

AENEID III

The gods had now deleted every trace
Of Asia's power and Priam's guiltless race,
Proud Ilium had fallen, and the ground
Of Neptune's Troy was smoking; we were bound
By this to seek exile in desert land
Afar because of Heaven's omens and
Beneath Antandros, under Ida's height
We built a fleet, unsure how destiny might
Treat us, where we might dock, and mustered men.
Scarcely had early summer started when 10
Anchises bade us yield to destiny
And set sail: with tears pouring out of me
I left my country's shores, each port, each plain
Where Troy once stood. An exile on the main,
I sailed with household gods, friends and Iulus,
My son. The war-god's land lay far from us,
By Thracians tilled, though over it once reigned
Lycurgus. We in former days had gained
Its friendship; its household gods were allied
With ours while Fortune blessed us. On the tide 20
We hither came and on its curved shoreline
I founded my first city, whose design
I entered on with hostile fates, and I,
From my own name, called it Aeneadae.
A sacrifice I then was offering
To Venus and the other gods to bring
Their blessing on the project, and I slew

A shining white bull as an offering to
 The King of Gods upon the shore. A mound
 There was close by, and on its top I found 30
 Cornel bushes and myrtle bristling
 With spear-shafts. I grew near and, essaying
 To tear up from the soil its greenery
 That I might with the branches of a tree
 Adorn the altar. Then - wondrous to tell –
 I saw a dreadful portent. For there fell
 From the first tree, its roots torn from the ground,
 Black blood that stained the earth with gore. Around
 My frame a shudder ran. My blood ran cold
 And froze with terror. Once more I made bold 40
 To pluck a stubborn shoot from another tree
 And seek the hidden cause. Similarly
 Black blood oozed from its bark. As my mind reeled,
 To the woodland Nymphs and Mars I then appealed
 (For he rules over the Getic fields) that they
 Might duly bless this sight and take away
 Much of its force, but after I had sought
 With greater effort the first shafts and fought,
 Upon my knees, the stubborn sand (should I
 Speak or be mum?), I heard a piteous cry 50
 At the mound's base and then: 'Why do you tear
 At me, Aeneas? In my tomb now spare
 Me! Don't pollute your pure hands! You know me –
 I am of Troy. Not from a lifeless tree
 Does this gore flow. Depart this cruel land!
 Ah, pity me! Depart this greedy strand!

I'm Polydorus. I was pierced right through
 With an iron harvest of spear-shafts which then grew
 Into sharp javelins.' With perplexing dread
 I was appalled: the hairs upon my head 60
 Stood up and in my throat my voice stuck fast.
 With a great weight of gold once in the past
 The luckless Priam sent in secrecy
 This man to the Thracian king that he might be
 His ward, no longer trusting Dardan might,
 His city seized. Fortune had taken flight
 With Troy brought down, and so this Thracian king
 Cut every sacred tie, now following
 Agamemnon's conquering arms. Taking the gold,
 He slew Polydorus. How many hearts are sold 70
 By you, accursed gold! After the dread
 Had left my body, to each chosen head
 Of all the Trojans this great prodigy
 I spoke of (to my father principally)
 And begged of them their judgment. Of one mind
 Were they – to leave this cursed land behind
 Where kindness was polluted and rely
 Upon the winds. A tomb was built up high:
 We gave Polydorus fresh solemnities.
 The altars celebrate the dead and these 80
 Dolorous fillets and black myrtle wear;
 About them Trojan dames with streaming hair,
 As is the custom, stand: and then we bring
 Bowls of warm, foaming milk and the we lay
 His soul to rest upon the tomb and pray

Once more. As soon as we can trust the sea
 And winds are calm and the South Wind whisperingly
 Calls out to it, my comrades launch the fleet
 And crowd the shores. The lands and towns retreat 90
 As we leave harbour. Mid-sea lies a land,
 Holy and dear to the Nereids' mother and
 Aegean Neptune. As it wandered round
 The coasts and shores the grateful Archer bound
 It to high Mykonos and Gyaros
 And let it lie unmoved and, as winds toss
 Around it, spurn them. Thither I sailed, and she
 Welcomed our weary band most peacefully
 In a safe haven. We prayed, now on land,
 To Pallas' town. King Anius – both king and 100
 Apollo's priest – his brows with fillets bound
 And hallowed laurel, met us all and found
 An old friend in Anchises; hands were pressed
 In greeting; to his palace we progressed.
 To the god's ancient temple, which was made
 Of stone, I paid due homage and then prayed:
 'O Thymbrian, grant to us a fitting place
 To live, grant walls to weary men, a race,
 A lasting city. Our new Pergamum
 Preserve - a second fort, residuum 110
 Of fierce Achilles and the Danaï.
 Whom should we follow? Where do you decree
 That we should go? Where should we build our base?
 Grant us an omen, father, and with grace
 Inspire our hearts!' Then everything suddenly

Appeared to shake – the laurel greenery,
The doorways of the god. There was a moan
Made by the tripod as the shrine was thrown
Open, the whole hill trembled. To the ground
We fell, prostrate, and to our ears the sound 120
Of a voice came: ‘Trojans, so long-suffering,
Your fathers’ land that reared you first shall bring
You to her fruitful bosom once again.
Seek out your ancient mother. The domain
Of Aeneas shall be lord of everything –
His children’s children and those who shall spring
From them.’ Thus Phoebus spoke. Great joy arose,
Mingled with much furore. ‘Whose walls are those?’
All asked. ‘Where should we in our wandering
Return?’ But then my father, pondering 130
Memorials of old, cried out: ‘Hear me,
You princes. Learn your hopes. There in mid-sea
Lies Crete, great Jupiter’s isle, where Ida’s mount
And our kin’s cradle are, where one may count
A hundred towns with great fertility;
And, if I can rely on memory,
Our earliest father, Teucer, to the strand
Of Rhoeteum sailed while searching for a land
Where he might rule, before Troy’s citadel
Was reared, or Troy herself. Men had to dwell 140
In low ravines. This island earned its fame
Through Mother Cybele who thither came
With Corybantian cymbals; also there
You’ll find the grove of Ida, which is where

The faithful silence of her rites was kept,
 And underneath her chariot there swept
 Yoked lions. Then let's follow the god's decree,
 Appease the winds and seek the sovereignty
 Of Gnosus. It is not so far away –
 Should Jove be gracious to us, the third day 150
 Should find us anchored there.' And then he slew
 Upon the shrines the sacrifices due –
 Bulls to Neptune and Phoebus, a black sheep
 To the Storm-God and a white one to keep
 The Zephyrs kindly. Rumour flew around
 That chief Idomeneus had, exile-bound,
 Left home and that the island's shores were bare,
 Its foes gone, and the homes were standing there
 Awaiting us. Ortygia's harbours we
 Leave far behind and fly across the sea, 160
 Past Bacchic Naxos revelling on its height,
 Green Donyssa, Olearus and snow-white
 Paros, the sea-strewn Cyclades and file
 The straits that foam round many a shore. Meanwhile,
 The sailors' shouts rose up in rivalry.
 The crewmen cheer: 'Let's seek our ancestry
 In Crete.' A wind is rising up behind
 Us as we sail and finally we find
 We're gliding in to reach the ancient land
 Of the Curetes. The city that I've planned 170
 To build I work on very eagerly
 And call it Pergamum. Our company,
 So happy with that name, I urge to love

Their hearths and build a citadel above
The city. Now the ships lie on the strand;
Our youth engaged in tilling of the land
And marriage. Laws and homes I gave. But then
Out of a tainted sky our Trojan men
Were plagued with wretched pestilence; the trees
And crops were hit by dire calamities. 180
Men died or dragged their feeble frames about
While Sirius scorched the acreage with drought.
The grass was dry; the sickly crop suppressed
Its fruits; Anchises then made the behest
That to Ortygia's oracle we should sail
And pray for Phoebus' favour to prevail
Upon us, ask what end we would receive
To our fatigue and whence he would relieve
Our toil and what our course should be. All sought
Their sleep (it was now night); the gods I'd brought, 190
The Phrygian gods which from I the Trojan flame
Had rescued now into my presence came,
It seemed, as I was sleeping, shining bright
Where the full moon was streaming in her light.
They spoke to me and took my cares away:
'What at Ortygia Phoebus will say
He utters here and sends us that he might
Report his words. When Ilium was alight
We followed you in battle, and again
We were beneath you in the swelling main. 200
Your future sons we will exalt and we
Shall to your city furnish monarchy.

To say this was Cassandra. I recall

Now that she said this sorrow would befall
Our race, Hesperia often mentioning
And Italy's realm. But – Trojans venturing
To Hesperia? Who'd believe it? Who would heed
Cassanadra's prophecies? Let us concede
To Phoebus and pursue the better plan –
We have been warned!' He speaks and every man
Obeys him joyfully. This place as well
We quit and, leaving some behind, the swell 240
We brave in hollow keels; the desert main
We speed across, and when the deep we gain,
No land in sight – only the sky and sea
On every side - a rain-cloud murkily
Looms overhead, bringing a night-time gale.
The waters shudder darkly as we sail
At once the winds begin to overturn
The waters as the great seas rise and churn,
And in a vast abyss we're tossed about;
Storm-clouds enwrap the day night's rain blots out 250
The sky. From rent clouds flashes lightning.
Hurled from our course, we end up wandering
Blindly. Even Palinurus I hear say
He knows not day from night and now our way
He can't recall. We wander for three days
In misty gloom, three nights in starless haze.
On the fourth day, we now saw lands arise;
Far mountains, curling smoke, too, met our eyes.
Sails dropped, we ply our oars; immediately
The sailors churn the deep and lustily 260

Sweep the blue waves. The shores of the Strophades
(Their Greek name) greet me, rescued from the seas.
In the great Ionian sea these islands stand:
The dread Celaeno dwells upon this land
And the other Harpies, since they have been sent
From Phineus' house and left their nourishment
In fear. No monster deadlier than these
Has ever risen from the Phrygian seas,
No fiercer plague nor godly wrath. These birds
Have maidens' faces and the filthiest turds 270
They drop, their hands are clawed, their faces spare
With hunger. When into the harbour there
We came, fine herds of cattle peppering
The plains we see and goats, too, scampering
Across the grass untended. Then indeed,
With swords in hand, we charge at them with speed
And bid the gods to share our slaughtered store,
And then we build along the curving shore
Couches and eat the rich food. From on high
In a sudden, dreadful swoop the Harpies fly, 280
Shaking the clanging wings, then capturing
The meat, contaminating everything
That lies upon the board. A hideous shriek
Then rends the sky amid the nauseous reek.
Once more, beneath a hollowed oak, within
A lengthy recess closely covered in
With trees and quivering shadows, we all strew
The tables with our banquet and renew
The altar's fire. But from a hidden lair

Once more and from a different place the air 290
Is filled with taloned feet, and all around
Ur feast they fly, making a hideous sound,
And taint the food. I then cry: 'Men, prepare
Your weapons; for it's war we must declare
Against this filthy race. The words I say
They heed and through the grass their arms they lay,
Concealed, and hide their shields. And then, once more,
The birds swoop down and shriek along the shore.
Misenus, watching from his citadel,
With hollow brass gives us the sign. Pell-mell 300
We charge and try a strange combat – to slay
With steel these filthy ocean birds. But they
Don't feel the blows nor suffer injury
Upon their backs, With great rapidity
Ty leave their stinking traces and away
They fly, behind them their half-eaten prey.
Only Celaeno, that ill-fated seer,
Lights on a lofty rock and, with a sneer,
Cries out: 'Is it for warfare that you slew
Our beasts, you Trojans? Is it for war that you 310
Prepare? You'd from our father's realm cast out
Us innocent Harpies? Listen then! Don't doubt
My words! What Jove told Phoebus, and what he
Told me shall be revealed to you by me,
The eldest of the Furies. You intend
To go to Italy – that is your end.
You'll reach her and will be allowed to moor
Within her harbours, but even before

You build your walls around the city you
 Were promised, a dread hunger will subdue 320
 Your people and will force them all to bite
 Their very tables.' At this she took flight
 Back to the forest. But in sudden dread
 My friends' blood chilled and froze, their spirits dead.
 No longer now with arms but vows and pleas,
 They bid me sue for peace, whatever these
 May be – goddesses or birds which foresee
 Dread omens. Now my father makes a plea,
 His hands stretched out upon the beach, and to
 The mighty gods vows sacrifices due: 330
 'Gods, stay your threats! Gods, turn this accident
 Away! Be gracious! Save the innocent!
 He bids them tear the cables from the shore
 And loosen and uncoil the sheets. Once more
 The South Winds stretch the sails. Once more, we flee
 Across the foaming main, wherever we
 Are bid by breeze and pilot. To our eyes
 Wooded Zacynthus and Dulichium arise,
 Same, steep, rocky Neritus as well.
 We flee the rocks of Ithaca, where dwell 340
 Laertes' people, and we lay a curse
 On the land that was cruel Ulysses' nurse,
 And soon the cloudy, storm-capped peaks appear
 Of Mt. Leucata and – what sailors fear -
 Apollo's shrine. In weariness we go
 Near to the little town, and then we throw
 The anchor from the prow; the sterns now stand

Upon the beach. So the unhopèd-for land
 We gain at last and then purification
 We offer Jupiter; with immolation 350
 With Trojan games we throng the Actian strand;
 Naked and sleek with oil, my allied band
 Engage in native wrestling, glad that they
 Past many an Argive town have slipped away
 Amidst their foes. The sun, though, circulates
 Through seasons; icy winter agitates
 The waves with North winds; once borne by Abas,
 Great warrior, a shield of hollow brass
 I fix on the entrance pillars. One may see
 My celebratory verse: *This weaponry* 360
Aeneas gained from conquering Greeks. The men
 I bade to quit the anchorage and then
 To man the benches; there in rivalry
 With oars they lash the waves and sweep the sea.
 The Phaeicians' lofty citadel soon gone
 From sight, round Epirus's shores we carry on
 To the Chaonian harbour and draw near
 Buthrotis' lofty city. It was here
 We hear an incredible tale – that Priam's son,
 Helenus, ruled Greek cities, having won 370
 Pyrrhus' wife and realm; we're told Andromache
 Another Trojan wed. It staggers me.
 I burn to speak with hi and find out more
 Of such a fate. I leave the port, the shore,
 The fleet. By chance I spy Andromache
 In a grove before the city, just as she

By the mime Simois' stream is offering
 Her yearly feasts and gifts of sorrowing
 To the dust, inviting each divinity
 To Hector's empty mound of greenery 380
 With twin shrines hallowed so that there she may
 Shed tears, and when she sees me, on my way,
 And Trojan arms, distracted as her eyes
 See all these marvels, each one terrifies
 The lady and she stiffens, all aghast.
 Heat leaves her limbs, she swoons, and then at last
 She speaks: 'O goddess-born, is it really you
 Who come to me? Will your report be true?
 Are you alive? If kindly light has fled.
 Where's Hector?' Then a flood of tears she shed 390
 And filled the place with crying. No reply
 Could I give to her frenzy. Gasping, I,
 Moved deeply, said: 'I am alive indeed –
 A life of great extremities I lead.
 Don't doubt – believe this sight. O what a fate
 Befell you, having lost a man so great!
 What fortune worthy of you have you met
 This time? And is Pyrrhus your husband yet?'
 She whispered, eyes cast down,: 'Happiest of all
 Is Priam's maiden daughter. doomed to fall 400
 At a foe's tomb in lofty Troy, who bore
 No lot's award nor was a captive for
 A conquering master's bed! With Troy aflame,
 We were transported far and here we came,
 Bearing Achilles' son's effrontery

And youthful innocence; in slavery
We gave birth. After that, though, keen to wed
The Spartan Leda, whom he wished to bed,
To Helenus he gave me, although he
Was also captive. But exceedingly 410
Mad for his stolen bride, did Orestes,
Being harassed for his iniquities
By the Furies, caught him unawares and slew
Him by his father's altars. But some due,
Through Neoptolemus' dying, of the realm
Had passed to Helenus; now at the helm,
He called the plains Chaonian, the whole land
Chaonia, from Trojan Chaon, and
Upon these heights a Trojan citadel
He placed. About you, though – what Fates befell 420
You, and what winds propelled you on the sea?
What god has driven you unknowingly
To these shores? And Ascanius, your boy?
Does he still see the sun? The fall of Troy
Did he survive? And does he still maintain
Love for his own lost mother? And again
Does Uncle Hector and his father fire
His heart with ancient pluck and the desire
For manly spirit?' She poured out her heart
With tears and was in vain about to start 430
Long lamentations when great Helenus,
Old Priam's son, was drawing near to us
With many folk. He knew us for his kin
And happily through the gates he led us in.

With every word he wept copiously.
 Advancing then, a little Troy I see,
 An imitation of our mighty nation,
 And a dry brook which takes its designation
 From Xanthus hen upon the Skaian Gate
 I plant a kiss. In this same happy state, 440
 The men enjoy the city's amity.
 The king greets them amidst the luxury
 Of ample cloisters. While the bowls they hold,
 They pour out wine libations, and on gold
 The feast is served. Days pass; the breezes shout
 Out to the sails, the canvas filling out
 With the South Wind, and then I ventured near
 To Helenus and this asked of the seer:
 'Trojan, the gods prophet, you who can say
 The will of Phoebus and who knows his bay, 450
 The tripods, stars, the meanings issuing
 From birds' tongues – omens of the flying wing –
 Tell me (for Heaven has told me joyously
 Where I shall go, and all the gods told me
 To make for Italy and seek to go
 To distant lands; the Harpy Celaeno
 Alone gave me a startling prophecy,
 Dreadful to tell, of hateful scarcity
 Of sustenance and awful anger) say
 What perils I should first avoid, I pray, 460
 And how I may endure such suffering.;
 Then Helenus, with due custom offering
 The gods steers, craved peace, from his hallowed head

Unbound the fillets and, Apollo, led
Me to the gates, with your full presence thrilled.
Then prophecies that were to be fulfilled
The priest's inspired lips pronounced: 'It's plain,
O goddess-born, that you across the main
Were led by higher powers (Jove doles out
One's fate and turns the wheel of change about; 470
Such is the circling course), to you I'll tell
A few things out of many that the swell
Of ocean you with more security
May cross and reach Ausonia's haven. Me
The Fates forbid to know more; Juno, too,
Won't let me speak. First, Italy, which you
Think near at hand and which unwittingly
You hope to reach soon lies across the sea
So far from here. Your oars you'll have to work
Through the Trinacrian sea, nor must you shirk 480
The Ausonian main, the nether lakes as well,
And on Aeacan Circe's isle you'll dwell
Before you'll build your city in that land
In safety. I will tell you tokens and
You must remember them. When you have found,
In your distress, a sow upon the ground
Lying beneath some oaks upon the shore
By a secluded stream – a sow, what's more,
Who's just delivered thirty young, all white,
Like her, around her teats – that is your site, 490
The end of all your toils. And have no fear
Of biting tables. Phoebus will be here

When summoned, and the Fates will find a way.
 These lands, however, shun, and those which stray
 Along the Italian border, where our tide
 Washes the shore – in all those towns abide
 Infamous Greeks. The Narycian Locri
 Have built a city here; with soldiery
 Idomeneus the Sallentine grassland
 Has thronged; here is the tiny but well-manned 500
 Petelia, Philoctetes' city (he
 Who was the captain of the company
 Of Mliboeans). When you have traversed
 The sea and built shrines on the shore, then first
 Cover your hair with purple robes in case
 Among the sacred fires a hostile face
 Appear and mar the omens. May your men
 Observe this mode of sacrifice, and then
 By this observance may your progeny,
 And their descendants, too, in purity 510
 Stand fast. But when the winds show you the strand
 Of Sicily and the barriers that stand
 Open to narrow Pelorus, you should go
 To the land and seas upon the left, although
 The path is long; the right hand you must shun.
 These lands, they say, although they once were one,
 Were split by mighty force (such change has been
 Made over many aeons). In between
 The sea came in and cut the Hesperian side
 From the Sicilian, with its narrow tide 520
 Washes the fields and cities which now stand

On severed shores; Scylla on the right hand
 Stands guard, Charybdis on the other side,
 Voracious. Thrice from the bottom of the sea,
 Then casts it up, spraying the galaxy.
 Scylla is penned in by a gloomy den
 Whence she gapes forth and lures the ships of me
 Onto her rocks: above a human face
 She has, down to the waist a maid of grace 530
 And beauty, but below a monstrosity –
 A large sea-dragon with a quantity
 Of dolphins' tails and wolf-bellies. And so
 It's better that you shun that sea and go
 A longer way than see in her vast lair
 Misshapen Scylla and the rocks that bear
 Her baying, sea-green hounds. If I am right,
 Moreover, and some trust in the foresight
 Of seers exists, if Phoebus fills his heart
 With truth, the one thing I to you impart, 540
 O goddess-born, the thing that stands in lieu
 Of everything else, and this I caution you
 Repeatedly: to mighty Juno pray,
 Sing joyful chants to Juno that you may
 Win her with suppliant gifts. Thus finally
 You will be sped, victorious, this sea
 Now left behind. When at Cumae you land,
 Avernus with its rustling woodland, and
 The haunted lakes, the inspired prophetess you'll find,
 Who all the signs and symbols has assigned 550
 To leaves and sings the Fates inside her lair

Of rocks. What verses she has written there
On leaves she sorts out and then stores away
Within her cave; remaining there, they stay
Within their rank. But when a hinge has turned
Upon the door and a light breeze has churned
The tender foliage she has no care
To catch it as it flutters in the air
Inside the rocky cave nor to retrieve
Their ranks nor merge the verses. Then, men leave 560
Without her counsel and abominate
The Sibyl's seat. Therefore procrastinate,
Though comrades chide and you are urgently
Called by your journey to essay the sea
And gales are favourable. Approach the seer
And pray for oracles which you may hear
Her graciously sing out. The Italian race,
The coming wars and how you'll have to face
Or flee each toil she'll tell. Entreated, she
Will grant a journey of prosperity. 570
These are my warnings. Go now and exalt
Great Troy by your deeds up to Heaven's vault.'
Thus graciously he spoke to us, and then
Down to the ships the seer ordered his men
With golden gifts and severed ivory
And in the halls stowed a large quantity
Of silver, Dodonan cauldrons and a breast-
Plate triply clasped with gold and, with a crest
Of plumes a splendid helmet, which before

Were worn by Neoptolemus. Yet more 580
 Came from my father – steeds, guides and a crew;
 He with their arms equipped my comrades, too.
 Meanwhile he ordered sails to grace the fleet
 Lest a kind wind should some postponement meet.
 Apollo's seer with seep respect now came
 To him: 'Anchises, worthy of your fame
 As Venus' spouse, twice from the ruination
 Of Troy rescued, and the gods' obligation,
 Ausonia waits for you! Sail! Make her yours!
 And yet you must drift on beyond these shores, 590
 That part which Phoebus shows still far away.
 Blest is you son's love. What more is to say?
 Why hold up surging winds?' Andromache,
 Sad at this last farewell, brought finery –
 Robes figured with inwoven gold; she brought
 Ascanius a Phrygian scarf, and nought
 She lacked in courtesy. A whole outfit
 She pressed on him and said to him: 'Take it
 To be the witness of my work, young lad,
 And the abiding love Andromache had, 600
 Hector's wife. The final bounty of your race
 Now take. I see Astyanax's face,
 Eyes, hands in you alone; now would he be
 Of your years.' I spoke to them tearfully:
 'Farewell – your fate's determined. We are pressed
 From fate to fate, but you have gained your rest:
 No seas to plough, no further destination
 To hanker for, like the Ausonian nation,

Always retreating. A facsimile

OF Xanthus and another Troy you see, 610

Which you have built with your own hands – I pray

The signs were happier. Further away

Be Greeks! If Tiber and her fields I face

And see the walls awarded to our race,

Our sister towns and allies – Epirus,

Hesperia – of whom the same Dardanus

Was ancestor, with the same dreadful tale,

From these two towns our spirit shall not fail

To make a Troy, and may that custody

Be granted to our future progeny.' 620

We sped across the sea and ventured near

The rock-face of Araucia; from here

Is the shortest route to Italy.

Meanwhile the sun set; in obscurity

The mountains lay. On the desired shore

We cast ourselves down, each and every oar

Doled out; on the dry beach some relaxation

We took. Sleep held us in our great prostration.

Night, driven by the Hours, was not halfway

To dawn when, springing up from where he lay, 630

Palinurus nimbly went to scrutinize

And listen to the winds. In the mute skies

He marked the gliding stars – damp Hyades.

Twin Bears, Arcturus and, as well as these,

Orion armed in gold. He could discern

That the whole sky was clear, so from the stern

He shouted loudly. We broke camp and sped

Upon our way, the wings of our sails all spread.
Dawn blushed, the stars fled and from far away
We saw dim hills where lowland Italy lay. 640
Then first Achates 'Italy!' cried out,
Then joyfully all my comrades with that shout
Responded – 'Italy!' Anchises bound
A massive bowl with wreaths: when it was crowned,
He filled it full of wine. Standing up high
Upon the stern, he called up to the sky:
'O powerful god of storms and earth and sea,
Waft us with gentle breezes graciously!'
The longed-for breezes freshen, as we draw near,
A haven opens and we see appear 650
A temple on Minerva's Heights. The men
Furl all the sails and to the shoreline then
Direct the prows. The eastern surge has made
The harbour bow-like; jutting crags are sprayed
With foam. Itself is hidden. Towering high,
The crags let down twin walls; as we draw nigh
The temple is receding from the shore.
The first omen we see is horses – four
Of them – upon the grass. They, white as snow,
Are grazing there as, far and wide, they go 660
Across the plain. Anchises said: 'It's war
You bear, o welcoming land. It's what they're for –
These steeds. They threaten war. One day their lot,
Though, will be to be yoked to a chariot
And bear the bit of concord. Peacefulness
There's also hope for.' Then to the goddess

Of clashing arms, great Pallas, we pray (she
 First hailed our cheers). Before the altars we
 All veiled our heads with Phrygian robes. We thought
 Of Helenus' urgent charge and duly brought 670
 A sacrifice to Juno. Straightaway,
 Our vows all paid in full, we sail away,
 Our sail-clad yards turned windward as we go
 From Grecian fields that we distrust. Now lo!
 The bay of Tarentum, a town of Hercules;
 If we may trust the tale, across from these
 Is the temple of Juno and Caulon's height
 And Sylaceum, ship-wrecker. In our sight
 Is Etna far away; the sea's great roar
 And crashing rocks we hear; along the shore 680
 Are broken noises. Shoals leap from the sea,
 Sands mixed with surge. Anchises said: "Trust me,
 This is Charybdis! These things Helenus
 Foretold – these crags, these rocks – calamitous!
 To the rescue, man the oars, men.' They complied.
 Palinurus turned the groaning prow portside;
 With oars and wind our whole force larboard went.
 The arching billow up to Heaven sent
 Our ships and, as the water ebbed, to Hell.
 Thrice through the rocks the ships gave out a yell, 690
 And thrice we saw the dripping stars and spray
 That showered us. The wind, though, went away
 At sundown, and we, ignorant of our course,
 Reached the Cyclops' land. The port, safe from the force
 Of winds, was large, but, thundering nearby,

Was dreadful, clashing Etna. To the sky
Black clouds were tossed which fumed with pitchy whirls
And glowing ashes, lifting upwards curls
Of flame which licked the stars; and meanwhile she
Regurgitates her rocks torrentially 700
And her torn entrails while the molten stone
She casts into the ether with a groan.
Enceladus's form, incinerated
By the thunderbolt – or so it has been stated –
Was weighed down by that mass, and up on high
Mt. Etna breathes out flames into the sky.
From its burnt furnaces. Whenever he
Turned over, all Trinacria would be
A-tremble and would moan, the sky obscured
By smoke. That night great terrors we endured 710
Nor did we see whatever caused the sound;
No star revealed its light; the moon was bound
In cloud at dead of night. Next day's first light
Cast dewy shades; at once into our sight
Out of the woods there came a piteous,
Unknown man, dead with hunger, curious,
Who stretched his hands towards the beach in prayer -
We looked back - ghastly in his squalor there,
His beard unshorn, the clothing that he wore
Fastened with thorns, in all else Greek, though, for 720
He had been sent to fight in Troy. When he
From far off saw our Trojan weaponry
And clothing, for a while he stopped in fear,
Soon rushing to the shore with many a tear

And begging: 'By the stars, the gods I pray
And by the air we breathe from day to day,
Take me, you Trojans, wherever you go
And that will be enough. I know, I know,
I am a Greek. I own that I have fought
Against your gods; if all my guilt has brought 730
You injury, cast me into the sea.
If I should perish it would content me
To have been killed by men!' Having confessed,
He clasped our knees and grovelled. Then we pressed
The man to tell us who he was, his race
And then the fortune that he had to face.
Anchises took his hand without delay
To comfort him. At last he could allay
His fears and said: 'I'm a companion
Of luckless Ulysses – I'm Ithacan, 740
Achaemenides by name. With Adrastus,
My father, who was impecunious
(O would we'd stayed in that penurious state!)
I went to Troy. Here, quitting the grim gate,
My comrades in their haste abandoned me
In the Cyclops' vast cave, full of butchery
And bloodstained feasts, a dark and gloomy den.
This massive brute touches the stars – such men,
O gods, take from the earth! – an ugly thing,
Not to be spoken to, and guzzling 750
On wretches' guts and black blood. His huge hand
I saw myself pick up two of our band
And crush them on a rock as he lay there –

The gore was splashed and swimming everywhere.
I saw him munch the limbs, all trickling
With black blood-clots, the arm joints quivering
Beneath his teeth. Yet not unmortified!
For Ulysses could not such things abide
Nor could forget, though in extremity,
That he was of an Ithacan family. 760
For, drowned with wine and with his feast well-fed,
The monster went to rest his drooping head,
Vomiting gore and morsels coalesced
With blood and wine; then the great gods we blessed
In prayer, allotted parts and then assailed
Him from all sides and with a sharp point impaled
His one huge eye, deep-set and half-concealed
Beneath his fierce brow, like an Argive shield
Or Phoebus' lamp, avenging joyfully
Our comrades' shades. But fell, poor wretches, flee, 770
Cut your ships' cables. For, in size and air
Like Polyphemus in his rocky lair
Where he pens up and milks his sheep, are more
In the high mountains, on this winding shore –
A hundred monstrous Cyclopes! The sky
Has three times shown its moonshine's beams since I
Among the woods in this deserted place
Have dragged my life out, where I have to face
Wild beasts and where upon a rock I see
The massive Cyclopes; and fearfully 780
I shake to hear their trampling feet and cries.
From boughs I get my miserable supplies –

Hard cornels, berries -and from grass I eat
Uptorn roots. Vigilant, I spied your fleet
At last approaching. To what destiny
Would offer I would yield. Enough for me
It is to have escaped the Cyclopes,
A monstrous race. Do to me what you please.'
Scarce had he told his tale when way up high
Upon the mountain-top we could espy 790
The shepherd Polyphemus as he strode
Among his flocks, taking the well-known road
Down to the shore – a monstrous, awful sight,
Lacking a shape, huge and bereft of light.
A cut-down pine served as a stick to guide
Him on his way; his flock walked at his side,
His only solace in his misery.
He reached the sea and with the water he
Washed off the blood that oozed out of his eye,
Gnashing his teeth, unleashing many a cry. 800
He strode into the waves, which had not yet
Reached to his towering sides and made them wet.
Anxiously we sped off far from there
And took the suppliant who had earned our care,
Cutting the cables silently; then we
Bent to our oars and rowed in rivalry.
The monster heard and turned himself around,
His steps now making for the splashing sound,
And since he couldn't reach us or compare
With Ionian waves in following us there, 810
He roared aloud, at which the entire sea

Began to tremble; all of Italy
Was frightened far within, and Etna roared
Within her winding caverns. Then there poured
From woods and mountains the Cyclopean band;
Across the harbours and the shores they fanned,
Roused up. We saw them stand with glaring eye,
Helpless, their heads all towering to the sky,
A grim conclave: like cone-clad cypress-trees
Or lofty oaks on mountain-tops were these, 820
Or in a lofty wood of Jupiter
Or in Diana's grove. In fear, we were
Driven to spread our sheets that we might gain
A favourable wind. But then again –
We had been warned by Helenus to shun
Both Scylla and Charybdis: either one
Was only one hair's breadth from death, and so
We sailed back. Past narrow Pelorus, lo!
The North Wind reached us past the entry-way
Of rocky Panagias and the bay 830
Of Megara and low-lying Thapsus. These
The comrade of the luckless Ulysses
Described as his former wanderings he traced.
An island stretched before our eyes: it faced
A Sicanian bay and it was opposite
Wave-bashed Plemurium (men once called it
Ortygia). River Alpheus, they say,
I Elis forged itself a secret way
Beneath the waves and with the Sicilian swell
Merges around the Arethusan well. 840

Bidden, we praised the great gods of the land;
Then where the marshes of Helorus stand
With splendid soil I passed, then we went by
Pachymus, whose rocks jut out, whose reefs stand high,
Then Camarina, far away (Fate banned
All movement of her), and Gela's grassland,
Great Gela, too, who has acquired her name
From her impetuous river. Then we came
To steep Acragas, long-walled, which once created
Spirited steeds. Now we'd been dedicated 850
Fair winds we passed palm-girt Selinus, then
Lilybaeum, whose rocks are a threat to men
To Drepanus' port and joyless shore I sailed.
I, who by countless sea-storms was assailed,
Now lost Anchises – best of fathers he.
You left me in my weary misery,
Dear father! All for nought was my distress!
The seer warned us of much unhappiness
But did not tell me of this further woe,
And neither did the cruel Celaeno. 860
The trial was my last – I'd roam no more.
Departing thence we came onto your shore
By the god's help.' Thus Aeneas related,
Before an eager throng, what had been fated
And all that he had borne till he attained
Their shores. He ceased to speak and silence reigned.

