

AENEID VI

Giving his fleet the reins, Aeneas wept;
Up To Euboean Cumae next he swept.
Seaward they turned the prows and with the grip
Of the anchor's teeth they tethered every ship;
The round keels fringed the beach, and eagerly
On the Hesperian shore the company
Of young men leapt; some sought the seeds of flame
In flint, some scoured the woods that shrouded game,
Some found new streams. Aeneas, though, went high
To where Apollo sat enthroned; nearby 10
He found a vast cave where his mighty mind
Apollo breathes and tells us what we'll find
In times ahead. Beneath the roof of gold
And the grove of Trivia they passed. It's told
That Daedalus when from Minos he fled,
On swift wings dared to fly as on he sped
Across the sky; unused to them, he flew
Th the chill North and finally came to
The Chacidian hill where delicately
He poised. Here, restored to firm ground, he 20
To you, Phoebus Apollo, dedicated
The steerage of his wings and consecrated
A massive temple. On the doors you'll see
Androgeos's death; the progeny
Of Cecrops also, who were forced to pay
Seven sons each year in tribute, sad to say;
Lots drawn, the urn stands there. The Gnosian land

Is facing it. The bull which cruelly and
 With devious craft lay with Pasiphaë
 Is here portrayed, and the mixed progeny 30
 Of the Minotaur, two-faced, betokening
 A monstrous love; a house of struggling,
 A hopeless maze; the queen's lust Daedalus
 Lamented and unwound the sinuous
 And tangled palace pathways and thus led
 Her unperceiving footsteps with a thread.
 You, too, if grief had granted warranty,
 Icarus, would have had much complicity
 In this great venture; twice your father tried
 To shape your fall in gold – but to subside 40
 Both times. All this would have been wholly scanned
 But that Achates came, who had in hand
 The priestess both of Trivia and Phoebus,
 Deiphobe, the daughter of Glaucus,
 Who to the king said: 'we don't need tis sight
 At such a time as this: no, it is right
 To slay seven unyoked steers and, fittingly,
 As many ewes.' These words to Aeneas she
 Addressed, and he complied with her command
 Without delay, and then the Trojan band 50
 She called to her high shrine. A cave was made
 From the huge Euboean rock, whither were laid
 A hundred wide mouths and a hundred more
 Gateways and from them billowed out five score
 Voices, the Sibyl's answers. When she'd led
 Them to the threshold, then the maiden said:

'It's time to ask the oracles. See, see,
The god! Before the doorway suddenly
Her face, her braided locks, her very hue
Altered; her bosom heaved, there was a new 60
Frenzy that swelled her heart with ecstasy;
She gained height, while of immortality
Her voice now savoured, for she was aware
That she was conscious of the holy air
Of deity. She cried: 'Do you delay,
O Trojan Aeneas, to vow and pray?
Till then the awestruck house won't open wide
Its mighty mouths. With that, her tongued she tied.
A numbing shudder through each sturdy frame
Of every Trojan ran, and then there came 70
Their king's entreaties from his very heart:
'Apollo, you who ever took our part
In Troy's distress, directing Paris' aim
Against the son of Aeacus, to maim
That hero. You who over many seas,
Which skirted many principalities,
And across many a far Massylian race
And the Syrtes have led me, now we face
At long last fleeing Italy; thus far
It's been out lot to follow Fortune's star; 80
Now spare our race (for it is surely right),
Gods and goddesses, you who felt such spite
Against Pergamum's fame. O prophetess
Most holy, lead us Trojans to success
(I do not crave a realm by destiny

Unpledged), allowing us our colony
 In Latium with our wandering deities
 And all the tempest-tossed authorities.
 To Trivia and to Phoebus I'll then raise
 A temple of solid gold, and festal days 90
 In Phoebus' name I'll found. In my domain
 A stately shrine awaits you, too. This fane
 Will hold your oracles, which were told to all
 My race and, gracious one, I shall install
 Elected men. Don't write your verses, though,
 On leaves lest on them rapid breezes blow
 And scatter them. Sing them yourself, pray.'
 The prophetess could not yet brook the sway
 Of Phoebus as she stormed distractedly
 About the cave to shake the great god free 100
 From off her breast. He thus debilitated
 Her raving mouth the more and dominated
 Her wild heart and with tis duress controlled
 The Sibyl. Now out of the house there rolled
 Those hundred mighty mouths spontaneously,
 Shedding the Sibyl's answer. Thus said she:
 'You who at last have fulfilled every threat
 The sea can offer (grievous matters yet
 Await you, though) – into Lavinium
 Be sure the sons of Dardanus shall come 110
 Yet not rejoice at this. Foul wars I see,
 The Tiber foaming with great butchery.
 The gods a Simois and Xanthus vow,
 A Doric camp you shall not lack. Even now

In Latium a new Achilles grows
 (He, too, is goddess-born); do not suppose
 That Jun will not dog you still, while yet,
 An abject suppliant, you'll pray to get
 So many towns and tribes in Italy!
 The cause of all this Trojan misery 120
 Shall once more be another alien bride,
 A foreign match. Don't yield to ills but stride
 Against them with more boldness than agreed
 By Fortune. Though you'll find it hard to heed,
 Your path to safety will initially
 Be from a Grecian city.' Thus did she
 Chant horrible enigmas, echoing
 Out of the cave, in darkness muffling
 The truth; Apollo plied beneath her breast
 The spur and shook the reins as on she pressed 130
 In rage. Her raving ceased and instantly
 Aeneas said: 'The things you say to me
 Are no unlooked-For toils: prophesied
 Them all. One thing I beg: since here reside
 The dead beyond the gateway of the lord
 Of the Underworld and, lying by the ford
 Of Acheron, that gloomy marsh, agree
 That I may be allowed once more to see
 My treasured father. Show the way, unbar
 The hallowed gates – upon these shoulders far 140
 I carried him through endless weaponry,
 Through flame and snatched him from the enemy.
 With me he suffered countless seas, the threat

Of ocean and of sky he bore – and yet
 He was infirm beyond his age. He, too,
 Prayed that I humbly might draw near unto
 Your doors. Pity, I pray, father and son –
 You are all-powerful, o gracious one,
 And of Avernus it was not in vain
 That Hecate made you mistress. Since it's plain 150
 That Orpheus with his tuneful lyre from Thrace
 Could raise his wife' shade; since, too, in his place
 Pollux redeemed his brother, frequently
 Both to and fro to each locality
 In transit - not to mention Alcides
 And mighty Theseus – I, as well as these,
 Am bred of most high Jove.' That prayer
 He offered as he grasped the altar there.
 Then she began: 'God-born, Anchises' son,
 Of Troy, the journey there s easily done: 160
 Black Dis's door is open day and night;
 But to return and once more see the light
 Of day involves much toil. There are a few,
 The sons of gods, whom Jove was kindly to
 Or whose bright worth raised them up through the sky.
 Between here and Avernus forests lie.
 Cocytus girds them, gliding murkily,
 But if your heart is beating longingly
 To swim the Styx and see black Tartarus
 Twice and if you'd essay this ludicrous 170
 Endeavour, hear, before you may begin,
 What you must do. A bough there lurks within

A shady tree whose stem is willowy,
 Whose leaves are golden: to Proserpine
 It is held sacred; it is hidden quite –
 Dim valleys' shadows keep it out of sight.
 One may not tread the earth's fark depths till he
 Has plucked the gold-tressed fruitage from that tree.
 This beautiful Proserpine assigned
 As her own gift. Another of its kind 180
 Appears when one is plucked – it, too, is gold,
 Its leaves the same. Look upwards and enfold
 It in your hand, once found. It willingly
 Will follow you if it's your destiny
 To see Avernus; if the Fates say no,
 No power will avail you, even though
 You use hard steel. There is impurity,
 Moreover, running through your argosy
 Because of your dead comrade lying there
 (Alas, you did not know!) while you would share 190
 My counsel, at my threshold hovering.
 Now bring him back, approve his burying.
 Bring black steers hither: let them be the first
 Peace-offerings. The thing for which you thirst –
 Those groves and realms the living may not tread –
 May then be offered you.' That's what she said.
 With downcast eyes Aeneas walked away
 In sadness, pondering on those words which lay
 Leadenly in his mind, and at his side
 His loyal friend Achates stride for stride 200
 Matched him and shared his cares. Their conversation

Was varied, touching on the inhumation
Of - which dead comrade? When they came, they found
Misenus lying on the arid ground
Beside the sea, the son of Aeolus.
With bugle's blare none was more vigorous
In stirring men to war. This man had been
Great Hector's comrade and was always seen
Fighting at Hector's side, famed for both lance
And clarion alike. When by mischance 210
Achilles slew his chief, this valiant man
Joined Aeneas, no meaner standard than
The former following. Insanity,
However, caused him to rouse up the sea
With hollow shell and call the gods to vie
With him: Triton in jealousy – if I
May trust the tale – into the foaming sea
Between the rocks immersed him. Grievingly
They all surrounded him, their pious king
Foremost. At once they started honouring 220
The Sibyl's orders, hurrying to pack
The altar of his tomb with trees and STACK
Them high up to the sky. To that deep lair
Of beasts, the ancient wood, they went, and there
The pitchy pines dropped down, and with axe-strokes
The ilex rang; ash-logs and splintering oaks
Were cleft with wedges. Down the mountains surged
Huge rowans. First among them Aeneas urged
Them on, girded alike with weaponry.
His heart was heavy with his thoughts, as he 230

Surveyed the massive wood and spoke in prayer:
'Would that a golden bough could be laid bare
Before us in this deep grove! Ah, the seer
Spoke true, Misenus – ah, *too* true, I fear!
Scarce had he spoken when before his eyes
Twin in doves appeared, speeding out of the skies
Ad settled on the grass. The king could see
They were his mother's birds and happily
Prayed: 'Be my leaders, flying through the air
And, if there is a way, then take me there – 240
To that grove, where a rich bough casts its shade
Over the fruitful ground. Don't fail to aid,
O goddess-mother, my uncertainty.'
He stopped and marked their signs that he might see
Which way they aimed. As they advanced in flight
They fed, remaining just within the sight
Of those who followed. At the very jaws
Of fetid Avernus, they, without a pause,
Rose up and through the liquid air in flight
They dropped down and descended on the site 250
So hungered for – it was that two-fold tree
Whose diverse hue gleamed with the radiancy
Of gold. As in the woods the mistletoe,
Sown of an alien tree, is wont to grow,
In winter's cold, unusual greenery
While round its trim stems yellow progeny
Burgeons, they could see gold leaves such as these
On the dark ilex, while a gentle breeze
Rustled the foil. Aeneas instantly

Plucked it; the clinging bough he greedily 260

Broke off and took it to the seer. The band

Of Trojans meanwhile wept upon the sand

For Misenus and the final dues they paid

To the thankless dust. On a huge pyre they laid

Pitch-pines and oaks and rind its sides enlaced

Funereal cypresses, adorning then

Its top with gleaming arms. Some of the men

With water set the cauldrons bubbling,

Then washed and oiled his cold corpse, sorrowing, 270

Then placed him on the couch, the usual gear

Of purple casting over him. The bier

Some shouldered – what a heavy ministry!

In ancestral formality,

Eyes turned away, they held the torch below.

The gifts were piled up in the blazing glow

Meat, incense, oil – and when the ash fell down,

The flame now dead, they all began to drown

With wine what still remained of thirsty clay.

Then Corynaeus took and put away 280

The bones in a brazen urn. He circled then

Thrice with pure water all the Trojan men

And cleansed and sprinkled them with flimsy dew

From a fruitful olive-bough and bade adieu

To their old friend. Aeneas, though, then stacked

A massive tomb above his bones and packed

Within Misenus' armour, trumpet, oar

Beneath a lofty mountain, evermore

To be called 'Misenus' from one generation

To another. He fulfilled the regulation 290

Of the Sibyl immediately. Nearby there stood
A deep cave, sheltered by a gloomy wood
And murky lake, wide, shingly and vast;
No flying creature ever safely passed
Above it, for there was a noxious fume
That poured out from its blackened jaws to spume
Up to the sky. Four dark-bulls in line
The seer set up and on their brows poured wine;
She plucked the top hairs that were bristling
Between their horns and, as first offering, 300
Tossed them into the sacred fire as she
Called on the one who holds supremacy
IN Heaven and Hell, Queen Hecate. Some men
Placed knives against the creatures' throats and then
Caught the warm blood in bowls. Aeneas slew
A black-fleeced lamb and sacrificed it to
Night and great Terra and, Proserpine,
To you a sterile heifer, and then he
To Pluto, when the day began to fade,
Installed a shrine, and on the flames he laid 310
The bulls and poured oil on the guts. They found,
However, on the break of day, the ground
Rumbling, the wooded peaks began to dance
And through the gloom, at Hecate's advance,
The dogs howled, as it seemed, and then the seer
Shrieked, 'Back, unhallowed ones! Do not come near
The grove. Aeneas, draw your sword: you need
Great courage now.' Then with insensate speed

She plunged into the cave; he fearlessly
Followed with parallel velocity. 320
Gods, who control our spirits, shadows who
Are voiceless, Chaos, Phlegethon and you,
Broad tracts of silent night, let me relate
What I have heard: let me illuminate
Things hidden in earth's depths. They journeyed down
Amid the gloom, beneath the lonely frown
Of night into the empty halls of Dis,
His phantom realm – just as a grudging piece
Of light from an inconstant moon is spied
In woods, when Jove has seen it fit to hide 330
The sky in darkness and out of our sight
All colours are lost in the blackest night.
Just at the mouth, the very jaws of Hell,
Grief and the Cares of vengeance, sleeping, dwell.
Sallow Diseases, sad Old Age and Fear,
Ill-counselling Hunger, dreadful Want are here,
Forms terrible to see; Distress, Death, Sleep,
Death's brother, guilty Joys embedded deep
Within the soul, and at the very door
Opposite them there dwells death-bearing War, 340
The Furies' iron cells, mad Strife, whose hair
With bloody fillets is entwined. Right there,
Spreading her ancient boughs, a vast elm-tree
Casts shadows where false Dreams throng copiously,
Clinging to leaves. Monsters of every kind
Are stalled within the doors, and you would find
Centauri and double-shaped Scyllas, Briareus

With his one-hundred arms and, letting loose
A horrid hissing, Lerna's beast; as well
The Chimaera, armed with flame, dwelt here in Hell 350
With Gorgons, Harpies, the three-bodied shade.
Aeneas grasped his sword, very afraid,
And turned its edge against them as they came.
Had not wise Sibyl warned no bodily frame
Did they possess but a mere falsity
Of form, Aeneas would quite pointlessly
Have rushed and with his steel's point tried to hack
Only at shadows. From this place a track
Led to the streams of Hell, and here they spied
A whirlpool thick with mire from side to side, 360
A fathomless flood that seethed and belched its sand
Into Cocytus, where these streams were manned
By a grim and filthy harbourmaster, chin
Covered with hoary, unkempt hair, while in
His eyes were flames; his squalid garb was tied
And from his shoulders hung. The only guide,
He poled the murky craft, tended each sail,
Conveying the dead – an aged man, yet hale
And green as fit the god he was. His name
Was Charon. Hither throngs of shadows came, 370
Streaming, towards the bankside, every one –
Bold heroes, mothers, men – whose lives were done,
Boys, unwed girls, before their fathers' eyes
Sons placed upon the pyre: just as, when dies
The summer, in the woods the thick leaves fall
In falls' first frost or birds flock, one and all,

Towards the shore, a seething entity,
When the chill year drives them across the sea
To sunnier climes. As there they stood, they prayed
That they might be the first to be conveyed 380
Across and they yearned for the farther shore,
Their arms stretched out. The surly boatman for
Now these, now those called out but thrust away
Others. Aeneas, stunned, was moved to say:
'What means this crowding at the riverside,
Maiden? Why do these spirits here decide
To leave these banks that they may be conveyed
Cross this lurid stream?' The old seer made
A brief reply: 'Anchises' progeny,
True offspring of the holy ones, you see 390
Cocytus' depths and Styx's marsh, who bear
Such powers the gods could never falsely swear.
Helpless and graveless is the crowd you see.
That warden's name is Charon – there that he
Ferries across were buried. Till they've found
A haven for their bones, the man is bound
Not to take them across the raucous foam
From bank to dreaded bank. They flit and roam
A hundred years about these shore to be
At last allowed the longed-for pools to see 400
Once more.' Aeneas checked his steps and thought
A great deal, pitying those souls so fraught
With cruelty. He saw Leucaspis there
Ad Orontes, captain of the Lycian share
Of ships, among those wretched souls who lacked

Death's honour. They by the South Wind were wracked,
Sailing from Troy through windy seas, both men
Engulfed with ship and crew alike. Lo! Then
The helmsman Palinurus passed them – he,
While on the Libyan voyage recently 410

And marking all the stars, was flung into
The waves. At last Aeneas, seeing who
This sad form was amidst the gloom, spoke thus:
'Which of the holy ones tore you from us,
Palinurus, plunging you into the sea?

Phoebus with this one answer hoodwinked me,
Though formerly he never had been found
A trickster – he'd foretold that safe and sound
You'd reach Ausonian shores. Some vow!' But he
Replied: 'Captain, there was no trickery 420

In Phoebus' tripod nor, Anchises' son,
Was I hurled overboard by any one
Of all the gods. The helm to which I clung
Was violently torn from me and I was flung
Into the waves. I swear the angry sea
Gave me less fear than that your ship would be
No match for surging waters, stripped of gear,
Bereft of helmsman, too. That was my fear.

Three stormy nights the South Wind carried me
Upon the waves across the measureless sea. 430

Then scarcely, as the fourth dawn broke, I caught
A glimpse of Italy as I was brought
High on a wave's crest. Swimming bit by bit
Towards the shore, safe land would I have hit

But that those cruel folk, as I was weighed
 Down with wet clothes while with bent hands I made
 Attempt to grasp the rough cliff-peaks, with sword
 Assailed me, thinking they'd seized some award,
 The fools. Held by the wave, on the shore
 I was tossed by the winds. You I implore, 440
 By all the breezes and by heaven's sweet light,
 Anchises and the prospect that we might
 Reach surging Julus, snatch these woes from me:
 Or sprinkle me (you have the ability)
 With earth and seek once more the Velian bay.
 Or if your goddess-mother shows a way,
 If there is one (for you will never breast
 These great streams nor the Stygian mere unblessed
 By the gods' help), then grasp this wretch's hand
 Ad take me across the waves that in a land 450
 Of peacefulness at least in death I'll lie.'
 At this, the seer began: 'Palinurus, why
 This hankering? Will you, unburied, view
 The Styx or the Cocytus, going to
 That bank unbidden? Divine destiny
 Don't hope to get reversed by prayer. Let me
 Advise you, giving you some consolation
 In your unhappiness: this neighbouring nation,
 In cities far and wide, shall, driven by
 Celestial portents, come to satisfy 460
 Your wish for burial. A monument
 They will create and offerings will be sent
 To grace it and henceforth its name will be

Palinurus.' This cured his anxiety,
Grief fled his gloomy heart and for a space
Of time he felt delighted that this place
Would bear his name. then, taking ip again
Their journey, they approached the Styx, but when,
Afloat, the boatman saw them passing through
The silent wood and turn their footsteps to 470
The bank, he chid them: 'Whoever you be
Who to our river come in arms, tell me
Why you are here. Stop there! This is a land
Of shades, Sleep, drowsy Night. For I am banned
From taking living people over there.
Indeed it gave me no delight to bear
Alcides thither nor, though progeny
Of god, unconquered in their bravery,
Pirithous nor Theseus. Why, you say?
Alcides made attempt to drag away 480
A trembling Cerberus; Pirithous
And Theseus tried to take our queen from us.'
The seer said briefly: 'Here's no trickery:
Be calm; our weapons have no potency.
The massive warden in his cave may still
With endless howl the bloodless shadows thrill
With fear and chaste Proserpina inside
The threshold of her uncle yet reside.
Trojan Aeneas, famed for piety
And skill in arms, has travelled here to see 490
His father n the shades of Acheron.
If you're moved by such a paragon,

Then know this bough (and this she then laid bare
From underneath her robe). Right then and there
His wrath subsided and his breast, before
Perturbed, was calm and he said nothing more.
He marvelled at the dreaded gift, discerned
By none for many years, and then he turned
His blue barque and approached the shore, then threw
The souls that sat on the long thwarts onto 500
The bank and cleared the gangways, then received
Great Aeneas. The leaky vessel heaved
And groaned beneath him, taking in much mud
Through all its cracks. At last, across the flood,
Unharm'd both seer and soldier came to land
Upon the ugly mire and sedge-caked strand.
Huge Cerberus through his three throats makes ring
This habitat with barking, huddling
So monstrously within his cave. She, when
She saw snakes bristling upon all three necks, then 510
Some meal and honey that was soporific
She tossed, and with a hunger quite horrific
He opened all three throats as these she threw
And caught them, then, relaxing, sank back to
The ground and hugely sprawled across the den.
The warder fast asleep, Aeneas then
Entered the cave, retreating speedily
From the bank whence none return. Immediately
Distressing cries and voices they could hear –
The souls of infants weeping, very near 520
The threshold of sweet life they weren't to share,

Torn from the breast, swept off to linger there
In grim death. Near them were the innocent
Who yet were doomed to capital punishment,
Yet picked by lot – Minos, in the chair
Of justice, shakes the urn and takes great care
To learn their lives and sins. The next location
Was where the innocent in desperation
Sought their own deaths, sad souls – they loathed the light,
So flung away their lives. They would delight 530
Above the earth to suffer poverty
And harsh toil now! However, destiny
Forbids it: by that grim marsh they're enchained;
In Styx's ninefold rings they have remained.
Not far from here and spread out everywhere
Were shown the Mourning Fields – that name they bear.
Here those whom cruel Love has caused to waste
Away are screened by hidden paths and placed
Within a myrtle grove. They feel the bite
Of love even now Here came within his sight 540
Phaedra and Procris and Eriphyle,
So sad, Evadne and Pasiphaë,
With wounds a cruel son made; with them came
Caeneus, once a young man, then a dame,
Turned back into a man by Destiny.
Among them, too, wounded but recently,
Phoenician Did, wandering around
The massive forest. When Aeneas found
Her standing near, although her form was dim
Among the shadows, it was clear to him 550

That she *was* Dido, just as someone spies,
Or thinks he does, the early moon arise
Between the clouds. 'Unhappy one,' he said,
Speaking in tender tones as tears he shed,
'The tale was true, then, that was brought to me
That with a sword you made your destiny
And are no more? Was I the cause? I swear
By all the stars, the gods, whatever there
Is sacred in the world below, dear queen,
Unwillingly I left you – I had been 560
Constrained by holy law, which forces me
To see these shades, these squalid lands, to be
Hemmed by abysmal night; I could not guess
My leaving would bring you such great distress.
Stay! Let me look on you Whom do you flee?
These must be my last words to you.' Thus he
Amid his springing tears would soothe the ire
Of Dido whose eyes flashed with burning fire.
She turned away, eyes lowered, not one glint
To changer her looks – well might she have been flint 570
Or else Marpesian rock. She finally
Fled swiftly from him, still his enemy,
Into a shady grove where her first lord,
Syphaeus, soothed her woes, for they adored
Each other. Yet in his astonishment
At her ill fate, Aeneas, as she went,
Attended her afar and still he wept,
Pitying her. Now to the path he kept.
They reached the farthest fields. Those who gained fame

In war dwelt here part. Here Tydeus came 580

To meet him, here, too, Parthenopaeus,

The famous warrior, and Adrastus,

A pallid shade. The Trojans killed in war,

Mourned by the living, he lamented for:

There were so many shades – Thersilochus,

Medon, Antenor's three sons, and Gaucus,

Polyboetes, Ceres' priest, Idaeus, who

Still kept his chariot and his armour, too.

They clamoured round about him, left and tight,

To know him better. It gave then delight 590

To stay and pace beside him, very keen

To know why he was there. When they'd been seen

By the Greek chiefs and their king's company

Of men as in that dim obscurity

His armour flashed, they trembled with great fear.

Some turned to run away, as yesteryear

They'd sought their ships, their gaping mouths defied

By their thin cries. And here Aeneas spied

Deïphobus, old Priam's son, each hand,

His face, indeed his whole frame mangled and 600

His ears and nostrils torn off cruelly.

Indeed the quivering form before him he

Could scarcely place. It tried in vain to screen

The awful wounds that he'd already seen.

Unhailed, he spoke to him familiarly:

'Deïphobus, strong in battle, progeny

Of noble Teucer, what man chose to do

Such harm? Who had such power to deal with you?

I heard that you, upon that final night,
Weary with slaughtering Grecians in the fight, 610
Fell on a heap of mingled butchery.

I built an empty tomb then by the sea
In Rhoeteum. Three times I loudly cried
To the dead spirits. In that place abide,
As guardians, your name and arms. Dear friend,
I could not see or lay you, at life's end,
In Troy.' The man replied: 'o no, friend, you
Omitted nothing – you have paid my due
In death. The Spartan woman's crime that wrought
Such death and my own destiny has caught 620
Me in these woes; this is her legacy.

For you know how amid false buoyancy
We spent that final night. For all too well
You must remember it. I need not tell
How over the heights of Troy that fateful steed
Leapt, bringing infantry its womb to feed.
She feigned a solemn dance as round about
She led the Phrygian wives who shouted out
Their Bacchic cries. She held a mighty light
And called the Grecians from the castle-height. 630

Our ill-starred bridal chamber held me fast,
As on my weary body slumber cast
Its weight, sweet, deep, a true facsimile
Of death. This peerless consort thoroughly
Removed all of the arms that had been laid
Within the house – even my trusty blade
She took from underneath my head; then to

Menelaus in the house she called and threw
The doors wide open. Perhaps she hoped there'd be
A fine boon for her lover and that she 640
Could be absolved from former crimes. Then they
Broke into our bedchamber straightaway
With their mentor in misdeeds, Ulysses
Requite the Greeks, gods, with such penalties,
For now I pray for vengeance reverently.
But tell me, blow by blow, what destiny
Has brought you here yet living. Have you strayed
Across the sea or was a god's charge laid
On you? Or has some doom-brought lethargy
Caused you to visit homes that never see 650
The sun in this sad and disordered place?'
Then, with that scarlet car, the face
Of Dawn appeared, travelling in between
Heaven and Earth; perhaps they would have been
Together all the time that was agreed
Had not the Sibyl warned him to take heed
'Aeneas, night is fast approaching we
Waste time in tears. In this locality
The pathway splits in two: upon the right
It runs beneath great Dis's stone-walled height 660
Straight to Elysium. But punishment
Of sins dwells on the left, the sinners sent
To pitiless Tartarus.' Deïphobus
Replied: 'Great priestess, don't be furious.
I'll leave, fill up the number of our host,
Returning to the dark that fits a ghost.

Go, glorious one, be happier than we.’
Speaking, he turned around, and suddenly
Beneath a left-hand cliff Aeneas spied,
Girt with a triple wall both broad and wide, 670
A castle, which fiery flood surrounded.
For this was Phlegethon which madly pounded
Along the rocks. They met a huge gateway
With adamant columns which no humans – nay,
Gods, neither – may uproot in enmity.
An iron tower looms; Tisiphone
Both night and day, her gown bedaubed with gore,
Unsleeping sits and guards the massive door.
Here they heard groaning, savage whips, the sound
Of iron and of clanking chains. Now, bound 680
In one spot, Aeneas was filled with fear.
O maiden, say what sort of crimes are here.
How are they punished? What’s that dreadful cry?’
The seer replied: ‘Great Trojan chieftain, I
Tell you this cursed floor must never be
Walked on by honest souls. When Hecate
Gave up Avernus’ groves to my command,
She told me of the gods’ chastisements and
Took me through all of them. His iron sway
Gnosian Rhadamanthus wields and they 690
Are punished by him, for he hears each crime,
Exacting a confession every time,
When on the earth, enjoying false deceit,
A man, until his life’s almost complete,
Puts off atonement. Then Immediately,

Girt with a lash, vengeful Tisiphone
 Leaps up and scourges them. With her left hand
 She wields her grim snakes, calling on her band
 Of savage sisters. Then the sacred gates
 At last are opened as their harsh hinge grates. 700
 See, there she sits on guard! More savage yet,
 With fifty black and gaping throats, is set
 Within the monstrous Hydra. Tartarus
 Yawns far into the gloom, precipitous
 And twice as far away as in the skies
 Olympus s from earth. In this zone lies
 The Titan brood, those ancient sons who dwelt
 On earth until they were cast down and felt
 The thunderbolt and in Earth's lowest maw
 They writhe. Here the Alaeon twins I saw - 710
 Immense they were – who tried to tear the sky
 Apart and displace Jupiter on high.
 Salmoneus, who pas a cruel penalty,
 I saw as well – he made a mimicry
 Of Jupiter's fire and thunder. Travelling
 Behind two brace of horses, brandishing
 A torch, among the Greeks throughout the town
 Of Elis while he claimed a god's renown.
 To ape clouds and that matchless bolt with brass
 And tramping steeds surely denotes an ass! 720
 A mid thick clouds Jove launched his bolt – no brand
 Of fire, no smoky pitch-pines either – and
 With a furious whirlwind he precipitately
 Drove him headlong. Here also you may see

Tityos, the child of Mother Earth, who's spread
Across nine acres – a huge vulture's fed
Upon his vitals, fruitful with distress,
And deathless liver, lunging for this fare
With his curved beak deep down within his breast.
The fibres are renewed and have no rest. 730
Why tell of Ixion and Pirithous,
Above whom a black crag looms, ominous
And seeming about to fall? Before their eyes
High gold-framed couches gleam; a banquet lies
In royal pomp; nearby, prohibiting
Their touching of the table, brandishing
A torch, the eldest Fury with loud cries
Leaps upwards. Those whose brothers I their eyes
Were hateful while they lived, or those who slapped
A parent or those who had once enwrapped 740
A client in some fraud, in privacy
Brooded upon their wealth, no quantity
Provided for their kin (this was the main
Offence), have for adultery been slain,
Taken arms against their country with no fear
Of breaking faith with those who ruled them. Here,
Pinned, they await their doom. But do not ask
What sort of doom that is. Some have the task
Of rolling a huge stone. Some you may see
Stretched, hanging on wheel-spokes. In misery 750
Sits -and will sit forevermore – the king
Of Athens, Theseus, and, admonishing
All folk, is Phlegyas who in the gloom

Loudly bears witness, warning of their doom:
'Take care! Learn to be just and do not slur
The gods!' One sold his land for gold, on her
Imposing a despot, while laws he made
And unmade for a price. One dared invade
His daughter's bed – an act incestuous! –
And married her. These all were villainous, 760
Attaining monstrous things. Had I five score
Tongues, mouths, an iron voice, it were a chore
Too harsh to sum up all the sins and all
The penances. 'But come along, don't stall,'
Apollo's priestess said. 'Quick! Come with me.
Fulfil the task in hand, for now I see
The walls which forges of the Cyclopes made.
And the arched gate where our gifts must be laid,
As we were told.' Then through the dusky place
They hurried, going through the middle space, 770
And reached the gates. Aeneas splashed his frame
With water as into the place he came
And placed the bough upon the threshold and,
The goddess; task fulfilled, a joyful land
They then beheld, delightful thickets where
The grass was green, for here the ampler air
Clothes all the meadows with a roseate light.
They have a sun and stars in their own right.
Some of them on the grassy wrestling-ground
Took exercise, played, grappled all around 780
The yellow sand; some dance and sang. There, too,
Appeared the long-robed Thracian Orpheus who

Matched them with both his quill of ivory
And fingers on his lute in harmony.
The family of Teucer, too, was there,
Great-hearted heroes and uncommonly fair,
All born in happier years – Assaracus
And Ilus and Troy's founder, Dardanus.
Each phantom weapon and each empty car
Caused Aeneas to marvel from afar; 790
Spears were fixed in the ground and all around
Steeds freely feeding in the plain they found
The pride in steeds and chariots, the care
In pasturing sleek horses still were there
Though now they dwelt below. Before their sight,
Sitting upon the grass to left and right,
Others were feasting, chanting joyously
A paeon in the fragrant greenery
Of laurel. Huge Eridanus flowed through
The forest from above them. Here, those who 800
Were wounded fighting for their fatherland;
Those who in life were priests, honest and grand,
Who sang Apollo's songs in harmony;
Those who ennobled with philosophy
Their lives and those whose work had merited
The esteem of their fellow-men – each head
Bound with white fillets. Now they were addressed
By the Sibyl as they swarmed – above the rest
Musaeus, gazed at by this mammoth throng
As with his shoulders high he towered among 810
Them all: 'Blest souls, and you, noteworthy seer,

Where is Anchises? We have travelled here,
Crossing the mighty Styx, to see him.' He
Briefly replied: 'No fixed abode have we.
In shady groves, on river-banks we dwell,
In watered meadows. If it suits you well,
Climb up this ridge and soon for you I'll find
An easy path.' This said, they walked behind;
And, as he led them, high above he showed
To them the shining fields. From there the road 820
Veered from the peaks. Deep in an emerald glade
Father Anchises earnestly surveyed
The imprisoned souls that were once more to see
The light of day while, incidentally.
He told the whole tale of the Trojan nation,
Of his dear children, of their destination,
Their deeds, their ways. When he saw Aeneas
Coming towards him there across the grass.
He wept and held his hands out eagerly;
A cry fell from his lips. 'You've come to me 830
At last, your harsh trek quenched by filial grace
That I have looked for? May I see your face,
My son, and may I speak to you and hear
You speaking back to me in tones so dear?
I counted the days and dreamed eventually
The hour would come, and my expectancy
Was not in vain. My son, what lands, what seas
Have you endured? And what extremities?
I feared that you'd be harmed by the Libyan land!
He answered: 'It was your sad shade that fanned 840

The flames of hope as it would visit me
So often in my thoughts that finally
I'd reach these gates. My ships off Tuscany stand.
Come, father, come, that I may grasp your hand.
Do not withdraw.' His cheeks with tears were wet;
Three times he would embrace him, three times yet
His image, vainly clasped, dodged his caress –
Breeze-like, dream-like, it seemed to evanesce.
In a retired vale Aeneas found
A shaded grove with forests all round 850
And rustling thickets; past each calm abode
And countless folk and tribes, the Lethe flowed,
As in the cloudless summertime the bees
Light upon coloured blossoms in the leas
And round lush lilies stream and everywhere
The fields hum. Aeneas was forced to stare
In wonder at this sudden sight and he
Asked what that river over there could be
And who were all those men who thronged about
The banks. 'They're spirits who are yet without 860
A second body owed to them by Fate,'
His father said, 'and now they're drinking straight
From Lethe whose sweet draught will to them bring
A long forgetfulness. My hankering
To tell of and to show you them has dwelt
Long in my mind and I have often felt
The need to speak of all my progeny
So that we may rejoice that Italy
Is found.' 'But, father, should we then believe

Some souls will venture upwards to receive 870

Dull frames again? Why do they frenziedly
Yearn for the light, poor souls? 'Listen to me,
Anchises said, 'I'll not leave you in doubt
But tell you all and leave not one thing out.

Firstly, the soul within itself sustains
Both heaven and earth and all the watery plains,
The shining moon and Titan's star, the sun;
The mind pervades its members, every one,
Uniting with that huge frame as it shakes

That mass. A race of men and beasts this makes 880

And the strange shapes within the glassy sea.
Their life-seeds are divine, their energy
White-hot, while harmful bodies can't impede
Their progress nor can earthly limbs indeed
Dull them. Hence they desire and they fear,
Grieve and rejoice and, shut away down here
In their dark cell, the light they do not see.

On their last day of life, some misery
Is there yet in their bones, for many a stain,
Long linked in growth, must naturally remain, 890

Remarkably ingrained. Thus penalties
They pay for old transgressions. Some of these
Are stretched out to the empty winds, some pay
The price whereby the stain is washed away
By floods or burned by fire; his spirit each
Must bear; and then a few of us will reach
The joyful fields of wide Elysium
Whither we're sent. Eventually the sum

Of days is full and takes away the stain –
The godliness and pure flame both remain. 900

When time's wheel through a thousand years has run,
The god to Lethe summons every one
Of them that they, bereft of memory,
May see again the vault above and be
Prepared to be a body once again.'

The Sibyl and his son Anchises then
Drew to the murmuring throng and chose a mound
Whence he might see them gathering around
And note each face. 'What glory shall escort
The Dardan line, Italians of what sort, 910

What splendid souls, what heirs there then shall be
I'll tell you while I teach your destiny
To you. That youth you see with shining spear
Holds the best place by lot, extremely near
The light; before all other she'll ascend
Into the air off heaven and will blend
With blood of Italy. His Alban name

Is Silvius, a man of kingly fame,
A father, too, of kings, whom your dear wife
Lavinia shall bear in later life, 920

Your last-born, in the woods. Our race of men
Through him shall rule in Alba Longa. Then
Comes Procas, glory of the Trojan race,
Cops and Numitor and he who'll trace
Your own name, both in arms and piety
Renowned Silvius Aneas shall he be –
Should he ever attain the Alban throne.

What youths are here! What mighty strength is shown!

All wreathed with civic oak! The Gabii

From them will rise, Numentum you shall see, 930

Fidenae and Collatia, Inuus,

Whose turrets shall be built to honour us,

Bola and Cora. These their names shall be

Though they are nameless now. And progeny

Of Mars, moreover, namely Romulus,

Shall join that god, whom, through Assaracus,

His mother Ilia shall bear. And see

The twin crests standing on his crest, while he

Is marked for earth by his own father. Son,

Through him famed Rome shall govern everyone 940

On earth, as proud as heaven above. She'll bound

That single city with a wall around

Her seven hills, blest with her citizenry:

Just as upon her chariot Cybele

Is carried, turret-crowned and glorying

In her divine offspring and, in a ring,

A hundred of them round her. See your race

Of Romans, marked to rise up to the face

Of earth – here's Caesar, all of Iulus' seed

And you've often heard is meant to lead 950

All Rome – AugustUS Caesar, who will be

Divinely born and made by destiny

The Golden Age where Saturn reigned before

And spread his empire past the Indian shore

And Garamas to a land that lies afar

Beyond the zodiac and every star,

Where Atlas on his shoulders bears the world,
Ensuring that it's regularly twirled,
Inset with gleaming stars. Already we
May see how tremulous is the Caspian Sea 960
At heaven's oracles, and the Scythia land;
The mouths of sevenfold Nile in terror stand
Against his coming. Even Hercules
Did not range through as many lands as these,
Although he pierced the deer and pacified
The Erymanthan woods and terrified
Lerna with his bow, nor the victorious
God of wine who with his viniferous
Reins drives the tigers from the lofty peak
Of Nysa. And shall we then cease to seek 970
To swell our skills with action? Or do we
Fear the Ausonian land? But who is he,
All wreathed in olive-sprays, who bears each rite
Of sacrifice and comes into our sight?
I know those locks, I know that hoary beard
Of Numa, sent from where he will be reared
Among the poor Cures that he may find
The infant Rome and see that it be bound
With laws and sovereign might. The man who'll be
His heir shall break his land's serenity 980
And rouse his slothful countrymen to war,
Creating ranks that rarely had before
Been used to triumphs. Tullus is his name.
Ancus shall be his heir, of boastful fame,
Harkening too much to what his people say.

Do you desire to look on the array
Of Tarquin kings and see the vengeful soul
Of noble Brutus who'll regain control
Of Rome? He'll be first consul and agree
To bear the cruel axes. Later, he 990
Will fight his sons who'll stir up further strife
And for fair freedom's sake will take their life.
Unhappy man, although posterity
Will praise the deed! A boundless ardency
For glory and the love of fatherland
Will overcome. See over there, where stand
The Decii and Drusi, Torquatus,
Who wields the cruel axe, and Camillus,
Bringing the standards home. Those men you see
Gleaming with matching arms in harmony 1000
At present while, alas, they're screened in night –
What wars they'll spawn when they have reached the light
Of life, what strife, what carnage! Caesar then
Shall be arrayed against great Pompey's men,
Down from Menoecus and the Alps to fight
His eastern army. Sons, don't think it's right
To contemplate such warfare. Do not tear
Your country's very vitals! No, forbear,
God-born! Unhand your sword, my son! Now see
Where Memmius stands, who'll gain a victory 1010
At Corinth, driving to that city's height,
Famed for the Greeks he'll slaughter in the fight.
The other shall uproot Argos – indeed
Mycenae, too, and he who was the seed

Of Achilles, strong in war, in vengeance for
Troy and Minerva's outraged shrine. What's more,
Great Cato, Cossus and the Scipian pair,
Two thunderbolts of war who caused despair
In Libya, the Gracchi and Fabricius,
The pauper-prince. And there is Serranus, 1020
The ploughman. To relate *your* history
Fabii, would tire me. Ah, you are he,
O Maximus, who singly shall restore
Rome by delay. I've no doubt there'll be m
Who'll better mould the bronze and draw more life
From marble, have more skill in legal strife,
Trace with their rods the paths of heaven, tell
Or rising stars; Roman, remember well
To rule the nations (this will be your art),
Crown Peace with Law, to those in chains impart 1030
Mercy, subdue the proud.' To great surprise
He spoke, then added: 'See! Before your eyes
Metellus with his fine spoils comes this way,
Triumphant over all. He'll be the stay
Of Rome in her confusion, conquering all
The Carthaginians and rebel Gaul
And to Father Quirinus offering thrice
The captured arms. Aeneas in a trice
Espied a handsome youth whose armour shone,
Though he cast down his eyes, his features wan. 1040
'Who's that with him?' he asked. 'A son, is he?
Or one of that great stock of progeny
Two generations on? What whispers noise

In that encircling crowd! What noble poise
He has! But black night flies around his head
In mournful shade.' Father Anchises said,
Tears welling up' 'Do not inquire, my son,
About your family's dreadful woe. He's one
The Fates will show to earth but will eschew
Keeping him there. Gods, it appeared to you 1050
That Roman stock would prove, if your largesse
Would last, too mighty. What unhappiness!
What wailing shall float from that famous Field
To potent Rome. What deaths shall be revealed,
Tiber, as past that new-built tomb you flow!
No Trojan youth shall elevate with so
Much fame his Latin ancestors; such pride
In any other son shall not abide
In Rome. Alas, invincibility
In war, justice and old-world decency! 1060
None would have met that man unscathed in fight,
Whether on foot or forcing his spurs to bite
Into his foaming horse's sides. You'll be
Marcellus. Oh, if only Destiny
Could be reversed, poor boy! Bring me a store
Of lilies so that purple flowers galore
I then may strew and on my offspring's shade
Offer these gifts at least in fruitless aid.'
They freely wandered through the shadowy
And wide plains, seeing all that they could see. 1070
When ha had shown him all and lit a flame
Within his heart for his ensuing fame,

He told him of the wars he must pursue,
Latinus' city, the Laurentians, too,
And how to flee of face his miseries.
There are two gates of Sleep; while one of these
They say is wrought of horn, an element made
To give an outlet to each genuine shade,
The other gleams with polished ivory
But to the earth dreams full of falsity 1080
Are sent up by the spirits. Then his son
And the Sibyl he sent through the ivory one;
Aeneas hastened to the ships to see
His comrades, then he sailed immediately
Along the shore to Caieta and cast
The anchor and the sterns he there made fast.

