

AENEID IX

While far away these things were taking place,
Juno sent Iris down from Heaven's face
To stalwart Turnus, who was sitting then,
As chance would have it, in a sacred glen
In his father Pylumus' grove. To him she said,
This child of Thaumas with her lips so red:
'Turnus, that which no god has dared to vow
In answer to your prayers is happening now,
Unsought. Aeneas, leaving all behind –
His friends, his fleet, his city – has in mind 10
The Palatine kingdom and the residence
Of Evander. That's not all – he travelled hence
To Corythus' furthest cities, mustering
The Lydian countryfolk. No lingering!
Call now for steeds and chariots. No delay!
Seize the bewildered camp!' She flew away
After this warning, cleaving as she flew
The sky with her great bow. The young man knew
The goddess: raising both his hands as she
Left earth, he said: 'Iris, nobility 20
Of Heaven, who has sent you here, conveyed
Upon a bank of clouds, and who has made
The sudden brightness here? The Heavens part.
And I see clearly all the stars that dart
About. I follow this great augury,
Whoever you are who call for weaponry.'
At this he went on to the flowing brook

And from its teeming flood some water took
And prayed to all the gods incessantly
And burdened Heaven with vows. Each company 30
Now to the plain advanced, a splendid sight
Of horses, trimmed-out robes, all shining bright
In gold (first Messapus, who led the men,
Their captain Turnus in the center, then
The sons of Tyrrhus at the rear), akin
To the Ganges which, on high, glides gently in
Its seven streams od the rich Nile which flows
Out of the fields and, sinking, at last goes
Down to its bed. The Trojan company
Here noticed a black cloud that suddenly 40
Gathered, the plains now dark. First, from the wall
Caicus cried: 'What is this murky ball
That rolls about, my countrymen? With speed
Bring weapons, climb the ramparts, for indeed
The foe's upon us!' With great clamouring
The Trojans looked, through every opening,
For shelter, then they manned the walls. For thus
At his departure the most glorious
Of men, Aeneas, had decreed. For he
Had said that, if meanwhile there chanced to be 50
Some incident, they should not dare array
Their line or trust the field, but rather they
Should guard the camp and walls and stay behind
Their mound. Therefore, although they were inclined,
Through wrath and shame, to fight, yet they obeyed,
Barring the gates. Within the towers they stayed,

In arms, and waited for the enemy.
Ahead of his slow column rapidly
Had Turnus flown, with twenty horsemen served,
And came upon the city unobserved. 60
The prince sat on a Thracian steed, white-flecked:
A golden helmet with red crest bedecked
His head. 'My men, will someone come with me
And be the first against the enemy?
See here,' he cried and whirled into the sky
A javelin, which served to signify
Engagement, then advanced across the field
With pride, and then a dreadful clamour pealed,
His comrades following tumultuously;
They marvelled at Trojan timidity. 70
'They dare not trust themselves in equal fray
Nor face the foe,' they said. 'No, there they stay
Inside the camp.' He galloped hither and yon,
Seeking to find a way, where there was none,
Through the walls, just like a wolf that lies in wait
For a crowded flock of sheep – by the pen's gate
He roars at midnight, facing wind and sleet,
While safe beneath their mothers the lambs bleat.
Fiercely and recklessly he storms in spleen,
Tormented that of hunger he's long been 80
The victim, dry and bloodless. Even so
Did Turnus at the ramparts of the foe
Rage angrily, his iron limbs blistering
With strong resentment, ever pondering
By what contrivance he should now essay

An entrance to the fortress. By what way
Could he eject the interned enemy
From their ramparts onto the plain? Then he
Attacked the fleet which, hidden, lay beside
The camp, enclosed by mounds and the flowing tide. 90
He called for fire from his exulting men
And quickly grasped a blazing pine, and then
They fell to, urged on by the company
Of Turnus, all armed with the weaponry
Of murky torches from the hearths. A flare
Of pitch leapt from the smoking torches' glare.
A sooty cloud wafted to Heaven, hurled
By Vulcan. O you Muses, which god whirled
The fierce flames from the Trojan company
And drove the vast fires from their argosy? 100
Faith in the tale is ancient but its glory
Is everlasting. Once, so goes the story,
When Aeneas was early fashioning
His fleet on Phrygian Ida, readying
To sail upon the deep, Queen Cybele,
The very mother of the panoply
Of gods, to mighty Jupiter said: 'Now
That you're Olympus' lord, my son, allow
My prayer. I had, upon a mountain-crest,
A wood of pine, where human folk addressed 110
Me with their offerings, screened all about
With firs and maple" Aeneas was without
A fleet and so I gave it willingly
To him, but now with great anxiety

I'm plagued: allow a mother's prayer that they
Be neither burdened by their weary way
Or crushed by winds. Thus may they profit by
Their breeding in our hills.' In his reply
Her son, who sways the starry world, said: 'O
My mother, why do you rouse providence so? 120
What do you want? Should ships by mortal hand
Constructed have immortal license and
Should Aeneas face insecurity
Securely? Who has such authority
Among the gods? No, when their work is done,
The Ausonian haven reached, then every one
Who has survived the cruel waves to take
Their captain to the Laurentian fields, I'll make
Goddesses of the mighty sea: they'll be
Like those who with their breast the foaming sea 130
Cleave – Galatea and Nereus' child, Noto.'
Then by his brother's Styx's waves that flow
Through banks which seethe with pitch, he gave assent
By nodding and through all Olympus went
A trembling at the sign he gave. Therefore
The day that they had all been waiting for
Had come, the appointed times by Destiny
Fulfilled when, warned by Turnus' savagery,
The torches were forestalled and turned away
By the Mother from the sacred ships. First they 140
Looked on a very strange and flashing light
And then a vast cloud came into their sight
Out of the Dawn while, closely following,

Came Ida's choirs; then there was heard to ring
A dread voice in the air and echoing through
Both enemy ranks: 'Let it not trouble you,
Trojans, to guard my ships nor arm for war.
For Turnus shall ignite the seas before
My sacred pines. The Mother sets you free
From conflict: go, goddesses of the sea.' 150

Each broke her cable from the banks to seek
The deepest ocean and to dip her beak
Into the sea. Then – how extraordinary! –
All rose as maidens and set out to sea.
The Rutuli were amazed, while Messapus,
His teed now terrified, proved timorous.
The raucous stream was stayed, and from the sea
The Tiber turned, but Turnus' bravery
Did not desert him; with encouragement
He buoyed his troops yet used admonishment: 160

'It is the Trojans that these portents seek:
Because of Jove their expectation's weak
Through lack of aid that they were wont to see.
They do not wait for fire and weaponry
From the Rutulians. No hope is left
For flight and of the ocean they're bereft.
One half the world they've lost, we rule the land
While Italy by thousands now is manned.
The oracles of which the Phrygians boast
I do not fear. The Trojan reached this coast – 170
Thus Fate and Venus are remunerated.
I, too, must pay the price, for I am fated

The slay the guilty race that cheated me
Out of my bride. Yes, that adversity
To Atreus' sons alone does not apply –
I, too, must take up arms. "And yet to die
Just once is not enough." One would have thought
They loathed all womankind, those who have sought
Their safety in their ramparts and delay
To fight, thus gaining courage in that way. 180

Did they not see the work of Vulcan's hand,
The walls of Troy, burn down? My chosen band,
Who's ready to destroy their ramparts? Who
Will storm that frightened camp of theirs? I do
Not need the arms of Vulcan nor a fleet
Of a thousand ships. Let all Etruria meet
Then in alliance. No anxiety
Should they have for a cowardly thievery
Of their Palladium in darkness, nor
Shall we hide in a horse's belly: for 190
In broad daylight and in the sight of all
I mean to kindle flame at every wall.

They'll not be fighting Greeks, all kept at bay
By Hector for nine years. Most of the day –
The best part – is now spent, so joyfully
Rest from your splendid work. Be sure that we
Prepare for war.' Meanwhile he gave command
To Messapus to block the gates with a band
Of sentries and to hem each battlement
With fires, while to guard the walls he sent 200
Fourteen Rutulians and, sparkling with gold

And purpled-plumed, a hundred he enrolled
To go with each of these: hither and yon
They rushed about by turns or, stretched upon
The grass, quaffed wine from bronze bowls. Flames burned bright,
The guards engaged throughout the sleepless night
In games. The Trojans, armed, while safeguarding
The battlements, each one with sword in hand. 210
Mnestheus and brave Serestus spurred them all
(Aeneas, should misfortune ever call,
Made them both chiefs and rulers of the nation).
Along the walls each man took up his station,
Taking the risks by turn. Nisus, the son
Of Hyrtacus, of whom there was not one
More valiant, kept the gate, dispatched to be
A warrior in Aeneas' company
By huntress Ida that he might serve in
His train with light darts and swift javelin. 220
Euryalus was with him, the most fair
Of all the Trojan men assembled there,
A youth unshaven. They in amity
Rushed to the battle. But security
Was now their task. 'Did gods give us this fire
Within us, or does this untamed desire
Make each of us a god, Euryalus?'
Said Nisus. 'I have long been ravenous
For fight or some great deed. Tranquillity
Does not delight me. Ah, do you not see 230
The confidence the Rutulians possess?
Their lights are few, and, free of weariness,

They slumber, full of wine. Serenity
Reigns far and wide. Therefore, listen to me
And hear the things I have in mind. Now all
The people and the Senate wish to call
Aeneas hither and to summon men
To give him sure intelligence. Well then,
If what I ask they promise (for to me
The glory is enough) I think I'll see 240
Beneath that mound a pathway that will lead
Me to the walls and fortress. For indeed
That's what I hanker for. Euryalus,
Smitten with great praise, was incredulous.
In answer he said to his fiery friend:
'Then, Nisus, do I gather you intend
To cut me from this mighty plan? I see
You plan this expedition without me.
My father, the old warrior Opheltes,
Did not train me among the miseries 250
Of Troy for this nor was I valorous
With you in battle to be treated thus,
Attending great Aeneas in his fight
For Destiny, for I abhor the light
And count that fame you strive for cheaply bought.'
To this said Nisus: 'I had not one thought
Of fear for you - a grave iniquity.
May Jove or he who would look favourably
On what I do bring me back safe and sound
To you but, if, as often may be found 260
In such a peril, some divinity

Or chance sweep me away, believe you me,
I'd have you live for youth has more worth
For life: someone must lay me in the earth,
Rescued or ransomed, or, if as may be,
Some chance prevents it, with formality
Rites must be held, though I'll be far from here,
And I'll be honoured by an empty bier.
Nor let your mother need to grieve for me –
Alone, out of a multiplicity 270
Of mothers, she dared to follow you and not
For great Acestes' city care one jot.'
'Your idle pleas you're weaving bootlessly,'
Said Nisus, 'I'll not change. Come, speedily.'
He roused the guards who came and took their place.
Euryalus quit his post and matched his pace
With Nisus as they went to seek the king.
All creatures through the earth were slumbering,
Free of all care: the Trojan chiefs, preferred
For their unrivalled chivalry, conferred 280
Upon the state – what should be carried out
And who should tell their chief. They stood about,
Leaning on their long spears while in each hand
A shield was grasped, upon the meadowland
Where they had settled. Nisus and his friend
Euryalus were swift to try to bend
Their ears; they had a great plan to discuss
Which would require delay, they said. Iulus
Was first to greet the anxious pair.' We need
To hear this plan,' he said. 'Well then, give heed,

Trojans,' said Nisus. 'Don't evaluate
Us by our youth. Our foe is in a state
Of ease with wine and sleep: they lie serene.
We've checked the ground – an entry may be seen
Where the gate splits in two, nearest the sea;
Their fires are dim and smoke flies murkily
To heaven. Allow this ruse and let us come
To Aeneas and the Pallanteum
And you'll soon see us booty-laden here,
Back from a mighty slaughter. Have no fear 300
We'll lose the trail: the town's periphery
We've noted down the gloomy glens, since we
Have down there hunted frequently, and so
The river's entire length we've come to know.'
Next man to speak was ancient Aletes,
Most wise in council. 'O divinities
Who ever guard out Troy, you in despite
Of all don't plan to extirpate us quite,
Since you have placed such courage in our men
And fashioned constant souls,' he said and then 310
Took each man by the shoulder, hand in hand.
'What worthy recompense should I demand
For such a noble deed? The very best
Shall Heaven and your hearts provide; the rest
Shall good Aeneas instantly repay,
And young Ascanius, who not one day
Will let pass by without remembering
Such splendid feats.' 'Your safety's the one thing,'
Broke in Ascanius, 'that will guarantee

My father's coming back. Then here's my plea: 320

By all the mighty household gods of mine,

Assaracus's Lar and the ancient shrine

Of Vesta, all my trust, my fate I lay

Upon your knees; recall my father, say

That he'll return. For when he does, my care

Will disappear. I'll give to you a pair

Of silver goblets, rough-chased, which were given

By Father (when Arisba had been driven

Into annihilation these he stole),

Two large gold talents and an ancient bowl 330

That Did gave him. But if Italy

We conquer and assume ascendancy,

Assigning spoil, the steed which Turnus sat

Upon and his gold weaponry, well, that

Same steed, his shield, his plumes of crimson I,

As your remuneration, will set by,

Nisus. My father will give furthermore

Twelve beauteous women chosen from his store

Of slaves and captive men – their armour, too –

And King Latinus' lands he'll give to you 340

As well. Revered youth, older by a year

Or two than me, I hold you very dear,

Embracing you as friend in every deed

Ahead. No glory shall I seek or need

Without you: whether we be at peace or wage

A war, my trust in you you'll always gauge

As greatest both in deed and word.' 'No day,'

Euryalus answered then, 'shall find dismay

In me for such bold acts, should Destiny
 Prove fair, not cruel. Above all gifts my plea 350
 Is this: my mother, of the ancient nation
 Of Priam, kept her staunch determination,
 Despite the land of Troy and Sicily,
 Acestes' own domain, or go with me.
 I leave her ignorant of how I'll fare,
 With no goodbye, because I could not bear
 A mother's tears – may your right hand and night
 Bear witness. Help me, therefore, that you might
 Console the poor soul in her misery.
 Allow me this and more intrepidly 360
 I'll meet all risks.' The Trojans thus were pressed
 To tears, fair Iulus before all the rest,
 Touched by such filial love. 'I'll harmonize
 My deeds, ' he said, 'with your great enterprise.
 Though she'll yet lack *Creusa* as a name,
 She'll be my mother, too, for no small fame
 Awaits her who has borne a son like you.
 Whatever fate will follow what you do,
 I swear(as Father did in days gone by)
 By my own head, that everything that I 370
 Promised on your return in victory
 Will for your mother and your family
 Remain the same.' He wept and set apart
 His golden sword, which with his wondrous art
 Was fashioned by Lycaon of Gnossus
 To fit an ivory sheath. Then to Nisus
 Mnestheus gave his friend a shaggy lion-skin;

Steadfast Aletes exchanged helmets. In
Their armour they advances immediately,
With vows escorted by the company 380
Of princes, young and old, up to the gate.
Fair Iulus gave any charges to relate
To his father – this young man possessed a mind
And spirit far beyond his years. The wind,
However, swept them fruitlessly away!
They crossed the trenches; when the light of day
Was gone, they sought the foe's camp, which would bring
Them many deaths. They found them slumbering,
Wine-drenched, along the greensward here and there,
Wheels, harness, armour, flagons everywhere, 390
Their chariots tilted on the shore. Nisus
Was first to speak: he said, 'Euryalus,
We must act now! The moment speaks out clear.
Here lies our way. Watch out lest from the rear
We are attacked. Look wide! For I will deal
Destruction: by a broad path I'll reveal
The way.' He checked his voice and instantly
Stabbed haughty Rhamnes who was peacefully
Asleep on high – he was himself a king,
King Turnus' favourite augur (auguring, 400
However, could not save him). There were three
Attendants who were lying carelessly
Among the weapons – all three men he slew,
Dispatching Remus' armour-bearer, too;
Beneath his horses' feet his charioteer
He slew as well. Their necks he severed clear;
Then for their lord he did the same and left

His torso dripping black blood, now bereft
Of its head, the ground and couch reeking with gore,
Then Lamyrus and Lamus, furthermore, 410
And young handsome Serranus who that night
Had long played, now exterminated quite
By Sleep; how happy, had he carried on
Throughout the night and, watchful, met the dawn.
Even so a lion, whom sharp hunger drives,
Roams full sheepfolds for sustenance and rives
An tears the feeble flock that's dumb with dread,
And growls with blood-stained mouth. Euryalus fed
Likewise on slaughter, rushing, all aflame,
Upon that mighty mass without a name 420
And slaying Abaris and Herbesus
And Fadus – all slept in unconsciousness.
But Rhoetus was awake and everything
He'd seen: behind a huge jar, cowering,
He'd hid and, as he rose, was run straight through
The heart, and then Euryalus withdrew
His word and left him dead. He vomited
His life, the wine he'd drunk mixed with the red.
Meanwhile Euryalus went stealthily
About his work; and now the company 430
Of Messapus ne neared; there he caught sight
Of leashed steeds feeding and the flickering light
From the last fires. Seeing Euryalus
Was kindled with a lust for blood, Nisus
Said briefly: 'Let us leave. Adverse cockcrow
Approaches. Vengeance taken on the foe
Is sated; through their ranks we've forged a way.'

They left much silver weaponry which lay
About the camp, bowls, gorgeous carpentry.
Euryalus took Rhamnes's heraldry 440
And gold sword-belt which Old Caedicus,
A wealthy man, had sent to Remulus
Of Tibur, thus vouchsafing amity
Though he w far away. When dying he
Gave to his grandson. Then the splendid gain
He fitted to his valiant breast – in vain!
Then Messapus's shapely helmet he
Put on, with all its graceful plumery.
They left in search of safety then. Meanwhile,
While all the other men lined up in file 450
Upon the plain, knights bringing a reply
To Turnus, bearing shields, came riding by –
Three hundred of them, led by Volcens. They
Were coming to the wall when, far away,
They saw those two turn left. The helmet, though,
Was noted in the shimmering shadows' glow,
Betraying rash Euryalus. Then a shout
From Volcens came: 'Halt! What are you about,
You men? Why are you armed? Why do you go
Upon a journey? What's your goal?' But no 460
Response was made as they fled out of sight
Into the wood, relying on the night
To shield them. Then the knights moved here and there
To bar the well-known crossroads, taking care
To man each opening. The wood spread wide
With brakes and dark ilex on every side:
Dense briers burgeoned everywhere; the track

Was sparsely lit; the booty on his back
And shadowy boughs hampered Euryalus
Who, owing to his apprehensiveness, 470
Was unsure of the way. Nisus got free
And heedlessly escaped the enemy
And reached the Alban plains (the world now calls
Them this from Alba's name). The stately stalls
Of King Latinus stood there. He looked round
To try to see his absent friend but found
Him not: 'Poor man, have I abandoned you?
Where are you? How shall I make headway through
This tricky wood?' he said. He wandered back,
Tracing his steps along the silent track. 480
He heard the horses, the cacophony
Of those pursuing him, and presently
He heard a cry and saw Euryalus,
Betrayed by night and by the spuriousness
Of the path and by the sudden noisy fray:
And now the foe was dragging him away.
He struggled, but in vain. What could he do?
What power could accomplish a rescue?
Should he now die amid the enemy
And choose a swift and glorious destiny? 490
He poised his spear and to the Moon on high
He prayed: 'O goddess, our endeavour's nigh.
Assist us in our labour, glorious one
Among the heavenly stars and guardian
Of all the groves; if ever in my name
My father Hyrtacus to your shrines came
With gifts, if ever with my hunting prey

I've praised you, hanging them in fine array
Upon your dome or holy roof, my plea
Is that I may confound that company 500
And guide my weapons.' Then with all his might
He flung his spear: it whistled through the night
And stuck in Sulmo's back, then snapped in two
And with the broken shaft it ran straight through
His midriff. Sulmo, in the chill of death,
Heaved forth his warm blood and with gasping breath
His limbs shook. Every eye flashed to and fro.
With greater strength Nisus prepared to throw
His spear once more and, as they paused, it flew
And, meeting Tagus' temple, shot straight through 510
His head and lodged its war self in his brain.
Now Volcens' anger made him quite insane –
He didn't see who threw it and thus knew
Not where to vent his rage. 'Meanwhile, though, you
Shall pay for both these deaths,' he said, and thus
With drawn sword he attacked Euryalus.
In terror Nisus shrieked aloud, for he
Could hide himself and bear such agony
No longer. 'It was I who slew these men,
Rutulians, ' he said to them. 'Why, then, 520
Turn steel on me. The guilt is mine. For he
Could not have slaughtered them. Listen to me!
By Heaven and the all-seeing stars I tell
You that he loved his hapless friend too well.'
The sword, though, driven forcefully, now went
Between Euryalus's ribs and rent
His snow-white breast, and he rolled over, dead.

And all across his beauteous limbs the red
Of gore ran and his neck drooped down: just so
A purple flower cut by the plough droops low 530
And dies, or poppies, burdened by the weight
Of a rainstorm, bend down. At a fearful rate
Nisus ran at the enemy, although
He sought Volcens alone; and now the foe
Surrounded him – they rushed hither and yon
To push him back, but Nisus still pressed on,
Whirling his lightning blade until he hit
Upon the shrieking Volcens and drove it
Full in his face and left him at life's end.
He threw himself upon his lifeless friend. 540
Pierced through and through, he lay and finally
Found peace in death. O true felicity
For both of them! If what I've written here
Has any force, you do not need to fear
That they will be forgotten just as long
As the rock-based Capitol of Rome stays strong
And the imperial line holds sovereign sway.
The lifeless Volcens was taken away
Back to the camp by the tearful Rutuli,
Masters of plunder. Tears of misery 550
Were shed for Rhamnes, too, when he was seen
Bereft of life. One carnage there had been,
And yet so many chieftains slain. So then
A great surge to the dead and dying men
Was made, the ground fresh with warm butchery.
Among the spoils they saw the finery
Regained with ample sweat; they noticed, too,

Messapus' shining helmet. Dawn was due,
For now she left Tithonus' saffron bed
That on the earth her fresh rays might be spread; 560
The sun now streamed in, bathing everything
In light, and Turnus, armed, was summoning
Hi men to fight; each chieftain would convene
His bronze-clad troops and stimulate their spleen
With rumour and (a wretched sight to see!)
Fixed on their upright spears clamorously
The heads of Nisus and Euryalus.
Upon the wall's left side the valorous
Aeneadae opposed the (for the right
The river girded). O the ramparts' height 570
And spacious troughs they stood in misery,
Moved by the transfixed heads, unhappily
Aware they dripped with black gore Taking wing,
Meanwhile, Rumour rushed through the trembling
City: Euryalus's mother she
Addressed, who with the news immediately
Grew cold; the shuttle from her hands she threw,
The threads unwound; the wretched lady flew
With shrieks, tearing her tresses as she sought
The walls and foremost ranks, having no thought 580
For man or peril's darts, filling the sky
With plaintive cries. 'Euryalus, must I
See you like this? You were the final cheer
Of my old age – could you now leave me here,
Cruel one? Could I not say a last goodbye
Before your perilous mission? Now you lie
In a strange land, to dogs and birds a prey

Your mother may not bury you, nor may
She close your eyes nor bathe your wounds nor dress
You in your robe, which I, in hastiness, 590
Was making for your sake both day and night
To solace with my loom my aging plight.
Where shall I go? Your mangled body where
May I now find? Is this the only share
You bring me of yourself? For this, my boy,
Did I pursue you all the way from Troy?
Rutulians, if there be some piety
Within you, stab me, throw your spears at me;
Great Jove, have pity, cast me into Hell –
There is no other way that I can tell 600
To leave this wretched life.' At this sad sound
The troops were greatly shaken – all around
A groan of sorrow rose, their strength for war
Now numb and crushed. Idaeus and Actor,
When Ilioneus and Iulus, who now wept
Most copiously, gave orders to them, swept
The grieving lady up and took her in
The house. Afar was heard the dreadful din
Of the trumpet's clarion call, and then a cry
Was taken up, re-echoing in the sky. 610
The Volscians surged forward evenly,
Driving their tortoise-shield and eagerly
Prepared to fill the ditch and tear away
The palisade. Some of them would assay
An entrance and, in places where the line
Was thin and thus they saw the daylight shine,
The Teucri threw all kinds of weaponry,

Using strong poles to thrust the enemy
Away, trained by long warfare to protect
Their walls, while heavy stones, rolled to dissect 620
The sheltered ranks, they used. However, the foe
Was happily prepared to undergo
Anything at all beneath their compact shield.
A huge throng loomed – *now* they began to yield.
The Trojans rolled and hurled upon the foe
A multitude of things that laid them low
And broke their camouflage: they had no care
A moment longer for such blind warfare.
With missiles now they strove audaciously
To clear the ramparts while (grim sight to see!) 630
Elsewhere his Etruscan pine Mezentius
Was brandishing and casting sulphurous
Brands; Messapus, horse-tamer, progeny
Of Neptune, tore the rampart down, then he
Demanded ladders. Kindle me, I pray,
Calliope, to sing what on that day
Turnus achieved in butchery and tell
Which warrior sent which warrior down to Hell;
The mighty scroll of war unroll with me.
There was an opportune locality – 640
A high, spanned tower – which the Italian foe
Strove mightily to storm and overthrow;
The Trojans built a stone defence and through
The open loopholes hurried in turn a slew
Of spears. First Turnus threw a fire-brand
Which set alight one side and, being fanned
By wind, seized on the planks and set on fire

The gateways, while a terrified desire
For flight ran through the Trojans – fruitlessly!
Within the side free from calamity 650
They huddled close. But then the tower fell in
Beneath the sudden weight: a mighty din
Then filled the heavens and they tumbled to
The ground, half-dead – their own spears pierced them through
And wooden shards impaled them cruelly.
Lyaeus and Helenor of that company
Alone escaped – though barely. Helenor,
Whom a Licynian slave secretly bore
To the Maconina king and sent to fight
In Troy (though only freemen had that right), 660
Was in the prime of youth: with shield of white
And naked sword, his weaponry was light,
For he was yet unfamed. The myriad foe
He saw around him going to and fro,
So, like a beast inside a serried band
Of hunters, rages at their weapons and,
Sure of his death, leaps on their spears, he raced
Upon them where the thickest ranks were placed,
A kamikaze, while Lyaeus, who
Was swifter on his feet, darted straight through 670
Their ranks and reached the walls, and no he tried
To clutch the top and reach his comrades' side.
Turnus pursued him with his spear and thus
Mocked hi : 'You hoped to get away from us,
You fool?' As he was hanging there he caught
The man and tore him down and with him brought
Much of the wall, just as, out of the air,

Jove's weapon-bearer swoops upon a hare
Or swan, or as a wolf out of the stalls
Makes off with a lamb whose mother catawauls 680
In vain. Now Everywhere a loud turmoil
Was heard. They pressed ahead and filled with soil
The trenches; some men blazing torches threw
Onto the roofs. Now Ilioneus slew
Lucetius with a huge rock as he neared
The gate with firebrands, and Liger speared
Emathion, and Asilas laid low
Corymaeus with an arrow from his bow;
And Caeneus killed Ortygius, Turnus
Then killed Caeneus, Itys and Clonius, 690
Dioxippus and Promulus, then slew
In turn both Sagaris and Idas, who
Was standing on the tower's topmost height.
Then Capys killed Provernus – though a slight
Wound from Themillas' spear was all that he
Had got at first, he injudiciously
Cast down his shield and raised his hand to stay
The bleeding. Hen an arrow winged its way,
Pinning his hand to his left side; so deep
It buried in his flesh that it would sweep 700
His life away. With glorious weaponry
Stood Arcens' son, his cloak's embroidery
Done in Iberian blue, so eminent
To look upon -by Arcens he'd been sent –
Brought up around the streams of Symaethus
In his mother's grove, where the shrine of Policus,
Kind and gift-laden, stood: abandoning

His spears, Mezentius the whizzing sling
In its tight thong whirled round and round his head
Three times, which with its molten bullet sped 710
And cleft his enemy's temples. There he lay
Stretched out upon the deep sand. People say
Ascanius then sent his first dart, though he
Was used to hunting beasts but recently.
Stalwart Numanus Regulus he slew,
Who had not long before been married to
King Turnus' younger sister. Now before
The line he strode, continuing to pour
Both meet and unmeet words, puffed up with pride
At his new title. Striding forth, he cried: 720
'Twice-captured Phrygians, don't you feel disgrace
To be cooped up in this beleaguered place?
You'd take our maids for brides by butchery!
What god, what madness brought you to Italy?
No sons of Atreus are there in this place,
No lying Ulysses! We are a race
Of hardy men – our first-born sons we bring
To the river that the water's cruel sting
May harden them' they wake up at daybreak
To hunt and range the forests, and they take 730
Delight in reining steeds ad from the bow
Shoot darts; they tame their acreage with the hoe
And conquer towns, hardworking and inured
To want; eternal conflict, be assured,
Tires us, while with inverted spears we drive
Our bullocks; even in old age we thrive,
Still strong; although our hairs be white, we wear

The helmet, always satisfied to share
Our recent plunder. You in fancy red
And gleaming purple clothe yourselves instead. 740
You're idle and you *dance*, your arms you his
In tunic-sleeves, your turbans all are tied
With ribbons. You're all women, you're not men!
Go to the heights of Dindymus again
And listen to the pipes; they're calling you,
The timbrels and the flutes of boxwood, too,
Played for the worship of your Cybele:
Leave arms to *men* and quit your weaponry.'
Ascanius would not stand this swaggering
But levelled the shaft upon his horse-hair sling, 750
Which he drew back; pausing, he sent a prayer
To Jupiter: 'I pray you, have a care,
Great Jove, to sanction my bold act. I'll bring
To your temple yearly bounty, offering
A snowy, gilt-browed bullock, grown to meet
His mother's height, who with his cloven feet
Can kick the sand and butt with horn.' His prayer
Jove heard and from a clear part of the air
Sent thunder on the left, and instantly
The fatal bow rang. Whirring dreadfully, 760
The arrow pierced the head of Remulus.
Go, haughty one, and mock the valorous!
This answer the twice-conquered Phrygii
Send in return back to the Rutuli.
That's all he said. The Trojans, with a shout
Of joy, seconded him and opened out
Their hearts to heaven, and it chanced that day

Long-haired Apollo was watching the fray
Near Jove, sat on a cloud. Thus he addressed
The victor: 'May your young valour be blessed, 770
My boy! This man is raised exaltedly,
Son of the gods and of the gods-to-be.
Now rightly shall all wars fate brings to us
Sink underneath the house of Assaracus;
Troy cannot hold you.' With these words he flew
From Heaven, cleft the breathing gales in two
And sought Ascanius. Now hi countenance
Was that of aged Butes, who had once
Carried Anchises' armour, and the gate
He'd guarded faithfully, but then of late 780
Anchises gave him to Ascanius
To be his henchman. Like that greybeard, thus
Apollo strode, in colour, white hair, hue
And savage-sounding armour, and spoke to
The fiery man: 'Sufficient let it be
Numanus fell beneath your weaponry,
Son of Aeneas, no reprisal made.
Mighty Apollo his respects has paid
To your first deed of valour, nor does he
Begrudge your armour which in quality 790
Is equal to his own. But now forbear
To fight, my boy." Then he into thin air
Vanished, flying away far from their sight
While speaking. All the princes guessed aright
This god had been Apollo, for they knew
His immortal weaponry and, as he flew,
They heard his quiver rattle, and therefore

At Phoebus' charge they stayed the youth from war,
Keen though he was, and, rushing forth pell-mell,
Once more faced gaping perils. Now the yell 800
Ran tower to tower, their thongs whirling around,
Their eager bows bent. All along the ground
Their spears were strewn; it was a vicious fight:
Their shields and helmets clashed, such as the might
Of western storms brought with a lashing rain
Beneath the Kid-Stars or the squalls that cane
The deep or when great Jupiter waxes fierce
And whirls a watery hurricane to pierce
The clouds with southern gales. The progeny
Sprung from Alcanus in the mountainy 810
Regions of Ida, the young Pandarus
And Bitias – tall as their indigenous
Pine-trees and hills – flung aside the gates (for they
Had been made guards to keep the foe away).
They called the enemy in, prepared to fight,
Before the towers on both left and right,
Their plumes aflutter like tall oaks which soar
High in the air beside some river's shore –
Padus or Athesis. The Rutuli
Rushed through the open gates. Immediately 820
Quercus and the well-armed Aquiculus,
Haemon, the seed of Mars, and rash Tmarus,
Their columns routed, turned their backs in flight
Or died there at the gateway. At this sight,
Their anger waxing fierce, the Trojan band
Amassed there, where they ventured hand-to-hand
Warfare and longer sallies. Tidings came

To Turnus, who as storming, all aflame
To gut the foe, that, freshly fortified
With butchery, that foe has opened wide 830
The gates. He stopped his toil and furiously
Rushed there to meet his proud fraternity.
Antiphates he saw first (for he led
The Trojan troops) – this bastard son was bred
Of a Theban mother and tall Sarpedon;
He slew him with a cornel-shaft which on
The yielding air took flight; it deeply pressed
Itself up through his gullet to his breast;
The wound's dark, gaping chasm turned into
Black foam, the steel now smoking. Then he slew 840
Meropes and Erymas, then Aphidnus,
Then Bitias fell, all fire and venomous,
Not from a javelin – such an implement
Could not have killed this man. Instead he went
Beneath a pike that hissed and twisted round
Just like a thunderbolt. Its mark it found.
Two bull-hides and the trusty corselet scaled
With double layers of gold had surely failed
To stop that pike: his giant body swayed
And fell. The earth groaned and his huge shield made 850
A thundering sound above him. Similarly
On Baiae's shore a great miscellany
Of boulders sometimes falls, which builders throw
As mighty blocks into the sea, and so
They trail havoc behind them, finally
Resting beneath the depths, whereon the sea
Is in turmoil, the black sands rocketing

Up high; the sound causes a trembling
In high Prochyta and rough Inarime,
While underneath, by Jupiter's decree, 860
Lies great Typhoeus. Mars now gave fresh might
And valour to the Latins for the fight
And into every heart sent stimuli
For battle and, among the enemy,
Sent dark Fear and Retreat. From every side
The Latins gathered, having been supplied
With scope for battle, and the god of fight
Had seized their souls. Pandarus, catching sight
Of his brother's fallen frame and seeing how
His fortunes stood and what his chances now 870
Might be, with mighty strength swung back the gate,
Hus leaving many comrades to their fate
Outside the walls; others he swept inside
And welcomed. Madman! For he had not spied
His enemy's king break through amid the throng
And pin him there, just as, roaming along
The helpless herds, a tiger one may see.
A new light filled his eyes and horribly
His armour clanged; his blood-red plumes now reeled
And streaks of lightning shimmered from his shield. 880
The Trojans knew the man immediately –
His hateful face and the enormity
Of his limbs. Then up sprang massive Pandarus,
Incensed at his brother's death. He roared out thus:
'This is no palace built for Turnus's bride
Nor Ardea keeping Turnus safe inside:
No, it's our enemy's camp; we cannot flee.'

At this his enemy smiled nonchalantly:

‘Come, fight me if you dare, then you can tell

Priam you met Achilles here as well.’ 890

Pandarus hurled his spear of knotted skin

With all his might. The breezes took it in,

But Juno turned the shaft aside – instead

It struck the gate. ‘You shan’t escape,’ he said,

This weapon, for the man who’s wounded by

The sword is not its thrower. Raising high

That sword, he severed clean in two his head

Between the temples and a ghastly red

Flowed from his beardless cheeks. A crashing sound

Was heard and with the heavy weight the ground 900

Was shaken; he collapsed and, when he died,

Was stretched upon the earth; on either side

His head drooped down, his armour drizzling

His brains. The Trojans turned round, scattering

In terror. If Turnus had had the wit

To break open the barrier and admit

His comrades, that would have been the final day

Of war and Troy. But a mad lust to slay

Drove Turnus on. He hamstringed Phalaris

And Gyges. First of all, and after this 910

He seized their spears and, as the Trojans fled,

He hurled them at their backs, as Juno fed

His heart with strength and courage. Halys then

He slew and sent to join those other men,

And Phegeus, shield transfixed, and then he slew

Alcander, Halius, Noëmon, too,

And Prytanis as on the walls they stood,

Unwitting, rousing up their brotherhood,
Then Lynceus, from the rampart on the right,
As he advanced, he slaughtered with a smite 920
Of flashing sword – but one blow! Far away
His head, attached still to his helmet, lay.
Then fell Amycus, master of the chase,
Who knew better than all men how to lace
The dart and sword with poison; Clytius,
Aeolus's on, was next, then Cretheus,
The Muses' darling, who adored to sing
And fitted notes upon the lyre's string,
Singing of steeds, arms, men, war. Finally,
When they had heard about the butchery 930
Of their man, the chiefs who led the Trojan band,
Mnestheus and brave Serestus, met and scanned
The scattered bodies and the enemy
Within the gates. 'Whither, then, do you flee?'
Said Mnestheus. 'Wat more battlements can be spied
Out there? Shall one man, pressed on every side
By ramparts, countrymen, escape scot-free
From dealing in this town such butchery?
The slaughter of so many fine young men!
You weaklings, do you feel no pity, then, 940
No shame for your old gods, your hapless land,
Great Aeneas?' Their ardour then was fanned
By this: they halted then in dense array,
And Turnus gradually drew away
From the fight and sought the river and the place
That ringed the stream. The Trojans rushed to face
The king, with mighty shouts, more fearlessly,

Massing their ranks, just as a company
Of hunters with their levelled spears beset
A savage lion – though terrified, he yet 950
Shows angry looks; he gives up ground for he
Is not allowed by rage and bravery
To turn his back yet cannot make his way
Between the spears and the hostile array
Of hunters. Thus did Turnus in a rush
Retrace his steps uncertainly, still flush
With anger, though he twice made an attack
Upon the foe and drove them fleeing back
Along the walls; but the whole company
Of Trojans massed together speedily 960
From out the camp, and Juno did not dare
To aid him – Jove sent Iris through the air,
Charged with harsh orders for her should the king
Leave the high Trojan walls – he could not bring,
Therefore, strength with his shield nor arm to bear
Upon the foe, beset both here and there
With darts. His helmet echoed ceaselessly,
The solid brass beneath the weaponry
Of stones gaped, and the horsehair crest he wore
Was ripped off and his shield was useless for 970
Withstanding blows; Mnestheus and his men,
Like lightning, doubled their spear count, and then
His sweat in pitchy streams flowed down, and he
Could scarcely breathe; his limbs shook wearily
With sickly panting. Finally he leapt
Headlong into the river, while he kept
His armour on. The yellow flood received

And raised his body up and he, relieved
By gentle waters, washed the butchery
Away, then joined his comrades joyfully.

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