your skills in vain, though I owed much indeed 
to Priam’s sons, and often wept at Aeneas’s cruel suffering. 
Now at Jove’s command he has set foot on Rutulian shores, 
so I come likewise as a suppliant and ask arms of the power 
sacred to me, a mother on behalf of her son. Thetis, Nereus’s 
daughter, and Aurora, Tithonus’s wife, could move you with tears. 
See what nations gather, what cities, closing their gates, 
are sharpening their swords against me, to destroy my people.’ 
She had spoken, and as he hesitated, the goddess caressed him 
in a tender embrace, on this side and on that, in her snowy arms. 
At once he felt the familiar flame, and that warmth he knew 
penetrated him to the marrow, and ran through his melting bones, 
no differently than when, with a peal of thunder, a forked 
streak of fire tears through the storm-clouds with dazzling light: 
his partner felt it, delighted with her cleverness and conscious 
of her beauty. Then old Vulcan spoke, chained by immortal love: 
‘Why do you seek instances from the past? Goddess, where 
has your faith in me gone? If your anxiety then was the same, 
it would have been right for me too to arm the Trojans then: 
neither fate nor the almighty Father refused to let Troy stand, 
or Priam live, ten years more. And so now, if war is your intent, 
and your mind is set on it, cease to doubt your powers, entreating 
whatever care I can promise in my craft, whatever can be made 
of iron and molten electrum, whatever fire and air can do.’ 
Saying these words he gave her a desired embrace, and sinking 
onto his wife’s breast, sought gentle sleep in every limb.

**BkVIII:407-453 Vulcan’s Smithy**

When, in vanishing night’s mid-course, first rest 
has conquered the need for sleep: when a woman, 
who supports life with distaff and the humble work 
Minerva imposes, first wakes the ashes, and slumbering flames, 
adding night hours to her toil, and maintains her servants 
at their endless task, by lamplight, to keep her husband’s bed 
pure, and raise her young sons: just so, the god, 
with the power of fire, rose now from his soft bed,
no idler at that hour, to labour at the forge.
An island, its rocks smoking, rises steeply by
the Sicilian coast, near the flanks of Aeolian Lipare.
Beneath it a cave, and the galleries of Etna, eaten at
by the Cyclopean furnaces, resound, and the groans from
the anvils are heard echoing the heavy blows,
and masses of Chalybean steel hiss in the caverns,
and fire breathes through the furnaces. It is Vulcan’s home
and called Vulcana. Here then the god
with the power of fire descended from the heavens.
In the huge cave the Cyclopes, Brontes, Steropes,
and bare-limbed Pyrmom, were forging iron.
They held a lightning-bolt, shaped with their hands,
like many of those the Father hurls from all over
the sky, part of it polished, part still left to do.
They’d added three shafts of spiralling rain, three of watery
cloud, three of reddening fire, and the winged south wind.
now they were blending terrifying flashes, into the work,
sounds and fears, and fury with following flames.
Elsewhere they pressed on with a chariot for Mars, with winged wheels,
with which he rouses men, with which he rouses cities:
and a chilling aegis, the breastplate of Pallas,
competing to burnish its serpent scales of gold,
its interwoven snakes, and the Gorgon herself
on the goddess’s breast, with severed neck and rolling eyes:
‘Away with all this,’ he shouts, ‘remove the work
you’ve started, Cyclopes of Etna, and turn your minds to this:
you’re to make arms for a brave hero. Now you
need strength, swift hands now, all the art now of a master.
An end to delay.’ He said no more, but they all
bent quickly to the toil, and shared the labour equally.
Bronze and golden ore flowed in streams,
and steel, that deals wounds, melted in a vast furnace.
They shaped a giant shield, one to stand against all
the weapons of Latium, layering it seven times,
disc on disc. Some sucked in air and blew it out
again with panting bellows, others dipped the hissing bronze
in the lake: the cavern groaned beneath the weight of anvils.
With mighty force they lifted their arms together in rhythm,
and turned the mass of metal, gripping it with pincers.
While the lord of Lemnos hastened the work on the Aeolian shore, the kindly light, and the dawn song of the birds beneath the eaves, called Evander from his humble house. The old man rose, clothed his body in a tunic and strapped Tyrrenian sandals to the soles of his feet. Then he fastened his Tegaean sword over his shoulder and to his side, flinging back a panther’s hide on the left. Two guard dogs besides ran ahead from the high threshold, and accompanied their master’s steps. The hero made his way to his guest Aeneas’s secluded lodging, thinking of his words, and the help he had promised. Aeneas was no less early to rise: his son Pallas walked with the one, Achates with the other. They clasped hands as they met, sat down among the houses, and finally enjoyed open conversation. The king was the first to begin, so:

‘Greatest leader of the Teuricians, for my part while you’re safe and sound I’ll never accept that the kingdom and power of Troy have been overthrown, our strength in war is inadequate to such a name: on this side we are shut in by the Tuscan river, while on that the Rutulian presses us, and thunders in arms round our walls. But I propose to affiliate mighty peoples to you, and a war-camp rich in kingships, help that chance unpredictably reveals. You arrive at fate’s command. Not far from here is the site of Argylla’s city, built of ancient stone, where the Lydian race, famous in war, once settled the Etruscan heights. For many years it flourished, until King Mezentius ruled it with arrogant power, and savage weaponry. Why recount the tyrant’s wicked murders and vicious acts? May the gods reserve such for his life and race!

He even tied corpses to living bodies, as a means of torture, placing hand on hand and face against face, so killing by a lingering death, in that wretched embrace, that ooze of disease and decomposition. But the weary citizens at last armed themselves surrounded the atrocious madman in his palace, mowed down his supporters, and fired the roof. Amongst the carnage he escaped and fled.
to Rutulian soil, protected by Turnus’s allied army. So all Etruria has risen in rightful anger, demanding the king for punishment, with the threat of immediate war. Aeneas, I’ll make you leader of those thousands. For their ships clamour densely on the shore, and they order the banners to advance, but an aged soothsayer holds them back, singing of destiny: ‘O chosen warriors of Maeonia, the flower, the honour of our ancient race, whom just resentment sends against the enemy, and whom Mezentius fires with rightful anger, no man of Italy may control such a people as you: choose foreigners as leaders.’ So the Etruscan ranks camped on that plain, fearful of this warning from the gods. Tarchon himself has sent ambassadors to me, with the royal sceptre and crown, entrusting me with the insignia: I to come to the camp, and take the Tuscan throne. But the slow frost of old age wearied by the years, and strength now beyond acts of valour, begrudge me the command. I would urge my son to it, except that of mixed blood with a Sabine mother, he takes part of his nationality from her. You, O bravest leader of Trojans and Italians, to whose race and years destiny is favourable, whom the divine will calls, accept. Moreover I’ll add Pallas here, our hope and comfort: let him become accustomed under your guidance to endure military service, and the grave work of war, witness your actions, and admire you from his early years. I’ll grant him two hundred Arcadian horsemen, the choice flower of our manhood, and Pallas will grant the same to you himself.’
BkVIII:520-584 The Preliminary Alarms

He had scarcely finished, and Aeneas, Anchises’s son, and loyal Achates, with eyes downcast, were thinking of many a difficulty, in their own sombre minds, when Cytherea sent a sign from a cloudless sky. For lightning came flashing unexpectedly from heaven, with thunder, and suddenly all seemed to quake, and, through the air, a Tyrrhenian trumpet blast seemed to bray. They looked upwards, a great crash sounded again and again. In a calm region of the sky among the clouds they saw weapons reddening in the bright air, and heard the noise of blows. The others were astounded but the Trojan hero knew the sounds as those of things which his mother had promised. Then he cried: ‘My friend, indeed, do not wonder I beg you as to what these marvels might prophesy: I am called by Olympus. The goddess who bore me foretold she would send this sign if war was near, and bring weapons from Vulcan through the air to aid me. Alas what slaughter awaits the wretched Laurentines! What a price you’ll pay me, Turnus! What shields and helmets and bodies of the brave you’ll roll beneath your waves, father Tiber! Let them ask for battle and break their treaties.’ Having spoken, he raised himself from his high throne, and firstly revived the dormant altars with Herculean fire, then gladly visited yesterday’s Lar and the humble household gods. Evander and the Trojan warriors equally sacrificed chosen ewes according to the rite. Next he went to the ships and met again with his comrades, choosing the most outstanding in courage to follow him to war: the others slipped downstream, floating effortlessly on the helpful current, carrying news to Ascanius of his father and his fortunes. Horses were granted to the Trojans who were to take the Tyrrhenian field: They lead out a choice mount for Aeneas, clothed in a tawny lion’s pelt with gleaming gilded claws. A rumour suddenly flew through the little town, proclaiming that horsemen were riding fast to the Tyrrhenic king’s shores. Mothers, in alarm, redoubled their prayers, and fear drew near with danger, and now the war god’s image loomed larger.
Then old Evander, clasping his son’s hand as he departed, clung to him weeping incessantly and spoke as follows: ‘O, if Jupiter would bring back the years that have vanished, I to be as I was when I felled the foremost ranks under Praeneste’s very walls, and as victor heaped up the shields, and sent King Erulus down to Tartarus, by this right hand, he to whom at his birth his mother Feronia (strange to tell) gave three lives, triple weapons to wield — to be three times brought low in death: who at last in a moment this right hand stripped of all his lives, and equally of all his weapons: I would never be torn as now from your sweet embrace, my son, never would Mezentius have poured insults on this neighbour’s head, caused so many cruel deaths with the sword, or widowed the city of so many of her sons. But you, powers above, and you, Jupiter, mighty ruler of the gods, take pity I beg you on this Arcadian king, and hear a father’s prayer. If your will, and fate, keep my Pallas safe, if I live to see him and be together with him, I ask for life: I have the patience to endure any hardship. But if you threaten any unbearable disaster, Fortune, now, oh now, let me break the thread of cruel existence, while fear hangs in doubt, while hope’s uncertain of the future. while you, beloved boy, my late and only joy, are held in my embrace, and let no evil news wound my ears.’ These were the words the father poured out at their last parting: then his servants carried him, overcome, into the palace.

BkVIII:585-625 Venus’s Gift of Armour

And now the horsemen had ridden from the opened gates, Aeneas, and loyal Achetes, among the first: then the other princes of Troy, Pallas himself travelling mid-column, notable in his cloak and engraved armour, like the Morning-Star, whom Venus loves above all the other starry fires, when, having bathed in Ocean’s wave, he raises his sacred head in heaven, and melts the dark. Mothers stand fearfully on the battlements, and with their eyes follow the cloud of dust, the squadrons bright with bronze. The armed men pass through the undergrowth where the route is most direct: a shout rises, and they form column, and with the thunder of their hooves shake the broken ground.
There’s a large grove by the chilly stream of Caere, held sacred far and wide, in ancestral reverence: the hollow hills enclose it on all sides, and surround the wood with dark fir trees. The tale is that the ancient Pelasgians, who once held the Latin borders, dedicated this wood and a festive day to Silvanus, god of the fields and the herds. Not far from here, Tarchon and the Tyrrhenians were camped in a safe place, and now all their troops could be seen, from the high ground, scattered widely over the fields. Aeneas, the leader, and the young men chosen for war, arrived, and refreshed their horses and their weary bodies. Then Venus, bright goddess, came bearing gifts through the ethereal clouds: and when she saw her son from far away who had retired in secret to the valley by the cool stream, she went to him herself, unasked, and spoke these words: ‘See the gifts brought to perfection by my husband’s skill, as promised. You need not hesitate, my son, to quickly challenge the proud Laurentines, or fierce Turnus, to battle.’ Cytherea spoke, and invited her son’s embrace, and placed the shining weapons under an oak tree opposite. He cannot have enough of turning his gaze over each item, delighting in the goddess’s gift and so high an honour, admiring, and turning the helmet over with hands and arms, with its fearsome crest and spouting flames, and the fateful sword, the stiff breastplate of bronze, dark-red and huge, like a bluish cloud when it’s lit by the rays of the sun, and glows from afar: then the smooth greaves, of electrum and refined gold, the spear, and the shield’s indescribable detail.

BkVIII:626-670 Vulcan’s Shield: Scenes of Early Rome

There the lord with the power of fire, not unversed in prophecy, and knowledge of the centuries to come, had fashioned the history of Italy, and Rome’s triumphs: there was every future generation of Ascanius’s stock, and the sequence of battles they were to fight. He had also shown the she-wolf, having just littered, lying on the ground, in the green cave of Mars, the twin brothers, Romulus and Remus, playing, hanging on her teats, and fearlessly sucking at their foster-mother.
Bending her neck back smoothly she caressed them in turn, and licked their limbs with her tongue. Not far from that he had placed Rome, the Sabine women, lawlessly snatched from the seated crowd, when the great games were held in the Circus: and the sudden surge of fresh warfare between Romulus’s men, and the aged Tatius and his austere Cures. Next, the same two kings stood armed in front of Jove’s altar, holding the wine-cups and joined in league, sacrificing a sow, the new-built palace bristling with Romulus’s thatch. Then, not far from that, four-horse chariots driven in different directions tore Mettus apart (Alban, you should have kept your word, though!), and Tullus dragged the liar’s entrails through the woods, the briars wet with sprinkled blood. There was Porsenna too, ordering Rome to admit the banished Tarquin, and gripping the city in a mighty siege: the scions of Aeneas running on the sword for freedom’s sake. You could see Porsenna in angry, and in threatening, posture, because Cocles dared to tear down the bridge, because Cloelia broke her restraints and swam the river. At the top Manlius, guardian of the Tarpeian Citadel, stood before the temple, defending the high Capitol. And there the silvery goose, flying through the gilded colonnades, cackled that the Gauls were at the gate. The Gauls were there in the gorse, taking the Citadel, protected by the dark, the gift of shadowy night. Their hair was gold, and their clothes were gold, they shone in striped cloaks, their white necks torqued with gold, each waving two Alpine javelins in his hand, long shields defending their bodies. Here he had beaten out the leaping Salii and naked Luperci, the woolly priest’s caps, and the oval shields that fell from heaven, chaste mothers in cushioned carriages leading sacred images through the city. Far from these he had added the regions of Tartarus, the high gates of Dis, the punishment for wickedness, and you Catiline, hanging from a threatening cliff, trembling at the sight of the Furies: and the good, at a distance, Cato handing out justice.

**BkVIII:671-713 Vulcan’s Shield: The Battle of Actium**

The likeness of the swollen sea flowed everywhere among these,
in gold, though the flood foamed with white billows, and dolphins in bright silver swept the waters round about with arcing tails, and cut through the surge. In the centre bronze ships could be seen, the Battle of Actium, and you could make out all Leucate in feverish preparation for war, the waves gleaming with gold. On one side Augustus Caesar stands on the high stern, leading the Italians to the conflict, with him the Senate, the People, the household gods, the great gods, his happy brow shoots out twin flames, and his father’s star is shown on his head. Elsewhere Agrippa, favoured by the winds and the gods leads his towering column of ships, his brow shines with the beaks of the naval crown, his proud battle distinction. On the other side Antony, with barbarous wealth and strange weapons, conqueror of eastern peoples and the Indian shores, bringing Egypt, and the might of the Orient, with him, and furthest Bactria: and his Egyptian consort follows him (the shame). All press forward together, and the whole sea foams, churned by the sweeping oars and the trident rams. They seek deep water: you’d think the Cycladic islands were uprooted and afloat on the flood, or high mountains clashed with mountains, so huge the mass with which the men attack the towering sterns. Blazing tow and missiles of winged steel shower from their hands, Neptune’s fields grow red with fresh slaughter. The queen in the centre signals to her columns with the native sistrum, not yet turning to look at the twin snakes at her back. Barking Anubis, and monstrous gods of every kind brandish weapons against Neptune, Venus, and Minerva. Mars rages in the centre of the contest, engraved in steel, and the grim Furies in the sky, and Discord in a torn robe strides joyously, while Bellona follows with her blood-drenched whip. Apollo of Actium sees from above and bends his bow: at this all Egypt, and India, all the Arabs and Sabaeans turn and flee. The queen herself is seen to call upon the winds, set sail, and now, even now, spread the slackened canvas. The lord with the power of fire has fashioned her pallid with the coming of death, amidst the slaughter, carried onwards by the waves and wind of Iapyx, while before her is Nile, mourning with his vast extent, opening wide his bays, and, with his whole tapestry, calling
the vanquished to his dark green breast, and sheltering streams.

**BkVIII:714-731 Vulcan’s Shield: Augustus’s Triple Triumph**

Next Augustus, entering the walls of Rome in triple triumph, is dedicating his immortal offering to Italy’s gods, three hundred great shrines throughout the city. The streets are ringing with joy, playfulness, applause: a band of women in every temple, altars in every one: before the altars sacrificial steers cover the ground. He himself sits at the snow-white threshold of shining Apollo, examines the gifts of nations, and hangs them on the proud gates. The conquered peoples walk past in a long line, as diverse in language as in weapons, or the fashion of their clothes. Here Vulcan has shown the Nomad race and loose-robed Africans, there the Leleges and Carians and Gelonians with their quivers: Euphrates runs with quieter waves, and the Morini, remotest of mankind, the double-horned Rhine, the untamed Dahae, and Araxes, resenting its restored bridge. Aeneas marvels at such things on Vulcan’s shield, his mother’s gift, and delights in the images, not recognising the future events, lifting to his shoulder the glory and the destiny of his heirs.

**BkXII:1-53 Turnus Demands Marriage**

When Turnus saw the Latins exhausted, and weakened by their military reverse, himself the subject of every gaze, his own promise to them yet unfulfilled, he burned implacably, and unprompted, and raised his courage. As a lion, in the African bush, severely hurt by huntsmen with a wound to the chest, only then rouses himself to battle, tosses his shaggy mane over his neck, in joy, and, unafraid, snaps off the spear some poacher has planted in him, roaring from blood-stained jaws: so the violence grew in Turnus’s inflamed heart. Then he spoke to the king, beginning turbulently like this: ‘There’s no reluctance here, in Turnus: there’s no reason for Aeneas’s coward crew to take back their words or renounce their pact: I go to meet him. Carry out the holy rite, father, and draw up the marriage contract.'
I’ll either send this Trojan, this Asian deserter, to Tartarus, (let the Latins sit and watch) and with my sword, alone, dispel the nation’s shame, or let him possess the defeated, let Lavinia go then as his bride.’ Latinus replied to him with calm in his heart: ‘O youth of noble spirit, the more you excel in fierce courage, the more it is right for me to take careful thought, and weigh every event with caution.
You have your father Daunus’s kingdom, you have the many fortresses you captured by force, and Latinus is not short of gold and generosity: there are other unmarried girls, not ignoble in birth, in the fields of Latium and Laurentium. Allow me to say this, un-gently, openly stripped of all guile, and take it to heart: it was forbidden for me to ally my daughter to any of her former suitors, and all gods and men decreed it. Conquered by love for you, conquered by kinship, and the tears of a sorrowful wife, I broke all bounds: I snatched the betrothed girl from my son-in-law to be, and drew the impious sword. You see, Turnus, what events, what war dogs me, what a heavy burden you above all bear. Defeated in two great battles we can hardly preserve the hopes of Italy in our city: Tiber’s streams are yet warm with our blood, the vast plains whitened by our bones. Why did I waver so often? What madness changed my decision? If I’d be ready to accept the Trojans as allies with Turnus dead, why not rather end the conflict while he’s alive? What would your Rutulian kin say, and the rest of Italy, if I betrayed you to death (let chance deny those words!) while seeking my daughter in marriage?
Consider the fortunes of war: pity your aged father, whom his native Ardea keeps apart from us, sorrowing.’ Turnus’s fury was unaffected by these words: it mounted higher, inflamed by the treatment. As soon as he was able to speak, he began like this: ‘Most gracious one, that concern you feel for me, I beg you, for me, set it aside, and allow me to barter death for glory. I too can scatter spears and no lack of steel, from my hand, father, and blood flows from the wounds I make as well. His goddess mother will be far from him, she who covers his flight with mist, like a woman, and hides in empty shadows.’
BkXII:54-80 He Proposes Single Combat

But the queen wept, terrified by the new terms of conflict, and clung to her ardent son, as if she were dying:
‘Turnus, one thing I beg of you, by these tears, by any respect for Amata that touches your heart: you are my only hope, the peace of my sad old age, the honour and power of Latinus is in your hands, our whole tottering house rests on you: do not engage in combat with the Trojans. Whatever danger awaits you in that battle awaits me too, Turnus: I would leave this hateful light with you and will never, as a prisoner, see Aeneas as my son-in-law.’
Lavinia listened to her mother’s words, her burning cheeks wet with tears, while a deep blush kindled their fire, and spread over her glowing face. Her virgin looks showed such colour as when one stains Indian ivory with crimson dye, or as white lilies redden when mixed with many a rose. Love stirred Turnus, and he fixed his gaze on the girl: fired still more for battle, he spoke briefly to Amata: ‘O mother, I beg you not to send me off with tears, or like ill omens, as I leave for the battles of a bitter war: Turnus is not free to delay his hour of death. Idmon, as a messenger, carry my unwelcome words to the Trojan leader. When tomorrow’s Dawn, riding her crimson chariot, reddens in the sky, do not lead Trojans against Rutulians, let Trojan and Rutulian weapons rest: let us resolve this war with our own blood, on that field let Lavinia be sought as bride.’

BkXII:81-112 He Prepares For Battle

When he had spoken, and returned quickly to the palace, he called for his horses, and delighted in seeing them, neighing before him, horses Orithyia herself gave Pilumnus, as a glory, surpassing the snow in whiteness, and the wind for speed. Their charioteers stood around eagerly patting their echoing chests, with the flat of their hands, and combing their flowing manes. Turnus drew a breastplate, stiff with gold and pale bronze, over his shoulders, fitted his sword and shield in position,
and the horns with their crimson crest: the god with the power of fire had wrought the sword for his father, Daunus, and dipped it, glowing, in the waters of the Styx. Then Turnus gripped his strong spear firmly, that stood leaning on a great column in the middle of the hall, a spoil won from the Auruncan, Actor, shook it till it quivered and shouted: ‘Now, o spear that never failed my call, now the time has come: Actor, the mightiest, carried you, and now the right hand of Turnus: allow me to lay low the body of that Phrygian eunuch, tear off and shatter his breastplate with my powerful hand, and defile his hair with dust, that’s curled with a heated iron, and drowned in myrrh.’ He was driven by frenzy, glowing sparks shot from his whole aspect, fire flashed from his fierce eyes, like a bull, before a fight, that starts its formidable bellowing and, trying its anger with its horns, charges a tree-trunk, lashes the air with its blows, and scatters the sand, as it practises for the battle. Meanwhile Aeneas, no less fierce, armed with the weapons, his mother’s gift, sharpened himself for conflict, and roused his anger, happy the war might be settled by the means on offer. Then he comforted his friends, and Iulus’s anxious fears, speaking of destiny, and ordered them to take a firm reply to King Latinus, and declare his conditions for peace.

BkXII:113-160 Juno Speaks to Juturna

The next dawn had scarcely begun to sprinkle the mountain summits with its rays, at that time when the horses of the sun first rise from the deep ocean, and breathe light from lifted nostrils: the Rutulians and Trojans had measured out the field of combat, under the massive walls of the city, and were preparing hearths and turf altars for their mutual gods. Others wearing priest’s aprons, their foreheads wreathed with vervain, brought spring water and fiery embers. The Ausonian army marched out, and their ranks, armed with spears, poured through the crowded gates. All the host of Trojans and Tuscans streamed out on the other side, arrayed in their various armour, equipped with steel, as if the bitter conflict of war called out to them. And the captains too, among their many thousands, darted about, brilliant in gold and purple,
Mnestheus of Assaracus’s line, brave Asilas,
and Messapus, tamer of horses, son of Neptune.
As soon as each had retired to their own ground, at the given signal,
they planted their spears in the earth, and leant their shields on them.
Then women, and weak old men, and the unarmed crowd,
poured out eagerly, and gathered on towers
and rooftops, or stood on the summit of the gates.
But Juno, gazed at the plain, looking from the top of a hill
(called Alban now, then without name, honour or glory)
at the twin ranks of Laurentum and Troy, and Latinus’s city.
Immediately, goddess to goddess, she spoke to Turnus’s sister,
who ruled over lakes and echoing rivers (Jupiter, the king
of high heaven, gave her that honour for stealing her virginity):
‘Nymph, glory of rivers, dearest of all to my heart,
you know how I’ve preferred you alone of all the Latin girls
who’ve mounted unwelcome to the couch of great-hearted Jove,
and I have freely granted you a place in a part of the sky:
lest you blame me, Juturna, learn of impending grief.
Whenever Fortune allowed, and the Fates permitted
the Latin state to prosper, I protected Turnus and your city.
Now I see a warrior meeting with an unequal destiny,
and a day of Fate and inimical force draws near.
I cannot look at this combat, they agreed to, with my eyes.
If you dare do anything more for your brother in person,
go on: it’s fitting. Perhaps better things will follow for the wretched.’
She had scarcely spoken, when Juturna’s eyes flowed with tears,
and her hand struck her lovely breast three or four times.
‘This is not the moment for tears,’ said Saturnian Juno:
‘Run, and, if there’s a way, snatch your brother from death:
or stir conflict and shatter the treaty they’ve made.
I teach you daring.’ Having urged her thus, she left her
uncertain and troubled, sadly hurt at heart.

BkXII:161-215 Aeneas and Latinus Sacrifice

Meanwhile the kings drove out: Latinus in a four-horsed chariot
of massive size (twelve golden rays circling his shining brow,
emblems of his ancestor, the Sun), Turnus behind a snow-white
team, brandishing two spears with broad steel blades in his hand.
On the other side, Aeneas, the leader, ancestor of the Roman race,
came from the camp, ablaze with starry shield and heavenly
armour, Ascanius with him, Rome’s second great hope, while a priest in pure robes brought the offspring of a bristly boar, and also an unshorn two-year sheep, and tethered the animals next to the blazing altars. The heroes turned their gaze towards the rising sun, sprinkled salt meal with their hands, marked the victims’ foreheads with a knife, and poured libations from cups onto the altars. Then pious Aeneas, with sword drawn, prayed like this: ‘Sun, be my witness, and this country that I call on, for which I have been able to endure such labours, and the all-powerful Father, and you Juno, his wife, (now goddess, now, be kinder, I pray) and you, glorious Mars, you, father, who control all warfare with your will: I call on founts and rivers, on all the holiness of high heaven, and the powers in the blue ocean: if by chance Victory falls to Turnus of Italy, it is agreed the defeated will withdraw to Evander’s city, Iulus will leave the land, and the people of Aeneas will never bring renewed war in battle, or attack this realm with the sword. But if victory agrees that our contest is mine (as I think more likely, and may the gods by their will prove it so), I will not command the Italians to submit to Trojans nor do I seek a kingdom for myself: let both nations, undefeated, put in place an eternal treaty. I will permit your gods and their rites: Latinus my father-in-law will keep his weapons, my father-in-law will keep his accustomed power: the Trojans will build walls for me, and Lavinia will give her name to a city. So Aeneas was first to speak, then Latinus followed him, thus, raising his eyes to heaven, and stretching his right hand to the sky: ‘I also swear, Aeneas, by the same earth, sea, and sky, by Latona’s twin offspring, and by two-faced Janus, by the power of the gods below, and the shrines of cruel Dis: may the Father, who ratifies treaties with his lightning, hear me. I touch the altar: I call as witness the gods, and the flames between us, no day shall break this peace or truce on Italy’s side, however things may fall out: nor will any power deflect my will, not if it plunges the earth, drowned in flood, into the waves, and dissolves heaven in hell, just as this sceptre (since he chanced to hold the sceptre in his hand) hewn, once and for all, from the lowest stem in the woods, having lost its parent trunk, and shedding its leaves and twigs
to the knife, will never, now the craftsman’s hand has sheathed it in fine bronze, and given it to the elders of Latium to carry, extend shoots or shade from light foliage.’ They sealed the treaty between them with these words in full view of the leaders. Then with due rite they slaughtered the sacrificial beasts over the flames, tore out the entrails, while they were alive, and piled the alters with heaped dishes.

**BkXII:216-265 The Rutulians Break The Treaty**

But the duel had for a long time seemed unfair to the Rutulians, and their hearts were torn by varied emotions, more so when they saw the combatants’ unequal strength near to. Turnus added to the unrest, in advancing with silent tread and venerating the altar humbly, with downcast eyes, and by his wasted cheeks and the pallor of his youthful body. As soon as his sister, Juturna, was aware that talk was spreading and the minds of the multitude were wavering in doubt, she entered the heart of the army, in the guise of Camers, whose birth was of noble ancestry, his father’s name famous for virtue, and he himself of the bravest in arms, she entered the heart of the army, not ignorant of her task, sowing various rumours and speaking as follows: ‘O Rutulians, aren’t you ashamed to sacrifice one life on behalf of so many of you? Aren’t we their equals in numbers and might? See, all the Trojans and Arcadians are here, and the Etrurian band led by fate, and hostile to Turnus: if every other man attacks, there’s barely an opponent for each of them. Turnus will climb in glory to the gods, at whose altars he has dedicated his life, and live borne on men’s lips: but we will be forced to submit to proud masters, our country lost, we who now sit inactive in the field.’ The will of the young men was roused by these words, more and more so, and a murmur spread through the ranks: even the Laurentines and the Latins changed their minds. Those who had lately hoped for rest from battle, and a safe existence, now longed for weapons, prayed for the treaty to be broken, and pitied Turnus’s unjust fate. Juturna added another greater spur, showing a sign in the depths of the sky, none more significant to disturb Italian minds, and charm them by the wonder of it. Jove’s tawny eagle, flying through reddened air,
stirred the shore-birds, with noisy confusion
in their winged ranks, when suddenly diving to the water
he seized the most outstanding swan cruelly in his curved talons.
The Italians paid attention, and (amazing to see)
all the birds wheeled, clamouring, in flight and, in a cloud,
drove their enemy through the air, darkening the sky
with their wings, until, defeated by force and the weight,
the bird gave way, and, dropping the prey
from his talons into the river, fled deep into the clouds.
Then the Rutulians truly hailed this omen with a shout
and spread wide their hands, and Tolumnius the augur was first
to cry out: ‘This, this was what my prayers have often sought.
I understand it, and recognise the gods: snatch up the sword
with me, with me at your head, o unhappy race, fragile birds,
whom a cruel foreigner terrifies with war, ravaging
your coast with violence. He will take flight and sail
far away over the deep. Close ranks, together, and defend
the king who has been snatched from you, in battle.

BkXII:266-310 Renewed Fighting

He spoke, and running forward hurled his spear
at the enemy: the hissing cornel shaft sang, and cut unerringly
through the air, At one with this, at one, was a mighty shout
the army all in uproar, and hearts hot with the turmoil.
The spear flew on, to where, by chance, nine handsome brothers
stood in its path, all of whom one faithful
Tuscan wife had borne to Arcadian Gylippus,
It struck one of them, a youth of great beauty, in shining armour,
at the waist, where a stitched belt rubbed against
his stomach, and the buckle bit into the overlapping ends,
pierced his ribs, and hurled him to the yellow sand.
But his spirited band of brothers, fired by grief,
drew their swords or snatched their iron spears,
and rushed forward blindly. The Laurentine ranks
charged them: Trojans and Agyllines and Arcadians
in decorated armour, poured in from the other side:
so all had one longing, to let the sword decide.
They stripped the altars, there was a fierce storm
of spears in the whole sky, and a steely rain fell:
wine-bowls and hearthstones were carried off:
Latinus himself fled, taking his defeated gods, the treaty void. Others harnessed their chariots or leapt on their horses, and waited with drawn swords. Messapus, keen to destroy the truce, charging on his horse, scared off Auletes, an Etruscan king with a king’s emblems: the unfortunate man, as he backed away, entangled, fell, head and shoulders, on to the altar behind him: and Messapus flew at him furiously, spear in hand, and from his horse’s height struck mightily at him with the massive weapon, as Auletes begged piteously, and spoke like this, over him: ‘He’s done for: this nobler victim is given to the great gods.’ The Italians crowded round and stripped the warm body. Against them, Corynaeus snatched a charred brand from an altar, and aiming a blow at the charging Ebyso dashed flames in his face: his great beard flared and gave off a smell of burning. Corynaeus following through his blow, clutched the hair of his stunned enemy in his left hand and brought him to earth with a thrust of his bent knee: then stabbed him in the side with his straight sword. Podalirius, towered over the shepherd Alsus, pursuing him with naked steel as he ran through the shower of spears in the front rank: but Alsus swung his axe back, and sliced through the front of his enemy’s brow and chin, drenching his armour with widely spouting blood. Harsh repose and iron slumber pressed on his eyes and their light was sunk in everlasting night.

BkXII:311-382 Aeneas Wounded: Turnus Rampant

But virtuous Aeneas his head bared, unarmed, stretched out his right hand, and called loudly to his troops: ‘Where are you running to? Why this sudden tide of discord? O, control your anger! The agreement has already been struck, and its terms fixed. I alone have the right to fight: Let me do so: banish your fears. I’ll prove the treaty sound with this right hand: these rites mean Turnus is already mine.’ Amidst these cries and words, see, a hissing arrow winged its way towards him, launched by what hand, sent whirling by whom, was unknown, as was the chance or god that brought the Rutulians such honour: the glorious pride in it was kept concealed,
and no one boasted of wounding Aeneas.  
As soon as Turnus saw Aeneas leave the ranks, his captains in confusion, he blazed with the fervour of sudden hope: he called for weapons and horses as one, leapt proudly into his chariot, and gripped the reins in his hands.  
He gave many a brave man death in his swift passage.  
Many he overturned half-alive, crushed the ranks under his chariot, or seizing his spears showered them on those fleeing.  
Just as when blood-drenched Mars is roused, and clashes his shield, by the icy streams of Hebrus and, inciting war, gives rein to his frenzied horses, so that they fly over the open plain outrunning the south and west winds, and farthest Thrace groans to the beat of their hooves, while around him the forms of black Terror, Anger and Treachery, speed, the companions of the god: with the same swiftness Turnus lashed his horses, smoking with sweat, through the midst of the conflict, trampling on enemies piteously slain, while the galloping hooves splashed bloody dew, and trampled the gore mixed with sand.  
Next he gave Sthenelus to death, Thamyrus, and Pholus, the latter close to, the former at a distance, from a distance too both sons of Imbrasas, Glaucus and Laudes, whom Imbrasus himself had raised in Lycia, and equipped with matching armour, to fight hand to hand, or outstrip the wind on horseback.  
Elsewhere Eumedes rode through the midst of the battle, famous in warfare, the son of aged Dolon, recalling the grandfather in name, his father in courage and skill, he who, in going as a spy that time to the Greek camp, dared to ask for Achilles’s chariot as his reward: but Diomedes paid him a different reward for his daring and he no longer aspired to Achilles’s team.  
When Turnus saw Eumedes, far over the open plain, he first sent a light javelin after him across the long space between, then halted his paired horses, leapt from his chariot, onto the half-dead, fallen man, and, planting his foot on his neck, tore the sword from his hand, and bloodied the bright blade deep in his throat, adding these words as well: ‘See the fields, that Western Land, you sought in war: lie there and measure it: this is the prize for those who dare to cross swords with me, thus they build their walls.’  
Then with a cast of his spear he sent Asbytes to keep him company, Chloreus and Sybaris, Dares and Thersiliochus, and Thymoetes
who was flung from the neck of his rearing horse.
As when the blast of the Edonian northerly sounds
over the Aegean deep, and drives the breakers to shore,
while brooding gusts in the sky put the clouds to flight,
so, wherever Turnus cut a path, the lines gave way,
and the ranks turned and ran: his own speed carried him on,
and, as the chariot met it, the wind tossed his flowing plume.
Phegeus could not endure his attack or his spirited war-cry:
he threw himself at the chariot and with his right hand wrenched
the heads of the swift horses aside, as they foamed at the bit.
While he was dragged along, hanging from the yoke,
Turnus’s broad-headed lance reached for his exposed flank,
tore open the double-stranded mail where it entered,
and grazed the surface of the flesh in a wound.
Phegeus still turned towards his enemy, his shield raised,
and was trying to protect himself with his drawn sword,
when the wheel and the onrush of the spinning axle
sent him headlong, throwing him to the ground, and Turnus,
following through, struck off his head with a sweep of his blade
between the rim of the helmet and the chain-mail’s
upper edge, and left the body lying on the sand.

BkXII:383-467 Venus Heals Aeneas

While Turnus was victoriously dealing death over the plain,
Mnestheus and loyal Achates, with Ascanius
by their side, set Aeneas down inside the camp,
bleeding, supporting alternate steps with his long spear.
he struggled furiously to pull out the head of the broken
shaft, and called for the quickest means of assistance:
to cut open the wound with a broadsword, lay open
the arrow-tip’s buried depths, and send him back to war.
Now Iapyx, Iasus’s son, approached, dearest of all to Apollo,
to whom the god himself, struck by deep love, long ago
offered with delight his own arts, his own gifts,
his powers of prophecy, his lyre, and swift arrows.
But Iapyx, in order to delay the fate of his dying father,
chose knowledge of the virtues of herbs, and the use
of medicine, and, without fame, to practise the silent arts.
Aeneas stood leaning on his great spear, complaining bitterly,
amongst a vast crowd of soldiers, with Iulus sorrowing,
himself unmoved by the tears. The aged Iapyx, his robe rolled back in Paeonian fashion, tried hard in vain with healing fingers and Apollo’s powerful herbs: he worked at the arrow uselessly with his hand, and tugged at the metal with tightened pincers. No luck guided his course, nor did Apollo his patron help, while cruel terror grew greater and greater over the plain, and evil drew near. Now they saw the sky standing on columns of dust: the horsemen neared and arrows fell thickly in the midst of the camp. A dismal cry rose to heaven of men fighting and falling under Mars’s harsh hand. At this Aeneas’s mother, Venus, shaken by her son’s cruel pain, culled a dittany plant from Cretan Ida, with downy leaves and purple flowers: a herb not unknown to the wild goats when winged arrows have fixed themselves in their sides. This Venus brought, her face veiled in dark mist, this, with its hidden curative powers, she steeped in river water, poured into a glittering basin, and sprinkled there healing ambrosial juice and fragrant panacea. Aged Iapyx bathed the wound with this liquid, not knowing its effect, and indeed all pain fled from Aeneas’s body, all the flow of blood ceased deep in the wound. Now, without force, the arrowhead slipped from the wound, following the motion of his hand, and fresh strength returned to Aeneas, such as before. Iapyx cried: ‘Quickly, bring our hero weapons. Why are you standing there?’ and was first to excite their courage against the enemy. ‘Aeneas, this cure does not come by human aid, nor guiding art, it is not my hand that saved you: a god, a greater one, worked this, and sends you out again to glorious deeds.’ Aeneas, eager for battle, had sheathed his legs in gold, left and right, and scornful of delay, brandished his spear. As soon as his shield was fixed at his side, the chain mail to his back, he clasped Ascanius in his armed embrace, and, kissing his lips lightly through the helmet, said: ‘My son, learn courage from me and true labour: good fortune from others. Now my hand will protect you in war, and lead you to great rewards. Make sure later, when your years have reached maturity, that you remember: let your father Aeneas, and your uncle Hector inspire your soul, by recalling their example.’
When he spoken these words, he rushed out through the gate, in all his strength, brandishing a great spear in his hand: Antheus and Mnestheus with him, and their massed ranks, and all the army streamed from the camp. Then the plain was a chaos of blinding dust, and the quaking earth shook under the tramp of feet. Turnus saw them advance, from the rampart opposite: the Ausonians saw, and a cold tremor ran to the marrow of their bones: Juturna was the first of all the Latins to hear and recognise the sound, and she fled in fear.

Aeneas flew ahead, racing his dark ranks over the open plain, As when the weather breaks and a storm cloud moves towards land, over the deep ocean (ah, the hearts of wretched farmers know if from far off, and shudder: it brings ruin to trees, and havoc to harvests, everything far and wide is destroyed), the gales run before it and carry their roar to the shore: so the Trojan leader drove his ranks against the foe, thickly they all gathered to him in dense columns.

Thymbreus struck mighty Osiris with his sword, Mnestheus killed Arcetius: Achates killed Epulo, Gyas killed Ufens: even Tolumnius the augur fell, first to hurl his spear straight at the enemy.

A shout rose to heaven, and in turn the routed Rutulians turned their backs in a cloud of dust, fleeing over the field.

Aeneas himself did not deign to send the fugitives to their death, nor did he attack the foot-soldiers, cavalry or those hurling missiles: he tracked only Turnus, searching through the dense gloom, Turnus alone he summoned to combat.

BkXII:468-499 Juturna Foils Aeneas

Juturna, the warrior maiden, her mind stricken with fear, knocked Turnus’s charioteer, Metiscus, from the reins, at this, so that he slipped from the beam, and left him far behind: she herself took his place, and guided the flowing reins with her hands, assuming Meniscus’s voice, form, weapons, all.

As when a dark swallow flies through the great house of some rich lord, winging her way through lofty halls gathering tiny crumbs and scraps of food for her noisy young, now twittering in the empty courtyards, now by the damp ponds: so Juturna was drawn by the horses through the enemy centre and, flying in her swift chariot, criss-crossed the whole plain,
now here, now there, she gives evidence of her triumphant brother, not allowing him close combat, flying far away. Nevertheless Aeneas traversed her winding course to meet him, tracking him, calling him loudly among the ranks. As often as he set eyes on his enemy, and tried to match the flight of the swift horses in his course, as often Juturna turned and wheeled the chariot.

Ah, what to do? Vainly he fluctuated on the shifting tide, and diverse concerns called his thoughts away. Messapus, who happened to be carrying two strong spears tipped with steel, advanced lightly towards him, levelled one, and hurled it with unerring aim. Aeneas stopped, and gathered himself behind his shield sinking on one knee: the swift spear still took off the tip of his helmet, and knocked the plumes from the crest. Then his anger truly surged, and incited by all this treachery, seeing his enemy’s chariot and horses driven far off, calling loudly on Jove, and the altars of the broken treaty, as witness, he plunged at last into the fray, and, aided by Mars, he awoke dreadful, savage, indiscriminate slaughter, and gave full rein to his wrath.

**BkXII: 500-553 Aeneas And Turnus Amongst The Slaughter**

What god can now relate for me such bitter things as these, who can tell of such varied slaughter, the deaths of generals, whom Turnus now, and now the Trojan hero, drove in turn over the field? Jupiter was it your will that races who would live together in everlasting peace should meet in so great a conflict? Aeneas meeting Rutulian Sucro (in the first battle that brought the Trojan attack to a halt) quickly struck him in the side, and drove the cruel steel through the ribs that protect the heart, where death come fastest. Turnus threw Amycus from his horse, and Diores his brother, attacking them on foot, striking one with the long lance as he advanced, the other with his sword, then hanging both their severed heads from his chariot carried them away dripping with blood. Aeneas sent Talos and Tanais and brave Cethegus to death, three in one attack, and sad Onites of Theban name, whose mother was Peridia: Turnus killed the brothers sent from Lycia, Apollo’s fields,
and Menoetes of Arcadia, who had hated war, but in vain: his humble home and his living were round Lerna’s fish-filled streams, never knowing the patronage of the great, and his father farmed rented land. Like fires set burning from opposite sides of a dry forest into the thickets of crackling laurel, or foaming rivers falling swiftly from the mountain heights, roaring and racing seawards, each leaving its path of destruction, so Aeneas and Turnus with no less fury swept through the battle: now anger surged within: now their hearts which knew no defeat were bursting: now with all their strength they set out to do harm. As he boasted of his fathers, and the antiquity of his ancestors’ names, and all his race traced back through Latin kings, Aeneas sent Murranus headlong with a stone, a great whirling rock, and hurled him to the ground: beneath the reins and yoke, the wheels churned him round, and the horses’ hooves, forgetful of their master, trampled him under with many a blow. Turnus met Hyllus as he charged, roaring with boundless pride, and hurled a spear at his gilded forehead: piercing the helmet the weapon lodged in his brain. Cretheus, bravest of Greeks, your right hand did not save you from Turnus, nor did the gods hide Cupencus when Aeneas came: he set his chest against the weapon’s track, and the bronze shield’s resistance profited the wretch nothing. The Laurentine field saw you fall also, Aeolus, on your back, sprawled wide on the ground. You fell, whom the Greek battalions could not lay low, nor Achilles who overturned Priam’s kingdom: here was the boundary of death for you: your noble house was below Mount Ida, that noble house at Lyrnesus, your grave in Laurentine soil. All the lines turned towards battle, the whole of the Latins, the whole of the Trojans, Mnestheus and fierce Serestus, Messapus, tamer of horses, and brave Asilas, the Tuscan phalanx, Evander’s Arcadian squadron, each for himself, men straining with all their strength: no respite and no rest: exerting themselves in one vast conflict.

**BkXII:554-592 Aeneas Attacks The City**

Now his loveliest of mothers set in his mind the idea of moving against the walls, and turning his army on the city,
swiftly, to confound the Latins with sudden ruin. While he tracked Turnus here and there through the ranks and swept his glance this way and that, he could see the city, free of fierce warfare and peacefully unharmed. Suddenly an image of a more ambitious act of war inflamed him: he called the generals Mnestheus, Sergestus and brave Serestus, and positioned himself on a hillock, where the rest of the Trojan army gathered round in a mass, without dropping their shields or spears. Standing amongst them on the high mound he cried: ‘Let nothing impede my orders, Jupiter is with us, and let no one be slower to advance because this attempt is so sudden. Today I will overthrow that city, a cause of war, Latinus’s capital itself, and lay its smoking roofs level with the ground, unless they agree to accept our rule, and submit, in defeat. Do you think I can wait until Turnus can face battle with me, and chooses to meet with me again, though defeated before? O citizens, this man is the fountainhead and source of this wicked war. Quickly, bring burning brands, and re-establish the treaty, with fire.’ He spoke, and all his troops adopted wedge-formation, hearts equal in emulation, and advanced in a dense mass towards the walls: in a flash, scaling ladders and sudden flames appeared. Some ran to the gates and cut down the leading defenders, others hurled steel, and darkened the sky with missiles. Aeneas himself, among the leaders, raised his hand, at the foot of the wall, accused Latinus in a loud voice, and called the gods to witness that he was being forced into battle again, that the Italians were doubly enemies, another treaty was broken. Dissension rose among the fearful citizens: some commanded the city be opened, and the gates be thrown wide to the Trojans, and they dragged the king himself to the ramparts: others brought weapons and hurried to defend the walls, as when a shepherd, who’s tracked a swarm to its lair concealed in the rock, fills it with acrid smoke: the bees inside, anxious for safety, rush round their wax fortress, and sharpen their anger in loud buzzing: the reeking darkness rolls through their hive, the rocks echo within to a blind humming, and fumes reach the clear air.

BkXII:593-613 Queen Amata’s Suicide

Now further misfortune befell the weary Latins,
and shook the whole city to its foundations with grief. When Queen Amata, from the palace, saw the enemy approaching, the walls assaulted, flames mounting to the roofs, but no opposing Rutulian lines, nor Turnus’s army, the unhappy queen thought Turnus had been killed in combat, and, her mind distraught, in sudden anguish, she cried out that she was the cause, the guilty one, the source of evil, and uttering many wild words in the frenzy of grief, wanting to die, she tore her purple robes, and fastened a hideous noose of death to a high beam. As soon as the wretched Latin women knew of the disaster, first her daughter Lavinia fell into a frenzy, tearing at her golden tresses and rosy cheeks with her hands, then all the crowd around her: the wide halls echoed to their lamentations. From there the unhappy rumour spread throughout the city: Spirits sank: Latinus went about with rent clothing, stunned by his wife’s fate and his city’s ruin, fouling his white hair with clouds of vile dust, reproaching himself again and again for not having freely received Trojan Aeneas, and adopted him as his son-in-law.

**BkXII:614-696 Turnus Hears Of Amata’s Death**

Meanwhile Turnus, fighting at the edge of the plain, was pursuing the stragglers now, more slowly, and rejoicing less and less in his horses’ advance. The breeze bore a clamour to him mingled with an unknown dread, and the cheerless sounds of a city in chaos met his straining ears. ‘Ah, what is this great grief that shakes the walls? What is this clamour that rises from the distant city?’ So he spoke, anxiously grasping the reins and halting. At this his sister, controlling chariot, horses and reins disguised in the shape of his charioteer, Metiscus, countered with these words: ‘Turnus, this way, let us chase the sons of Troy, where victory forges the way ahead: there are others with hands to defend our homes. Aeneas is attacking the Italians, and stirring conflict: let our hands too deal cruel death to the Trojans. You will not leave the field inferior in battle honours or the number you have killed’ Turnus replied to this:
‘O sister, I recognised you long ago, when you first wrecked the truce with your guile, and dedicated yourself to warfare, and now too you hide your divinity in vain. But who desired you to be sent down from Olympus to suffer such labours? Was it so you might see your unlucky brother’s death? What can I do? What chance can offer me life?

I saw Murranus fall, before my very eyes, calling out to me, loudly, no one more dear to me than him remains, a mighty man, and overwhelmed by a mighty wound. Unfortunate Ufens fell, so he might not witness our shame: the Trojans captured his body and his armour. Shall I endure the razing of our homes (the one thing left) and not deny Drances’s words with my sword?

Shall I turn my back, and this country see Turnus run?

Is it indeed so terrible to die? Oh be good to me, you Shades below, since the gods above have turned their faces from me. I will descend to you, a virtuous soul, innocent of blame, never unworthy of my great ancestors.’

He had barely spoken when Saces sped by, carried on a foaming horse through the thick of the enemy, wounded full in the face by an arrow, and calling to Turnus by name as he rushed on: ‘Turnus, in you our last hope lies, pity your people. Aeneas is explosive in arms, and threatens to throw down Italy’s highest citadel and deliver it to destruction, even now burning brands fly towards the roofs. The Latins turn their faces to you, their eyes are on you: King Latinus mutters to himself, wavering as to whom to call his sons, towards what alliance to lean. Moreover the queen, most loyal to you, has fallen by her own hand, and fled, in horror of the light. Messapus and brave Atinas, alone in front of the gates sustain our lines. Around them dense squadrons stand on every side, a harvest of steel that bristles with naked swords, while you drive your chariot over the empty turf.’

Stunned and amazed by this vision of multiple disaster, Turnus stood silently gazing: fierce shame surged in that solitary heart, and madness mingled with grief, love stung to frenzy, consciousness of virtue. As soon as the shadows dispersed, and light returned to his mind, he turned his gaze, with blazing eyes, towards the walls, and looked back on the mighty city from his chariot. See, now, a spiralling crest of flame fastened
on a tower, and rolled skyward through the stories,
a tower he had built himself with jointed beams,
set on wheels, and equipped with high walkways.
He spoke: ‘Now, sister, now fate triumphs: no more delays:
where god and cruel fortune calls, let me follow.
I’m determined on meeting Aeneas, determined to suffer
death, however bitter: you’ll no longer see me ashamed, sister.
I beg you let me rage before I am maddened.’
And, leaping swiftly from his chariot to the ground,
he ran through enemy spears, deserting his grieving sister,
and burst, in his quick passage, through the ranks.
As when a rock torn from the mountaintop by a storm
hurries downward, washed free by a tempest of rain
or loosened in time by the passage of the years,
and the wilful mass plunges down the slope in a mighty rush
and leaps over the ground, rolling trees, herds and men
with it: so Turnus ran to the city walls through the broken ranks,
where the soil was most drenched with blood, and the air
shrill with spears, signalled with his hand and began shouting aloud:
‘Rutulians stop now, and you Latins hold back your spears.
Whatever fate is here, is mine: it is better that I alone
make reparation for the truce and decide it with the sword.’
All drew back, and left a space in their midst.

BkXII:697-765 The Final Duel Begins

Now Aeneas the leader hearing the name of Turnus
left the walls, and left the high fortress,
cast aside all delay, broke off from every task,
and exultant with delight clashed his weapons fiercely:
vast as Mount Athos, or Mount Eryx, or vast as old Apennine
himself when he roars through the glittering holm-oaks
and joys in lifting his snowy summit to heaven.
Now all truly turned their eyes, stripping the armour
from their shoulders, Rutulians, Trojans and Italians,
those who held the high ramparts and those whose ram
batttered at the walls beneath. Latinus himself was amazed
at these mighty men, born at opposite ends of the world,
meeting and deciding the outcome with their swords.
As soon as the field was clear on the open plain,
they both dashed quickly forward, hurling their spears first
from a distance, rushing, with shield and ringing bronze, to battle. The earth groaned: they redoubled their intense sword-strokes, chance and skill mingled together. And as when two bulls charge head to head in mortal battle, on mighty Sila or on Taburnus’s heights, and in terror their keepers retreat, the whole herd stand silent with fear, and the heifers wait, mute, to see who will be lord of the forest, whom all the herds will follow, as they deal wounds to each other with immense force, gore with butting horns, and bathe neck and shoulders in streaming blood, while all the wood echoes to their bellowing: so Trojan Aeneas and the Daunian hero, Turnus, clashed their shields, and the mighty crash filled the sky. Jupiter himself held up two evenly balanced scales before him, and placed in them the diverse fates of the two, to see whom the effort doomed, with whose weight death sank down. Turnus leapt forward thinking himself safe, rose to the full height of his body with uplifted sword, and struck: the Trojans and the anxious Latins cried out, both armies were roused. But the treacherous blade snapped, and would have left the eager warrior defenceless in mid-stroke, if immediate flight had not saved him. He ran swifter than the east wind, when he saw that strange hilt in his exposed right hand. The tale is that in headlong haste, when he first mounted behind his yoked team for battle, he left his father’s sword behind, and snatched up the blade of his charioteer, Metiscus: and that served him for a long while as the straggling Trojans turned their backs, but the mortal blade flew apart like brittle ice at the stroke, on meeting Vulcan’s divine armour: and the fragments gleamed on the yellow sand. So Turnus ran madly this way and that over the plain, winding aimless circles here and there: on all sides the Trojans imprisoned him in their crowded ring, and a vast marsh penned him on one side, on the other the steep ramparts. Aeneas, no less, though his knees, slowed at times by the arrow wound, failed him and denied him speed, pursued and pressed his anxious enemy hotly, foot to foot: as when a hound in the hunt presses on a stag, chasing and barking, one found trapped by the river or hedged in by fear of the crimson feathers: the stag, terrified by the snares and the high banks, flies backwards and forwards
a thousand ways, but the eager Umbrian clings close
with gaping mouth, almost has him, and snaps his jaws
as though he holds him, baffled and biting empty air:
Then a clamour breaks out indeed, the pools and banks
around echo, and the whole sky rings with the tumult.
As he fled Turnus chided the Rutulians, calling on each
by name and calling out for his own familiar sword.
Aeneas in turn threatened death and immediate destruction
if any one approached, and terrified his trembling enemies
threatening to raze the city, and pressing on though wounded.
They completed five circuits, and unwound as many,
this way and that: since they sought for no paltry prize
at the games, but vied for Turnus’s life blood.

BkXII:766-790 The Goddesses Intervene

By chance this was the place where a bitter-leaved
wild olive, sacred to Faunus, had stood, a tree revered
by sailors of old, where, when saved from the sea, they used
to hang their gifts to the Laurentine god, and the votive garments:
but the Trojans had removed the sacred trunk, allowing
of no exceptions, in order to fight on open ground.
Here stood Aeneas’s spear, its impetus had carried it there,
fixed and held fast by the tough roots. The Trojan halted,
intending to pluck out the steel with his hand,
and pursue the man he couldn’t catch by running,
with his javelin. Then Turnus mad with anxiety indeed cried:
‘Faunus, pity me, I pray, and you, most gracious Earth
if I have every honoured your rites that the sons of Aeneas
have instead defiled by war, retain the steel.’
He spoke, and did not invoke the power of heaven in vain,
since Aeneas could not prise open the wood’s grip,
by any show of strength, though he wrestled long and lingered
over the strong stump. While he tugged and strained fiercely, Juturna,
the Daunian goddess, changing again to the shape of Metiscus,
the charioteer, ran forward and restored his sword to her brother.
But Venus, enraged that this was allowed the audacious nymph,
approached, and plucked the javelin from the deep root.
Refreshed with weapons and courage, one relying on his sword,
the other towering fiercely with his spear, both breathing hard,
they stood, tall, face to face, in martial conflict.
BkXII:791-842 Jupiter And Juno Decide The Future

The king of almighty Olympus meanwhile was speaking to Juno, as she gazed at the fighting from a golden cloud:
‘Wife, what will the end be now? What will be left in the end?
You know yourself, and confess you know, that Aeneas, is destined for heaven as the nation’s god: the Fates raise him to the stars. What are you planning? What hope do you cling to in the cold clouds? Was it right that this god be defiled by a mortal’s wound? Or that the lost sword (for what could Juturna achieve without you?) be restored to Turnus, the defeated gaining new strength? Now cease, at last, and give way to my entreaties, lest such sadness consume you in silence, and your bitter woes stream back to me often from your sweet lips. It has reached its end. You have had the power to drive the Trojans over land and sea, to stir up evil war, to mar a house, and mix marriage with grief: I forbid you to attempt more.’ So Jupiter spoke: so, with humble look, the Saturnian goddess replied: ‘Great Jupiter, truly, it was because I knew it was your wish that I parted reluctantly from Turnus and the Earth: or you would not see me alone now, on my celestial perch, enduring the just and the unjust, but I’d be standing, wreathed in flame, in the battle line itself, and drawing the Trojans into deadly combat. I counselled Juturna (I confess) to help her unfortunate brother and approved greater acts of daring for the sake of his life, yet not for her to contend with the arrow or the bow: I swear it by the implacable fountainhead of Styx, that alone is held in awe by the gods above. And now I yield, yes, and leave the fighting I loathe. Yet I beg this of you, for Latium’s sake, for the majesty of your own kin: since it is not prohibited by any law of fate: when they soon make peace with happy nuptials (so be it) when they join together soon in laws and treaties, don’t order the native Latins to change their ancient name, to become Trojans or be called Teucrians, or change their language, or alter their clothing. Let Latium still exist, let there be Alban kings through the ages, let there be Roman offspring strong in Italian virtue: Troy has fallen, let her stay fallen, along with her name.’
Smiling at her, the creator of men and things replied:
‘You are a true sister of Jove, another child of Saturn,
such waves of anger surge within your heart.
Come, truly, calm this passion that was needlessly roused:
I grant what you wish, and I relent, willingly defeated.
Ausonia’s sons will keep their father’s speech and manners,
as their name is, so it will be: the Trojans shall sink, merged
into the mass, only. I will add sacred laws and rites,
and make them all Latins of one tongue.
From them a race will rise, merged with Ausonian blood,
that you will see surpass men and gods in virtue,
no nation will celebrate your rites with as much devotion.’
Juno agreed it, and joyfully altered her purpose:
then left her cloud, and departed from the sky.

**BkXII:843-886 Jupiter Sends Juturna A Sign**

This done the Father turns something else over in his mind
and prepares to take Juturna from her brother’s side.
Men speak of twin plagues, named the Dread Ones,
whom Night bore untimely, in one birth with Tartarean Megaera,
wreathing them equally in snaky coils, and adding wings swift
as the wind. They wait by Jove’s throne on the fierce king’s
threshold, and sharpen the fears of weak mortals
whenever the king of the gods sends plagues
and death’s horrors, or terrifies guilty cities with war.
Jupiter sent one of them quickly down from heaven’s heights
and ordered her to meet with Juturna as a sign:
she flew, and darted to earth in a swift whirlwind.
Like an arrow loosed from the string, through the clouds,
that a Parthian, a Parthian or a Cydonian, fired,
hissing, and leaping unseen through the swift shadows,
a shaft beyond all cure, armed with cruel poison’s venom:
so sped the daughter of Night, seeking the earth.
As soon as she saw the Trojan ranks and Turnus’s troops,
she changed her shape, suddenly shrinking to the form of that
small bird that perching at night on tombs or deserted rooftops,
often sings her troubling song so late among the shadows –
and the fiend flew screeching to and fro in front
of Turnus’s face, and beat at his shield with her wings.
A strange numbness loosed his limbs in dread,
his hair stood up in terror, and his voice clung to his throat. But when his wretched sister Juturna recognised the Dread One’s whirring wings in the distance, she tore at her loosened hair, marring her face with her nails, and her breasts with her clenched hands: ‘What help can your sister give you now, Turnus? What is left for me who have suffered so? With what art can I prolong your life? Can I stand against such a portent? Now at last I leave the ranks. Bird of ill-omen, do not you terrify me who already am afraid: I know your wing-beats and their fatal sound, and I do not mistake the proud command of great-hearted Jupiter. Is this his reward for my virginity? Why did he grant me eternal life? Why is the mortal condition taken from me? Then, at least, I could end such pain and go through the shadows at my poor brother’s side! An immortal, I? Can anything be sweet to me without you my brother? Oh what earth can gape deep enough for me, to send a goddess down to the deepest Shades?’ So saying she veiled her head in a grey mantle, and the goddess, with many a cry of grief, plunged into the river’s depths.

BkXII:887-952 The Death Of Turnus

Aeneas pressed on, brandishing his great spear like a tree, and, angered at heart, he cried out in this way: ‘Why now yet more delay? Why do you still retreat, Turnus? We must compete hand to hand with fierce weapons, not by running. Change into every form: summon up all your powers of mind and art, wing your way if you wish to the high stars, or hide in earth’s hollow prison.’ Turnus shook his head: ‘Fierce man, your fiery words don’t frighten me: the gods terrify me and Jupiter’s enmity.’ Saying no more he looked round seeing a great rock, a vast ancient stone, that happened to lie there in the plain, set up as a boundary marker, to distinguish fields in dispute. Twelve picked men, men of such form as Earth now produces, could scarcely have lifted it on their shoulders, but the hero, grasping it quickly, rising to his full height and as swiftly as he could, hurled it at his enemy. But he did not know himself, running or moving raising the great rock in his hands, or throwing: his knees gave way, his blood was frozen cold.
The stone itself, whirled by the warrior through the empty air, failed to travel the whole distance, or drive home with force. As in dreams when languid sleep weighs down our eyes at night, we seem to try in vain to follow our eager path, and collapse helpless in the midst of our efforts, the tongue won’t work, the usual strength is lacking from our limbs, and neither word nor voice will come: so the dread goddess denied Turnus success, however courageously he sought to find a way. Then shifting visions whirled through his brain: he gazed at the Rutulians, and at the city, faltered in fear, and shuddered at the death that neared, he saw no way to escape, no power to attack his enemy, nor sign of his chariot, nor his sister, his charioteer. As he wavered, Aeneas shook his fateful spear, seeing a favourable chance, and hurled it from the distance with all his might. Stone shot from a siege engine never roared so loud, such mighty thunder never burst from a lightning bolt. Like a black hurricane the spear flew on bearing dire destruction, and pierced the outer circle of the seven-fold shield, the breastplate’s lower rim, and, hissing, passed through the centre of the thigh. Great Turnus sank, his knee bent beneath him, under the blow. The Rutulians rose up, and groaned, and all the hills around re-echoed, and, far and wide, the woods returned the sound. He lowered his eyes in submission and stretched out his right hand: ‘I have earned this, I ask no mercy’ he said, ‘seize your chance. If any concern for a parent’s grief can touch you (you too had such a father, in Anchises) I beg you to pity Daunus’s old age and return me, or if you prefer it my body robbed of life, to my people. You are the victor, and the Ausonians have seen me stretch out my hands in defeat: Lavinia is your wife, don’t extend your hatred further.’ Aeneas stood, fierce in his armour, his eyes flickered, and he held back his hand: and even now, as he paused, the words began to move him more deeply, when high on Turnus’s shoulder young Pallas’s luckless sword-belt met his gaze, the strap glinting with its familiar decorations, he whom Turnus, now wearing his enemy’s emblems on his shoulder, had wounded and thrown, defeated, to the earth. As soon as his eyes took in the trophy, a memory of cruel grief,
Aeneas, blazing with fury, and terrible in his anger, cried:
‘Shall you be snatched from my grasp, wearing the spoils of one who was my own? Pallas it is, Pallas, who sacrifices you with this stroke, and exacts retribution from your guilty blood.’
So saying, burning with rage, he buried his sword deep in Turnus’s breast: and then Turnus’s limbs grew slack with death, and his life fled, with a moan, angrily, to the Shades.

The End of the Aeneid