X

THE RETURN AND RAGE OF AENEAS

Gods Gathering

Meanwhile the house of the strongest Olympian opened. Mankind's King and the Gods' Father called an assembly there in the starlit throne-room: from there he could survey every land, the Latin people and Trojan defense-works. Seats filled in the two-doored hall. Jupiter started: "Majestic Sky-Gods, why this change in your purpose, this deep unsettling of spirit? Why the reversal? I disapproved of war—of Italians jarring with Trojans. What discord thwarts my command? What fear has convinced you to whip one side or another to war and to weapons? The right time for fighting will come: don't hurry the future: Carthage will test Roman defenses ferociously. The Alps will open and send down massive destruction. Then you may hate and fight—then you may ravage—But now no more. Be glad to settle a peace-pact."

Goddess Against Goddess

So Jupiter's words were few; but those of the gold-haired Venus were not: "My Father, man's and the world's permanent Ruler—indeed who else can we pray to now or acknowledge?—You see those leaping Rutulians? And Turnus on horseback riding high through their midst, galloping proudly, the War-God behind him? Meanwhile Trojans lack the protection of closed walls: they fight at the gates, on a rampart or wall itself: their blood saturates trenches. Aeneas is absent and unaware. Will you never
allow this siege to be lifted? Enemies threaten  
the walls of a young Troy again—another attack-force,  
a new Diomedes looming from Arpi, the Aetolian village,  
to duel with Troy. New wounds await me, I'm certain,  
your own daughter stopping the spear of some human.  
If Trojans made for Italy lacking your favor,  
spiting your will, let them pay for their evil:  
don't help them. If Trojans however have followed  
the signs given by Sky-God and Hell-God, how can some person  
now subvert your rule? Why make novel pronouncements?  
Need I recall the burned fleet on Eryx's beaches,  
the mad gale at sea which the Aeolian storm-king  
dared to create, then Iris dispatched from a rain-cloud?  
Now even Underworld beings—resources  
not yet tapped—are stirring: Allecto is packed off  
suddenly, crazing Italian hamlets on orders from heaven.  
I think nothing of empire. I hoped for an empire  
when Luck lasted. The one you choose is the winner.  
If no country exists your hard wife will apportion  
to Trojans, Father, I plead—on the smoldering wreckage  
of ruined Troy—that you send Ascanius safely  
from battle. Or let me: give my grandson survival.  
Let unknown waters toss even Aeneas,  
take him whatever way Fortune may offer;  
but help me shield and guide that boy from the horror of battle.  
I have Amathus, high Paphos, Cythera,  
a home in Idalia. Let him relinquish his armor  
and age there quietly. Give your order divinely  
that Carthage level Ausonia: nothing will hinder  
Tyrian cities. But how has it helped us to slip from  
war's plague, to run from Greeks in a fire-storm,  
worst out on desolate land and dangerous water,  
Trojans looking to rebuild Troy in Latium country?  
To sit in their last homeland's ashes was better—  
the dirt where Troy stood. Bring back the Xanthus  
and Simois, Father! I ask that the miserable Trojans  
re-live Troy's destruction."

Divine Retaliation

But Queen Juno responded,  
driven by rage: "Why do you force me to break from  
long silence and tell my sorrows in public?  
Who among Gods or men pressured Aeneas
to start this war, to move on King Latinus in battle?
Fates told him to make for Italy? Granted:
a raving Cassandra forced him! Did Juno persuade him
to leave camp, commit his life to a Southwind,
trust walls and the war's crux to a youngster,
meddle with peace and the faith of Tuscany's people?
Which God compelled him to lie? Where is the cruel
power of Juno here, Iris dispatched from a cloud-trail?
Shameful, yes! Italy circling your newborn
Troy with fire, Turnus defending lands of his fathers—
Pilumnus' grandson—his mother a Goddess, Venilia.
What of the Trojans' fire and soot harming the Latins,
plowing strangers' land and pirating booty?
What if they pick then tear girls from their fathers and husbands,
offering peace with one hand, arming ships with another?
Venus may spread some mist or blank wind where a man was,
leading Aeneas from Greek clutches in battle,
Venus may change a whole fleet into Sea-Nymphs;
but our helping any Rutulian is wicked!
Aeneas is gone, unaware? He should remain so.
You have Paphos, Idalia, the heights of Cythera:
why incite harsh crowds and a war-heavy city?
Did we attempt to rip up Troy from its drifting
foundations? We? Or the man who threw your despondent
Trojans at Greeks? What was the reason that Europe
and Asia rose in war, secretly breaking a peace-pact?
Did I command a Trojan lecher to capture that Spartan?
Did I supply spears or foment longing for battle?
You might have feared for your children then; now your
complaining
is late and unlikely. You raise invalid contentions."

Divine Neutrality

All the Gods assented when Juno was finished,
resembling a mixed murmur of wind in a woodland,
caught first by some trees then muttering darkly
and grumbling, warning sailors a storm may be coming.

Now the strongest Father—the first force in the cosmos—
began to speak, hushing the high house of the Sky-Gods.
Earth trembled profoundly, steep heavens were quiet,
the Westwind diminished and waves on the ocean subsided.
"Take my words to heart now and retain them.
What with Troy and Ausonia clearly prevented
from peaceful union, with all your constant dissension,
let each side take what luck and hope this day will provide you.
I'll look on both Rutulian and Trojan as equal,
whether the camp's besieged through Fates of Italians
or Trojan mistakes or malice, some wrong word or prediction.
I'll bind Rutulians too, the same struggle for each man
and his own luck. They'll all have Jupiter ruling.
Fates will find a way.” He swore by his brother’s
river—the Styx’s pitch-black banks and its chasm.
He nodded: the nod rumbled all of Olympus.
Talk had ended. Jupiter rose from the golden
throne, ringed and escorted by Gods to the threshold.

The War Goes On

Rutulians meanwhile drove at the gates of the Trojans.
Men sprawled and bled. Walls were circled by torches.
Aeneas' men, kept within the embankments,
had no hope of escape. Sadly they stood on a tower’s
height or ringed a wall like a thin crown; they were helpless.
Asius (Imbrasus’ son), Thymoetes (Hicetaeon’s),
the two called Assaracus, old Thymbris, and Castor
were ranked in front, joined by two of Sarpedon’s
brothers, Clarus and Thaemon, from Lycian hilltops.
The hulking Acmon, who came from Lyrnesos, contorted
his whole body to lift a massive chunk of some mountain—
tall as his father Clytius, his brother Mnestheus.
One man tried defending with boulders, another with lance
throws;
some built fires or fitted bowstrings with arrows.
Look at the Dardan boy himself, right there in the middle—
Venus was right to worry—his fine forehead uncovered:
the way a gem framed in gold shines in adorning
the neck or head, or just like dazzling ivory
when skilled craftsmen inlay it with Orican boxwood
or terebinth. Hair fell to his welcoming milkwhite
neck and a golden clasp loosely contained it.
And you, Ismarus, watched by your big-hearted people,
dipping reeds in venom, aiming and wounding:
you’d come from a house of Maconians, men who extracted
wealth from the soil and gold from the Pactolus River.
Mnestheus too stood near. He’d driven out Turnus
yesterday; now he walked high on the ramparts in honor.
And Capys—his name would lead to the city of Capua.
Return Journey at Night

While those men bore the hard struggle of battle, Aeneas cut through the river's channel in darkness after leaving Evander's camp. He reached the Etruscan king's banks and told of his name and his nation, what he required and brought himself. He told of the army Mezentius gathered for war and the violent passion of Turnus. Aeneas warned and variously pleaded for trust in human affairs. Instantly Tarchon struck a pact to join his force: a Lydian people escaped doom by trusting this foreign commander. They launched a fleet with Gods in command and Aeneas' ship leading. Its prow had Phrygian lions above and Ida below—what joy to a Trojan in exile! Aeneas grandly presided; he pondered the war's mixed outcome. Pallas was nearby, just to his left. He often asked about starlight and course on such dim nights, about country and ocean maneuvers.

A Prayer to the Muses Once More

Open Helicon now, you Muses, and quicken my song: what groups from Tuscan beaches were joining Aeneas and arraying ships to sail on the water?

The Grand Fleet

Massicus' bronzed Tiger cut through the current, leading a thousand men who'd come from the cities of Cosae and Clusium. Their weapons were quivers and arrows, light on their shoulders—Death rode on the bow-wood. Abas had joined them, a fierce one, all his ranks in distinguished armor. The Sun-God gleamed in gold on their stern-deck. He led six hundred men, Populonia's children, young but skilled in war; three hundred from Ilva, too, the Chalybes' Island, lavishly rich in deposits. The third, an augur for God and men, was Asilas. Innards of beasts and stars in heaven obeyed him; Birds' language and lightning fire told him the future. He'd gathered a thousand close-ranked men bristling with lances: Pisa commanded their loyalty—Alph's town at the outset, later a Tuscan city. Behind them was Astyr, a sure and handsome horseman in colorful armor.
Three hundred men, all of one mind, were behind him:

sent from Caere, farms near the Minio River,

from ancient Pyrgi and coastal, fog-bound Gravisae.

And you, Cinyrus—bravest Ligurian war-lord—

I won’t omit you. Nor you, with your handful of helpers,

Cupavo—a swan’s plumage rose from your helmet,

a sign of your father’s change (a fault of the Love-God):

Cyncus, they say, your father, despairing of Phaethon’s

love, sang in the leafy shade of a sisterly poplar,

trying to soothe the pain of love through his music,

when soft feathers appeared, he whitened and grew old:

gone from the earth, his voice follows the starlight.

The son, matched by a crowd of shipboard companions,

moved the massive Centaur forward by rowing.

She leaned on waves like a hugely threatening cliffside.

A long and deep wake was cut by her keel-line.

Mantua

Ocnus had also called up troops from his fatherland’s coastline—

his father the Tiber, his mother a prophetess, Manto—

200 giving to you, Mantua, walls and the name of a mother.

Mantua: rich in your parents, not all from a single

family: from three, with four clans in each household.

Mantua headed the clans, her blood strong as the Trojans’.

The Rest of the Armada

Next came five hundred to march on Mezentius,

led on the waves by an angry pinewood River-God, Mincius—

Lake Benacus, wreathed in blue-grey sedge, was his father.

Aulestes rode in a heavy ship that surged when its hundred

oars churned the water, lashing and bubbling the surface:

He sailed the immense Triton, alarming the wave-crests,

210 a blue-black conch on her prow, with a human and shaggy

swimmer out front whose form below was a sea-snake’s—

the half-wild chest foamed and hissed through the water.

So thirty chosen leaders moved in some thirty

ships to help Troy. Bronze cut through the salt-field.

Sea-Nymphs

Day had already passed from the sky and a kindly

Moon’s night-wandering chariot beat by Olympus:

Aeneas, his body never relieved from its worry,

had taken the wheel himself, then tended a mainsheet,
when look: halfway back to the fort he was met by a friendly
circle of water-dancers, the Nymphs whom Cybele warmly
had told to change from ships into Nymphs, to have power
at sea. They swam together and cut through the water—
the same number of bronze bows which had stood on the shore-
line.
They knew their king from a distance and ritually circled.
One of them, well trained in speech, Cymodocea,
followed the ship, grasped the stern with her right hand
and lifted herself while her left hand paddled the gentle
seas, and said to a puzzled Aeneas, “You’re watching,
son of the Goddess? Watch—and pay out canvas for running.

We all were pines on the holy mountain of Ida—
once your fleet—now we are Sea-Nymphs. Rutilians rashly
and wrongly came to attack us with torches and axes:
we broke your cables against our will and we sought you
at sea. Our Mother pitied and gave us our sea-forms,
made us divine, to pass our time in the water.
Now for your boy Ascanius: Latins bristling for battle
have trapped him in earthworks and trenches: they pelt him with
arrows.
Your cavalry, strong Arcadians teamed with Etruscans,
hold the position you ordered; but Turnus decided
firmly to stop all riders from reaching the campsite.
Up now, move! Dawn is approaching: order your comrades
to arm first then take the matchless shield which the Fire-God
himself gave you, his gold border around it.
Tomorrow’s light—don’t think my words are unlikely—
will see an immense heap of Rutilian bodies.”

* A Prayer to Cybele

Her hand pushed at the high stern when she finished,
knowing exactly how, and the vessel rushed through the water
quick as a spear or an arrow abreast of an Eastwind.
Sister ships kept pace while the Trojan son of Anchises,
confused and amazed, felt spirits raised by the omen.
Briefly he looked to the arched sky and invoked it:
“Caring Mother of Gods, of Dindymus, Ida,
of tower-supporting towns, your team a bridling of lions:
lead me now in this war. Stand by your omen
rightly. Walk with your Trojans, Goddess, be present.”
Trojans Reunited

That's all he asked. The sky meanwhile was turning, ripe daylight already dispelling the darkness. He told each friend first to follow the signals, armor their hearts and prepare themselves for a battle.

260 Soon he could see his own camp and the Trojans. Standing high astern he lofted the gleaming shield by hand: Trojans who saw it from wall-tops raised a shout to the sky. Hope addled their anger: they hurled spears dense as cranes on the Strymon River that sail under dark clouds calling each other, loudly urging their flock to run from the Southwind. The scene astonished all the Ausonian leaders and Turnus, until they turned and saw an invasion—the sea filled with ships approaching the shoreline.

270 Aeneas' helmet and crest burned like a fire-light. The broad shield glowed fiery and golden just like a comet burning bloody and somber some humid night, or white-hot Sirius rising to bring on drought, dismay and sickness in people, troubling the eastern sky with its ominous luster.

Another Way of Reading the Gods

But daring and self-trust hardly departed from Turnus: he'd take those beaches first and stop the arrivals from landing! He spoke out, lifting spirits and adding a challenge. "All you prayed for is here—to smash them in person!

280 Let Mars himself be your power. Let each man think of his wife and home now. Remember our signal Fathers' acts and awards. Make a stand in the shallows, there, when they first step out, off balance and shaky. Luck will help the adventurous."

Perilous Landings

He stopped to consider which men to lead in the skirmish and which to trust with the task of blockading the earthworks. Aeneas meanwhile tried to offload friends on a gangplank down from his high stern. Many awaited a gentle backwash of surf, then leaped in the shallows.

290 Others used oars. Tarchon was watching the beach for calm water, where waves were not breaking, but seas rolled up unimpeded, the turbulence building.
He suddenly swung the prow and pleaded with shipmates, “Now, you men I’ve hand-picked: pull on your rugged oars and lift us, drive the ship’s beak till it splits up enemy ground: the keel itself will plow us a furrow. I won’t resist wrecking the ship at this juncture—only get us beached!” When Tarchon had spoken, all the rowers pulled strongly together, driving the spray-flecked ship at the coast of the Latins.

The whole fleet made it, sitting undamaged on dry sand, but not the vessel of Tarchon: flung onto rollers, she hung for a time on a jagged ridge, unsteady but holding, till breakers exhausted and split her, dropping the men right there in the water. Pieces of oars and flotsam of benches impeded their steps. A swift undertow dragged at their ankles.

_A New Battle is Joined_

Turnus hardly dawdled. He rode fiercely at Trojans, a whole cohort attempting to keep them from beachsand.

Signals blared. The first to charge at some rustics and sprawl Latins, an omen of war himself, was Aeneas: he killed Theron, the biggest man who had boldly stalked the Trojan. A sword cut through the fittings of brass, the gold-gnarled tunic, draining an open side. He struck Lichas next, who’d been cut from a dying mother at birth—sacred to Phoebus now for escaping a knife-slash when little. A forceful Cisseus crumpled for Death nearby, and tall Gyas—both had been downing men with clubs—but neither Hercules’ weapons,

their strong hands, nor their father Melampus could help them (Hercules’ friend while earth supplied him with heavy labor). And look: when Pharus casually taunted, a twirled spear stopped his mouth and its racket. Then you, Cydon, who sadly followed your latest attraction, a youngster with blond fuzz on his cheekbones, Clytius: Aeneas’ hand would have flattened and freed you from love (as a boy love was your joy) to lie there in sadness had not your brothers closed ranks to prevent it—seven sons of Phorcsus hurling their seven lances. A few made harmless clangs on the helmet and shield but some, close to the body, a caring Venus deflected. Aeneas called to the loyal Achates, “Bring more spears! None from my hand will be wasted.
Spears from Greek bodies on Troy’s fields will be twisted now in Rutulians’. He gripped and threw an enormous weapon that zinged at the brazen shield-plate of Maeon and pierced it, broke through the chest protector and ribcage. A brother, Alcanor, ran to support his collapsing brother by hand, but a spear punctured his shoulder and instantly passed on its bloody trajectory, leaving his arm torn at the socket, hanging by tendons and dying. Now Numitor pulled the spear from a brother’s body and aimed at Aeneas. He wasn’t permitted to strike him—it grazed the huge thigh of Achates. Clausus approached next. Coming from Cures and trusting his youth and strength, from a distance he struck the gullet of Dryops, the rigid spear fatally wedged under the chinbone—a throat-wound taking voice and life after he cried out. He fell to the ground face-first, coughing up blood-gouts.

Three more from Thrace, of the high clan of the Northwind, and three from Ismara, their homeland, with Idas, their father, were variously killed by Clausus. Halaesus approached him with grouped Auruncans. The son of Neptune, Messapus (known for his horses) helped. This side and that side strained and drove back, they fought on Ausonia’s threshold itself the way discordant winds in a far-flung sky will struggle and rise, matched in momentum and vigor, unyielding among themselves in the clouds, on the ocean, all fixed on a long fight—the end undecided.

Latin and Trojan forces charged in the same way, leg locked against leg, this man at that man.

_A Young Warrior Rallies his Men_

On other ground where rocks were tumbled and scattered by rushing water, where trees on banks were uprooted, Pallas watched his Arcadian horsemen, not used to fighting on foot, turn and run from the Latins: rough terrain this once had forced them to jump from their mounts. The only hope in that desperate moment now was to plead—harsh words might heat up their courage—“Where are you running, my friends? I swear by your bravest acts, the wars you’ve won, the name of your leader, Evander, my hopes that rise now and rival praise from my Father: don’t trust your feet! Cut your way through the Latins with metal! There, where men are most crowded,
Pallas will lead you back. Your country demands it. No Gods beset us: we humans are driven by human power, with no more hands or spirit than we have. Look at the sea, a wide barrier blocks you, we lack land for escape—would you head for Troy or some ocean?"

The First Blood Spilled by Pallas

He stopped and charged, head-on, the enemy center.

380 Lagus faced him first (impelled by some unfair Fate): he tried hoisting a ponderous boulder but Pallas’ lance found a gap in his ribcage halfway down the back: the spear-tip, extracted, pulled out bone. Hisbo, hoping to catch him next from behind, failed. The merciless killing of Lagus had made him rage unthinkingly and Pallas received his charge and swollen chest—on a sword-point. He struck at Sthenius; the old bloodline of Rhoetus, Anchemolus—once he had dared to defile a stepmother’s bedroom.

390 You twins also died on Rutulian war-ground: Larides and Thymber, sons of Daucus, identical children even to family, pleasantly baffling your parents. Now Pallas made a hard distinction between you: he cut off Thymber’s head with a sword of Evander then lopped Larides’ hand—still seeking its owner, the half-dead fingers trembled, re-handled a weapon. Every word and signal action of Pallas ignited Arcadians. Mingled shame and guilt armed them for fighting. When Rhoeteus’ chariot fled on by, it was Pallas who speared him—and gained time in that manner for Ilus: the strong spear had been aimed from a distance at Ilus when Rhoeteus came between, chased by two brothers, Tyres and excellent Teuthra. The chariot threw him: he beat with his half-dead heels on Rutulian fieldgrass. Just as the right winds come up in the summer when shepherds have set scattered fires in a woodland, a line of flame quickly and broadly extending, the Fire-God crackles through fields and ground intervening, he looks in triumph down at the flame that exalts him:

410 so valor formed a solid front of your comrades to help you, Pallas. Halaesus, gathered in armor himself, moved against you. A vigorous fighter,
he'd butchered Ladon already, Demodocus, Pheres. He'd flashed a sword, severed Strymonius' fingers and reached to choke him. His rock had smashed into Thoas' face, spattering blood and brain tangled with bone-chips. His father, who sang of the future, had hidden Halaesus in woods; when death dissolved the man's colorless vision, Fates took charge and destined the son for Evander's weapon. A willing Pallas pleaded beforehand: "Tiber, my Father, grant that the steel which I balance now will travel with luck through the hard chest of Halaesus. Your oak-tree will own the man's clothing and armor." The River-God heard him. Halaesus, protecting Imaon, sorriely exposed a lung to the Arcadian spear-throw.

Two Young Men's Destinies

And here Lausus, a major force in the conflict, allowed his men no fear of the heavy slaughter, but finished Abas, who'd faced him first—he'd stalled and knotted the fighting. Arcadians now sprawled by sprawling Etruscans, and even you Trojans, although the Greeks could not kill you. Columns clashed, their vigor and leadership well-matched, rear-guards mashed up front so close that they could not move hand or sword. Pallas kept pushing and straining here, Lausus there—both exceptionally graceful, close in age. But Luck had already denied them return home. Not that the King of lofty Olympus would let them charge each other now in the battle: soon each must wait for death from a greater contender.

Lion and Bull

Turnus, meanwhile, warned by his provident sister to help Lausus, cut through ranks in his chariot swiftly. Spotting friends he said, "It's time—stop your attacking. Pallas belongs only to me: I'm moved to confront him alone. I wish his father himself could be watching." Followers moved back from the field at that order. Pallas marveled at all the Rutulians backing, the proud command and the massive body of Turnus. He looked back fiercely, watching it all from a distance. Words of his own opposed the words of that leader: "Either I'm praised now for taking excellent booty or dying nobly. For either chance my Father is ready. No more threats." He stopped and proceeded to midfield.
Blood collected and cooled in Arcadian stomachs. Turnus jumped from the chariot, ready to walk up close. Like a lion seeing, high on some lookout, a bull ready to fight on a field in the distance, then charging: the form of Turnus approached in the same way. When Pallas thought he’d come within range of a spear-throw he moved first, hoping chance would support him in facing greater strength. He called loudly to heaven:

460 “Hercules! Just as my Father’s table received you, a stranger: receive my prayer in this great undertaking. Let Turnus watch half dead as I strip him of bloody arms! Let his dying eye behold me in triumph.”

The Appointed Time

Hercules heard the man, repressing a heavy sigh deep in his chest. The tears he shed would be futile. The Father, Jupiter, spoke to Hercules gently. “To each his own day. The moment of every life is unclaimably brief. To spread one’s name through achievement—

that’s the task of manhood. Many sons of the Sky-Gods fell by the high walls of Troy—even my own son, Sarpedon, died. Fates of his own will be calling Turnus, too: he’s close to the end of his lifetime.” He stopped and looked away from the fields of Rutulia.

Turnus Kills Pallas

Pallas directed the spear with all of his power then pulled a gleaming sword from deep in its scabbard. The spear went flying: it forced its way through the shield-rim and struck the built-up armor high on the shoulder, actually grazing the huge body of Turnus. Now Turnus poised a spear of oak with its iron tip for a moment. He called to Pallas then threw it: “See if my own weapon will penetrate deeper.” The brass and iron shield of Pallas had various layers and many bull’s-hides protecting his middle. Yet the wide and shimmering spear-point tore through the chest-plate, slowing somewhat before piercing the ribcage. Pallas yanked the warmed point in vain from the puncture: blood and air followed the path of the weapon. He sank on the wound, his armor clanking around him.
The Aeneid of Virgil
Translated by Edward McCrorie, With a foreword by Vincent Cleary
http://www.press.umich.edu/titleDetailDesc.do?id=10501
The University of Michigan Press, 1996

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THE AENEID

He died on that hostile ground coughing his blood out.

A Fatal War-belt

490 Standing above him,
Turnus called, "Arcadians! Take my words to Evander:
tell him I send back Pallas' corpse—he deserved it.
Whatever comfort or honor a tomb or burial offers
I grant. Making friends with Aeneas has cost him
plenty." He stopped, planted a foot on the lifeless
body, and lifted the ponderous weight of a war-belt,
inscribed with evil: the death of a number of husbands,
beds blood-smeared there on the night of their wedding.
Engraved in gold richly by Clonus, the son of Eurytus,
the war-prize belonged to Turnus now and it pleased him.

Another Appointed Time

You minds of men! Blind to the Fates, to the future,
to how your place is kept when Luck is in favor!
The hour was near when Turnus would empty a kingdom
for Pallas' life: he'd hate this day and that war-prize.

Uncontrolled Grief and Rage

Soon friends were mourning loudly for Pallas.
In tears they laid the corpse on a shield and upraised him.
What great pride and grief to return to a father!
The first day that gave him to war had removed him.
Still he'd left a huge pile of Rutulians behind him.

510 Definite word of the deep loss—not a rumor—
rushed to Aeneas now. His men were the thinnest
remove from disaster. Helping Trojans retreating
he hacked with a sword at foes who were closest and hotly
cut a broad path through troops while he headed
for you, Turnus, proud of your recent killing. Aeneas
envisioned Evander and Pallas himself, the table he'd gone to
first as a stranger, the hand he'd taken. He captured
four young sons of Sulmo alive, and as many
reared by Ufens, to kill as Underworld victims:

520 he'd pour the captives' blood on the ashes of Pallas.
He aimed an angry spear at Magus now from a distance.
The man nimbly ducked—the spear went quivering past him.
Reduced to begging, he clutched a leg of Aeneas:
"I ask through your dead father, your hopes for a growing
Iulus: keep me alive for my son and my father."
Book X

My home is large, the wealth deep in my cellar—
engraved silver and solid weights of unfinished
and finished gold. A Trojan victory turns on
more than one life. I won’t be a major distinction.”

530 Aeneas replied, when he stopped, to the contrary, saying,
“All the silver and gold weights that you mention
will keep for your sons. Turnus ended such ransom
in war first and last by the killing of Pallas.
Here is my dead Father’s judgment, here is Iulus.”
He stopped and gripped the helmet, angling the beggar’s
neck backward, and drove hard to the sword-hilt.

More Killings

Nearby, the son of Haemon, a priest of Diana
and Phoebus, had wreathed his devoted forehead in fillets
of wool. All his clothing and signal arms were resplendent.

540 Forced into open field he slipped—and Aeneas,
a giant hovering shadow, killed him. Serestus collected
the arms and removed them—a prize for you, royal Gradivus.
When Linus began to re-group with Caeculus, Vulcan’s
boy, and Umbro, arrived from the Marsian foothills,
Aeneas attacked them fiercely. He cut off the left arm
of Anxur, the sword detaching a shield he’d been toting.
He’d made some grandiose comment, believing his muscle
could match his mouth—carried away to some heaven,
perhaps, assured he would live long and be grey-haired.

550 Tarquitus paraded too in dazzling armor.
Born to the Nymph Dryope and Faunus the Tree-God,
he faced the heat of Aeneas, who leveled a weapon
and nailed the heavy shield’s weight to the breastplate.
He cut off the head, pleading in vain and preparing
a speech there on the ground. Rolling the lukewarm
torso aside, Aeneas proudly and angrily cursed it:
“Lie there now, you terror! No excellent mother
will burden the earth or a family tomb with your body.
I’ll leave you to wild birds or throw you in water—
waves and hungry fish can lick at your gashes.”

Fighting Like Aegaeon

Quickly he ran down Antaeus and Lucas, of Turnus’
vanguard, a rugged Numa, blondhaired Camertes,
a son of the high-spirited Volcens, the richest
Ausonian farmer, ruler of peaceful Amyclae.
The monster Aegaeon, some men say, had a hundred arms and hands, fire bursting from fifty lungs and mouths when he challenged Jupiter’s lightning and unsheathed fifty swords that clashed on as many matched shields: Aeneas, once his blade became blood-warm, beat down men in rage on the field in the same way. He drove at the chest of Niphaeus who guided a horse-team and look—the horses veered in fright when they spotted Aeneas grimly threatening, striding: they trotted backward, dumped their guide and ran for the shoreline.

Two Brothers Die

Lucagus meanwhile moved up center with Liger, his brother, who flicked the reins of their chariot’s off-white horses, while Lucagus whipped out a sword and brandished it wildly.

Aeneas could hardly stand such fury and frenzy. Appearing immense with spear at the ready, he faced them.

But Liger called out, “You see no Phrygian field here or Achilles’ or Diomedes’ horse. The war and your lifetime will end on this land.” The speech of Liger went flying around madly. The Trojan leader was ready but not with a speech: he threw a spear at his rival. Just as Lucagus leaned forward to slap at a horse-flank, using the flat of a sword, extending the left foot and ready for combat, the spear passed through the gleaming shield’s base and pierced his groin on the left side.

Struck from the chariot, rolling in gravel, he died there. Aeneas had done his duty. He bitterly mocked him, “No sluggish or startled horse-team, Lucagus, tilted your chariot: no empty enemy shadow reversed them: you jumped from the team yourself.” He stopped and arrested that team, the brother extending a useless and wretched hand in prayer when the same chariot dumped him: “Man of Troy, for your own sake and the parents who bore you, spare my life. Pity a beggar.”

The plea had weight. But Aeneas: “You gave me another speech just now. Die—let brother remain with his brother.”

The sword opened his chest where life had been hiding.

The Siege is Ended

And so the Trojan leader distributed killing
throughout that field like a mad torrent of water or dark tornado. At last Ascanius ventured from camp with friends: the siege had failed and was lifted.

Juno Pleads for Turnus

Jupiter meanwhile spoke to Juno abruptly: “Ah, my sister and lovely wife at the same time! Venus keeps up Trojan power—you thought so, your judgment’s right—not some war-quickened human hand or fierce will or patience in danger.” And Juno, subdued: “Why does my beautiful husband aggravate my hurt? I fear your commands; they depress me. If all my love had the force now which it once had and should have still, you’d not deny me the favor, with all your power, of leading Turnus from battle. Let me keep him safe for Daunus, his father. If not he’ll shed good blood, be punished by Trojans, despite his tracing a name from our own through Pilumnus, his great-great-grandfather. Over and over his generous hand has piled gifts on your threshold.”

Stalling Death

The King of windy Olympus answered her briefly. “If all you ask for is time, a stay of impending doom for a doomed man—I’m sure you see my position—carry Turnus away from the Fates that pursue him. You’re free to enjoy that much. If a deeper concession hides under your plea, a design about changing the whole war, you feed on blank expectations.” And Juno, in tears: “What if you grant in your wisdom what words deny and the life of Turnus continues?”

Right now a brutal end waits for a guiltless man, or I’m far from the truth. If only a put-on fear were your game! Or you’d change—and you can—what you started.”

Real and Unreal Aeneas

Hurriedly leaving the heights of the sky when she finished, wrapped in cloud and driving a storm through the upper air, she made for the Trojan line and Laurentian campsite. The Goddess contrived from empty mist a defenseless Aeneas: thin shadow, a startling wonder to look at, equipped with a Trojan sword, shield and a godlike
head and crest. She gave it meaningless chatter,

640 mindless noise, and it mimicked the walk of Aeneas. When death is traversed (they say) such figures will fly there, or flutter in dreams, deluding the mind of the dreamer. The figure proudly strode right up to the vanguard to fluster and goad Turnus with weapons and insult. Turnus charged: he hurled a spear from the distance that whirred; the figure turned its back on the combat: Turnus actually thought Aeneas intended to yield. Filled with vain hope he addressed it, “Where do you run to, Aeneas? Leaving the bed you had planned on?

650 This hand will give you the land you sought on the sea-ways!” He chased and yelled at the figure. He brandished a naked sword unaware that a wind might carry his joy off.

A Wrong Escape

By chance a ship lay moored at the base of a rock-pile. She stood with open gangplanks and rope-ladders ready, sailed by King Osinius here from Clusium’s coastline. There the tremulous form of a fleeing Aeneas disappeared with Turnus quickly pursuing, hurdling obstacles, leaping high on a gangplank. He’d scarcely reached the prow when the daughter of Saturn cut the cables, pulled at the ship, and it rolled on a sea-swell. Aeneas elsewhere had called for the missing Turnus to fight him, many had faced him, he’d sent each corpse to the Death-God; his tenuous look-alike, no longer needing to hide out, flew up high and mingled with darkening stormcloud. A gale meanwhile carried Turnus to seaward. He gazed back confused, hardly grateful for safety. Lifting both hands to the star-heights he cried out, “All-powerful Father—you think that I merit shame like this? You want me to hurt and be punished?

660 Where am I borne to? From whom? What course will return me to camp now to see the walls of Laurentum? What of all the men who followed my war-flag? I left each troop—it’s cursed and criminal—dying back in that field. I picture them scatter and tumble, I hear their groans. What can I do? Where is the deepest earth to consume me? You Wind, show me some pity—run me aground. Turnus willingly begs you: break up the ship, drive it on truculent sandbanks
where neither Rumor will know or Rutulian follow."

680 His mind, while he spoke, wavered this way and that way: whether to fall, so badly disgraced, on a weapon, madly forcing the crude steel through his ribcage, or leap right now in the sea and swim for the winding beach—return once more to fight against Trojans. Three times he tried both, but the power of Juno stopped him. She deeply pitied the man but restrained him. The ship cut through seas, rushed by a turbulent current, gliding back to the old city of Daunus, his father.

*Headland and Surf*

690 Meanwhile Mezentius, prompted by Jupiter, hotly resumed the war, charging jubilant Trojans. Tuscan counter-charged—all of their hatred and weapons in fact volleyed and aimed at that single man. He stood like a headland, a hugely projecting seawall facing the wind's rage, bare to the breakers, living through every threat and force of heaven and ocean. Remaining unmoved he knocked to the ground Dolichaeon, the son of Hebrus. Latagus fell, and a runaway Palmus: he struck Latagus' face and mouth with a boulder, a big chunk of some mountain; Palmus he hamstrung and left there slowly writhing. (Laurus was given the arms to shoulder, plumes to stick on his helmet.) He killed Euanthes too, a Phrygian; Mimas, a friend and equal of Paris: the same night that his mother Theano brought him to light for his father Amycus, Paris was born to the queen—she'd feared she carried a fire-brand. Paris was buried near Troy, his homeland; Mimas, in unknown Laurentian soil. Now, like dogs that snap at and drive from the mountain heights a boar hidden for years in the pinegroves carried by Vesulus Mountain, or gorged for years in some reedy

710 Laurentian bog: after he runs in the netting he stops and fiercely snorts, bristling his shoulders, no one brave enough to approach or arouse him, preferring to taunt with spears and shouts from a distance: so Mezentius, justly hated by Tuscan, found no one with spirit and bare sword to engage him. They irked him with loud yelling and spears from a distance. Still unafraid the man stalled them on all sides, grinding his teeth, the shield fending each lance off.
Lion and Prey

A man had come from ancient Corythus’ border—

720 Acron, exiled from Greece, engaged but not married. Mezentius eyed him scattering ranks in the distance, decked in purple nuptial plumes for his lady.
The way a starved lion, prowling through highland retreats, compelled by maddening hunger, will happen to see a doe dash out or a stag with burgeoning antlers: he snarls with immense pleasure, backhair erected, he clutches that flesh in a crouch, his jaws a revolting and bloody slaver:

Mezentius rushed at the massed enemy fiercely

730 and Acron went down, sadly, heels beating the greyish dust where he died, the broken spear in his own blood.

Hard Sleep

Mezentius even disdained to flatten a running Orodès by wounding the man with a spear from the blind side: he ran and faced him soldier to soldier directly, killing him not through stealth but stronger exertion.
He stepped on the fallen chest to pull out his weapon:
“A tall one lies here, men, with no small role in the battle—Orodès!” Glad friends joined in the war-cry.
And dying Orodès: “I’ll have vengeance, whoever

740 you are: you won’t rejoice for long, conqueror. Equal Fates are watching. Soon you’ll lie on this war-field.”
Mezentius briddled. He answered and smiled through his anger:
“First you’ll die. The King of men and Father of Sky-Gods will see to me.” He stopped, yanked the spear from the body, and hard quiet pressed the eyes of Orodès:
iron sleep darkened and closed them forever.

Mourning Distributed Equally

Caedicus killed Alcathous now; Sacrator, Hydaspes.
Rapo killed Parthenius, then the powerful Orses.
Messapus killed Ericetes (the son of Lycaon) and Clonius:

750 the second thrown to the ground by a horse with no bridle, the first on foot. Where a Lycian, Agis, was walking, Valerus cut him down—he lacked none of his fathers’ courage. Salius killed Thronius; but Salius
died by the skilledNealces’ bow from a distance, unnoticed.
The grave War-God now distributed mourning
and death equally. Both sides, winning or losing, charged and were killed. No one saw an escape-route. Gods in Jupiter's hall pitied their futile rage, the intense labor of people on both fronts.

760 Here Venus watched; there, the daughter of Saturn. Tisiphone fumed, pale and surrounded by thousands.

The Domination of Mezentius

Mezentius moved on the field like a storm-wind and brandished a truly immense lance. Huge as Orion cutting a wake stride by stride through the deepest ocean marsh and taller than waves by a shoulder: or hauling an old ash-tree down from some mountain, his feet on the ground, his head obscured in a raincloud: Mezentius walked that tall with his ponderous weapons. Aeneas had watched him move the length of a column, preparing to face him. Mezentius fearlessly stood there, his own mass, awaiting a high-minded rival. He watched and guessed the distance a spear-throw would cover. "You God in my own hand and the weapon I balance: stay close and help me. I vow Lausus will buckle that armor himself. I'll steal from the corpse of a stealer, Aeneas." He stopped and flung a spear from the distance that hissed as it flew but clanged off the shield of Aeneas—it pierced Antores, an excellent man, in the belly. Antores, arrived from Greece, Hercules' comrade, had lived in a town of Italy close to Evander. He lay in anguish now, mistakenly wounded and gazing to heaven, remembering lovely Argos, and dying.

A Disabling Wound

Then Aeneas prayed and hurtled: his weapon pierced the convex shield, three layers of bull’s-hide, linen and brass, and sank low in Mezentius' groin but not too deeply. Quickly Aeneas pulled the sword by his thigh, glad to have spotted Tuscan blood. He charged the shaken man in a frenzy.

Praise for a Soldier

But Lausus cried aloud watching the action, his face in tears from the deep love for his father. A hard death would come from your eminent conduct: if ancient time sustains faith in your action
I surely won't be silent, memorable soldier.

*Father Defended by Son*

Mezentius yielded ground as if hamstrung and useless.
Retreating, he pulled the enemy’s lance from the shield-rim.
Lausus hurried and mingled himself in the fighting:
just as Aeneas’ hand rose for the death-blow
Lausus parried the stroke himself and Aeneas
was checked. Friends loudly cheered and supported
the son, whose buckler protected the father’s withdrawal:
they hurled weapons and drove the enemy well back
with missiles. Aeneas fumed but stayed under cover.
The way a black stormcloud pours out its headlong
rain and hail, scattering every planter
and plower afield, travelers hunching safely in shelter
close to a stream-bank or high in the arch of a cliff-side—
the earth gets drenched so people can work in the daylight
once the sun returns: that’s how the war-storm
covered Aeneas. Weapons thundered on all sides;
he bore it. He scolded Lausus and threatened the young man,
"Where will you run to die? Your daring surpasses
your strength: your love makes you careless." But Lausus
went on, gloating madly. Fiercer resentment
rose in the Darden leader. The Fates had collected
Lausus’ last threads: the hard blade of Aeneas
thrust in the youth’s belly and vanished completely,
its point passing through buckler, armor (too light for such
menace)
and tunic, woven in soft gold by his mother.
All his front bloodied, he sadly relinquished
life to the air, giving a corpse to the Death-world.

*An Enemy’s Loss Mourned*

The son of Anchises, in fact, watching the dying
man’s face with its strange manner of greying,
deeply sighed and held out a pitying right hand—
love for his own father had troubled his vision.
"Wretched man, what can the love of Aeneas
give you now to match your laudable instincts?
Keep the armor you took such pride in. I’ll send you
back, if it’s any concern, to the spirit and ash of your fathers.
You died, sadly. One fact may lessen the sadness:
you fell by the great hand of Aeneas.” Upbraiding
some timid friends of Lausus, he knelt on the ground and he
raised him,
the usually braided hair now bloodied and dirty.

A Son's Loss Mourned

The father meanwhile had reached a bank of the Tiber.
He rinsed his wound in water, resting his body,
leaned against a tree-trunk. Nearby the bronze-plated helmet
hung from a bough; his heavy arms lay still in a clearing.
Hand-picked men were around him. Wheezing and sickly,
esting his neck, beard sprawled on his chest and disheveled,
he asked all about Lausus, often dispatching
a man to recall him, or bring worried words from his father.
But friends brought him the dead Lausus in mourning
high on a shield, a great man now, wounded and beaten
greatly. The father had sensed grief: his heart had expected
the worst. Dusting his hair repeatedly, raising
both hands to the sky, he clutched the body and cried out,
"How could so great joy in living possess me,
my son? To let you withstand the enemy's right hand—
you, my son! Your wound rescued your father:
you're dead, I live. Oh, but what pain to be exiled
now, what misery stings me, how deeply that wound goes!
I sullied your name, my son. I'm guilty of evil,
driven in shame from the scepter and throne of our Fathers.
I should be punished: my fatherland's people despised me.
I should be given to all these deaths: I deserved them.
Instead I'm alive, yet to abandon daylight and people.
But now I will." He raised himself on an aching
leg while speaking. Though deep hurt had diminished
his strength he was hardly crushed. He called for a graceful
comfort in war, his horse—the one he had always
ridden in triumph. He spoke to the animal sadly:
"We've lived a long time, Rhoebus—if anything earthly
lasts long. Today we'll return either in triumph,
with bloody spoils like the head of Aeneas in vengeance
for Lausus' pain, or make no way with our power
and both go down. I can't believe that your strongest
heart will yield to foreigners' rule and be mastered by Trojans."

Book X
Taunts and Spear-Throws

He stopped, took his usual place on the horse’s back and filled both hands with fine-pointed lances. Bronze helmet gleaming—the crest was of horsehair—

he rode to the front quickly. Shame had engulfed him, mixed with grief in his heart verging on madness. He knew his valor, but love had made him fanatic. Now he called out loud three times for Aeneas. The Trojan recognized that voice. He prayed with a relish, “Father of Gods, let it happen. Highest Apollo, let this combat begin.”

He said no more but moved with a poised spear to confront him. Mezentius called out, “How could you scare me, you savage? Son-killing—that was the only way you could wound me.

But I don’t panic at death, or care for your Sky-Gods. Enough! I came to die—and to bring you some presents first.” While speaking he twirled a spear at his rival, another spear and another, throwing while circling widely around him. The gold shield-boss withstood them. He galloped from right to left three times in a circle, flinging lances, the Trojan champion turning three times, the bronze shield an overgrown forest.

A Final Strategy

When everything dragged on, weary of yanking so many spears out, the fight’s unfairness compelling

him now to mind all options, finally Aeneas threw, with a leap, a spear at the war-horse’s temple. The animal reared up, lashed the air with its hoof-swings and dumped Mezentius. Tumbling itself on the rider headlong, it tangled and pinned him, throwing a shoulder. Trojans and Latins burned the sky with their outcries.

Bared Throat

Aeneas ran up, pulling a sword from its scabbard, and spoke down to him: “Where is Mezentius’ fury and wild strength now?” The Tuscan regarded man and sky, gasping for air when he answered, “Sour enemy, why do you threaten and taunt me? Kill me, it’s no great crime. I came here for combat: Lausus made no peace-pact for me with a Trojan. I ask one thing—if enemies humor their victims—
let my body be buried. I know I’m surrounded by bitter people who hate me. I ask that you fend off their fury: let me lie close in a tomb to the body of Lausus.”
After speaking he consciously bared his throat to the weapon. Life ran out in a flow of blood on his armor.