I

ARRIVAL AT CARTHAGE

The Epic Theme and Story

My song is of war and the first man from a Trojan coast to arrive in Italy, forced by Fates to Lavinian shore: the power of Gods repeatedly tossed him on land and sea, Juno’s fierce and remembering anger caused him to suffer greatly in war while founding a city, bringing his Gods to Latium, leading to Latin and Alban fathers, to high walls of the Romans.

Invocation of the Muse

Muse, tell me the reasons: what slight to her power, what grief drove the Queen of the Gods to involve him, a man so known for reverence, in struggle and hardship over and over? Can so much spite reside in a Goddess?

The Anger of Juno

An old city, held by Tyrian settlers, Carthage faced the far-off Italian Tiber’s mouth: rich and resourceful, fierce and avid in warfare. Juno they say loved this land more than all others, preferred it even to Samos; keeping her weapons and chariot here, the Goddess warmly strove from the outset to make it a world kingdom—if only the Fates would allow it. But now she’d heard of a family descended from Trojan blood who would someday crumble her Tyrian towers: a widely ruling people, proud of their warfare, would come to destroy Carthage: the Fates had unrolled it. Saturn’s daughter was anxious. She thought of that former war she’d waged at Troy, the Greeks she had cared for. Pretexts for anger and bitter grief had not vanished
yet from her mind; stored deep in her memory
lay Paris' insulting judgment, scorning her beauty.
Troy was hateful, kidnapped Ganymede's honors
worse provocation. Trojans had scattered on every
sea—remnants left by the Greeks and a ruthless Achilles—
she'd kept them far from Latium, wandering many
years over the water, forced by Fates into circles.
To found Rome and her people required such exertion.

Juno's Mounting Frustration

The glad Trojans had hardly unruffled their canvas,
bronze plowing through foam, Sicily's farmland behind them,
when Juno, preserving the old wound in her bosom,
asked herself, "Have I lost? Do I stop what I started,
helpless to keep this Trojan leader from Italy?
Fates prevent me, of course! Then how could Pallas incinerate
Greek ships, plunge their crews under water,
because of one mad crime of Ajax, the son of Oileus?
She hurled Jupiter's lightning herself from a cloudburst,
overturned waves with a windstorm, and scattered the vessels.
When she struck Ajax he exhaled fire from the chest-wound,
she seized and threw him on sharp rock with a whirlwind.
While I, Queen of the Gods, who walk as the sister
and wife of Jupiter, wage war with a single
people for years. Will anyone reverence Juno's
name now or humbly honor my altars?"

Lord of the Winds

It all fired her heart as she mulled it. The Goddess
came to a land of rainclouds, a place where Southwinds were
feuding.
called Aeolia. King Aeolus tempered and mastered
wrestling gales and highpitched gusts in a monstrous
cave here: chains and a prison restrained them.
The winds bridled; they rumbled all of the mountain,
growled and thrashed in their cages. Aeolus ruled from a
stronghold
above: gripping a scepter, he soothed and steadied their anger.
The winds, had he not, would have quickly and surely carried the
ocean,
land and depths of the sky away, and swept them through heaven.

Fearing as much, the all-powerful Father had moved them
to dark caves; he'd massed high mountain above them.
He gave them a lord who knew how to tighten or loosen their bindings, and follow the rules of a definite compact. Juno now modestly spoke to this ruler.

"Aeolus, the Gods’ Father and monarch of mankind gave you seas to calm or build with your windstorms. A people I hate are now crossing the Tyrrhene, carrying Household Gods from Troy into Italy. Strike force in your winds: crush those vessels, capsize them, drive them apart: acquaint their crewmen with sea-depths.

I have fourteen Nymphs of exceptional beauty and none has a finer form than Deiopea. I’ll say she’s yours: I’ll join you in durable marriage. She’ll render all her time yours for the service you do me. She’ll help you father beautiful children.”

A Storm Begins

Aeolus answered, “Your task, my Queen, is to ponder your own will; my law is to welcome your wishes. Whatever I rule you gave: Jupiter’s friendship, my scepter, the gift of divine couches to lie on.

You made me rule raincloud and violent tempest.”

Soon as he finished he turned and struck at the mountain’s hollow side with a spear. Winds, like volleys of soldiers given an opening, rushed out to blow through the countryside, twirling.

They fell on the sea: they roiled its bottom completely. Eastwind joined with Southwind; Southwesterly, crowded with squalls, ran out and rolled huge tumblers at beaches. Cables creaked on the ships. Crewmen were yelling. Clouds had suddenly stolen the brightness of heaven from Trojan eyes. A black night sat on the water.

Poles thundered; the air, dense with lightning, ignited. Everything threatened instant death for the crewmen.

The Prayer of Aeneas

Chills weakened the legs now of Aeneas. He sighed, extending both hands to the heavens and raising a cry: “You, three and four times as lucky, who fell by chance near Troy’s high walls while your fathers watched—and you, bravest of Greeks, Diomedes: I wish I’d fallen myself there on some Trojan field struck by your hand and pouring my life out where fierce Hector fell by a spear of Achilles,
where big Sarpedon lay, the Simois River collecting
the shields of strong men, dispersing corpses and helmets.”

The Heavens Answer

He’d hardly stopped when the Northwind screamed and collided
hard with his mainsail, seas built to the star-heights
and oars fractured. A ship was turned and presented
to waves broadside, swamped by a torn-off seawater mountain.
Men hung on a wave’s crest; to others the gaping
trough exposed ground, sand swarming with water.
A Southwind seized three ships and threw them on hidden
rocks (Italians call them “The Altars”—surrounded by water,
a massive ridge in the deep sea); then an Eastwind
drove three more from the sea into shallows—the scene was
pathetic—
it slapped them with surf and piled up girdles of pebbles.
The ship carrying Lycians and loyal Orantes
Aeneas could barely see: a peaked and ponderous roller
struck her astern, pulled out and tumbled the helmsman
headlong: water twirled the ship in the same place
three times, round and around, till a whirlpool devoured her.
Scattered swimmers appeared in that desolate swirling,
men’s armor and shields, Troy’s wealth in the water.
The storm was beating them now. The durable galley
of Ilioneus and steadfast Achates, of Abas
and aging Aletes—all were filling with water,
planks loosened, seams turned into fissures.

Neptune Ends the Storm

Neptune meanwhile sensed a mixed-up and far-flung
commotion at sea, a storm loose: even the bottom
currents shifted. The God, seriously troubled,
gazed at the water. Raising a calm face on the wave-tops
he saw Aeneas’ fleet scattered completely,
Trojans crushed by waves and the sky’s inundation.

Juno’s anger and guile: they were clear to her brother.
He called Eastwind and Westwind to tell them in person,
“Since when has exorbitant pride in your birthright possessed you?
Without my will now you winds have dared to entangle
heaven and earth, you rouse great masses of water
which I—! First I’ll calm the turbulent billows.
Later you’ll pay with some rare pain for your doings.
Hurry back to your master for now and inform him
that rule at sea, this rugged trident, was given
to me, not him, by lot. He owns that barbarous rockpile—
your home, Eastwind. Let Aeolus busy himself with
ruling you winds in that locked-up jail for a palace.”
He finished and quick as his word he quieted puffed-up
seas, dispersed the dense clouds and brought back the sunshine.
Triton helped Cimothoë work at and push from
sharp rocks the ships that Neptune raised with his trident.
He cleared the wastes of sandbanks and steadied the sea-swells,
his nimble chariot wheels brushing the wave-tops.
At times in a great city a riot abruptly
begins, common people turn willful and savage,
rocks and torches go flying, anger providing the weapons.
By chance if they spot one man of serious merit
and justice their ears perk up, they stand there in silence:
his words guide their minds and calm their emotions.
So all the noise at sea diminished when Neptune
gazed at the water. Skies cleared where he guided
his willing horses, giving them rein, the chariot flying.

Arriving at a Strange Shore

Aeneas’ men were exhausted. They made for the nearest
shore, changing course for the Libyan coastline.
There in a deep lagoon was a place like a harbor,
formed by an island’s barriers. The surf was divided,
broken here and there into ripple and eddy.
On either side were high rocks menacing heaven—
paired cliffs—the sea was quiet and harmless
under their broad crowns. The heights were a picture of trembling
leaves, darkly hanging trees and bristling shadow.
Facing a cliff was a cave with stalactites hanging
inside, a freshwater pool, and couches of living
rock where Nymphs rested. Here was no mooring
required for tired ships; no biting hook of an anchor.

Aeneas approached the beach with seven remaining
vessels regrouped. Their love for land overwhelming,
Trojans emerged and clutched at sand they had prayed for.
They lay on the beach. Salt dripped from their shoulders.
Achates was first to strike sparks with a flint-piece.
Fire began among leaves and circling wood-chips.
He fed it fuel; he drew out flame from the tinder.
The sea had spoiled some grain but the crewmen, though weary
of things, brought out Ceres’ tools to grind down the remnant
of flour with stone. A fire was ready for baking.

_The Killing of Seven Deer_

180 Aeneas meanwhile climbed a bluff to examine
the whole far sea. He hoped for a glimpse of the wind-tossed
ship of Antheus there, some Phrygian galley
or Capys, the arms of Caicus high on the fantail.
No sign of a ship. He did see deer on the shoreline,
three stray stags. Large companies followed
next—a long line grazed on the lowland.
Aeneas approached and paused, holding a bow and some lively
arrows, weapons Achates had loyally carried.
He struck first at the leader himself, with his tree-like
antlers held high. Then he drove at and scattered
the large herd into thicket and bush with his arrows,
only resting in triumph when seven cumbersome bodies
lay on the ground—matching his number of vessels.
He made for the harbor to share with all his companions.
Wine was apportioned—a kindly Acestes had weighted
jars back in Sicily—a kingly gift when they left there.

_The Trojans’ Ultimate Destiny_

Aeneas tried to remove their sadness by asking,
“My friends, haven’t we known disaster before this?
You’ve suffered worse. A God will end this agony also.

200 You’ve come close to the raucous cliffs of a rabid
Scylla—once you even hazardcd Cyclops’
boulders. Renew your spirits, abandon this mourning
and fear: remembering all this someday may cheer you.
Through every crux, each separation and setback,
we head for a home and peace in Latium shown by
the Fates: the Gods’ word on Troy’s kingdom reviving.
Hold on—save yourselves for a better tomorrow.”
He stopped: large concerns had made him uneasy.
He’d put on hopeful looks but felt repressed disappointment.

210 His men girded themselves for the fine meat in the offering:
they tore off hides from ribs, revealing the innards,
they sliced and fixed quivering cutlets
on spits, set bronzes in sand and tended to fires.
Food recalled their strength. They lay on the dune-grass,
filling with old wine and fat-dripping game-flesh.
Feasting ended their hunger; removing the tables,
in long talks they mourned the loss of companions,
caught between faith and fear: should they hope they were living? 
Or done with the worst, no longer hearing when summoned?

220 Aeneas rightly mourned the death of forceful Orontes 
especially now, and Amycus, the merciless killing 
of Lycus, intrepid Gyas, intrepid Cloanthus.

The Complaint of Venus

While all that ended, Jupiter gazed from the highest 
heaven down on spread-out lands and the sail-winged 
sea, on far-off nations. He paused on a sky-peak 
and focused his eyes’ light on the country of Libya. 
Concern ruffled his heart. Venus approached him, 
speaking sadly, her eyes filled with the shining 
tears of a Goddess. “You, the Ruler forever

230 of Gods’ and men’s affairs with your fear-spreading lightning: 
what crime has my Aeneas committed against you? 
What have the Trojans done to be cut off from every 
land, to suffer such loss? Did Italy cause this? 
Rome would surely come, that was your promise: 
leaders would help restore someday the bloodline of Teucer: 
as years passed they would rule the ocean and govern 
every nation. Father, what sentiments changed you? 
Your word consoled me when sorry Troy was collapsing, 
I hoped in fact to balance bad luck with good luck;

240 now the same bad luck, all these reversals, 
pursue them. My great King, will you end their affliction? 
Antenor could slip from a whole Greek force—he was able 
to pass through Illyrian gulf s and penetrate safely 
remote Liburnian kingdoms. He reached the Timavus, 
where nine springs rumble a desolate mountain, 
the water an uproar that swamps pasture and breaks for the delta. 
There Antenor founded the city of Padua, 
Trojan homes, he gave his name to a people, 
retiring Trojan arms for the quiet of peacetime.

250 But we, your family, promised a fortress in heaven, 
lose our ships. An outrage!—the spite and deception 
of one person keeps us far from Italy’s coastline. 
That’s the reward for loyalty? That’s the scepter you saved us?”

The Trojan Future in Italy

The Father of Gods and men lavished on Venus 
the smile he used to clear stormwind from heaven. 
He kissed his daughter’s lips and answered her fully:
“Cytherean Lady, don’t be alarmed. Your family’s future will not be changed. You’ll see the Lavinian city, the walls I promised; you’ll bear the great soul of Aeneas high into starlight. No one’s thinking has changed me. I’ll speak right now, in fact—anxiety gnaws you—I’ll show you the Fates’ distant twists and their secrets. First Aeneas will wage a hard war in Italy, smashing fierce tribes. He’ll set down walls and ways for his people, three full summers will see him reigning in Latium: three winters will pass once the Rutulians are conquered. Then his boy Ascanius, surnamed Iulus (Ilus at Troy as long as a kingdom survived there), will rule through an ample cycle of thirty revolving years in all. He’ll move the throne from Lavinium’s base and greatly fortify Alba Longa. There the people of Hector will rule for a total of three centuries. Next Ilia, priestess and pregnant queen, will bear twins to the War-God: Romulus, proud of the tan hide, the she-wolf that nursed him, now will assume the line: he’ll settle a city for Mars and call it Rome after his own name. I set no time or wealth limits on Romans: I’ll give them endless rule. And what about Juno?

Harsh and worried, wearing the sky, water and land out? She’ll change for the better. My own counsel will help her: she’ll cherish as world rulers those men in their togas! You’ve heard my will. A time will come after the lustral years pass which will see Assaracus’ people enslave Phthia and dazzling Mycenae—the Greeks will be conquered. A Trojan Caesar will rise from your beautiful bloodline, only the stars will limit his fame, the ocean his empire: Julius—a name that comes from a great one—Iulus. Someday you’ll calmly welcome the man into heaven, loaded with Eastern wealth; prayers will invoke him. War will end, then. Violent times will diminish. Elderly Faith and Vesta, Remus and Romulus, brothers, will draft laws. The feared gates of war, with their iron hinges grinding, will shut. Inside on its cruel weapons mad Rage will sit, tied by a hundred bronze knots, its bloody mouth savagely howling.”
Book I

The Messenger of the Gods

He finished and sent down Maia’s son from Olympus to open the young fields and fortress of Carthage, to welcome Trojans and not let Dido, not knowing her future, block the borders. Quickly plashing the air-waves—broad wings were his oars—Mercury came to the Libyan shore and obeyed the command: people discarded uncivil acts as the God wished. The queen was especially gentle in spirit, well disposed to receiving the Trojans.

Venus Confronts Aeneas

Aeneas all that night had dutifully pondered many matters. With Dawn’s kindly glow he determined to set out, explore the strange land where the sea-winds had brought him, to seek and learn what men or animals lived there (he’d seen no farmland) and bring back word to his people.

Hiding the fleet in a cove closely surrounded by trees, hollow rock and chilly obscurity, Aeneas himself set out, joined by only Achates. Each hand gripped a spear with its broad spearpoint of iron. His mother confronted the man there in the forest. She’d put on a girl’s dress, the appearance and weapons of young Spartans, or those like Harpalyce’s, tiring a Thracian horse or winning a sprint with the fast-flowing Hebrus.

A supple, stylish bow hung from her shoulder. The huntress had let her hair ruffle in breezes, her knees were bare and knots collected her flowing dress. “Hello, you men,” she spoke up first, “can you tell me whether you’ve seen by chance one of my sisters? She sported a lynx’s spotted hide and a quiver. She followed a sweating boar, chasing and shouting.” The son of Venus answered when Venus had finished. “I haven’t seen or heard one of your sisters, young lady. But you, what shall I call you? Your features and voice aren’t human merely. Of course you’re a Goddess—from one of the Nymphs’ families? A sister of Phoebus?

Be kind, whoever you are, lighten our burden: tell us what sky we’re under, what world and shore we’ve been thrown on, please—we wander around, not knowing the country
or people, driven by winds here and a desert of water.
My hand will bring down scores of beasts at your altar.”

**The Tragic Story of Dido**

Venus told him, “I hardly deserve such distinction!
Tyrian girls customarily carry a quiver
and lace their calves high with violet bootstraps.
The kingdom you see is Punic; the Tyrian town, of Agenor.
Libyans live next door—intractable fighters.

340 Dido rules this land. She left a Tyrian city,
she ran from a brother—a long story of outrage
with many twists. I’ll trace the matter in outline.
Her husband Sycaeus, one of the richest Phoenician
farmers, was loved by the wretched woman intensely:
her father gave his virgin daughter in marriage
first to Sycaeus. But Tyre’s king was her brother
Pygmalion, far more criminally vicious than any.
Anger came between them: Pygmalion, blinded
by greed for Sycaeus’ gold, attacked him in secret:

350 he stabbed him before an altar profanely—the love of his sister
irrelevant. For days he hid the facts from the sickened
woman, played with her love, falsely hoped and deceived her.
But then a vision came in a nightmare to Dido,
her husband himself: unburied, fearfully lifting
his drained face, he showed her the cruel altar, the chest-wounds
where metal had pierced—the whole secret family murder.
Then he urged her to hurry and run from the country.
To help her leave he showed her underground treasure,
old and secret silver and gold in abundance.

360 Deeply shaken, Dido planned to escape with companions:
others who hated the despot’s crimes or intensely
feared him joined her. By chance vessels were ready,
they boarded, loading the gold, and carried the greedy
Pygmalion’s wealth to sea. And the action’s leader a woman!
At length they arrived here, and soon you’ll see the enormous
walls of her young Carthage, a citadel rising.
They bought up land and called it Byrsa, ‘The Bull’s-Hide’:
all they could circle with hair-thin strips of a steer-skin.

**An Omen of Twelve Swans**

“...But tell me, who are you men? What coast have you come from?
370 Where are you bound?” Deeply sighing, Aeneas
tried to answer her questions, dragging the words out:
“Goddess, if I could trace it, repeat it all from the outset,
if you had time to hear our annals of struggle,
Evening would sooner close down Day and lock up Olympus.
Old Troy was our home—if the word Trojan has happened
to reach your ears. We were driven on various sea-lanes;
a storm drove us by chance to the Libyan coastline.
I, who revere the Gods, am Aeneas. I salvaged my House-Gods
from Greeks; they’re borne on my ships. My name is known on
Olympus.

380 I look to a home in Italy, high Jupiter’s nation.
With twenty ships I scaled the Phrygian sea-peaks,
a Goddess-Mother my guide, I followed the Fates I was given;
hardly seven are left, convulsed by Eastwind and water.
I am unknown here, destitute, wandering Libyan wasteland,
forced out of Asia and Europe—” Venus could suffer
no more distressful complaint and so interrupted,
“Whoever you are, I hardly believe you’re hateful to heaven:
you breathe, you’re alive, close to a Tyrian city.
Only persist—continue from here to the threshold of Dido.

390 As for your friends and ships, I tell you they’re rescued,
nudged into safe harbor by gathering Northwinds—
unless my parents explained omens for nothing.
Look at those twelve glad swans in formation.
Jupiter’s raptor just plunged from the sky and dispersed them
in open air. They now can be seen to be looking
to land in their long line, or landing already.
Just as they’re saved, their wings whistling and playing,
just as they circled the sky, regrouping and singing,
I’m sure your ships and crews are either approaching
a harbor in full sail or actually mooring.
Just keep on—walk this path where it leads you.”

Revelation of a Goddess

She finished and turned, her neck rose-colored, glowing.
The Goddess’ hair exhaled a scent of ambrosia,
her clothing loosened and flowed down to her ankles:
she walked in revealing her truly a Goddess. Aeneas
knew his mother now, he followed and spoke as she left him:
“Even you, cruel to your son—why do you always
play with tricks and disguises? Why are we stopped from
joining hand in hand, and hearing our actual voices?”
Enveloped in Mist

410 He stopped accusing. He took the path to the city.
Venus enclosed their walk in an air of opaqueness:
she spread a mantle of thick vapor around them
so no one could see, no one could touch them
or cause delay, or ask their reasons for coming.
The Goddess returned to Paphos. She went to a pleasant
mountainside home where a hundred shrines in her temple
breathed of fresh flowers and smoldering incense from Saba.

The Labor of Bees

The men, meanwhile, hurried along the path she had shown
them.
Already they’d climbed a long ridge overlooking
420 the city and gazed down at the fortress that faced them.
Aeneas admired the large buildings, formerly hovels,
he admired the gates and noisy paving of roadways.
The Tyrians worked hard, some men rearing a stronghold
or raising a wall, manually rolling the stones up.
Others picked out homesites and framed them with trenches.
They chose magistrates, laws, and a venerable senate.
Here they dredged a harbor; there they were laying
a theater’s deep foundation or sculpting its massive
rock columns—high decor for scenes that were coming.

430 Just as their work wearies bees in the sunlight
of young summer on blossoming farms where the old ones
lead out the hive’s young or pack syrupy honey
in cells, filling the hive with nectar-like sweetness:
they either take on loads from arrivals or form up
ranks to keep the lazy group of drones from the storage:
the work teems amid fragrant, thyme-scented honey.
“How lucky you are—your walls are rising already,”
Aeneas remarked. He gazed at the skyline of Carthage
and entered the city. Enclosed in the mist—a wonder to speak of—
440 he mixed right in, surrounded by men, and no one took notice.

Paintings of the Trojan War

A grove in the central city was pleasantly shaded.
Here the Tyrians, after water and whirlwind had struck them,
first broke ground where Queen Juno commanded,
unearting a wild stallion’s head—a sign of their future
greatness in war, and the lasting natural wealth of their nation.
Here the Sidonian, Dido, planned a magnificent temple
to Juno, endowed with gifts and the Goddess’s power.
A stairway rose to a bronze threshold and cross-beams
of linked bronze, and bronze portals rang on their hinges.

450 Now in this grove for the first time an unlikely
thing lessened Aeneas’ fear. He hoped to be safe here,
despite losses, he dared trust in change for the better,
for while he stared at the huge and intricate temple,
expecting the queen, amazed at the luck of the city—
at craftsmen’s hands competing among themselves in their
art-work—
he saw Troy. A long sequence of battles—
word had spread that war worldwide already—
the sons of Atreas; Priam; and menacing both men, Achilles.
The tears came to Aeneas. “What place,” he asked of Achates,

460 “what part of the world is not yet full of our struggle?
Look at that Priam! Even here they value your honor,
they weep for things, their hearts are touched by the dying.
Dismiss your fear: you’re saved by your own reputation.”
While speaking he fed his heart with empty depictions,
he often sighed, the big tears wetting a cheekbone
whenever he saw Greeks, in a roundabout skirmish
at Troy, routed by young Trojans and run off;
or Trojans chased by the team of crested Achilles.
Aeneas recognized, weeping, the bivouac of Rhesus

470 nearby like sails of snow—till Diomedes exposed them
in deep sleep, wrecked the camp, bloodied and killed them.
He turned the sweating horses back to their campsite before they
could taste Trojan fodder or drink from the Xanthus.
Another scene: Troilus dropped his weapons and ran off:
the sorry youngster had faced a full-grown Achilles
and slipped backwards while holding the empty
chariot’s reins, the horses had pulled, dragging his neck-bone
and hair on the ground. His reversed spear scrawled on the gravel.
Meanwhile, Trojan women filed to the temple

480 of unfair Pallas. Wildhaired, bringing her vestments,
palms beating their breasts, they prostrated, wailing.
The Goddess kept her looks on the ground to avoid them.
And Hector: Achilles had hauled the spiritless body
around the walls three times, then sold it for money.
Truly Aeneas felt deep hurt, painfully moaning
to see that armor and chariot, even his comrade’s
corpse, and the hands of Priam, weaponless, pleading.
Aeneas found himself as well in a tangle with Grecian chiefs; brigades from the East; dark Memnon’s equipment; and crazed Penthesilea, the Amazon leader, blazing among crescent shields, surrounded by thousands. One breast bared, a gold girdle beneath it, the war-queen dared to charge into men though a virgin.

*The Arrival of Dido*

Now as Aeneas, a Dardan, stared in amazement at all those wondrous art-works, fixed in that single direction, the queen entered the temple. Most beautiful, Dido was thronged by circling young groups of her people, the way Diana works a circle of dancers across a Cynthius slope or a bank of the River Eurotas, Oreads gathering here and there by the thousand to follow: she shoulders a quiver, outstrips all of the Sky-Gods and stuns with joy the quiet heart of Latona. Dido carried herself as proudly and gladly, surrounded; she urged forward the work of her kingdom. Soon at the temple’s arched center, the portals of Juno, she sat on a raised throne, cordoned by weapons. She spelled out people’s legal rights, distributed labor in equal parts, or drew lots for each duty.

*Lost Trojans are Found*

Another large crowd was approaching. Aeneas suddenly spotted Antheus, brave Cloanthus, Sergestus and other Trojans—people scattered completely by dark waves and squalls to different beaches. It all stunned Aeneas; Achates was also struck by joy and fear. Anxious, eager for handshakes, still they faced the unknown, their spirits were troubled; they hid in the mist’s cave-like covering, watching these men describe their luck, what shore the ships had been left on, why they’d come here, chosen to march from the galleys, to make for this temple’s commotion, to ask for Dido’s indulgence. They entered, received permission to speak in her presence and Ilioneus, the eldest, began with quiet emotion. “My queen, Jupiter gave you power to settle a new city and check the pride of people with justice. We are miserable Trojans, driven by all of the sea-winds.
We beg you: stop your men from burning our ships: it's unspeakable.
Spare a decent people. Look on our cause with some kindness.
We haven't approached you with swords to plunder the House-Gods
of Libya, to drag stolen goods to the beaches.
Swagger and brute force are not for us losers.

530 There is a place, the Greeks called it Hesperia,
an ancient land with rich soil and powerful armies:
Oenotrians lived there once but now they say that a younger people have named it Italy, after their leader.
We set that course
but Orion suddenly surged and stormed on the water,
heaved us at blind shoals and drove us completely apart with blustering southwinds and massed waves, impassable sea-cliffs. Some of us reached your beaches by swimming.
Who are these men, your people? What barbarous country allows them to act so? To keep us from welcoming beachsand,
to goad us to fight or stop us from standing our ground here—if human kind and dying weapons are sneered at,
remember the Gods remember the law and the outlaw.
Our prince was Aeneas. No one's justice was higher,
no one was more conscientious or stronger with weapons in wartime.

If Fates rescued the man, if he still savors this higher air, not lying yet with Underworld shadow,
we fear nothing. And first competing in kindness won't harm you. There's also Sicilian land to return to,

540 Trojan farms and towns of well-known Acestes.
Let us haul our wind-rattled ships from the water,
shape new oars and refit our hulls with your timber.
If Gods restore our king, our friends and a heading for Italy, gladly we'll make for Latium's country.
If not—if you're not safe, you best father of Trojans,
if Libyan water holds you, the hope of Iulus demolished—at least we'll head for Sicilian straits where we came from.
Homes are ready there. We'll look for kingly Acestes.'

When Ileoneus finished, all of the Trojans voiced their approval.

Dido's Warm Welcome

With downcast looks Dido spoke to them briefly.
"Release fear from your hearts, Trojans. Banish anxiety. Our life is hard here. The kingdom's youth has compelled me to mass defenses and post watches at outlying borders. The house of Aeneas! Who's not heard of the city of Troy, your brave men in that great war and its firestorms? Our own Phoenician hearts have not been so blunted: your Sun-God's horse-team is not that far from our Tyrian city. Whether you choose broad Hesperia, the farmland of Saturn, or sail for the country of King Acestes and Eryx, I will help. I'll send you in safety; our wealth will assist you. And what if you wish to remain as our equals in Carthage? The city I'm building is yours. Draw out your vessels. I'll treat you without bias, Trojan and Tyrian. If only Aeneas himself, your leader, were present, nudged by the same Southwind! In fact I'll order reliable troops to search the shore and Libyan outposts, to see if he's thrown by surf into bush, or lost in some village."

_Aeneas Appears from the Mist_

Her words inspired both lordly Aeneas and steady Achates. Both for a long time had been eager to break from the mist. Achates first encouraged Aeneas: "You, the son of a Goddess, what are your thoughts now? You see they are all safe: our friends and ships have been rescued. Except for one—we saw him ourselves in the maelstrom, sucked down—the rest confirms the word of your mother." He'd hardly spoken when suddenly all the surrounding mist parted itself and cleared away in a crosswind. Aeneas stood there, a clear glow on his godlike shoulder and face. Venus herself had exhaled on her son's hair a splendor, a Youthfully ruddy light on his face, on his eyes a luster and gladness, the way a craftsman's hand might add splendor to ivory or set in yellow gold Parian marble or silver. Abruptly he spoke to the queen and everyone present, saying openly, "Here I am, the person you're seeking, Aeneas of Troy, snatched from Libyan water. And you, the only person to pity our struggle, the curse on Troy, to share your home and your city with us, remnants exhausted by Greeks on land and by every mischance at sea, utterly beggared! To properly thank you, Dido, is not in our power: all that's left of the Trojan people throughout the world is everywhere scattered."
Book I

Gods must bring the reward you deserve, if a Power regards reverence, if justice continues to matter, and men's knowledge of right. What glad generation gave you birth, what great parents conceived you? While rivers flow to the sea, while shadows in mountain coombs wander and skies nourish the starlight, your name, honor and praise will continue to live on, whatever land calls me." He finished and held out hands to his friends Ilioneus, Serestus, then to the others, rugged Gyan and rugged Cloanthus.

Invitation to the Palace

Dido of Sidon was struck first by the face of Aeneas, then by the man's hard losses. She answered, "The son of a Goddess! What great danger and downfall have chased you? What Power leads you to primitive coast-lines? You're truly Aeneas? The one whom kindly Venus delivered to Troy's Anchises close to the flowing Phrygian Simois? And yes, I recall a Teucer coming to Sidon, expelled from his fathers' land. He looked for a younger kingdom with help from Belus, my Father, when Belus exploited the wealth of Cyprus and held it under his power. From that time on I knew of the fall of your Trojan city, the names of Pelasgian rulers, and your name. Your enemy Teucer gave you Trojans exceptional credit and claimed he branched himself from an old family of Trojans. Come, then, all you men—enter our household. A similar luck drove me as well through a number of hardships, picking this land at last for our settling.

I know of pain. I've learned to alleviate sadness."

Preparation for a Banquet

She stopped and led Aeneas at once to the royal palace, commanding thanks be to God in each temple and sending no fewer than twenty bulls to the seashore, a hundred huge swine with bristling backs for the crews there. She added a hundred plump ewes with their young ones and glad gifts of the Wine-God. The palace built up soon to a queenly resplendence. Inside the central hall a banquet was readied in proud purple, tapestries' intricate patterns, silver massed on tables, and golden engravings of strong ancestors' work: a long sequence of actions
traced through men from the ancient birth of their people.

Presents for a Queen

Aeneas, whose fatherly love truly prevented his mind from resting, sent Achates fast to the moorage to bring Ascanius news and guide him back to the city. All his care and parental concern stood in Ascanius. He ordered gifts brought back as well that were saved from Troy’s rubble: a stiff cloak with its stitching of gold; the veil bordered in saffron acanthus worn by the Greek, Helen—brought from Mycenae to Troy when she sought that perverse marriage with Paris, and Helen’s marvellous gift from Leda, her mother; the scepter, too, which Priam’s eldest daughter Ilione once carried; a pearl necklace and double crown with gold plaiting and jewels. Achates hurried away to do all this at the moorage.

Plans of Venus and Cupid

But Venus was mulling a different maneuver, a novel scheme in her heart: how Cupid might change his appearance and walk as her dear Ascanius, alarming the manic queen with gifts and winding fire through her marrow. Venus deeply feared Tyre was evasive and two-tongued, Juno cruel and seething. At night when anxiety rushed back Venus hurriedly spoke to the quick-flying Love-God: “My son, my supreme strength and power—the only son who shrugs at our highest Father’s Typhoeus-destroying bolts—I come to you humbly. I ask for that power. Your brother Aeneas is thrown by seas onto every shore, Juno’s caustic hatred has caused it, you know all that: you’ve often shared his grief, and your mother’s.

Now a Phoenician, Dido, detains him with lovely talk, and I’m worried. How will a welcome of Juno turn out? At such a crux she’s hardly relaxing. Therefore I plan to capture Dido beforehand, to trick her, ring her with fire which no one can alter: to keep her by me, through a deep love for Aeneas. Listen: adopt my plan on how we might do this. The boy, my prince and greatest worry, is ready to leave for the Tyrian city, his loving father insisting. He’ll bring on gifts that survived Troy’s fire and the sea-storm.
680 I'll hide him in dreamy sleep on the heights of Cythera, 
and lay him down in my sacred shrine at Idalium: 
he won't be aware of our tricks or be able to stop them. 
For just one night you fake the prince's appearance, 
put on—you're a boy—a boy's familiar expressions. 
Then, when Dido takes you in pure joy to her bosom, 
surrounded by royal tables and wines of Lyaeus, 
soon as she hugs and kisses you firmly and sweetly, 
breathe in your flame: unnerve her with dark aphrodisiac."

_Cupid Becomes Ascanius_

The Love-God liked the loving request of his mother.

690 He doffed his wings and gladly skipped like Iulus 
while Venus diffused a gentle sleep through Ascanius' 
body. The Goddess took him, warmed in her lap, to the Cyprus 
high country where soft marjoram blossoms 
embraced him with fragrance. He lingered in amiable shadow. 
Cupid moved along, complying with orders. He carried 
princely gifts into Carthage gladly led by Achates. 
The queen, when he came, already reclined on a golden 
sofa placed in the midst of exquisite drapery. 
Aeneas, the father, had joined her already with Trojan 
youths who lay on spreads emblazoned in purple. 
Servants washed their hands, wiped them with shaggy 
towels, and offered the bread of Ceres in baskets. 
Fifty girls in back were concerned with arranging 
long lines of food and with fires that honored the Hearth-Gods. 
Two hundred others, girls and boys of the same age, 
helped by loading tables with food and setting the cups out. 
Tyrrians too were gathering, crossing the joyful 
threshold in groups, shown to embroidered couches to lie on. 
Admiring the gifts from Aeneas, admiring Iulus—

710 the Love-God's flagrant cheek and play-acting chatter— 
they gazed at the cloak, at the veil of painted yellow acanthus. 
Dido especially (sadly doomed to a sickness 
soon) could not get her fill of feverish gazing: 
the queen was moved both by the gifts and the boy-God. 
And he, after he'd hung on the neck of Aeneas 
and satisfied the deep love of his make-believe father, 
sought out the queen. Her eyes and bosom completely 
cherished him now on her lap, Dido sadly unknowing 
how great a God sat there. But Cupid remembered 

720 his Acidalian mother: he slowly started erasing
Sychaeus: he tried to distract the queen with a living desire. Her feelings had long stagnated, unused.

_Dido’s Prayer_

After the banquet’s first lull and the tables’ removal wines were set out in large garlanded wine-bowls. They caused an ovation—shouts rolled through the building’s ample halls. Lamps were lit: hanging from golden paneled ceilings their torch-fires mastered the darkness. Shortly the queen called for a vessel of heavy gold and gems. By custom she poured the vintage of Belus and all his descendents. She made the hallways be silent. “Jupiter, known to provide justice for strangers: let this day be a glad one for Tyrian and Trojan refugees. Let our children remember this moment. Let Bacchus bring us joy; let kindly Juno be present. Celebrate, all you Tyrians—welcome these people!” Finished, she poured wine first on the table to honor the Gods. She touched her lips to the vessel, then daringly gave it to Bitias. He drained it aggressively, face deep in the gold, splashed by the wine-foam.

_Themes of the Poet_

740 As other leaders followed, shag-haired Iopas, taught by Atlas the great, strummed on a golden lyre and sang of the moon’s wandering, solar eclipses, where man and beast came from, downpour and lightning, the rains of Arcturus, the twin Bears and the Hyades. He told why winter sunsets dye the Ocean so quickly and what prevents the slow nights from advancing. Tyrians doubled their cheers, followed by Trojans.

_A Royal Request_

And luckless Dido kept drawing the night out. Changing topics, drinking the depths of desire, 750 she asked all about Priam, all about Hector, then of the arms that came with the son of Aurora, then of Diomedes’ horse, and the girth of Achilles. “But no, tell us, my guest, from the very beginning,” she said, “of Greek deceit, the fall of your people, your whole journey. For seven summers already have borne you on every land and sea in your travels.”