OVID

Ovid's Metamorphoses

Books I-XV

Original and Contemporary English

A facing-page edition for personal reading

Complete Latin text and the existing contemporary English translation, Books I-XV. The Latin is typeset from the project's Latin Library text; these are not facsimile images. The two texts are aligned at book level. Each side runs independently within that book, so facing pages need not cover exactly the same passage. Latin line ranges and English portion numbers identify each side without implying a line-by-line concordance. Original English section headings are retained.

Source project: github.com/lurnake/ovid-metamorphoses

English translation project by Joona Heino. Existing AI-assisted translations are reproduced from the source project. This edition checks layout and page order; it is not a new scholarly verification of the translation.

Print at actual size on A4 paper, double-sided, flipping on the long edge. Originals appear on left-hand pages and English on right-hand pages. Binding margins are mirrored. The files are in reading order, ready for a printer to impose.

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BOOK 1

In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas
corpora; di, coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illas)
adspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi
ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen!
Ante mare et terras et quod tegit omnia caelum
unus erat toto naturae vultus in orbe,
quem dixere chaos: rudis indigestaque moles
nec quicquam nisi pondus iners congestaque eodem
non bene iunctarum discordia semina rerum.
nullus adhuc mundo praebebat lumina Titan,
nec nova crescendo reparabat cornua Phoebe,
nec circumfuso pendebat in aere tellus
ponderibus librata suis, nec bracchia longo
margine terrarum porrexerat Amphitrite;
utque erat et tellus illic et pontus et aer,
sic erat instabilis tellus, innabilis unda,
lucis egens aer; nulli sua forma manebat,
obstabatque aliis aliud, quia corpore in uno
frigida pugnabant calidis, umentia siccis,
mollia cum duris, sine pondere, habentia pondus.
Hanc deus et melior litem natura diremit.
nam caelo terras et terris abscidit undas
et liquidum spisso secrevit ab aere caelum.
quae postquam evolvit caecoque exemit acervo,
dissociata locis concordi pace ligavit:
ignea convexi vis et sine pondere caeli
emicuit summaque locum sibi fecit in arce;
proximus est aer illi levitate locoque;
densior his tellus elementaque grandia traxit
et pressa est gravitate sua; circumfluus umor
ultima possedit solidumque coercuit orbem.
Sic ubi dispositam quisquis fuit ille deorum
congeriem secuit sectamque in membra coegit,
principio terram, ne non aequalis ab omni
parte foret, magni speciem glomeravit in orbis.
tum freta diffundi rapidisque tumescere ventis
iussit et ambitae circumdare litora terrae;
addidit et fontes et stagna inmensa lacusque
fluminaque obliquis cinxit declivia ripis,

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Opening Invocation

My mind is set on telling of bodies transformed into new forms. You gods - since you're the ones who made these changes happen - breathe life into my project and spin my song in one unbroken thread from the world's beginning to my own time.

The Creation

Before the sea and land existed, before the sky that covers everything, nature showed one face throughout the whole world - what they called Chaos: a rough, unorganized mass, nothing but dead weight and the clashing seeds of things badly joined together.

No sun yet gave the world its light. The moon didn't renew her crescent horns by growing full. The earth didn't yet hang suspended in the surrounding air, balanced by her own weight. No ocean yet stretched its arms along the far edges of the land.

Though earth and sea and air were present there, the earth was unstable, the water unswimmable, the air without light. Nothing kept its shape. Everything got in the way of everything else - because within one body, cold fought with hot, wet with dry, soft with hard, things with weight versus weightlessness.

A god - and a better kind of nature - settled this war. He cut the heavens from the earth, the earth from the water, and separated the pure air from the thick fog.

When he'd unraveled these elements and freed them from the blind heap, he bound them in their separate places in harmonious peace. The fiery, weightless energy of the vaulted sky shot upward and claimed the highest place. Air, almost as light, took the next position. The earth, denser than these, drew in the heavier elements and was pressed down by its own gravity. Water flowed around everything and held the solid globe in its embrace.

Shaping the World

When whichever god it was had organized this pile and divided it into separate parts, he first shaped the earth into a great sphere so it would be equal on every side. Then he ordered the seas to spread out, to swell with rushing winds, and to embrace the shores of the encircled land.

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quae, diversa locis, partim sorbentur ab ipsa,
in mare perveniunt partim campoque recepta
liberioris aquae pro ripis litora pulsant.
iussit et extendi campos, subsidere valles,
fronde tegi silvas, lapidosos surgere montes,
utque duae dextra caelum totidemque sinistra
parte secant zonae, quinta est ardentior illis,
sic onus inclusum numero distinxit eodem
cura dei, totidemque plagae tellure premuntur.
quarum quae media est, non est habitabilis aestu;
nix tegit alta duas; totidem inter utramque locavit
temperiemque dedit mixta cum frigore flamma.
Inminet his aer, qui, quanto est pondere terrae
pondus aquae levius, tanto est onerosior igni.
illic et nebulas, illic consistere nubes
iussit et humanas motura tonitrua mentes
et cum fulminibus facientes fulgura ventos.
His quoque non passim mundi fabricator habendum
aera permisit; vix nunc obsistitur illis,
cum sua quisque regat diverso flamina tractu,
quin lanient mundum; tanta est discordia fratrum.
Eurus ad Auroram Nabataeaque regna recessit
Persidaque et radiis iuga subdita matutinis;
vesper et occiduo quae litora sole tepescunt,
proxima sunt Zephyro; Scythiam septemque triones
horrifer invasit Boreas; contraria tellus
nubibus adsiduis pluviaque madescit ab Austro.
haec super inposuit liquidum et gravitate carentem
aethera nec quicquam terrenae faecis habentem.
Vix ita limitibus dissaepserat omnia certis,
cum, quae pressa diu fuerant caligine caeca,
sidera coeperunt toto effervescere caelo;
neu regio foret ulla suis animalibus orba,
astra tenent caeleste solum formaeque deorum,
cesserunt nitidis habitandae piscibus undae,
terra feras cepit, volucres agitabilis aer.
Sanctius his animal mentisque capacius altae
deerat adhuc et quod dominari in cetera posset:
natus homo est, sive hunc divino semine fecit

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He added springs, vast marshes, and lakes. He bounded rivers with sloping banks that slope in different directions - some absorbed back into the earth itself, some reaching the sea where, received into that wider space of freer water, they beat against shores instead of riverbanks.

He ordered plains to stretch, valleys to sink down, forests to clothe themselves in leaves, and rocky mountains to rise up.

Just as two zones cut across the sky on the right and two on the left, with a fifth zone hotter than these in between, so the god's care marked off the enclosed mass with the same number, and the same zones are imprinted on the earth.

The middle zone is uninhabitable because of heat. Deep snow covers two others. He placed the same number in between and gave them a temperate climate, mixing cold with warmth.

Air and the Elements

Above these zones hangs the air. As much lighter as water is than earth, just that much heavier is air than fire.

There he ordered mists to settle, there clouds, there thunder that would shake human minds, and winds that strike lightning and make the flash.

But the world's builder didn't let these winds roam the air freely - even now, though each one rules its own separate region, they can barely be stopped from tearing the world apart. Such discord exists between brothers!

The East Wind withdrew toward the dawn and the kingdoms of Arabia and Persia, to the ridges that lie beneath the rays of morning. The West Wind claimed the shores warmed by the setting sun. The North Wind invaded frozen Scythia and the northern stars. The opposite land is drenched by constant clouds and rain from the South Wind.

Above all these he placed the clear ether, weightless and free from any earthly residue.

Life Appears

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ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo,
sive recens tellus seductaque nuper ab alto
aethere cognati retinebat semina caeli.
quam satus Iapeto, mixtam pluvialibus undis,
finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta deorum,
pronaque cum spectent animalia cetera terram,
os homini sublime dedit caelumque videre
iussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus:
sic, modo quae fuerat rudis et sine imagine, tellus
induit ignotas hominum conversa figuras.
Aurea prima sata est aetas, quae vindice nullo,
sponte sua, sine lege fidem rectumque colebat.
poena metusque aberant, nec verba minantia fixo
aere legebantur, nec supplex turba timebat
iudicis ora sui, sed erant sine vindice tuti.
nondum caesa suis, peregrinum ut viseret orbem,
montibus in liquidas pinus descenderat undas,
nullaque mortales praeter sua litora norant;
nondum praecipites cingebant oppida fossae;
non tuba derecti, non aeris cornua flexi,
non galeae, non ensis erat: sine militis usu
mollia securae peragebant otia gentes.
ipsa quoque inmunis rastroque intacta nec ullis
saucia vomeribus per se dabat omnia tellus,
contentique cibis nullo cogente creatis
arbuteos fetus montanaque fraga legebant
cornaque et in duris haerentia mora rubetis
et quae deciderant patula Iovis arbore glandes.
ver erat aeternum, placidique tepentibus auris
mulcebant zephyri natos sine semine flores;
mox etiam fruges tellus inarata ferebat,
nec renovatus ager gravidis canebat aristis;
flumina iam lactis, iam flumina nectaris ibant,
flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella.
Postquam Saturno tenebrosa in Tartara misso
sub Iove mundus erat, subiit argentea proles,
auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior aere.
Iuppiter antiqui contraxit tempora veris
perque hiemes aestusque et inaequalis autumnos

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As soon as he'd separated everything with these fixed boundaries, the stars that had long been pressed down by blind darkness began to kindle throughout the whole sky.

So that no region would lack its own living things: the heavenly soil holds the stars and divine forms; the gleaming waves were given to fish to inhabit; earth took the wild beasts; the shifting air, the birds.

The Creation of Humanity

An animal holier than these, more capable of higher thought, one that could rule over all the rest, was still missing. Then human beings were born.

Either that craftsman of the universe, creator of a better world, made them from divine seed, or else the new-formed earth, recently separated from the high ether, still retained seeds related to the sky - which the son of Iapetus, mixing it with rainwater, shaped into the likeness of the gods who control everything.

While other animals look downward at the earth, he gave humanity an upturned face and ordered us to look at the sky and lift our gaze toward the stars.

So the earth that had just been rough and shapeless took on the unknown form of human beings.

The Golden Age

First came the Golden Age. Without any enforcer, without laws, people cultivated faith and righteousness on their own.

There was no punishment or fear. No threatening words were engraved on bronze tablets. No crowd of suppliants dreaded the face of their judge - they were safe without any enforcer.

No pine tree yet, cut from its mountain, had descended into the clear waves to visit a foreign world. Mortals knew no shores except their own.

No steep ditches yet surrounded cities. There were no straight bronze trumpets, no curved brass horns, no helmets, no swords. Without any need for soldiers, people lived through soft, peaceful times in safety.

The earth itself, untouched by the hoe, unwounded by any plowshare, gave everything on its own. Content with food that required no one's compulsion to create it, people gathered wild strawberries

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et breve ver spatiis exegit quattuor annum.
tum primum siccis aer fervoribus ustus
canduit, et ventis glacies adstricta pependit;
tum primum subiere domos; domus antra fuerunt
et densi frutices et vinctae cortice virgae.
semina tum primum longis Cerealia sulcis
obruta sunt, pressique iugo gemuere iuvenci.
Tertia post illam successit aenea proles,
saevior ingeniis et ad horrida promptior arma,
non scelerata tamen; de duro est ultima ferro.
protinus inrupit venae peioris in aevum
omne nefas: fugere pudor verumque fidesque;
in quorum subiere locum fraudesque dolusque
insidiaeque et vis et amor sceleratus habendi.
vela dabant ventis nec adhuc bene noverat illos
navita, quaeque prius steterant in montibus altis,
fluctibus ignotis insultavere carinae,
communemque prius ceu lumina solis et auras
cautus humum longo signavit limite mensor.
nec tantum segetes alimentaque debita dives
poscebatur humus, sed itum est in viscera terrae,
quasque recondiderat Stygiisque admoverat umbris,
effodiuntur opes, inritamenta malorum.
iamque nocens ferrum ferroque nocentius aurum
prodierat, prodit bellum, quod pugnat utroque,
sanguineaque manu crepitantia concutit arma.
vivitur ex rapto: non hospes ab hospite tutus,
non socer a genero, fratrum quoque gratia rara est;
inminet exitio vir coniugis, illa mariti,
lurida terribiles miscent aconita novercae,
filius ante diem patrios inquirit in annos:
victa iacet pietas, et virgo caede madentis
ultima caelestum terras Astraea reliquit.
Neve foret terris securior arduus aether,
adfectasse ferunt regnum caeleste gigantas
altaque congestos struxisse ad sidera montis.
tum pater omnipotens misso perfregit Olympum
fulmine et excussit subiecto Pelion Ossae.
obruta mole sua cum corpora dira iacerent,

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from the mountains, cherries, berries clinging to prickly brambles, and acorns that had fallen from Jupiter's spreading oak tree.

Spring was eternal. Gentle west winds with warm breezes caressed flowers born without seeds. Soon the unplowed earth even produced grain, and the unfilled field grew white with heavy wheat. Rivers flowed with milk, rivers flowed with nectar, and golden honey dripped from the green oak tree.

The Silver Age

After Saturn was sent down to dark Tartarus and the world came under Jupiter's rule, the Silver Age arrived - worse than gold, but more valuable than tawny bronze.

Jupiter shortened the length of the ancient spring and drove the year through four seasons: winter, summer, unequal autumn, and brief spring.

Then for the first time the air burned white with dry heat, and ice hung frozen by winds. Then for the first time people sought houses - before, their homes had been caves, thick bushes, and branches bound with bark.

Then for the first time grain seeds were buried in long furrows, and young oxen groaned under the weight of the yoke.

The Bronze Age

After that came the third generation, of bronze - fiercer in temperament and quicker to take up savage weapons, but not yet criminal.

The Iron Age

Last is the age of hard iron. Immediately every kind of wickedness burst into this age of baser material. Shame fled, and truth and faith. In their place came treachery, deceit, traps, violence, and the cursed love of possessions.

Sailors spread their sails to winds they didn't yet know well. Trees that once stood on high mountains now jumped as ships' hulls on unknown waves.

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perfusam multo natorum sanguine Terram
immaduisse ferunt calidumque animasse cruorem
et, ne nulla suae stirpis monimenta manerent,
in faciem vertisse hominum; sed et illa propago
contemptrix superum saevaeque avidissima caedis
et violenta fuit: scires e sanguine natos.
Quae pater ut summa vidit Saturnius arce,
ingemit et facto nondum vulgata recenti
foeda Lycaoniae referens convivia mensae
ingentes animo et dignas Iove concipit iras
conciliumque vocat: tenuit mora nulla vocatos.
Est via sublimis, caelo manifesta sereno;
lactea nomen habet, candore notabilis ipso.
hac iter est superis ad magni tecta Tonantis
regalemque domum: dextra laevaque deorum
atria nobilium valvis celebrantur apertis.
plebs habitat diversa locis: hac parte potentes
caelicolae clarique suos posuere penates;
hic locus est, quem, si verbis audacia detur,
haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli.
Ergo ubi marmoreo superi sedere recessu,
celsior ipse loco sceptroque innixus eburno
terrificam capitis concussit terque quaterque
caesariem, cum qua terram, mare, sidera movit.
talibus inde modis ora indignantia solvit:
'non ego pro mundi regno magis anxius illa
tempestate fui, qua centum quisque parabat
inicere anguipedum captivo bracchia caelo.
nam quamquam ferus hostis erat, tamen illud ab uno
corpore et ex una pendebat origine bellum;
nunc mihi qua totum Nereus circumsonat orbem,
perdendum est mortale genus: per flumina iuro
infera sub terras Stygio labentia luco!
cuncta prius temptanda, sed inmedicabile curae
ense recidendum, ne pars sincera trahatur.
sunt mihi semidei, sunt, rustica numina, nymphae
faunique satyrique et monticolae silvani;
quos quoniam caeli nondum dignamur honore,
quas dedimus, certe terras habitare sinamus.

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The surveyor carefully marked the ground with long boundary lines - ground that before, like sunlight and air, had been common to all.

Not only were crops and the sustenance we're owed demanded from the rich soil, but people went down into the earth's guts, and they dug up the wealth she'd hidden and stored near the Stygian shades - wealth that incites evil.

And now deadly iron came forth, and gold more deadly than iron. War came forth, which fights with both, and shook clashing weapons with bloody hands.

People lived off theft. Guest wasn't safe from host, nor father-in-law from son-in-law. Even brotherly love was rare. Husbands threatened their wives' lives, wives their husbands'. Terrible stepmothers mixed deadly poisons. Sons checked their fathers' ages before their time.

Righteousness lay defeated. The virgin Astraea, last of the immortals, abandoned the blood-soaked earth.

The Giants

And so that the high heaven wouldn't be safer than the earth, they say the giants aspired to the kingdom of the sky and piled up mountains heaped toward the stars.

Then the all-powerful father shattered Olympus with a thunderbolt he hurled and knocked Pelion down from underlying Ossa.

When those dreadful bodies lay crushed beneath their own mass, they say that Earth, soaked with her sons' abundant blood, gave life to the warm gore - so that some memorial of her offspring would remain.

Jupiter's Council and the Flood

But this bloodthirsty generation didn't escape the notice of the gods. When Saturn's son saw it from his highest citadel, he groaned. Remembering the recent, not-yet-publicized horror of Lycaon's feast, he conceived huge rage worthy of Jupiter and called a council. No delay held back those he summoned.

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an satis, o superi, tutos fore creditis illos,
cum mihi, qui fulmen, qui vos habeoque regoque,
struxerit insidias notus feritate Lycaon?'
Confremuere omnes studiisque ardentibus ausum
talia deposcunt: sic, cum manus inpia saevit
sanguine Caesareo Romanum exstinguere nomen,
attonitum tantae subito terrore ruinae
humanum genus est totusque perhorruit orbis;
nec tibi grata minus pietas, Auguste, tuorum
quam fuit illa Iovi. qui postquam voce manuque
murmura conpressit, tenuere silentia cuncti.
substitit ut clamor pressus gravitate regentis,
Iuppiter hoc iterum sermone silentia rupit:
'ille quidem poenas (curam hanc dimittite!) solvit;
quod tamen admissum, quae sit vindicta, docebo.
contigerat nostras infamia temporis aures;
quam cupiens falsam summo delabor Olympo
et deus humana lustro sub imagine terras.
longa mora est, quantum noxae sit ubique repertum,
enumerare: minor fuit ipsa infamia vero.
Maenala transieram latebris horrenda ferarum
et cum Cyllene gelidi pineta Lycaei:
Arcadis hinc sedes et inhospita tecta tyranni
ingredior, traherent cum sera crepuscula noctem.
signa dedi venisse deum, vulgusque precari
coeperat: inridet primo pia vota Lycaon,
mox ait "experiar deus hic discrimine aperto
an sit mortalis: nec erit dubitabile verum."
nocte gravem somno necopina perdere morte
comparat: haec illi placet experientia veri;
nec contentus eo, missi de gente Molossa
obsidis unius iugulum mucrone resolvit
atque ita semineces partim ferventibus artus
mollit aquis, partim subiecto torruit igni.
quod simul inposuit mensis, ego vindice flamma
in domino dignos everti tecta penates;
territus ipse fugit nactusque silentia ruris
exululat frustraque loqui conatur: ab ipso
colligit os rabiem solitaeque cupidine caedis

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There's a high road, visible in the clear sky, called the Milky Way - famous for its brilliant whiteness. This is the path the gods take to the palace of the great Thunderer and his royal home. On the right and left, the halls of powerful, distinguished gods bustle with open doors. The common people live in different quarters. Here, in this section, the influential heaven-dwellers and famous ones have placed their household shrines. This is a place that - if words can be so bold - I wouldn't hesitate to call the Palatine of the great sky.

So when the gods had taken their seats in the marble hall, Jupiter himself, seated higher than the rest and leaning on his ivory scepter, shook three or four times the terrifying hair of his head, with which he moves the earth, the sea, and the stars. Then he opened his indignant mouth with these words:

"I was never more anxious for the kingdom of the world than during that crisis when each of the hundred snake-footed giants was preparing to throw its arms around captive heaven. For though that enemy was fierce, still that war hung from one body and sprang from one source. But now, wherever Nereus resounds around the whole world, the mortal race must be destroyed. I swear by the rivers of the underworld that flow beneath the earth through the Stygian grove! Everything must be tried first, but what's incurable must be cut away with the knife, before the healthy part is infected.

"I have demigods, rustic spirits, nymphs, fauns, satyrs, and mountain-dwelling woodland gods. Since we don't yet think them worthy of the honor of heaven, let's at least allow them to live in the lands we've given them. Or do you really believe they'll be safe enough, gods, when Lycaon - notorious for his savagery - has plotted against me, who wield the thunderbolt and rule over both you and myself?"

All the gods murmured together and with burning zeal demanded punishment for such daring. Just as when a wicked gang raged to extinguish the Roman name with Caesar's blood, the whole human race was stunned by the terror of such sudden ruin, and the whole world shuddered - your people's loyalty wasn't less pleasing to you, Augustus, than that loyalty was to Jupiter. He, after he'd quieted the murmurs with voice and hand, all held silence. When the clamor died down, pressed by the ruler's authority, Jupiter again broke the silence with this speech:

"He indeed has paid his penalty - don't worry about that! But I'll tell you what crime he committed and what vengeance followed. Reports of our age's infamy had reached my ears. Hoping these reports were false, I descended from high Olympus and, though a god, I traveled the earth in human form. It would

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vertitur in pecudes et nunc quoque sanguine gaudet.
in villos abeunt vestes, in crura lacerti:
fit lupus et veteris servat vestigia formae;
canities eadem est, eadem violentia vultus,
idem oculi lucent, eadem feritatis imago est.
occidit una domus, sed non domus una perire
digna fuit: qua terra patet, fera regnat Erinys.
in facinus iurasse putes! dent ocius omnes,
quas meruere pati, (sic stat sententia) poenas.'
Dicta Iovis pars voce probant stimulosque frementi
adiciunt, alii partes adsensibus inplent.
est tamen humani generis iactura dolori
omnibus, et quae sit terrae mortalibus orbae
forma futura rogant, quis sit laturus in aras
tura, ferisne paret populandas tradere terras.
talia quaerentes (sibi enim fore cetera curae)
rex superum trepidare vetat subolemque priori
dissimilem populo promittit origine mira.
Iamque erat in totas sparsurus fulmina terras;
sed timuit, ne forte sacer tot ab ignibus aether
conciperet flammas longusque ardesceret axis:
esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur, adfore tempus,
quo mare, quo tellus correptaque regia caeli
ardeat et mundi moles obsessa laboret.
tela reponuntur manibus fabricata cyclopum;
poena placet diversa, genus mortale sub undis
perdere et ex omni nimbos demittere caelo.
Protinus Aeoliis Aquilonem claudit in antris
et quaecumque fugant inductas flamina nubes
emittitque Notum. madidis Notus evolat alis,
terribilem picea tectus caligine vultum;
barba gravis nimbis, canis fluit unda capillis;
fronte sedent nebulae, rorant pennaeque sinusque.
utque manu lata pendentia nubila pressit,
fit fragor: hinc densi funduntur ab aethere nimbi;
nuntia Iunonis varios induta colores
concipit Iris aquas alimentaque nubibus adfert.
sternuntur segetes et deplorata coloni
vota iacent, longique perit labor inritus anni.

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take too long to list how much wickedness I found everywhere. The reputation fell short of the truth.

"I'd crossed the Maenalus - dreadful with its wild beasts' lairs - and Cyllene and the pine forests of cold Lycaeus. From there I entered the home and inhospitable dwelling of the Arcadian tyrant, as late twilight was drawing on night. I gave signs that a god had come, and the common people began to pray. At first Lycaon mocked their pious prayers. Then he said, 'I'll test whether this is a god or a mortal with clear proof - the truth won't be in doubt.'

"He planned to kill me in my sleep during the night, by surprise and without warning. That's the kind of proof of truth that pleased him! Not content with that, he took a hostage sent from the Molossian people, cut his throat with a sword, and then softened some of the half-dead limbs in boiling water, some he roasted over fire. As soon as he set this before me at his table, I brought down his dwelling with avenging flame, collapsing it on the master who deserved it.

"Terrified, he fled and reached the silence of the countryside. He howled and tried in vain to speak. His mouth gathered foam from his own rage, and with his usual lust for slaughter, he turned against flocks - even now he delights in blood. His clothes changed into shaggy fur, his arms to legs. He became a wolf and kept traces of his old form. The same gray hair, the same violent expression, the same gleaming eyes, the same image of savagery.

"One house has fallen, but not only one house deserved to fall. Wherever the earth spreads, savage Vengeance reigns. You'd think they'd sworn an oath to crime! Let them all quickly pay the penalties they've earned - this is my decision."

Some approved Jupiter's words with their voices and added fuel to his rage; others filled their parts with silent agreement. Still, the loss of the human race was painful to all of them, and they asked what form the earth would take without mortals, who would bring incense to the altars, whether he intended to abandon the earth to wild beasts for ravaging. The king of the gods told them not to worry about such things (for the rest would be his concern) and promised a new race unlike the previous people, one with a miraculous origin.

And now he was about to scatter lightning bolts across the whole earth, but he feared that perhaps the sacred ether might catch fire from so many flames and the long axis of heaven burn. He also remembered that it's in the fates that a time will come when the sea, the earth, and the palace of the sky

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Nec caelo contenta suo est Iovis ira, sed illum
caeruleus frater iuvat auxiliaribus undis.
convocat hic amnes: qui postquam tecta tyranni
intravere sui, 'non est hortamine longo
nunc' ait 'utendum; vires effundite vestras:
sic opus est! aperite domos ac mole remota
fluminibus vestris totas inmittite habenas!'
iusserat; hi redeunt ac fontibus ora relaxant
et defrenato volvuntur in aequora cursu.
Ipse tridente suo terram percussit, at illa
intremuit motuque vias patefecit aquarum.
exspatiata ruunt per apertos flumina campos
cumque satis arbusta simul pecudesque virosque
tectaque cumque suis rapiunt penetralia sacris.
si qua domus mansit potuitque resistere tanto
indeiecta malo, culmen tamen altior huius
unda tegit, pressaeque latent sub gurgite turres.
iamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant:
omnia pontus erant, derant quoque litora ponto.
Occupat hic collem, cumba sedet alter adunca
et ducit remos illic, ubi nuper arabat:
ille supra segetes aut mersae culmina villae
navigat, hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo.
figitur in viridi, si fors tulit, ancora prato,
aut subiecta terunt curvae vineta carinae;
et, modo qua graciles gramen carpsere capellae,
nunc ibi deformes ponunt sua corpora phocae.
mirantur sub aqua lucos urbesque domosque
Nereides, silvasque tenent delphines et altis
incursant ramis agitataque robora pulsant.
nat lupus inter oves, fulvos vehit unda leones,
unda vehit tigres; nec vires fulminis apro,
crura nec ablato prosunt velocia cervo,
quaesitisque diu terris, ubi sistere possit,
in mare lassatis volucris vaga decidit alis.
obruerat tumulos inmensa licentia ponti,
pulsabantque novi montana cacumina fluctus.
maxima pars unda rapitur; quibus unda pepercit,
illos longa domant inopi ieiunia victu.

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will burn, and the besieged structure of the universe will be in danger. He put away the thunderbolts forged by Cyclopes' hands. A different punishment pleased him - to destroy the mortal race beneath the waves and send down rainstorms from the whole sky.

The Great Flood

Immediately he imprisoned the North Wind in Aeolus' caves along with whatever breezes scatter the clouds once they're gathered, and he released the South Wind. The South Wind flew out on soaking wings, his terrible face covered in pitch-black darkness. His beard was heavy with rainclouds, water flowed from his white hair, mists sat on his forehead, and his wings and the folds of his robe dripped with rain. When he pressed the hanging clouds with his broad hand, there was a crash. Then thick rainclouds poured down from the sky. Iris, Juno's messenger, dressed in various colors, gathered water and fed it to the clouds. The crops were flattened. The farmers' prayers lay mourned and ruined, and a long year's work perished, all for nothing.

Nor was Jupiter's anger satisfied with his own sky - his sea-blue brother helped him with auxiliary waves. He called the rivers together. After they'd entered their master's dwelling, he said, "There's no need for a long speech now. Pour out your power - that's what's needed! Open your houses and, with all barriers removed, release full rein to your streams!" He'd given his orders. They returned and relaxed their fountainheads and rolled toward the sea in an unbridled course.

He himself struck the earth with his trident, and it trembled and with that movement opened paths for the waters. The rivers spread out and rushed through the open fields. They swept away orchards, crops, cattle, people, houses, and inner shrines with their sacred things. If any house remained standing and could resist such great disaster without being thrown down, still a wave higher than that house covered its roof, and towers lay hidden, pressed down under the flood. And now sea and land had no distinction. Everything was ocean - an ocean that even lacked shores.

Scenes from the Flood

One person occupied a hill. Another sat in a curved boat and rowed where he'd recently plowed. One sailed over crops or over the roof of his submerged farmhouse. Another caught a fish in the top of an elm tree. An anchor was stuck in a green meadow, if chance brought it there, or curved keels scraped over

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Separat Aonios Oetaeis Phocis ab arvis,
terra ferax, dum terra fuit, sed tempore in illo
pars maris et latus subitarum campus aquarum.
mons ibi verticibus petit arduus astra duobus,
nomine Parnasos, superantque cacumina nubes.
hic ubi Deucalion (nam cetera texerat aequor)
cum consorte tori parva rate vectus adhaesit,
Corycidas nymphas et numina montis adorant
fatidicamque Themin, quae tunc oracla tenebat:
non illo melior quisquam nec amantior aequi
vir fuit aut illa metuentior ulla deorum.
Iuppiter ut liquidis stagnare paludibus orbem
et superesse virum de tot modo milibus unum,
et superesse vidit de tot modo milibus unam,
innocuos ambo, cultores numinis ambo,
nubila disiecit nimbisque aquilone remotis
et caelo terras ostendit et aethera terris.
nec maris ira manet, positoque tricuspide telo
mulcet aquas rector pelagi supraque profundum
exstantem atque umeros innato murice tectum
caeruleum Tritona vocat conchaeque sonanti
inspirare iubet fluctusque et flumina signo
iam revocare dato: cava bucina sumitur illi,
tortilis in latum quae turbine crescit ab imo,
bucina, quae medio concepit ubi aera ponto,
litora voce replet sub utroque iacentia Phoebo;
tum quoque, ut ora dei madida rorantia barba
contigit et cecinit iussos inflata receptus,
omnibus audita est telluris et aequoris undis,
et quibus est undis audita, coercuit omnes.
iam mare litus habet, plenos capit alveus amnes,
flumina subsidunt collesque exire videntur;
surgit humus, crescunt sola decrescentibus undis,
postque diem longam nudata cacumina silvae
ostendunt limumque tenent in fronde relictum
Redditus orbis erat; quem postquam vidit inanem
et desolatas agere alta silentia terras,
Deucalion lacrimis ita Pyrrham adfatur obortis:
'o soror, o coniunx, o femina sola superstes,

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vineyards beneath them. And where graceful goats had just grazed on grass, now misshapen seals placed their bodies.

The sea nymphs marveled at groves and cities and houses underwater. Dolphins held the forests and ran into high branches and struck against the shaken oaks. A wolf swam among sheep. The wave carried tawny lions, the wave carried tigers. Neither the power of his lightning-bolt strength helped the boar, nor his swift legs the deer, though they'd been taken away. After searching long for land where it could settle, the wandering bird fell into the sea on exhausted wings.

The boundless license of the ocean had buried hills, and new waves beat against mountain peaks. The flood swept away most life. Those the wave spared were conquered by slow starvation from lack of food.

Deucalion and Pyrrha

Phocis separates the Boeotian fields from those of Oeta - a fertile land while it was land, but at that time it was part of the sea, a broad plain of sudden waters. There a mountain reaches toward the stars with its twin peaks, named Parnassus, and its summits rise above the clouds. Here, when Deucalion - for the sea had covered everything else - landed in his small boat with his wife and companion, they worshiped the Corycian nymphs and the spirits of the mountain and prophetic Themis, who then held the oracle. No man was better than he, none more loving of justice, and no woman was more reverent toward the gods than she.

When Jupiter saw the world stagnating in liquid marshes and saw that one man survived of so many thousands just before, and one woman survived of so many thousands just before - both innocent, both worshipers of divinity - he scattered the clouds and, with the North Wind driving away the rainstorms, revealed the earth to the sky and the heavens to the lands. Nor did the sea's anger remain. The ruler of the deep set aside his three-pronged weapon and calmed the waters. He called sea-blue Triton, who rose above the depths, his shoulders covered with native purple shellfish, and ordered him to blow into his resounding conch shell and with that signal now to call back the waves and rivers. Triton took up his hollow trumpet, twisted in a spiral that grows wide from its base - the trumpet that, when it receives air in the middle of the sea, fills with its voice the shores lying beneath both suns. Then too, when it touched the god's lips, wet and dripping with his beard, and sounded the ordered retreat, it was heard by all the waters of earth and sea, and all the waters it was heard by, it restrained.

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quam commune mihi genus et patruelis origo,
deinde torus iunxit, nunc ipsa pericula iungunt,
terrarum, quascumque vident occasus et ortus,
nos duo turba sumus; possedit cetera pontus.
haec quoque adhuc vitae non est fiducia nostrae
certa satis; terrent etiamnum nubila mentem.
quis tibi, si sine me fatis erepta fuisses,
nunc animus, miseranda, foret? quo sola timorem
ferre modo posses? quo consolante doleres!
namque ego (crede mihi), si te quoque pontus haberet,
te sequerer, coniunx, et me quoque pontus haberet.
o utinam possim populos reparare paternis
artibus atque animas formatae infundere terrae!
nunc genus in nobis restat mortale duobus.
sic visum superis: hominumque exemplas manemus.'
dixerat, et flebant: placuit caeleste precari
numen et auxilium per sacras quaerere sortes.
nulla mora est: adeunt pariter Cephesidas undas,
ut nondum liquidas, sic iam vada nota secantes.
inde ubi libatos inroravere liquores
vestibus et capiti, flectunt vestigia sanctae
ad delubra deae, quorum fastigia turpi
pallebant musco stabantque sine ignibus arae.
ut templi tetigere gradus, procumbit uterque
pronus humi gelidoque pavens dedit oscula saxo
atque ita 'si precibus' dixerunt 'numina iustis
victa remollescunt, si flectitur ira deorum,
dic, Themi, qua generis damnum reparabile nostri
arte sit, et mersis fer opem, mitissima, rebus!'
Mota dea est sortemque dedit: 'discedite templo
et velate caput cinctasque resolvite vestes
ossaque post tergum magnae iactate parentis!'
obstupuere diu: rumpitque silentia voce
Pyrrha prior iussisque deae parere recusat,
detque sibi veniam pavido rogat ore pavetque
laedere iactatis maternas ossibus umbras.
interea repetunt caecis obscura latebris
verba datae sortis secum inter seque volutant.
inde Promethides placidis Epimethida dictis

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Now the sea had shores. Rivers were held in full channels. Floods subsided and hills were seen emerging. The earth rose up. The ground increased as the waters decreased. After a long day, the forests showed their naked peaks and held mud left in the leaves.

The world had been restored. But when Deucalion saw it empty and saw the lands conducting deep silence in their desolation, he spoke to Pyrrha with welling tears:

"O sister, O wife, O only woman surviving! You whom common descent and family origin connected to me, then marriage joined, now dangers themselves join us - of the lands that the setting and rising sun see, we two are the whole population. The sea has claimed the rest. Even now, assurance of our life isn't certain enough. The clouds still terrify my mind. What spirit would you have now, pitiful woman, if you'd been snatched by the fates without me? How could you bear your fear alone? Who would console you in your grief? For believe me, if the sea held you too, I would follow you, wife, and the sea would hold me too.

"Oh, if only I could repopulate the world with my father's arts and breathe souls into molded earth! Now the mortal race survives in just us two. So it seemed good to the gods above: we remain as examples of humanity."

He'd spoken, and they wept. They decided to pray to the heavenly divinity and seek help through sacred oracles. There was no delay. Together they approached the Cephisian waters, still not clear but already cutting their familiar channels. From there, when they'd sprinkled purifying liquid on their clothes and heads, they turned their steps toward the shrine of the holy goddess, whose pediment was pale with foul moss and whose altars stood without fire.

When they'd touched the temple steps, each fell prone on the ground, and trembling, each gave kisses to the cold stone, and said, "If the gods' powers are conquered and softened by just prayers, if divine anger is bent, tell us, Themis, by what art the loss of our race can be repaired, and bring help, most gentle goddess, to our drowned world!"

The goddess was moved and gave this oracle: "Leave the temple and cover your heads and loosen your belted robes and throw the bones of your great mother behind your backs!"

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mulcet et 'aut fallax' ait 'est sollertia nobis,
aut (pia sunt nullumque nefas oracula suadent!)
magna parens terra est: lapides in corpore terrae
ossa reor dici; iacere hos post terga iubemur.'
Coniugis augurio quamquam Titania mota est,
spes tamen in dubio est: adeo caelestibus ambo
diffidunt monitis; sed quid temptare nocebit?
descendunt: velantque caput tunicasque recingunt
et iussos lapides sua post vestigia mittunt.
saxa (quis hoc credat, nisi sit pro teste vetustas?)
ponere duritiem coepere suumque rigorem
mollirique mora mollitaque ducere formam.
mox ubi creverunt naturaque mitior illis
contigit, ut quaedam, sic non manifesta videri
forma potest hominis, sed uti de marmore coepta
non exacta satis rudibusque simillima signis,
quae tamen ex illis aliquo pars umida suco
et terrena fuit, versa est in corporis usum;
quod solidum est flectique nequit, mutatur in ossa,
quae modo vena fuit, sub eodem nomine mansit,
inque brevi spatio superorum numine saxa
missa viri manibus faciem traxere virorum
et de femineo reparata est femina iactu.
inde genus durum sumus experiensque laborum
et documenta damus qua simus origine nati.
Cetera diversis tellus animalia formis
sponte sua peperit, postquam vetus umor ab igne
percaluit solis, caenumque udaeque paludes
intumuere aestu, fecundaque semina rerum
vivaci nutrita solo ceu matris in alvo
creverunt faciemque aliquam cepere morando.
sic ubi deseruit madidos septemfluus agros
Nilus et antiquo sua flumina reddidit alveo
aetherioque recens exarsit sidere limus,
plurima cultores versis animalia glaebis
inveniunt et in his quaedam modo coepta per ipsum
nascendi spatium, quaedam inperfecta suisque
trunca vident numeris, et eodem in corpore saepe
altera pars vivit, rudis est pars altera tellus.

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They stood stunned for a long time. Pyrrha first broke the silence with her voice and refused to obey the goddess's commands. With frightened voice she begged for pardon and feared to injure her mother's ghost by throwing her bones. Meanwhile they mulled over the obscure words of the oracle given in dark riddles, turning them over between themselves.

Then Prometheus' son calmed Epimetheus' daughter with these soothing words: "Either our cleverness deceives me, or (the oracles are holy and urge no wrong!) our great mother is the earth. I think the stones in the earth's body are called bones. We're ordered to throw these behind our backs."

Though the Titan's wife was moved by her husband's interpretation, still her hope was in doubt - so much did they both distrust the heavenly instructions. But what harm would trying do? They descended. They covered their heads and loosened their tunics and threw stones behind their tracks as ordered.

The stones (who would believe this, unless ancient tradition proved it?) began to lose their hardness and their rigidity, and to soften gradually, and when softened, to take on form. Soon, when they'd grown and a gentler nature had touched them, a certain shape could be seen - almost like a human form, but not quite clear, like marble statues just begun, not finished enough, most similar to rough figures. Whatever part of the stones that was moist with some dampness and earthy was turned to bodily use. What was solid and couldn't bend was changed into bones. What had just been a vein remained under the same name. And in a brief time, by the will of the gods above, the stones sent by the man's hands took on the appearance of men, and from the woman's throwing, woman was restored.

That's why we're a tough race, experienced in hard work - we give proof of the origin from which we were born.

New Life After the Flood

The earth spontaneously produced other animals in various forms after the ancient moisture was warmed by the sun's fire, and the mud and wet marshes swelled with heat. Fertile seeds of things, nourished by life-giving soil as if in a mother's womb, grew and took on some form over time.

So when the seven-channeled Nile abandoned the soaked fields and returned its river to its ancient bed, and the fresh mud baked beneath the heavenly star, farmers turning over the clods found countless animals - and among these they saw some just begun at the very moment of birth, some incomplete and

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quippe ubi temperiem sumpsere umorque calorque,
concipiunt, et ab his oriuntur cuncta duobus,
cumque sit ignis aquae pugnax, vapor umidus omnes
res creat, et discors concordia fetibus apta est.
ergo ubi diluvio tellus lutulenta recenti
solibus aetheriis altoque recanduit aestu,
edidit innumeras species; partimque figuras
rettulit antiquas, partim nova monstra creavit.
Illa quidem nollet, sed te quoque, maxime Python,
tum genuit, populisque novis, incognita serpens,
terror eras: tantum spatii de monte tenebas.
hunc deus arcitenens, numquam letalibus armis
ante nisi in dammis capreisque fugacibus usus,
mille gravem telis exhausta paene pharetra
perdidit effuso per vulnera nigra veneno.
neve operis famam posset delere vetustas,
instituit sacros celebri certamine ludos,
Pythia de domitae serpentis nomine dictos.
hic iuvenum quicumque manu pedibusve rotave
vicerat, aesculeae capiebat frondis honorem.
nondum laurus erat, longoque decentia crine
tempora cingebat de qualibet arbore Phoebus.
Primus amor Phoebi Daphne Peneia, quem non
fors ignara dedit, sed saeva Cupidinis ira,
Delius hunc nuper, victa serpente superbus,
viderat adducto flectentem cornua nervo
'quid' que 'tibi, lascive puer, cum fortibus armis?'
dixerat: 'ista decent umeros gestamina nostros,
qui dare certa ferae, dare vulnera possumus hosti,
qui modo pestifero tot iugera ventre prementem
stravimus innumeris tumidum Pythona sagittis.
tu face nescio quos esto contentus amores
inritare tua, nec laudes adsere nostras!'
filius huic Veneris 'figat tuus omnia, Phoebe,
te meus arcus' ait; 'quantoque animalia cedunt
cuncta deo, tanto minor est tua gloria nostra.'
dixit et eliso percussis aere pennis
inpiger umbrosa Parnasi constitit arce
eque sagittifera prompsit duo tela pharetra

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lacking their full count of parts. Often in the same body, one part was alive while the other part was still raw earth.

For whenever moisture and heat have combined in right proportion, they conceive, and all things arise from these two. Though fire fights with water, moist heat creates everything, and this discordant harmony is suited to producing life. So when the earth, muddy from the recent flood, glowed hot beneath the heavenly sunlight and deep warmth, it produced countless species. Partly it brought back ancient forms, partly it created new monsters.

Apollo and Python

That earth didn't want to create you, but it did produce you then too, enormous Python - you were a terror to these new peoples, unknown snake, so much space from the mountain did you occupy. The bow-bearing god destroyed you, weighed down with a thousand arrows, his quiver nearly emptied, poisonous venom streaming through your black wounds - weapons he'd never before used except on deer and fleeing goats.

And so that time's oblivion couldn't erase the fame of this deed, he established sacred games with famous competition, called Pythian from the name of the conquered serpent. There, whatever youth conquered in hand or foot or wheel received the honor of oak-leaf crowns. The laurel didn't yet exist, and Phoebus encircled his temples - beautiful with long hair - with garlands from any tree.

Apollo and Daphne

Apollo's first love was Daphne, daughter of Peneus. No blind chance gave him this, but Cupid's savage anger. The Delian god, proud after conquering the serpent, had recently seen Cupid bending his bow's drawn string and said, "What are you doing with powerful weapons, playful boy? That equipment suits my shoulders - I who can deal sure wounds to wild beasts, deal wounds to enemies, I who just now laid low the swollen Python, pressing so many acres with its plague-filled belly, with countless arrows. You - be content to provoke some loves or other with your torch, and don't claim my glory!"

Venus' son replied, "Your bow may pierce everything, Phoebus, but mine will pierce you. As much as all animals yield to a god, by that much is your glory less than mine."

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diversorum operum: fugat hoc, facit illud amorem;
quod facit, auratum est et cuspide fulget acuta,
quod fugat, obtusum est et habet sub harundine plumbum.
hoc deus in nympha Peneide fixit, at illo
laesit Apollineas traiecta per ossa medullas;
protinus alter amat, fugit altera nomen amantis
silvarum latebris captivarumque ferarum
exuviis gaudens innuptaeque aemula Phoebes:
vitta coercebat positos sine lege capillos.
multi illam petiere, illa aversata petentes
inpatiens expersque viri nemora avia lustrat
nec, quid Hymen, quid Amor, quid sint conubia curat.
saepe pater dixit: 'generum mihi, filia, debes,'
saepe pater dixit: 'debes mihi, nata, nepotes';
illa velut crimen taedas exosa iugales
pulchra verecundo suffuderat ora rubore
inque patris blandis haerens cervice lacertis
'da mihi perpetua, genitor carissime,' dixit
'virginitate frui! dedit hoc pater ante Dianae.'
ille quidem obsequitur, sed te decor iste quod optas
esse vetat, votoque tuo tua forma repugnat:
Phoebus amat visaeque cupit conubia Daphnes,
quodque cupit, sperat, suaque illum oracula fallunt,
utque leves stipulae demptis adolentur aristis,
ut facibus saepes ardent, quas forte viator
vel nimis admovit vel iam sub luce reliquit,
sic deus in flammas abiit, sic pectore toto
uritur et sterilem sperando nutrit amorem.
spectat inornatos collo pendere capillos
et 'quid, si comantur?' ait. videt igne micantes
sideribus similes oculos, videt oscula, quae non
est vidisse satis; laudat digitosque manusque
bracchiaque et nudos media plus parte lacertos;
si qua latent, meliora putat. fugit ocior aura
illa levi neque ad haec revocantis verba resistit:
'nympha, precor, Penei, mane! non insequor hostis;
nympha, mane! sic agna lupum, sic cerva leonem,
sic aquilam penna fugiunt trepidante columbae,
hostes quaeque suos: amor est mihi causa sequendi!

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He spoke, and cleaving the air with his beating wings, swiftly he stood on shady Parnassus' citadel. From his arrow-bearing quiver he drew two shafts of different effects: one puts love to flight, the other creates it. The one that creates love is golden and gleams with a sharp point. The one that puts it to flight is blunt and has lead beneath its reed shaft. This one the god fixed in the nymph, daughter of Peneus, but with the other he struck Apollo's bones, piercing through to the marrow.

Immediately Apollo loves; Daphne flees even the name of lover, rejoicing in forest hiding places and in the spoils of captured animals, a rival of unmarried Phoebe. A ribbon held back her hair, arranged without care. Many men pursued her; she turned away from her pursuers, impatient with men, untouched by them, and wandered through pathless forests, not caring what Hymen was, what Love was, what marriage was.

Often her father said, "Daughter, you owe me a son-in-law." Often her father said, "Child, you owe me grandchildren." But she hated the wedding torches like a crime, and her beautiful face blushed with modest red, and clinging to her father's neck with coaxing arms, she said, "Dearest father, let me enjoy perpetual virginity! Diana's father granted her this before."

He indeed agreed, but your very beauty prevents you from being what you wish, and your form fights against your prayer. Phoebus loves her and desires marriage with Daphne once he's seen her, and what he desires, he hopes for - and his own oracles deceive him.

Just as light stubble burns when the grain is stripped away, as hedges catch fire from torches that a traveler perhaps brought too close or left behind at daybreak, so the god burst into flames, so he burned through his whole heart and nourished his sterile love with hoping. He looked at the uncombed hair hanging on her neck and said, "What if it were styled?" He saw her eyes sparkling like stars, he saw her lips - which seeing isn't enough. He praised her fingers and hands and arms and shoulders bare more than halfway. Whatever was hidden, he imagined was better.

She fled swifter than the light breeze and didn't stop at these words of the god calling her back: "Nymph, I beg you, daughter of Peneus, stay! I'm not pursuing as an enemy. Nymph, stay! This is how a lamb flees a wolf, a deer flees a lion, how doves flee an eagle on trembling wing, each fleeing its enemies. Love is my reason for following!

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me miserum! ne prona cadas indignave laedi
crura notent sentes et sim tibi causa doloris!
aspera, qua properas, loca sunt: moderatius, oro,
curre fugamque inhibe, moderatius insequar ipse.
cui placeas, inquire tamen: non incola montis,
non ego sum pastor, non hic armenta gregesque
horridus observo. nescis, temeraria, nescis,
quem fugias, ideoque fugis: mihi Delphica tellus
et Claros et Tenedos Patareaque regia servit;
Iuppiter est genitor; per me, quod eritque fuitque
estque, patet; per me concordant carmina nervis.
certa quidem nostra est, nostra tamen una sagitta
certior, in vacuo quae vulnera pectore fecit!
inventum medicina meum est, opiferque per orbem
dicor, et herbarum subiecta potentia nobis.
ei mihi, quod nullis amor est sanabilis herbis
nec prosunt domino, quae prosunt omnibus, artes!'
Plura locuturum timido Peneia cursu
fugit cumque ipso verba inperfecta reliquit,
tum quoque visa decens; nudabant corpora venti,
obviaque adversas vibrabant flamina vestes,
et levis inpulsos retro dabat aura capillos,
auctaque forma fuga est. sed enim non sustinet ultra
perdere blanditias iuvenis deus, utque monebat
ipse Amor, admisso sequitur vestigia passu.
ut canis in vacuo leporem cum Gallicus arvo
vidit, et hic praedam pedibus petit, ille salutem;
alter inhaesuro similis iam iamque tenere
sperat et extento stringit vestigia rostro,
alter in ambiguo est, an sit conprensus, et ipsis
morsibus eripitur tangentiaque ora relinquit:
sic deus et virgo est hic spe celer, illa timore.
qui tamen insequitur pennis adiutus Amoris,
ocior est requiemque negat tergoque fugacis
inminet et crinem sparsum cervicibus adflat.
viribus absumptis expalluit illa citaeque
victa labore fugae spectans Peneidas undas
'fer, pater,' inquit 'opem! si flumina numen habetis,
qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram!'

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"Poor me! Don't fall headlong, don't let brambles mark your legs undeservingly, and don't let me be the cause of your pain! The places you're rushing through are rough. I beg you, run more slowly and hold back your flight - I'll pursue more slowly myself. At least ask who finds you pleasing. I'm no mountain-dweller, I'm no shepherd, I don't watch over herds and flocks unkempt here. You don't know, reckless girl, you don't know whom you're fleeing - that's why you flee. The Delphic land serves me, and Claros and Tenedos and Patara's palace. Jupiter is my father. Through me, what will be and was and is lies open. Through me, songs harmonize with strings. My arrow is sure indeed, yet one arrow is more sure than mine - the one that made this wound in my empty heart!

"Medicine is my invention. I'm called the helper throughout the world, and the power of herbs is subject to me. Ah, but love can't be healed by any herbs, and the arts that help everyone don't help their master!"

He was going to say more, but Peneus' daughter fled in frightened flight and left him and his words unfinished. Even then she looked lovely. The winds bared her body, and opposing breezes fluttered her clothes against her, and a light breeze threw her hair backward, and her beauty was increased by flight.

But the young god couldn't bear to waste more flattery. As Love itself urged, he followed her tracks at full speed. Like a Gallic hunting dog when it sees a rabbit in an open field - one seeks prey with its feet, the other safety; the hound seems just about to grasp its catch and hopes now, now to hold it, and grazes her tracks with outstretched muzzle, but she's uncertain whether she's been caught and escapes from the very bites and leaves behind the mouth that touched her - so the god and maiden were, he swift with hope, she with fear.

Yet he who pursued, aided by Love's wings, was faster and denied her rest and pressed against the back of the fleeing girl and breathed on the hair scattered on her neck. Her strength spent, she grew pale and, overcome by the labor of swift flight, looking at Peneus' waters, said, "Help me, father! If rivers have divine power, destroy by transformation this figure by which I've pleased too much!"

The prayer was scarcely finished when heavy numbness seized her limbs. Soft bark surrounded her chest, her hair grew into leaves, her arms into branches. Her foot, just now so swift, stuck fast in sluggish roots. Her face became a treetop. Only her radiance remained in her.

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[quae facit ut laedar mutando perde figuram.]
vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus,
mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro,
in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt,
pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret,
ora cacumen habet: remanet nitor unus in illa.
Hanc quoque Phoebus amat positaque in stipite dextra
sentit adhuc trepidare novo sub cortice pectus
conplexusque suis ramos ut membra lacertis
oscula dat ligno; refugit tamen oscula lignum.
cui deus 'at, quoniam coniunx mea non potes esse,
arbor eris certe' dixit 'mea! semper habebunt
te coma, te citharae, te nostrae, laure, pharetrae;
tu ducibus Latiis aderis, cum laeta Triumphum
vox canet et visent longas Capitolia pompas;
postibus Augustis eadem fidissima custos
ante fores stabis mediamque tuebere quercum,
utque meum intonsis caput est iuvenale capillis,
tu quoque perpetuos semper gere frondis honores!'
finierat Paean: factis modo laurea ramis
adnuit utque caput visa est agitasse cacumen.
Est nemus Haemoniae, praerupta quod undique claudit
silva: vocant Tempe; per quae Peneos ab imo
effusus Pindo spumosis volvitur undis
deiectuque gravi tenues agitantia fumos
nubila conducit summisque adspergine silvis
inpluit et sonitu plus quam vicina fatigat:
haec domus, haec sedes, haec sunt penetralia magni
amnis, in his residens facto de cautibus antro,
undis iura dabat nymphisque colentibus undas.
conveniunt illuc popularia flumina primum,
nescia, gratentur consolenturne parentem,
populifer Sperchios et inrequietus Enipeus
Apidanosque senex lenisque Amphrysos et Aeas,
moxque amnes alii, qui, qua tulit inpetus illos,
in mare deducunt fessas erroribus undas.
Inachus unus abest imoque reconditus antro
fletibus auget aquas natamque miserrimus Io
luget ut amissam: nescit, vitane fruatur

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Even in this form Phoebus loved her. Placing his hand on the trunk, he felt her heart still trembling beneath the new bark. Embracing the branches as if they were limbs with his arms, he gave kisses to the wood - yet the wood shrank from his kisses.

To her the god said, "Since you can't be my wife, you'll certainly be my tree! Forever, laurel, you'll clothe my hair, my lyre, my quiver. You'll attend Latin commanders when joyful voices sing Triumph and the Capitol sees long processions. You'll stand as the most faithful guardian before Augustus' doors and protect the oak in the middle. And as my head is young with unshorn hair, you too will always wear the perpetual honor of leaves!"

The Healer had finished. The laurel, with her newly made branches, seemed to nod and seemed to shake her treetop like a head.

The Vale of Tempe and the River Peneus

There's a grove in Thessaly that a steep forest encloses on every side. They call it Tempe. Through it the Peneus, pouring forth from the base of Pindus, rolls with foaming waves. With its heavy fall, it gathers thin clouds of rising mist and sprinkles the tops of the forests with its spray and wearies places far beyond with its sound. This is the home, this the seat, these are the inner chambers of the great river. Here, residing in a cave made from rock, he gave laws to the waters and to the nymphs who dwell in the waters.

First the rivers of that region gathered there - uncertain whether to congratulate or console the parent: poplar-bearing Spercheus, restless Enipeus, old Apidanus, gentle Amphrysus, and Aeas. Soon other rivers came who, wherever their current carried them, bring their waters, tired from wandering, down to the sea.

Inachus alone was absent, hidden in his deepest cave. With his tears he swelled his waters and, most miserable, mourned his daughter Io as if she were lost. He didn't know whether she enjoyed life or was among the ghosts. But since he found her nowhere, he believed she existed nowhere and feared worse things in his mind.

Io's Transformation

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an sit apud manes; sed quam non invenit usquam,
esse putat nusquam atque animo peiora veretur.
Viderat a patrio redeuntem Iuppiter illam
flumine et 'o virgo Iove digna tuoque beatum
nescio quem factura toro, pete' dixerat 'umbras
altorum nemorum' (et nemorum monstraverat umbras)
'dum calet, et medio sol est altissimus orbe!
quodsi sola times latebras intrare ferarum,
praeside tuta deo nemorum secreta subibis,
nec de plebe deo, sed qui caelestia magna
sceptra manu teneo, sed qui vaga fulmina mitto.
ne fuge me!' fugiebat enim. iam pascua Lernae
consitaque arboribus Lyrcea reliquerat arva,
cum deus inducta latas caligine terras
occuluit tenuitque fugam rapuitque pudorem.
Interea medios Iuno despexit in Argos
et noctis faciem nebulas fecisse volucres
sub nitido mirata die, non fluminis illas
esse, nec umenti sensit tellure remitti;
atque suus coniunx ubi sit circumspicit, ut quae
deprensi totiens iam nosset furta mariti.
quem postquam caelo non repperit, 'aut ego fallor
aut ego laedor' ait delapsaque ab aethere summo
constitit in terris nebulasque recedere iussit.
coniugis adventum praesenserat inque nitentem
Inachidos vultus mutaverat ille iuvencam;
bos quoque formosa est. speciem Saturnia vaccae,
quamquam invita, probat nec non, et cuius et unde
quove sit armento, veri quasi nescia quaerit.
Iuppiter e terra genitam mentitur, ut auctor
desinat inquiri: petit hanc Saturnia munus.
quid faciat? crudele suos addicere amores,
non dare suspectum est: Pudor est, qui suadeat illinc,
hinc dissuadet Amor. victus Pudor esset Amore,
sed leve si munus sociae generisque torique
vacca negaretur, poterat non vacca videri!
Paelice donata non protinus exuit omnem
diva metum timuitque Iovem et fuit anxia furti,
donec Arestoridae servandam tradidit Argo.

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Jupiter had seen her returning from her father's river and said, "O maiden worthy of Jove, about to make some man - I don't know whom - blessed with your bed, seek the shade of the deep forest" (and he'd shown her the forest's shade) "while it's hot and the sun is highest in the middle of its orbit! But if you're afraid to enter the lairs of wild beasts alone, with a god as your protector you'll go safely into the forest's secrets - and not with a common god, but with the one who holds the great scepters of heaven in my hand, the one who hurls the wandering lightning. Don't flee me!"

For she was fleeing. Already she'd left behind the pastures of Lerna and the tree-planted fields of Lyrceus when the god covered the broad lands with darkness and stopped her flight and stole her chastity.

Juno's Suspicion

Meanwhile Juno looked down into the middle of Argos and marveled that swift clouds had created the appearance of night under a bright day. She sensed they didn't come from a river and weren't released from damp earth. She looked around to see where her husband was - as one who'd already learned so many times of her caught husband's stolen affairs.

When she didn't find him in the sky, she said, "Either I'm wrong or I'm being wronged," and gliding down from highest heaven, she stood on the earth and ordered the clouds to withdraw. Her husband had sensed his wife's arrival and had changed Inachus' daughter's face into a sleek heifer. Even as a cow she was beautiful.

Juno, daughter of Saturn, approved the cow's appearance, though unwillingly, and asked - as if she didn't know the truth - whose she was, where from, and what herd. Jupiter lied that she was born from the earth, so that inquiry about her creator would stop. Juno, daughter of Saturn, asked for her as a gift.

What should he do? It's cruel to hand over his love, but not to give her would be suspicious. Shame urged him one way, Love argued against it the other. Shame would have been conquered by Love, but if he refused so slight a gift as a cow to his partner in marriage and kind, she might seem not to be a cow!

Argus as Guardian

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centum luminibus cinctum caput Argus habebat
inde suis vicibus capiebant bina quietem,
cetera servabant atque in statione manebant.
constiterat quocumque modo, spectabat ad Io,
ante oculos Io, quamvis aversus, habebat.
luce sinit pasci; cum sol tellure sub alta est,
claudit et indigno circumdat vincula collo.
frondibus arboreis et amara pascitur herba.
proque toro terrae non semper gramen habenti
incubat infelix limosaque flumina potat.
illa etiam supplex Argo cum bracchia vellet
tendere, non habuit, quae bracchia tenderet Argo,
conatoque queri mugitus edidit ore
pertimuitque sonos propriaque exterrita voce est.
venit et ad ripas, ubi ludere saepe solebat,
Inachidas: rictus novaque ut conspexit in unda
cornua, pertimuit seque exsternata refugit.
naides ignorant, ignorat et Inachus ipse,
quae sit; at illa patrem sequitur sequiturque sorores
et patitur tangi seque admirantibus offert.
decerptas senior porrexerat Inachus herbas:
illa manus lambit patriisque dat oscula palmis
nec retinet lacrimas et, si modo verba sequantur,
oret opem nomenque suum casusque loquatur;
littera pro verbis, quam pes in pulvere duxit,
corporis indicium mutati triste peregit.
'me miserum!' exclamat pater Inachus inque gementis
cornibus et nivea pendens cervice iuvencae
'me miserum!' ingeminat; 'tune es quaesita per omnes
nata mihi terras? tu non inventa reperta
luctus eras levior! retices nec mutua nostris
dicta refers, alto tantum suspiria ducis
pectore, quodque unum potes, ad mea verba remugis!
at tibi ego ignarus thalamos taedasque parabam,
spesque fuit generi mihi prima, secunda nepotum.
de grege nunc tibi vir, nunc de grege natus habendus.
nec finire licet tantos mihi morte dolores;
sed nocet esse deum, praeclusaque ianua leti
aeternum nostros luctus extendit in aevum.'

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Though her rival was given away, the goddess didn't immediately shed all fear. She feared Jupiter and was anxious about the affair until she handed Io over to Argus, son of Arestor, to guard. Argus had a hundred eyes surrounding his head. From these, two at a time took their rest in turns while the rest kept watch and remained at their station.

However Argus stood, he was looking at Io. He kept Io before his eyes even when he'd turned away. During daylight he let her graze. When the sun was beneath the deep earth, he shut her in and bound her innocent neck with a rope. She grazed on tree leaves and bitter grass. Instead of a bed, the poor creature lay on ground that didn't always have grass, and drank muddy streams.

When she wanted to stretch out her arms as a suppliant to Argus, she had no arms to stretch out to Argus. When she tried to complain, she produced a moo from her mouth and was terrified by the sounds, frightened by her own voice.

She came to the banks where she'd often played before, the Inachid banks. When she saw her new horns in the water and her face, she was terrified and fled, startled from herself. The Naiads didn't know who she was, nor did Inachus himself know. But she followed her father and followed her sisters and allowed herself to be touched and offered herself to those who admired her.

Old Inachus had plucked grass and offered it to her. She licked his hands and gave kisses to her father's palms and couldn't hold back tears. If only words would follow, she would beg for help and tell her name and fate. A letter in place of words, which her hoof drew in the dust, completed the sad evidence of her transformed body.

"Woe is me!" exclaimed father Inachus, and clinging to the horns and snowy neck of the moaning heifer, "Woe is me!" he repeated. "Are you my daughter, sought through all lands? You not found were a lighter grief than you found! You're silent and don't respond with words to mine. You only draw deep sighs from your chest, and - the one thing you can do - you moo in answer to my words.

"But I, unknowing, was preparing marriage chamber and wedding torches for you. My first hope was for a son-in-law, my second for grandchildren. Now you must have a husband from the herd, now a son from the herd. I can't even end such great griefs by death. It's harmful to be a god - the gate of death is closed to me and extends my grief into eternity."

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talia maerenti stellatus submovet Argus
ereptamque patri diversa in pascua natam
abstrahit. ipse procul montis sublime cacumen
occupat, unde sedens partes speculatur in omnes.
Nec superum rector mala tanta Phoronidos ultra
ferre potest natumque vocat, quem lucida partu
Pleias enixa est letoque det imperat Argum.
parva mora est alas pedibus virgamque potenti
somniferam sumpsisse manu tegumenque capillis.
haec ubi disposuit, patria Iove natus ab arce
desilit in terras; illic tegumenque removit
et posuit pennas, tantummodo virga retenta est:
hac agit, ut pastor, per devia rura capellas
dum venit abductas, et structis cantat avenis.
voce nova captus custos Iunonius 'at tu,
quisquis es, hoc poteras mecum considere saxo'
Argus ait; 'neque enim pecori fecundior ullo
herba loco est, aptamque vides pastoribus umbram.'
Sedit Atlantiades et euntem multa loquendo
detinuit sermone diem iunctisque canendo
vincere harundinibus servantia lumina temptat.
ille tamen pugnat molles evincere somnos
et, quamvis sopor est oculorum parte receptus,
parte tamen vigilat. quaerit quoque (namque reperta
fistula nuper erat), qua sit ratione reperta.
Tum deus 'Arcadiae gelidis sub montibus' inquit
'inter hamadryadas celeberrima Nonacrinas
naias una fuit: nymphae Syringa vocabant.
non semel et satyros eluserat illa sequentes
et quoscumque deos umbrosaque silva feraxque
rus habet. Ortygiam studiis ipsaque colebat
virginitate deam; ritu quoque cincta Dianae
falleret et posset credi Latonia, si non
corneus huic arcus, si non foret aureus illi;
sic quoque fallebat.
Redeuntem colle Lycaeo
Pan videt hanc pinuque caput praecinctus acuta
talia verba refert -- restabat verba referre
et precibus spretis fugisse per avia nympham,

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While he mourned such things, star-eyed Argus drove Io away, snatched from her father, and dragged her to different pastures. He himself occupied a mountain's high peak at a distance, from where, sitting, he surveyed all directions.

Mercury Sent to Kill Argus

Nor could the ruler of the gods bear the sufferings of Phoroneus' daughter any longer. He called his son, whom the bright Pleiad had brought forth in childbirth, and ordered him to bring death to Argus. Little delay there was in taking wings for his feet and a sleep-bringing wand for his powerful hand and a covering for his hair. When he'd arranged these things, Jupiter's son leaped from his father's citadel down to earth. There he removed his covering and put aside his wings - only the wand was kept. With this he drove goats through remote countryside as he came, having led them astray, and played on joined reeds.

Captivated by the new sound, Juno's guardian said, "Whoever you are, you could sit with me on this rock. No grass in any place is more fertile for a flock, and you see there's suitable shade for shepherds."

The son of Atlas sat down and kept the passing day delayed with much talk and tried to overcome the watchful eyes by playing on his joined reeds. But Argus fought to conquer soft sleep, and though drowsiness was received in part of his eyes, he still kept watch with part. He also asked (for the pipe had recently been invented) by what method it was invented.

The Story of Syrinx

Then the god said, "In the cold mountains of Arcadia, among the Hamadryads of Nonacris, one Naiad was most famous. The nymphs called her Syrinx. More than once she'd eluded satyrs pursuing her, and whatever gods the shadowy forest and fertile countryside contains. In her pursuits and in her very virginity she worshiped the Ortygian goddess. Dressed too in Diana's fashion, she could deceive and could be believed to be Latona's daughter - if her bow weren't horn and the other's weren't gold. Even so she deceived.

"Returning from Lycaeus hill, Pan saw her, his head wreathed with sharp pine, and spoke these words - ' The words remained to be told, and how the nymph, prayers spurned, fled through pathless ways until she came to the peaceful stream of sandy Ladon. Here, with the waters blocking her course, she begged

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donec harenosi placidum Ladonis ad amnem
venerit; hic illam cursum inpedientibus undis
ut se mutarent liquidas orasse sorores,
Panaque cum prensam sibi iam Syringa putaret,
corpore pro nymphae calamos tenuisse palustres,
dumque ibi suspirat, motos in harundine ventos
effecisse sonum tenuem similemque querenti.
arte nova vocisque deum dulcedine captum
'hoc mihi colloquium tecum' dixisse 'manebit,'
atque ita disparibus calamis conpagine cerae
inter se iunctis nomen tenuisse puellae.
talia dicturus vidit Cyllenius omnes
subcubuisse oculos adopertaque lumina somno;
supprimit extemplo vocem firmatque soporem
languida permulcens medicata lumina virga.
nec mora, falcato nutantem vulnerat ense,
qua collo est confine caput, saxoque cruentum
deicit et maculat praeruptam sanguine rupem.
Arge, iaces, quodque in tot lumina lumen habebas,
exstinctum est, centumque oculos nox occupat una.
Excipit hos volucrisque suae Saturnia pennis
collocat et gemmis caudam stellantibus inplet.
protinus exarsit nec tempora distulit irae
horriferamque oculis animoque obiecit Erinyn
paelicis Argolicae stimulosque in pectore caecos
condidit et profugam per totum exercuit orbem.
ultimus inmenso restabas, Nile, labori;
quem simulac tetigit, positisque in margine ripae
procubuit genibus resupinoque ardua collo,
quos potuit solos, tollens ad sidera vultus
et gemitu et lacrimis et luctisono mugitu
cum Iove visa queri finemque orare malorum.
coniugis ille suae conplexus colla lacertis,
finiat ut poenas tandem, rogat 'in' que 'futurum
pone metus' inquit: 'numquam tibi causa doloris
haec erit,' et Stygias iubet hoc audire paludes.
Ut lenita dea est, vultus capit illa priores
fitque, quod ante fuit: fugiunt e corpore saetae,
cornua decrescunt, fit luminis artior orbis,

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her liquid sisters to transform her. And when Pan thought he'd now seized Syrinx, instead of the nymph's body he held marsh reeds.

"While he sighed there, the winds moving in the reeds produced a thin sound like a lament. The god, captivated by the art's novelty and the sweetness of the voice, said, 'This conversation with you will remain for me.' And so, with reeds of unequal lengths joined by wax's binding, the pipes kept the girl's name."

About to say such things, Cyllenius saw all eyes had succumbed and their lights were covered with sleep. Immediately he suppressed his voice and strengthened the slumber, soothing the languid eyes with his magic wand. Without delay he struck the nodding head with his curved sword where the neck joins the head, and hurled him, bloody, from the rock and stained the steep cliff with blood.

Argus, you lie dead. The light you had in so many eyes is extinguished, and one night occupies a hundred eyes.

Io's Torment and Restoration

Juno, daughter of Saturn, took these eyes and placed them on the feathers of her own bird and filled its tail with star-like gems. Immediately she blazed with rage and didn't delay her anger. She thrust a dreadful Fury before the eyes and mind of her Greek rival, and planted hidden goads in her heart, and drove her as a fugitive to exercise through the whole world.

You, Nile, remained as the final limit of her immense labor. As soon as she touched you and, kneeling on the river's bank, fell forward, stretching her neck back and lifting to the stars the face that was all she could lift, she seemed with her groans and tears and mournful mooing to complain to Jupiter and beg an end to her miseries.

He, embracing his wife's neck with his arms, begged her to end the punishment at last. "Put away," he said, "fear for the future. She'll never be cause of grief to you," and he ordered the Stygian marshes to hear this oath.

When the goddess was appeased, Io took back her former face and became what she was before. The bristles fled from her body, her horns shrank, her eye's orbit narrowed, her jaws contracted, her shoulders and hands returned, and each hoof, dissolved, disappeared into five nails. Nothing of the cow

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contrahitur rictus, redeunt umerique manusque,
ungulaque in quinos dilapsa absumitur ungues:
de bove nil superest formae nisi candor in illa.
officioque pedum nymphe contenta duorum
erigitur metuitque loqui, ne more iuvencae
mugiat, et timide verba intermissa retemptat.
Nunc dea linigera colitur celeberrima turba.
huic Epaphus magni genitus de semine tandem
creditur esse Iovis perque urbes iuncta parenti
templa tenet. fuit huic animis aequalis et annis
Sole satus Phaethon, quem quondam magna loquentem
nec sibi cedentem Phoeboque parente superbum
non tulit Inachides 'matri' que ait 'omnia demens
credis et es tumidus genitoris imagine falsi.'
erubuit Phaethon iramque pudore repressit
et tulit ad Clymenen Epaphi convicia matrem
'quo' que 'magis doleas, genetrix' ait, 'ille ego liber,
ille ferox tacui! pudet haec opprobria nobis
et dici potuisse et non potuisse refelli.
at tu, si modo sum caelesti stirpe creatus,
ede notam tanti generis meque adsere caelo!'
dixit et inplicuit materno bracchia collo
perque suum Meropisque caput taedasque sororum
traderet oravit veri sibi signa parentis.
ambiguum Clymene precibus Phaethontis an ira
mota magis dicti sibi criminis utraque caelo
bracchia porrexit spectansque ad lumina solis
'per iubar hoc' inquit 'radiis insigne coruscis,
nate, tibi iuro, quod nos auditque videtque,
hoc te, quem spectas, hoc te, qui temperat orbem,
Sole satum; si ficta loquor, neget ipse videndum
se mihi, sitque oculis lux ista novissima nostris!
nec longus labor est patrios tibi nosse penates.
unde oritur, domus est terrae contermina nostrae:
si modo fert animus, gradere et scitabere ab ipso!'
emicat extemplo laetus post talia matris
dicta suae Phaethon et concipit aethera mente
Aethiopasque suos positosque sub ignibus Indos
sidereis transit patriosque adit inpiger ortus.

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remained in her except her radiance.

The nymph, content with the function of two feet, stood upright and feared to speak, lest she moo like a heifer, and timidly retried her interrupted words.

Now she's worshiped as a famous goddess by the linen-robed crowd. Her son Epaphus is believed finally to have been born from great Jupiter's seed and holds temples throughout cities joined with his mother.

Phaethon Seeks His Father

Equal to him in spirit and years was Phaethon, born of the Sun. Once when Phaethon was speaking boastfully and not yielding to Epaphus and being proud of his father Phoebus, the grandson of Inachus couldn't bear it and said, "You're crazy to believe everything your mother says, and you're swollen with the false image of your father."

Phaethon blushed and suppressed his anger with shame and brought Epaphus' insults to his mother Clymene. "And so that you may grieve more, mother," he said, "I - the free-spirited, the fierce - was silent! I'm ashamed that such reproaches could be spoken to us and couldn't be refuted. But you, if indeed I was created from heavenly stock, give me a sign of such high birth and assert my claim to heaven!"

He spoke and wrapped his arms around his mother's neck, and by his own head and Merops' head and his sisters' wedding torches, he begged her to give him true signs of his father. It's uncertain whether Clymene was moved more by Phaethon's prayers or by anger at the accusation spoken against her. She stretched both arms toward the sky and, looking toward the sun's light, said:

"By this radiance bright with gleaming rays, my son, I swear to you - by this which hears and sees us, by this Sun you're gazing at, this who governs the world - you're born of him. If I speak falsely, may he himself deny me the sight of him, and may that light be the last for my eyes! Nor is it a long journey for you to learn your father's home. The place from which he rises borders our land. If your spirit moves you, go and ask the truth from him himself!"

Immediately after such words from his mother, Phaethon leaped up, joyful, and conceived heaven in his mind. He passed through his Ethiopians and the Indians placed beneath the stars' fires and eagerly sought his father's rising-place.

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BOOK 2

Regia Solis erat sublimibus alta columnis,
clara micante auro flammasque imitante pyropo,
cuius ebur nitidum fastigia summa tegebat,
argenti bifores radiabant lumine valvae.
materiam superabat opus: nam Mulciber illic
aequora caelarat medias cingentia terras
terrarumque orbem caelumque, quod imminet orbi.
caeruleos habet unda deos, Tritona canorum
Proteaque ambiguum ballaenarumque prementem
Aegaeona suis inmania terga lacertis
Doridaque et natas, quarum pars nare videtur,
pars in mole sedens viridis siccare capillos,
pisce vehi quaedam: facies non omnibus una,
non diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum.
terra viros urbesque gerit silvasque ferasque
fluminaque et nymphas et cetera numina ruris.
haec super inposita est caeli fulgentis imago,
signaque sex foribus dextris totidemque sinistris. Quo simul adclivi Clymeneia limite proles
venit et intravit dubitati tecta parentis,
protinus ad patrios sua fert vestigia vultus
consistitque procul; neque enim propiora ferebat
lumina: purpurea velatus veste sedebat
in solio Phoebus claris lucente smaragdis.
a dextra laevaque Dies et Mensis et Annus
Saeculaque et positae spatiis aequalibus Horae
Verque novum stabat cinctum florente corona,
stabat nuda Aestas et spicea serta gerebat,
stabat et Autumnus calcatis sordidus uvis
et glacialis Hiems canos hirsuta capillos. 30 Ipse loco medius rerum novitate paventem
Sol oculis iuvenem, quibus adspicit omnia, vidit
'quae' que 'viae tibi causa? quid hac' ait 'arce petisti,
progenies, Phaethon, haud infitianda parenti?'
ille refert: 'o lux inmensi publica mundi,
Phoebe pater, si das usum mihi nominis huius,
nec falsa Clymene culpam sub imagine celat,
pignora da, genitor, per quae tua vera propago
credar, et hunc animis errorem detrahe nostris!'
dixerat, at genitor circum caput omne micantes
deposuit radios propiusque accedere iussit
amplexuque dato 'nec tu meus esse negari

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The Palace of the Sun

The palace of the Sun stood high on lofty columns, bright with gleaming gold and bronze that imitated flames. Shining ivory covered its highest roof, and the double doors radiated with silver light. The workmanship surpassed the materials. For there Vulcan had engraved the seas encircling the lands in the middle, and the globe of earth, and the sky that hangs above the globe.

The water holds the sea-blue gods: melodious Triton, changeable Proteus, Aegaeon pressing the enormous backs of whales with his arms, Doris and her daughters - some of whom seem to be swimming, some sitting on rocks drying their green hair, some riding on fish. Their faces aren't all identical, yet not too different either - the way sisters ought to look.

The land bears men and cities and forests and wild beasts and rivers and nymphs and other spirits of the countryside. Above these was placed the image of the shining sky, six constellations on the right doors, six on the left.

When Clymene's son climbed the steep path and entered the house of his doubted father, he immediately carried his steps toward his father's face and stopped at a distance. For he couldn't bear to come closer to the light. Phoebus sat on a throne bright with gleaming emeralds, clothed in purple robes. On his right and left stood Day and Month and Year and the Ages and the Hours positioned at equal intervals. Young Spring stood wreathed with a flowering crown, naked Summer stood wearing garlands of grain, Autumn stood stained with trampled grapes, and icy Winter stood shaggy with white hair.

Phaethon's Request

From his central position, the Sun saw the young man with those eyes that see all things, awed by the newness of it all, and said, "What reason brings you on this journey? Why have you sought this citadel, Phaethon, a son I don't deny?"

He replied, "O universal light of the immense world, Phoebus my father, if you grant me the use of this name, and if Clymene doesn't hide guilt beneath a false image, give me proof, father, by which I may be believed your true offspring, and remove this doubt from my mind!"

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dignus es, et Clymene veros' ait 'edidit ortus,
quoque minus dubites, quodvis pete munus, ut illud
me tribuente feras! promissi testis adesto
dis iuranda palus, oculis incognita nostris!'
vix bene desierat, currus rogat ille paternos
inque diem alipedum ius et moderamen equorum. Paenituit iurasse patrem: qui terque quaterque
concutiens inlustre caput 'temeraria' dixit
'vox mea facta tua est; utinam promissa liceret
non dare! confiteor, solum hoc tibi, nate, negarem.
dissuadere licet: non est tua tuta voluntas!
magna petis, Phaethon, et quae nec viribus istis
munera conveniant nec tam puerilibus annis:
sors tua mortalis, non est mortale, quod optas.
plus etiam, quam quod superis contingere possit,
nescius adfectas; placeat sibi quisque licebit,
non tamen ignifero quisquam consistere in axe
me valet excepto; vasti quoque rector Olympi,
qui fera terribili iaculatur fulmina dextra,
non agat hos currus: et quid Iove maius habemus?
ardua prima via est et qua vix mane recentes
enituntur equi; medio est altissima caelo,
unde mare et terras ipsi mihi saepe videre
fit timor et pavida trepidat formidine pectus;
ultima prona via est et eget moderamine certo:
tunc etiam quae me subiectis excipit undis,
ne ferar in praeceps, Tethys solet ipsa vereri.
adde, quod adsidua rapitur vertigine caelum
sideraque alta trahit celerique volumine torquet.
nitor in adversum, nec me, qui cetera, vincit
inpetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.
finge datos currus: quid ages? poterisne rotatis
obvius ire polis, ne te citus auferat axis?
forsitan et lucos illic urbesque deorum
concipias animo delubraque ditia donis
esse: per insidias iter est formasque ferarum!
utque viam teneas nulloque errore traharis,
per tamen adversi gradieris cornua tauri
Haemoniosque arcus violentique ora Leonis
saevaque circuitu curvantem bracchia longo
Scorpion atque aliter curvantem bracchia Cancrum.

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He'd spoken. His father laid down all the rays gleaming around his head and ordered him to come closer. Giving him an embrace, he said, "You're not unworthy to be called mine, and Clymene told the truth about your birth. So that you may doubt less, ask for any gift you want, and you'll receive it from me! Let that marsh by which the gods swear - though unknown to my eyes - be witness to my promise!"

He'd scarcely finished when Phaethon asked for his father's chariot and the right to drive the wing-footed horses for one day.

The Sun's Warning

His father regretted having sworn. Three and four times he shook his shining head and said, "Your words have made my promise reckless! I confess, this alone I would deny you, my son. I'm allowed to try to dissuade you. Your desire isn't safe! What you're asking for is great, Phaethon, and doesn't suit your strength or your boyish years. Your lot is mortal - what you desire isn't mortal. You're unknowingly reaching for more than even the gods can achieve. Though each may be pleased with himself, no one but me has the power to stand on the fire-bearing axle. Even the ruler of vast Olympus, who hurls fierce lightning bolts with his terrible right hand, won't drive this chariot - and what do we have greater than Jupiter?

"The first part of the path is steep, and the horses, fresh in the morning, can barely climb it. In the middle it's highest in the sky, from where even for me, looking at the sea and lands, fear often arises and my heart trembles with anxious dread. The final part slopes downward and requires sure control. Then even Tethys herself, who receives me in her waves below, usually fears I'll be carried headlong.

"Add to this that the sky is swept around in constant rotation and drags the high stars with it, whirling them in swift revolution. I struggle against it. The force that overcomes everything else doesn't overcome me, and I'm carried contrary to the rapid orbit. Imagine the chariot is given to you - what will you do? Will you be able to go against the turning poles, so the swift axle doesn't carry you away?

"Perhaps you imagine there are groves there and cities of the gods and temples rich with offerings. The path is through ambushes and the forms of wild beasts! Even if you keep the road and aren't drawn off by any mistake, you'll still pass through the horns of the opposing Bull and the Thessalian Bow and the jaws of the violent Lion and the Scorpion curving its savage arms in a long arc, and the Crab curving its arms differently.

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nec tibi quadripedes animosos ignibus illis,
quos in pectore habent, quos ore et naribus efflant,
in promptu regere est: vix me patiuntur, ubi acres
incaluere animi cervixque repugnat habenis. -
at tu, funesti ne sim tibi muneris auctor,
nate, cave, dum resque sinit tua corrige vota!
scilicet ut nostro genitum te sanguine credas,
pignora certa petis: do pignora certa timendo
et patrio pater esse metu probor. adspice vultus
ecce meos; utinamque oculos in pectora posses
inserere et patrias intus deprendere curas!
denique quidquid habet dives, circumspice, mundus
eque tot ac tantis caeli terraeque marisque
posce bonis aliquid; nullam patiere repulsam.
deprecor hoc unum, quod vero nomine poena,
non honor est: poenam, Phaethon, pro munere poscis!
quid mea colla tenes blandis, ignare, lacertis?
ne dubita! dabitur (Stygias iuravimus undas),
quodcumque optaris; sed tu sapientius opta!' Finierat monitus; dictis tamen ille repugnat
propositumque premit flagratque cupidine currus.
ergo, qua licuit, genitor cunctatus ad altos
deducit iuvenem, Vulcania munera, currus.
aureus axis erat, temo aureus, aurea summae
curvatura rotae, radiorum argenteus ordo;
per iuga chrysolithi positaeque ex ordine gemmae
clara repercusso reddebant lumina Phoebo. 110 Dumque ea magnanimus Phaethon miratur opusque
perspicit, ecce vigil nitido patefecit ab ortu
purpureas Aurora fores et plena rosarum
atria: diffugiunt stellae, quarum agmina cogit
Lucifer et caeli statione novissimus exit. 115 Quem petere ut terras mundumque rubescere vidit
cornuaque extremae velut evanescere lunae,
iungere equos Titan velocibus imperat Horis.
iussa deae celeres peragunt ignemque vomentes,
ambrosiae suco saturos, praesepibus altis
quadripedes ducunt adduntque sonantia frena.
tum pater ora sui sacro medicamine nati
contigit et rapidae fecit patientia flammae
inposuitque comae radios praesagaque luctus
pectore sollicito repetens suspiria dixit:
'si potes his saltem monitis parere parentis

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"Nor will it be easy for you to control the spirited four-footed horses, breathing fires that they have in their chests and blow from their mouths and nostrils. They barely tolerate even me when their fierce spirits have heated up and their necks fight the reins. But you, my son, be careful that I'm not the author of a deadly gift to you! Correct your wish while it's possible!

"Obviously, so that you may believe you're born of my blood, you ask for sure proof. I give sure proof by fearing, and by a father's dread I'm proved to be your father. Look at my face! If only you could insert your eyes into my heart and grasp your father's cares inside! Finally, look around at whatever the rich world contains. From so many and such great goods of sky and earth and sea, ask for something - you'll suffer no refusal. This one thing alone I beg you not to ask for, which is truly a punishment, not an honor. You're asking for punishment, Phaethon, not a gift!

"Why do you hold my neck with coaxing arms, unknowing boy? Don't doubt! What you wish will be given (I've sworn by the Stygian waters), but you should wish more wisely!"

The Journey Begins

He'd finished his warnings, yet Phaethon fought against his words and pressed his purpose and burned with desire for the chariot. So his father, delaying as much as he could, led the young man to the lofty chariot, a gift from Vulcan's forge. The axle was gold, the pole gold, the rim of the wheels gold, the row of spokes silver. Along the yoke, chrysolites and gems arranged in order reflected back bright light to Phoebus.

While great-hearted Phaethon admired all this and examined the work, look - watchful Aurora opened her purple doors from the bright east and her halls full of roses. The stars fled - the Morning Star marshaled their ranks and left last from heaven's station. When the Sun saw him heading for earth and the world blushing red and the horns of the farthest moon seeming to vanish, he ordered the swift Hours to yoke the horses. The goddesses swiftly performed his command. They led the four-footed horses from their high stalls - breathing fire, fed on ambrosial juice - and put on their ringing bridles.

Then the father touched his son's face with sacred ointment and made him able to endure the rapid flame, and placed rays on his hair. Drawing sighs from his worried heart, foreboding grief, he said:

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parce, puer, stimulis et fortius utere loris!
sponte sua properant, labor est inhibere volentes.
nec tibi derectos placeat via quinque per arcus!
sectus in obliquum est lato curvamine limes,
zonarumque trium contentus fine polumque
effugit australem iunctamque aquilonibus arcton:
hac sit iter - manifesta rotae vestigia cernes -
utque ferant aequos et caelum et terra calores,
nec preme nec summum molire per aethera currum!
altius egressus caelestia tecta cremabis,
inferius terras; medio tutissimus ibis.
neu te dexterior tortum declinet ad Anguem,
neve sinisterior pressam rota ducat ad Aram,
inter utrumque tene! Fortunae cetera mando,
quae iuvet et melius quam tu tibi consulat opto.
dum loquor, Hesperio positas in litore metas
umida nox tetigit; non est mora libera nobis!
poscimur: effulget tenebris Aurora fugatis.
corripe lora manu, vel, si mutabile pectus
est tibi, consiliis, non curribus utere nostris!
dum potes et solidis etiamnum sedibus adstas,
dumque male optatos nondum premis inscius axes,
quae tutus spectes, sine me dare lumina terris!' Occupat ille levem iuvenali corpore currum
statque super manibusque leves contingere habenas
gaudet et invito grates agit inde parenti. Interea volucres Pyrois et Eous et Aethon,
Solis equi, quartusque Phlegon hinnitibus auras
flammiferis inplent pedibusque repagula pulsant.
quae postquam Tethys, fatorum ignara nepotis,
reppulit, et facta est inmensi copia caeli,
corripuere viam pedibusque per aera motis
obstantes scindunt nebulas pennisque levati
praetereunt ortos isdem de partibus Euros.
sed leve pondus erat nec quod cognoscere possent
Solis equi, solitaque iugum gravitate carebat;
utque labant curvae iusto sine pondere naves
perque mare instabiles nimia levitate feruntur,
sic onere adsueto vacuus dat in aera saltus
succutiturque alte similisque est currus inani. Quod simulac sensere, ruunt tritumque relinquunt
quadriiugi spatium nec quo prius ordine currunt.
ipse pavet nec qua commissas flectat habenas

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"If at least you can obey these warnings of a parent, spare the whip, boy, and use the reins more firmly! They hurry on their own - the work is to hold them back when they're willing. And don't let the path please you straight through the five zones! The track is cut slanting in a broad curve, contained within the boundary of three zones, avoiding the southern pole and the Bear joined to the northern winds. Let this be your route - you'll see clear wheel tracks. And so that heaven and earth may receive equal heat, don't drive too low and don't direct the chariot through the highest ether! Too high and you'll burn the celestial dwelling, too low and you'll burn the lands. You'll go most safely in the middle.

"And don't let your wheel decline too far right toward the twisting Serpent, nor turn too far left toward the low Altar - keep between them both! I entrust the rest to Fortune, and I hope she'll help you and advise you better than you advise yourself. While I'm speaking, dewy night has touched the limits placed on the western shore. We have no freedom to delay! We're called for - look, Aurora shines as the shadows flee.

"Seize the reins with your hand! Or, if your heart can still be changed, use my advice, not my chariot! While you can and still stand on solid ground, while you haven't yet set foot on the wheels you wrongly desire, unknowing - let me give light to the lands while you watch safely!"

Phaethon's Fatal Ride

But Phaethon seized the light chariot with his youthful body, stood up in it, and joyfully took the light reins in his hands and thanked his unwilling father.

Meanwhile the Sun's winged horses - Pyrois and Eous and Aethon, and fourth Phlegon - filled the air with their fire-breathing neighs and struck the barriers with their hooves. When Tethys, unaware of her grandson's fate, pushed these back and the expanse of immense sky was made available, they seized the path and, moving their feet through the air, tore through the opposing clouds. Lifted on wings, they passed the East Winds rising from the same regions.

But the weight was light - not what the Sun's horses could recognize - and the yoke lacked its accustomed heaviness. Just as curved ships toss without proper weight and are carried unstable through the sea by excessive lightness, so the chariot, empty of its usual burden, leaped into the air and was tossed high and seemed like an empty cart.

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nec scit qua sit iter, nec, si sciat, imperet illis.
tum primum radiis gelidi caluere Triones
et vetito frustra temptarunt aequore tingui,
quaeque polo posita est glaciali proxima Serpens,
frigore pigra prius nec formidabilis ulli,
incaluit sumpsitque novas fervoribus iras;
te quoque turbatum memorant fugisse, Boote,
quamvis tardus eras et te tua plaustra tenebant. Ut vero summo despexit ab aethere terras
infelix Phaethon penitus penitusque iacentes,
palluit et subito genua intremuere timore
suntque oculis tenebrae per tantum lumen obortae,
et iam mallet equos numquam tetigisse paternos,
iam cognosse genus piget et valuisse rogando,
iam Meropis dici cupiens ita fertur, ut acta
praecipiti pinus borea, cui victa remisit
frena suus rector, quam dis votisque reliquit.
quid faciat? multum caeli post terga relictum,
ante oculos plus est: animo metitur utrumque
et modo, quos illi fatum contingere non est,
prospicit occasus, interdum respicit ortus,
quidque agat ignarus stupet et nec frena remittit
nec retinere valet nec nomina novit equorum.
sparsa quoque in vario passim miracula caelo
vastarumque videt trepidus simulacra ferarum.
est locus, in geminos ubi bracchia concavat arcus
Scorpius et cauda flexisque utrimque lacertis
porrigit in spatium signorum membra duorum:
hunc puer ut nigri madidum sudore veneni
vulnera curvata minitantem cuspide vidit,
mentis inops gelida formidine lora remisit. 200 Quae postquam summum tetigere iacentia tergum,
exspatiantur equi nulloque inhibente per auras
ignotae regionis eunt, quaque inpetus egit,
hac sine lege ruunt altoque sub aethere fixis
incursant stellis rapiuntque per avia currum
et modo summa petunt, modo per declive viasque
praecipites spatio terrae propiore feruntur,
inferiusque suis fraternos currere Luna
admiratur equos, ambustaque nubila fumant.
corripitur flammis, ut quaeque altissima, tellus
fissaque agit rimas et sucis aret ademptis;

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As soon as the four-horse team sensed this, they bolted and left the worn track and didn't run in their former order. Phaethon himself panicked. He didn't know how to turn the reins he'd been given, didn't know where the path was, and if he'd known, couldn't command them.

Then for the first time the cold Bears grew hot with rays and tried in vain to plunge into the forbidden sea. And the Serpent, which lies positioned nearest the icy pole, sluggish before with cold and frightening to no one, grew hot and took on new anger from the heat. They say even you, Boötes, were thrown into confusion and fled, though you're slow and your wagon holds you back.

The World Burns

When unlucky Phaethon looked down from the highest heaven and saw the lands lying far, far below, he grew pale and his knees suddenly trembled with fear. Darkness came over his eyes despite so much light, and now he wished he'd never touched his father's horses, now he regretted learning his parentage and prevailing with his request. Now, wanting to be called Merops' son, he was carried like a pine driven by the north wind, whose master has given up and let go the reins and left it to the gods and prayers.

What should he do? Much sky lay behind his back, but more was before his eyes. He measured both in his mind and sometimes looked toward the west, which fate didn't allow him to reach, sometimes looked back toward the east. Ignorant of what to do, he was stunned and neither released the reins nor could hold them back, nor did he know the horses' names. He also saw, scattered here and there across the varied sky, marvels and shapes of huge beasts, and trembled.

There's a place where the Scorpion curves its arms into twin arcs and with its tail and arms bent on both sides stretches its limbs across the space of two constellations. When the boy saw this creature, dripping with the sweat of black poison, threatening wounds with its curved stinger, he lost his mind with icy fear and dropped the reins.

When these fell slack on their backs, the horses ran wild. With no one restraining them, they went through the air of an unknown region. Wherever impulse drove them, there they rushed without law. They crashed into stars fixed high in the ether and dragged the chariot through pathless ways. Now they sought the heights, now through steep downward paths they were carried closer to the earth. The Moon marveled to see her brother's horses running below her own, and the scorched clouds smoked.

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pabula canescunt, cum frondibus uritur arbor,
materiamque suo praebet seges arida damno.
parva queror: magnae pereunt cum moenibus urbes,
cumque suis totas populis incendia gentis
in cinerem vertunt; silvae cum montibus ardent;
ardet Athos Taurusque Cilix et Tmolus et Oete
et tum sicca, prius creberrima fontibus, Ide
virgineusque Helicon et nondum Oeagrius Haemus:
ardet in inmensum geminatis ignibus Aetne
Parnasosque biceps et Eryx et Cynthus et Othrys
et tandem nivibus Rhodope caritura Mimasque
Dindymaque et Mycale natusque ad sacra Cithaeron.
nec prosunt Scythiae sua frigora: Caucasus ardet
Ossaque cum Pindo maiorque ambobus Olympus
aeriaeque Alpes et nubifer Appenninus. Tum vero Phaethon cunctis e partibus orbem
adspicit accensum nec tantos sustinet aestus
ferventisque auras velut e fornace profunda
ore trahit currusque suos candescere sentit;
et neque iam cineres eiectatamque favillam
ferre potest calidoque involvitur undique fumo,
quoque eat aut ubi sit, picea caligine tectus
nescit et arbitrio volucrum raptatur equorum. Sanguine tum credunt in corpora summa vocato
Aethiopum populos nigrum traxisse colorem;
tum facta est Libye raptis umoribus aestu
arida, tum nymphae passis fontesque lacusque
deflevere comis; quaerit Boeotia Dircen,
Argos Amymonen, Ephyre Pirenidas undas;
nec sortita loco distantes flumina ripas
tuta manent: mediis Tanais fumavit in undis
Peneosque senex Teuthranteusque Caicus
et celer Ismenos cum Phegiaco Erymantho
arsurusque iterum Xanthos flavusque Lycormas,
quique recurvatis ludit Maeandros in undis,
Mygdoniusque Melas et Taenarius Eurotas.
arsit et Euphrates Babylonius, arsit Orontes
Thermodonque citus Gangesque et Phasis et Hister;
aestuat Alpheos, ripae Spercheides ardent,
quodque suo Tagus amne vehit, fluit ignibus aurum,
et, quae Maeonias celebrabant carmine ripas
flumineae volucres, medio caluere Caystro;

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Each highest part of earth was seized by flames. It cracked open and formed crevices and dried out with its moisture stolen. Meadows turned white, trees burned along with their leaves, and the dry grain provided fuel for its own destruction.

I'm complaining about small things - great cities perished with their walls, and flames turned entire nations with their peoples into ashes. Forests burned with mountains. Athos burned and Cilician Taurus and Tmolus and Oeta and Ida - dry then, though before most abundant in springs - and virgin Helicon and Haemus, not yet called Oeagrian. Aetna burned immensely with doubled fires, and two-peaked Parnassus and Eryx and Cynthus and Othrys and Rhodope, destined finally to lose its snows, and Mimas and Dindyma and Mycale and Cithaeron, born for sacred rites.

Nor did its cold help Scythia. The Caucasus burned, and Ossa with Pindus and Olympus greater than both, and the airy Alps and cloud-bearing Apennines.

Then truly Phaethon saw the world aflame on all sides and couldn't bear such heat. He drew in burning air as if from a deep furnace through his mouth and felt his chariot growing white-hot. He could no longer endure the flying ashes and hurled sparks and was wrapped on all sides in hot smoke. Covered in pitch-black darkness, he didn't know where he was going or where he was, and was carried at the whim of the winged horses.

The Transformation of the Earth

They believe that then the Ethiopian peoples drew their black color when blood was called to the surface of their bodies. Then Libya was made arid by the heat that stole its moisture. Then the nymphs with loosened hair mourned their springs and pools. Boeotia sought Dirce, Argos Amymone, Ephyre the Pirenean waters. Nor were rivers safe, though their banks were distant from each other. The Tanais smoked in mid-current, old Peneus and Teuthrantean Caicus and swift Ismenus with Phegian Erymanthus and Xanthus, destined to burn again, and yellow Lycormas and the Maeander playing with its curving waves, Mygdonian Melas and Taenarian Eurotas.

Babylonian Euphrates burned, Orontes burned, and swift Thermodon and the Ganges and Phasis and Danube. Alpheus boiled, the banks of Spercheus blazed, and the gold that Tagus carries in its stream flowed in flames. The river birds that used to celebrate the Maeonian banks with song grew hot in the middle of Cayster. The Nile fled terrified to the farthest world and hid its head, which still remains

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Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem
occuluitque caput, quod adhuc latet: ostia septem
pulverulenta vacant, septem sine flumine valles.
fors eadem Ismarios Hebrum cum Strymone siccat
Hesperiosque amnes, Rhenum Rhodanumque Padumque
cuique fuit rerum promissa potentia, Thybrin.
dissilit omne solum, penetratque in Tartara rimis
lumen et infernum terret cum coniuge regem;
et mare contrahitur siccaeque est campus harenae,
quod modo pontus erat, quosque altum texerat aequor,
exsistunt montes et sparsas Cycladas augent.
ima petunt pisces, nec se super aequora curvi
tollere consuetas audent delphines in auras;
corpora phocarum summo resupina profundo
exanimata natant: ipsum quoque Nerea fama est
Doridaque et natas tepidis latuisse sub antris.
ter Neptunus aquis cum torvo bracchia vultu
exserere ausus erat, ter non tulit aeris ignes. Alma tamen Tellus, ut erat circumdata ponto,
inter aquas pelagi contractosque undique fontes,
qui se condiderant in opacae viscera matris,
sustulit oppressos collo tenus arida vultus
opposuitque manum fronti magnoque tremore
omnia concutiens paulum subsedit et infra,
quam solet esse, fuit fractaque ita voce locuta est:
'si placet hoc meruique, quid o tua fulmina cessant,
summe deum? liceat perituraе viribus ignis
igne perire tuo clademque auctore levare!
vix equidem fauces haec ipsa in verba resolvo';
(presserat ora vapor) 'tostos en adspice crines
inque oculis tantum, tantum super ora favillae!
hosne mihi fructus, hunc fertilitatis honorem
officiique refers, quod adunci vulnera aratri
rastrorumque fero totoque exerceor anno,
quod pecori frondes alimentaque mitia, fruges
humano generi, vobis quoque tura ministro?
sed tamen exitium fac me meruisse: quid undae,
quid meruit frater? cur illi tradita sorte
aequora decrescunt et ab aethere longius absunt?
quodsi nec fratris nec te mea gratia tangit,
at caeli miserere tui! circumspice utrumque:

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hidden. Its seven mouths stand dusty and empty, seven valleys without rivers. The same chance dried Ismarian Hebrus with Strymon and the western rivers: Rhine and Rhone and Po and Tiber, to whom power over the world had been promised.

Everywhere the ground split apart, and light penetrated through cracks into Tartarus and terrified the underworld king with his queen. The sea contracted and became a plain of dry sand that before had been ocean. Mountains that the deep water had covered emerged and increased the scattered Cyclades. Fish sought the depths, nor did the curved dolphins dare to lift themselves into the air as they were accustomed. The bodies of seals floated lifeless, face-up on the surface. They say even Nereus himself and Doris and their daughters hid in their warm caves. Three times Neptune dared to raise his arms and fierce face from the water. Three times he couldn't bear the fiery air.

Earth's Plea to Jupiter

Yet nurturing Earth, as she was surrounded by ocean, among the waters of the sea and the springs contracted on all sides, which had hidden themselves in their dark mother's depths, lifted up her parched face, pressed as far as her neck. She placed her hand on her forehead, and with a great tremor shaking everything, she subsided a little and was lower than usual, and spoke with a broken voice:

"If this pleases you and I've deserved it, why, O highest of gods, do your thunderbolts delay? If I must perish by the power of fire, let me perish by your fire and lighten the disaster by its author! I can scarcely open my throat for these very words" - the heat had pressed her mouth shut - "Look, see my scorched hair and so much ash in my eyes, so much on my face! Do you return these as my rewards, this as the honor for fertility and service - that I bear the wounds of the curved plow and rakes and am worked the whole year round, that I supply leaves and gentle nourishment for cattle, grain for the human race, and incense for you too?

"But suppose I've deserved destruction. What have the waters deserved? What has your brother deserved? Why do the seas entrusted to him by lot decrease and withdraw farther from heaven? But if neither your brother's welfare nor mine moves you, at least pity your own sky! Look around at both poles - both are smoking! If fire damages these, your halls will fall! Look, even Atlas himself struggles and can barely support the glowing axle on his shoulders! If the seas and lands perish, if heaven's palace falls, we're confused back into ancient Chaos! Snatch things from the flames if anything still survives,

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fumat uterque polus! quos si vitiaverit ignis,
atria vestra ruent! Atlas en ipse laborat
vixque suis umeris candentem sustinet axem!
si freta, si terrae pereunt, si regia caeli,
in chaos antiquum confundimur! eripe flammis,
si quid adhuc superest, et rerum consule summae!' 300 Dixerat haec Tellus: neque enim tolerare vaporem
ulterius potuit nec dicere plura suumque
rettulit os in se propioraque manibus antra;
at pater omnipotens, superos testatus et ipsum,
qui dederat currus, nisi opem ferat, omnia fato
interitura gravi, summam petit arduus arcem,
unde solet nubes latis inducere terris,
unde movet tonitrus vibrataque fulmina iactat;
sed neque quas posset terris inducere nubes
tunc habuit, nec quos caelo demitteret imbres:
intonat et dextra libratum fulmen ab aure
misit in aurigam pariterque animaque rotisque
expulit et saevis conpescuit ignibus ignes.
consternantur equi et saltu in contraria facto
colla iugo eripiunt abruptaque lora relinquunt:
illic frena iacent, illic temone revulsus
axis, in hac radii fractarum parte rotarum
sparsaque sunt late laceri vestigia currus. At Phaethon rutilos flamma populante capillos
volvitur in praeceps longoque per aera tractu
fertur, ut interdum de caelo stella sereno
etsi non cecidit, potuit cecidisse videri.
quem procul a patria diverso maximus orbe
excipit Eridanus fumantiaque abluit ora.
Naides Hesperiae trifida fumantia flamma
corpora dant tumulo, signant quoque carmine saxum:
hic : sitvs : est : phaethon : cvrrvs : avriga : paterni
qvem : si : non : tenvit : magnis : tamen : excidit : avsis Nam pater obductos luctu miserabilis aegro
condiderat vultus, et, si modo credimus, unum
isse diem sine sole ferunt: incendia lumen
praebebant aliquisque malo fuit usus in illo.
at Clymene postquam dixit, quaecumque fuerunt
in tantis dicenda malis, lugubris et amens
et laniata sinus totum percensuit orbem
exanimesque artus primo, mox ossa requirens
repperit ossa tamen peregrina condita ripa

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and look to the welfare of the universe!"

Earth spoke thus, for she could no longer tolerate the heat nor say more, and she withdrew her mouth back into herself and the caves closer to the underworld.

Jupiter's Thunderbolt

But the all-powerful father, calling the gods above to witness, and him who'd given the chariot - that unless he brought help, everything would perish by heavy fate - sought the highest citadel, from where he usually spreads clouds over the broad lands, from where he moves thunder and hurls vibrating lightning bolts. But then he had no clouds he could spread over the lands, nor rains he could send down from the sky.

He thundered and, with his right hand, hurled a thunderbolt balanced at his ear, striking the charioteer. It threw him from life and from the wheels together and checked the savage fires with savage fire.

The horses panicked and, leaping in the opposite direction, tore their necks from the yoke and left the broken reins behind. There the bridles lay, there the axle torn from the pole, there in one place the spokes of shattered wheels, and scattered far and wide were the remains of the wrecked chariot.

Phaethon's Fall

But Phaethon, his reddish hair consumed by flame, was hurled headlong and carried through the long tract of air, as sometimes a star from the clear sky, even if it didn't fall, can seem to have fallen.

Far from his homeland in a distant part of the world, the great river Eridanus received him and washed his smoking face. The western Naiads gave his body, smoking with triple flame, to a tomb and marked the stone with this inscription:

HERE LIES PHAETHON, DRIVER OF HIS FATHER'S CHARIOT THOUGH HE COULD NOT CONTROL IT, HE FAILED IN A GREAT ATTEMPT

Clymene and the Heliades

His father, miserable with sick grief, had hidden his covered face, and if we can believe it, they say one day passed without the sun. The fires gave light, and there was some use in that evil.

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incubuitque loco nomenque in marmore lectum
perfudit lacrimis et aperto pectore fovit.
nec minus Heliades fletus et, inania morti
munera, dant lacrimas, et caesae pectora palmis
non auditurum miseras Phaethonta querellas
nocte dieque vocant adsternunturque sepulcro.
luna quater iunctis inplerat cornibus orbem;
illae more suo (nam morem fecerat usus)
plangorem dederant: e quis Phaethusa, sororum
maxima, cum vellet terra procumbere, questa est
deriguisse pedes; ad quam conata venire
candida Lampetie subita radice retenta est;
tertia, cum crinem manibus laniare pararet,
avellit frondes; haec stipite crura teneri,
illa dolet fieri longos sua bracchia ramos,
dumque ea mirantur, conplectitur inguina cortex
perque gradus uterum pectusque umerosque manusque
ambit, et exstabant tantum ora vocantia matrem.
quid faciat mater, nisi, quo trahat inpetus illam,
huc eat atque illuc et, dum licet, oscula iungat?
non satis est: truncis avellere corpora temptat
et teneros manibus ramos abrumpit, at inde
sanguineae manant tamquam de vulnere guttae.
'parce, precor, mater,' quaecumque est saucia, clamat,
'parce, precor: nostrum laceratur in arbore corpus
iamque vale' - cortex in verba novissima venit.
inde fluunt lacrimae, stillataque sole rigescunt
de ramis electra novis, quae lucidus amnis
excipit et nuribus mittit gestanda Latinis. Adfuit huic monstro proles Stheneleia Cycnus,
qui tibi materno quamvis a sanguine iunctus,
mente tamen, Phaethon, propior fuit. ille relicto
(nam Ligurum populos et magnas rexerat urbes)
imperio ripas virides amnemque querellis
Eridanum inplerat silvamque sororibus auctam,
cum vox est tenuata viro canaeque capillos
dissimulant plumae collumque a pectore longe
porrigitur digitosque ligat iunctura rubentis,
penna latus velat, tenet os sine acumine rostrum.
fit nova Cycnus avis nec se caeloque Iovique
credit, ut iniuste missi memor ignis ab illo;

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But Clymene, after she'd said whatever had to be said in such great disaster, mourned and went mad and tore her breast and searched the whole world, seeking first his lifeless limbs, then his bones. She found his bones, however, buried on a foreign bank. She fell upon the place and, reading his name on the marble, wet it with tears and warmed it with her bare breast.

No less did the Heliades pour out tears - vain gifts to death - and beating their breasts with their hands, they called for Phaethon night and day, who wouldn't hear their pitiful complaints, and they threw themselves on his tomb. Four times the moon had filled her orb with joined horns. They, according to their custom (for habit had made it custom), gave their lament.

Of these, Phaethusa, the oldest of the sisters, when she wanted to fall to the ground, complained that her feet had grown stiff. Bright Lampetie, trying to come to her, was held back by a sudden root. A third, when she prepared to tear her hair with her hands, pulled off leaves. One grieved that bark held her legs, another that her arms became long branches. While they marveled at this, bark embraced their groins and by degrees covered their wombs and chests and shoulders and hands. Only their mouths remained, calling their mother.

What could their mother do except go here and there as impulse drew her, and join kisses while she could? It wasn't enough. She tried to tear their bodies from the trunks and broke off tender branches with her hands. But from there bloody drops flowed as if from a wound.

"Spare me, mother, I beg," cried each one who was wounded. "Spare me, I beg! Our body is being torn in the tree. Now farewell" - bark came over their last words. From there tears flow, and drops of amber, hardened by the sun, drip from the new branches. The clear river receives them and sends them to be worn by Latin brides.

Cycnus

Cycnus, son of Sthenelus, was present at this prodigy - he who, though joined to you by his mother's blood, Phaethon, was yet closer in mind. Leaving his kingdom (for he'd ruled the Ligurian peoples and great cities), he filled the green banks and the river Eridanus with complaints, and the forest increased by your sisters. Then his voice grew thin and white feathers concealed his hair. His neck stretched far from his chest, a web joined his reddening fingers, wings covered his sides, and a blunt beak replaced his mouth.

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stagna petit patulosque lacus ignemque perosus
quae colat elegit contraria flumina flammis. 380 Squalidus interea genitor Phaethontis et expers
ipse sui decoris, qualis, cum deficit orbem,
esse solet, lucemque odit seque ipse diemque
datque animum in luctus et luctibus adicit iram 365
officiumque negat mundo. 'satis' inquit 'ab aevi
sors mea principiis fuit inrequieta, pigetque
actorum sine fine mihi, sine honore laborum!
quilibet alter agat portantes lumina currus!
si nemo est omnesque dei non posse fatentur, 370
ipse agat ut saltem, dum nostras temptat habenas,
orbatura patres aliquando fulmina ponat!
tum sciet ignipedum vires expertus equorum
non meruisse necem, qui non bene rexerit illos.' Talia dicentem circumstant omnia Solem
numina, neve velit tenebras inducere rebus, 375
supplice voce rogant; missos quoque Iuppiter ignes
excusat precibusque minas regaliter addit.
colligit amentes et adhuc terrore paventes
Phoebus equos stimuloque dolens et verbere saevit
(saevit enim) natumque obiectat et inputat illis. 400 At pater omnipotens ingentia moenia caeli 380
circuit et, ne quid labefactum viribus ignis
corruat, explorat. quae postquam firma suique
roboris esse videt, terras hominumque labores
perspicit. Arcadiae tamen est inpensior illi
cura suae: fontesque et nondum audentia labi 385
flumina restituit, dat terrae gramina, frondes
arboribus, laesasque iubet revirescere silvas.
dum redit itque frequens, in virgine Nonacrina
haesit, et accepti caluere sub ossibus ignes.
non erat huius opus lanam mollire trahendo 390
nec positu variare comas; ubi fibula vestem,
vitta coercuerat neglectos alba capillos;
et modo leve manu iaculum, modo sumpserat arcum,
miles erat Phoebes: nec Maenalon attigit ulla
gratior hac Triviae; sed nulla potentia longa est. Ulterius medio spatium sol altus habebat, 395
cum subit illa nemus, quod nulla ceciderat aetas;
exuit hic umero pharetram lentosque retendit
arcus inque solo, quod texerat herba, iacebat
et pictam posita pharetram cervice premebat.
Iuppiter ut vidit fessam et custode vacantem, 400

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Cycnus became a strange new bird. He didn't trust himself to the sky or to Jupiter, remembering the fire unjustly sent by him. He sought pools and broad lakes and, hating fire, chose to live in rivers - the opposite of flames.

The Sun's Grief

Meanwhile squalid Phaethon's father, lacking his own splendor - as he usually is when he fails the world - hated light and himself and the day. He gave his mind to grief and added anger to grief and denied his service to the world.

"Enough!" he said. "My lot has been restless from the beginning of time, and I'm weary of my endless, thankless labors! Let any other drive the chariot that carries light! If there's no one and all the gods confess they can't, let Jupiter himself drive - at least while he tries our reins, he'll put down for a while the thunderbolts that bereave fathers! Then, having tested the strength of the fire-footed horses, he'll know that the one who didn't drive them well didn't deserve death."

As he spoke such things, all the gods surrounded the Sun and with suppliant voices begged him not to want to bring darkness over things. Jupiter also excused the fires he'd sent and added threats to his prayers in regal fashion. Phoebus gathered his frantic horses, still trembling with fear, and, grieving, raged with goad and whip (for he did rage), and reproached them with his son and charged it to their account.

Jupiter Repairs the World

But the all-powerful father circled the great walls of heaven and checked everything lest something, weakened by the fire's force, should collapse. After he saw these were firm and had their proper strength, he surveyed the lands and the labors of men. But his care was especially intent on his own Arcadia. He restored springs and rivers that didn't yet dare to flow, gave grass to the earth, leaves to trees, and ordered the damaged forests to grow green again.

Callisto and Jupiter

While he went back and forth frequently, his gaze caught on a virgin of Nonacris, and fires kindled beneath his bones. It wasn't her work to soften wool by drawing it out or to vary her hairstyle. A brooch

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'hoc certe furtum coniunx mea nesciet' inquit,
'aut si rescierit, sunt, o sunt iurgia tanti!'
protinus induitur faciem cultumque Dianae
atque ait: 'o comitum, virgo, pars una mearum,
in quibus es venata iugis?' de caespite virgo
se levat et 'salve numen, me iudice' dixit,
'audiat ipse licet, maius Iove.' ridet et audit
et sibi praeferri se gaudet et oscula iungit,
nec moderata satis nec sic a virgine danda.
qua venata foret silva, narrare parantem
inpedit amplexu nec se sine crimine prodit.
illa quidem contra, quantum modo femina posset
(adspiceres utinam, Saturnia, mitior esses),
illa quidem pugnat, sed quem superare puella,
quisve Iovem poterat? superum petit aethera victor
Iuppiter: huic odio nemus est et conscia silva;
unde pedem referens paene est oblita pharetram
tollere cum telis et quem suspenderat arcum. 440 Ecce, suo comitata choro Dictynna per altum
Maenalon ingrediens et caede superba ferarum
adspicit hanc visamque vocat: clamata refugit
et timuit primo, ne Iuppiter esset in illa;
sed postquam pariter nymphas incedere vidit,
sensit abesse dolos numerumque accessit ad harum.
heu! quam difficile est crimen non prodere vultu!
vix oculos attollit humo nec, ut ante solebat,
iuncta deae lateri nec toto est agmine prima,
sed silet et laesi dat signa rubore pudoris;
et, nisi quod virgo est, poterat sentire Diana
mille notis culpam: nymphae sensisse feruntur.
orbe resurgebant lunaria cornua nono,
cum de venatu fraternis languida flammis,
nacta nemus gelidum dea, quo cum murmure labens
ibat et attritas versabat rivus harenas.
ut loca laudavit, summas pede contigit undas;
his quoque laudatis 'procul est' ait 'arbiter omnis:
nuda superfusis tinguamus corpora lymphis!'
Parrhasis erubuit; cunctae velamina ponunt;
una moras quaerit: dubitanti vestis adempta est,
qua posita nudo patuit cum corpore crimen.
attonitae manibusque uterum celare volenti

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would fasten her garment, a white ribbon restrain her careless hair. Now she'd taken up a light spear in her hand, now her bow. She was a soldier of Diana. No woman more pleasing than she touched Mount Maenalus. But no power lasts long.

The sun held a space higher than mid-heaven when she entered a grove that no age had cut down. Here she took the quiver from her shoulder and unstrung her pliant bow and lay on the ground, which grass covered, and pressed the painted quiver with her placed head.

When Jupiter saw her tired and without a guard, he said, "This stolen affair at least my wife won't learn about - or if she does find out, oh, the quarrel is worth it!"

Immediately he put on Diana's appearance and dress and said, "O maiden, one of my companions, on what ridges have you been hunting?" The maiden raised herself from the turf and said, "Hail, goddess - greater than Jupiter in my judgment, even if he himself should hear." He laughed and heard and was glad to be preferred to himself, and joined kisses - not moderate enough nor such as a virgin should give.

When she prepared to tell in what forest she'd been hunting, he prevented her with an embrace and betrayed himself by his crime. She indeed fought back as much as a woman could (if only you could have watched, daughter of Saturn, you'd be gentler) - she indeed fought, but what girl could overcome, or who could overcome Jupiter? Victorious, Jupiter sought the upper air. She hated that grove and the forest that knew the secret. As she was going back, she almost forgot to take up her quiver with its arrows and the bow she'd hung up.

Diana Discovers Callisto's Shame

Look - Dictynna, accompanied by her chorus, walking through high Maenalus and proud of the slaughter of beasts, saw her and called to her when she was seen. Called, she fled and at first feared Jupiter was in her. But after she saw the nymphs walking together, she sensed the trick was absent and joined their number.

Alas, how difficult it is not to show guilt in one's face! She barely lifted her eyes from the ground. She wasn't joined to the goddess's side as before, nor was she first in the whole line, but she kept silent and gave signs of her injured modesty with a blush. If Diana weren't a virgin, she could have sensed the guilt by a thousand signs. They say the nymphs sensed it.

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'i procul hinc' dixit 'nec sacros pollue fontis!'
Cynthia deque suo iussit secedere coetu. 465 Senserat hoc olim magni matrona Tonantis
distuleratque graves in idonea tempora poenas.
causa morae nulla est, et iam puer Arcas (id ipsum
indoluit Iuno) fuerat de paelice natus.
quo simul obvertit saevam cum lumine mentem,
'scilicet hoc etiam restabat, adultera' dixit,
'ut fecunda fores, fieretque iniuria partu
nota, Iovisque mei testatum dedecus esset.
haud inpune feres: adimam tibi namque figuram,
qua tibi, quaque places nostro, inportuna, marito.'
dixit et adversam prensis a fronte capillis
stravit humi pronam. tendebat bracchia supplex:
bracchia coeperunt nigris horrescere villis
curvarique manus et aduncos crescere in unguis
officioque pedum fungi laudataque quondam
ora Iovi lato fieri deformia rictu.
neve preces animos et verba precantia flectant,
posse loqui eripitur: vox iracunda minaxque
plenaque terroris rauco de gutture fertur;
mens antiqua tamen facta quoque mansit in ursa,
adsiduoque suos gemitu testata dolores
qualescumque manus ad caelum et sidera tollit
ingratumque Iovem, nequeat cum dicere, sentit.
a! quotiens, sola non ausa quiescere silva,
ante domum quondamque suis erravit in agris!
a! quotiens per saxa canum latratibus acta est
venatrixque metu venantum territa fugit!
saepe feris latuit visis, oblita quid esset,
ursaque conspectos in montibus horruit ursos
pertimuitque lupos, quamvis pater esset in illis. 495 Ecce Lycaoniae proles ignara parentis,
Arcas adest ter quinque fere natalibus actis;
dumque feras sequitur, dum saltus eligit aptos
nexilibusque plagis silvas Erymanthidas ambit,
incidit in matrem, quae restitit Arcade viso
et cognoscenti similis fuit: ille refugit
inmotosque oculos in se sine fine tenentem
nescius extimuit propiusque accedere aventi
vulnifico fuerat fixurus pectora telo:
arcuit omnipotens pariterque ipsosque nefasque

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The moon's horns were rising for the ninth time. Diana, faint from her brother's fires, found a cool grove where a murmuring stream glided and turned its worn sands. When she praised the place, she touched the top of the water with her foot. Pleased with this too, she said, "Every witness is far away - let's bathe our naked bodies in the flowing water!"

The Parrhasian girl blushed. All the others put down their garments. She alone sought delays. As she hesitated, her clothing was removed. When it was laid aside, the shame was revealed along with her naked body. Stunned and trying to hide her womb with her hands, "Go far from here," Diana said, "and don't pollute the sacred spring!" The Cynthian goddess ordered her to leave her company.

Juno's Revenge on Callisto

The wife of the great Thunderer had sensed this long before and had postponed harsh punishment for a suitable time. There was no reason for delay now - a boy, Arcas (even this pained Juno), had been born from her rival. When she turned her savage mind and gaze to this, "So this was still lacking, adulteress," she said, "that you should be fertile, and the injury should become known by birth, and my Jupiter's disgrace be testified! You won't carry this off unpunished! For I'll take from you that figure by which you please - troublesome woman - yourself and my husband."

She spoke and, seizing her hair from the front, threw her prone on the ground. Callisto stretched out her arms as a suppliant. Her arms began to bristle with black hair, her hands to curve and grow into hooked claws and to serve as feet. Her face, once praised by Jupiter, was made ugly with a wide gaping mouth. And lest prayers and pleading words bend minds, the power of speech was taken from her. An angry, threatening voice full of terror came from her rough throat. Yet her old mind remained even though she was made a bear.

Testifying to her grief with constant groans, she lifted whatever hands she had to heaven and the stars and felt Jupiter ungrateful - though she couldn't say it. Ah, how often she didn't dare to rest alone in the forest and wandered before her former home and in the fields once hers! Ah, how often she was driven through rocks by the barking of dogs, and the huntress, terrified, fled in fear of hunters!

Often she hid when beasts were seen, forgetting what she was, and though a bear, shuddered at bears seen on the mountains and feared wolves, though her father was among them.

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sustulit et pariter raptos per inania vento
inposuit caelo vicinaque sidera fecit. Intumuit Iuno, postquam inter sidera paelex
fulsit, et ad canam descendit in aequora Tethyn
Oceanumque senem, quorum reverentia movit
saepe deos, causamque viae scitantibus infit:
'quaeritis, aetheriis quare regina deorum
sedibus huc adsim? pro me tenet altera caelum!
mentior, obscurum nisi nox cum fecerit orbem,
nuper honoratas summo, mea vulnera, caelo
videritis stellas illic, ubi circulus axem
ultimus extremum spatioque brevissimus ambit.
et vero quisquam Iunonem laedere nolit
offensamque tremat, quae prosum sola nocendo?
o ego quantum egi! quam vasta potentia nostra est!
esse hominem vetui: facta est dea! sic ego poenas
sontibus inpono, sic est mea magna potestas!
vindicet antiquam faciem vultusque ferinos
detrahat, Argolica quod in ante Phoronide fecit
cur non et pulsa ducit Iunone meoque
collocat in thalamo socerumque Lycaona sumit?
at vos si laesae tangit contemptus alumnae,
gurgite caeruleo septem prohibete triones
sideraque in caelo stupri mercede recepta
pellite, ne puro tinguatur in aequore paelex!' 530 Di maris adnuerant: habili Saturnia curru,
ingreditur liquidum pavonibus aethera pictis,
tam nuper pictis caeso pavonibus Argo,
quam tu nuper eras, cum candidus ante fuisses,
corve loquax, subito nigrantis versus in alas.
nam fuit haec quondam niveis argentea pennis
ales, ut aequaret totas sine labe columbas,
nec servaturis vigili Capitolia voce
cederet anseribus nec amanti flumina cycno.
lingua fuit damno: lingua faciente loquaci
qui color albus erat, nunc est contrarius albo Pulchrior in tota quam Larisaea Coronis
non fuit Haemonia: placuit tibi, Delphice, certe,
dum vel casta fuit vel inobservata, sed ales
sensit adulterium Phoebeius, utque latentem
detegeret culpam, non exorabilis index,
ad dominum tendebat iter. quem garrula motis
consequitur pennis, scitetur ut omnia, cornix

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Arcas Nearly Kills His Mother

Look - Arcas, son of Lycaon, appeared, unaware of his parent, about fifteen years old. While he was tracking beasts and choosing suitable thickets and enclosing the Erymanthian forests with woven nets, he came upon his mother. She stopped when she saw Arcas and seemed to recognize him. He fled. When she held her unmoving eyes on him endlessly, unknowing, he was terrified. When she was eager to come closer, he was about to pierce her breast with a deadly weapon.

The Almighty prevented it and lifted both them and the impious deed together. Carried through the void by wind, he placed them in heaven and made them neighboring constellations.

Juno's Complaint

Juno swelled with rage after her rival shone among the stars. She descended to the sea to gray-haired Tethys and old Ocean, whose reverence often moved the gods. To them asking the cause of her journey, she began:

"You ask why I, queen of the gods, come here from the heavenly seats? Another holds heaven in my place! I lie unless, when night has made the world dark, you see stars recently honored in the highest sky - my wounds! - there where the circle, outermost and shortest in space, surrounds the axis.

"And truly, why should anyone fear to injure Juno or tremble at offending me, who only benefit by harming? Oh, how much I've accomplished! How vast is my power! I forbade her to be human - she's been made a goddess! This is how I impose punishments on the guilty! This is how great my power is!

"Let Jupiter restore her ancient form and remove her bestial appearance, as he did before for the Argolic Phoronid! Why doesn't he divorce Juno and take her for his marriage bed and take Lycaon as his father-in-law? But if the contempt for your injured foster-daughter touches you, forbid the seven oxen from your blue waters and drive away the stars received in heaven as payment for disgrace - don't let the concubine be bathed in pure water!"

The sea gods nodded. Juno, daughter of Saturn, mounted her wheeled chariot and entered the clear air with painted peacocks - peacocks painted so recently when Argus was slain, just as you so recently were, talkative crow, when you were suddenly changed to black wings, though you'd been white before.

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auditaque viae causa 'non utile carpis'
inquit 'iter: ne sperne meae praesagia linguae!
quid fuerim quid simque vide meritumque require:
invenies nocuisse fidem. nam tempore quodam
Pallas Ericthonium, prolem sine matre creatam,
clauserat Actaeo texta de vimine cista
virginibusque tribus gemino de Cecrope natis
et legem dederat, sua ne secreta viderent.
abdita fronde levi densa speculabar ab ulmo,
quid facerent: commissa duae sine fraude tuentur,
Pandrosos atque Herse; timidas vocat una sorores
Aglauros nodosque manu diducit, et intus
infantemque vident adporrectumque draconem.
acta deae refero. pro quo mihi gratia talis
redditur, ut dicar tutela pulsa Minervae
et ponar post noctis avem! mea poena volucres
admonuisse potest, ne voce pericula quaerant.
at, puto, non ultro nequiquam tale rogantem
me petiit! - ipsa licet hoc a Pallade quaeras:
quamvis irata est, non hoc irata negabit.
nam me Phocaica clarus tellure Coroneus
(nota loquor) genuit, fueramque ego regia virgo
divitibusque procis (ne me contemne) petebar:
forma mihi nocuit. nam cum per litora lentis
passibus, ut soleo, summa spatiarer harena,
vidit et incaluit pelagi deus, utque precando
tempora cum blandis absumpsit inania verbis,
vim parat et sequitur. fugio densumque relinquo
litus et in molli nequiquam lassor harena.
inde deos hominesque voco; nec contigit ullum
vox mea mortalem: mota est pro virgine virgo
auxiliumque tulit. tendebam bracchia caelo:
bracchia coeperunt levibus nigrescere pennis;
reicere ex umeris vestem molibar, at illa
pluma erat inque cutem radices egerat imas;
plangere nuda meis conabar pectora palmis,
sed neque iam palmas nec pectora nuda gerebam;
currebam, nec, ut ante, pedes retinebat harena,
sed summa tollebar humo; mox alta per auras
evehor et data sum comes inculpata Minervae.

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The Story of the Crow and the Raven

For this bird was once silvery with snowy feathers, so that it would equal spotless doves and wouldn't yield to the geese who would save the Capitol with their watchful voice, nor to the swan that loves rivers. Its tongue was its harm. Because of its talkative tongue, the color that was white is now the opposite of white.

No woman in all Thessaly was more beautiful than Larissaean Coronis. She pleased you, Delphic god, certainly, while she was either chaste or unobserved. But Phoebus' bird sensed the adultery, and as an inexorable informer to expose the hidden guilt, he was making his way toward his master.

The chattering crow followed him with moving wings to learn everything. When it heard the reason for his journey, it said, "You're taking a useless trip! Don't spurn my tongue's warnings! See what I was and what I am, and ask what I deserved - you'll find that loyalty harmed me.

"For at one time Pallas had shut Erichthonius, offspring created without a mother, in a wicker chest woven from branches and had given it to three virgins born of twin Cecrops and had given a law that they shouldn't see her secret. Hidden in the dense elm tree's light foliage, I watched what they would do. Two guarded their trust without deceit, Pandrosos and Herse. One, Aglauros, called her sisters cowards and undid the knots with her hand, and inside they saw the infant and the outstretched dragon.

"I reported the deed to the goddess. In return for which, such gratitude was given to me that I'm said to have been expelled from Minerva's protection and placed after the night bird! My punishment can warn birds not to seek dangers by speaking. But I think she didn't ask for me unless I asked for nothing - ask Pallas herself about this! Though she's angry, she won't deny this in her anger.

"For Coroneus, famous in Phocian land, begot me (I speak of known things), and I was a royal maiden and was sought by rich suitors (don't scorn me). My beauty harmed me. For as I was walking with slow steps along the shore, as I usually do, on the surface sand, the god of the sea saw me and burned. When he'd wasted time with pleading and gentle words, he prepared violence and pursued me.

"I fled and left the packed shore and grew tired in vain in the soft sand. Then I called on gods and mortals. My voice reached no mortal. A virgin was moved for a virgin and brought help. I was stretching my arms to heaven - my arms began to darken with light feathers. I was trying to throw off my robe from my shoulders, but it was feathers and had driven roots deep into my skin. I was trying to beat my naked

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quid tamen hoc prodest, si diro facta volucris
crimine Nyctimene nostro successit honori?
an quae per totam res est notissima Lesbon,
non audita tibi est, patrium temerasse cubile
Nyctimenen? avis illa quidem, sed conscia culpae
conspectum lucemque fugit tenebrisque pudorem
celat et a cunctis expellitur aethere toto.' 595 Talia dicenti 'tibi' ait 'revocamina' corvus
'sint, precor, ista malo: nos vanum spernimus omen.'
nec coeptum dimittit iter dominoque iacentem
cum iuvene Haemonio vidisse Coronida narrat.
laurea delapsa est audito crimine amantis,
et pariter vultusque deo plectrumque colorque
excidit, utque animus tumida fervebat ab ira,
arma adsueta capit flexumque a cornibus arcum
tendit et illa suo totiens cum pectore iuncta
indevitato traiecit pectora telo.
icta dedit gemitum tractoque a corpore ferro
candida puniceo perfudit membra cruore
et dixit: 'potui poenas tibi, Phoebe, dedisse,
sed peperisse prius; duo nunc moriemur in una.'
hactenus, et pariter vitam cum sanguine fudit;
corpus inane animae frigus letale secutum est. Paenitet heu! sero poenae crudelis amantem,
seque, quod audierit, quod sic exarserit, odit;
odit avem, per quam crimen causamque dolendi
scire coactus erat, nec non arcumque manumque
odit cumque manu temeraria tela sagittas
conlapsamque fovet seraque ope vincere fata
nititur et medicas exercet inaniter artes.
quae postquam frustra temptata rogumque parari
vidit et arsuros supremis ignibus artus,
tum vero gemitus (neque enim caelestia tingui
ora licet lacrimis) alto de corde petitos
edidit, haud aliter quam cum spectante iuvenca
lactentis vituli dextra libratus ab aure
tempora discussit claro cava malleus ictu.
ut tamen ingratos in pectora fudit odores
et dedit amplexus iniustaque iusta peregit,
non tulit in cineres labi sua Phoebus eosdem
semina, sed natum flammis uteroque parentis
eripuit geminique tulit Chironis in antrum,

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breast with my palms, but I no longer had palms or a naked breast.

"I was running, and the sand no longer held my feet as before, but I was lifted from the surface of the ground. Soon I was carried through the high air and was given as a blameless companion to Minerva. But what does this help me if Nyctimene, made a bird for her terrible crime, has succeeded to my honor?

"Haven't you heard - the story most famous throughout all Lesbos - that Nyctimene defiled her father's bed? She's a bird indeed, but conscious of her guilt, she flees sight and light and hides her shame in darkness and is driven from the whole sky by all."

Coronis and Apollo

To the crow saying such things, the raven said, "May those curses be for your harm, I pray! I spurn your vain omen." He didn't abandon his begun journey and told his master that he'd seen Coronis lying with a Thessalian youth.

The laurel fell from the lover when he heard the charge, and at the same time color fell from the god's face and his plectrum. As his mind seethed with swelling rage, he seized his accustomed weapons and bent the bow curved from horns and stretched it and pierced with unavoidable arrow the breast so often joined to his own breast.

Struck, she gave a groan, and when the iron was drawn from her body, she soaked her white limbs with red blood and said, "I could have paid you punishment, Phoebus, but first I could have given birth. Now two of us will die in one." So far she spoke, and equally she poured out life with blood. A lethal chill followed her body now empty of soul.

Apollo's Grief

Alas, the lover repented, too late, of his cruel punishment, and he hated himself for having heard, for having blazed up so. He hated the bird through which he'd been forced to know the crime and cause of grief. He hated the bow and his hand and his rash arrows along with his hand. He cherished her collapsed form and tried to conquer fate with late help and practiced his medical arts in vain.

When he saw these were attempted in vain and saw the pyre being prepared and her limbs about to burn in the final fires, then truly he gave groans drawn from deep in his heart (for celestial faces aren't

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sperantemque sibi non falsae praemia linguae
inter aves albas vetuit consistere corvum. Semifer interea divinae stirpis alumno
laetus erat mixtoque oneri gaudebat honore;
ecce venit rutilis umeros protecta capillis
filia centauri, quam quondam nympha Chariclo
fluminis in rapidi ripis enixa vocavit
Ocyroen: non haec artes contenta paternas
edidicisse fuit, fatorum arcana canebat.
ergo ubi vaticinos concepit mente furores
incaluitque deo, quem clausum pectore habebat,
adspicit infantem 'toto' que 'salutifer orbi
cresce, puer!' dixit; 'tibi se mortalia saepe
corpora debebunt, animas tibi reddere ademptas
fas erit, idque semel dis indignantibus ausus
posse dare hoc iterum flamma prohibebere avita,
eque deo corpus fies exsangue deusque,
qui modo corpus eras, et bis tua fata novabis.
tu quoque, care pater, nunc inmortalis et aevis
omnibus ut maneas nascendi lege creatus,
posse mori cupies, tum cum cruciabere dirae
sanguine serpentis per saucia membra recepto;
teque ex aeterno patientem numina mortis
efficient, triplicesque deae tua fila resolvent.'
restabat fatis aliquid: suspirat ab imis
pectoribus, lacrimaeque genis labuntur obortae,
atque ita 'praevertunt' inquit 'me fata, vetorque
plura loqui, vocisque meae praecluditur usus.
non fuerant artes tanti, quae numinis iram
contraxere mihi: mallem nescisse futura!
iam mihi subduci facies humana videtur,
iam cibus herba placet, iam latis currere campis
impetus est: in equam cognataque corpora vertor.
tota tamen quare? pater est mihi nempe biformis.'
talia dicenti pars est extrema querellae
intellecta parum confusaque verba fuerunt;
mox nec verba quidem nec equae sonus ille videtur
sed simulantis equam, parvoque in tempore certos
edidit hinnitus et bracchia movit in herbas.
tum digiti coeunt et quinos alligat ungues
perpetuo cornu levis ungula, crescit et oris

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allowed to be wet with tears) - not otherwise than when a heifer, watching, hears the hammer, balanced from the ear, shatter the hollow temples of her suckling calf with a clear blow.

Yet when he'd poured ungrateful perfumes on her breast and given embraces and performed unjust rites justly, Phoebus didn't bear that his seed should sink into the same ashes. He snatched the child from the flames and from the parent's womb and carried it to the cave of twin-formed Chiron. And the raven, hoping for rewards for its truthful tongue, he forbade to stand among white birds.

Ocyrhoe's Prophecy and Transformation

Meanwhile the half-beast was happy with the divine-born nursling and rejoiced in the honor mixed with burden. Look - the centaur's daughter came, her shoulders covered with reddish hair. A nymph named Chariclo had once given birth to her on the banks of a swift river and called her Ocyrhoe. This girl wasn't content to have learned her father's arts - she sang the secrets of the fates.

So when she conceived prophetic frenzies in her mind and grew hot with the god she held enclosed in her breast, she looked at the infant and said, "Grow, boy, bringer of health to the whole world! Often mortal bodies will owe themselves to you. You'll have the right to restore stolen souls. Having dared this once while gods were indignant, you'll be prevented by your grandfather's flame from being able to give this again, and from a god you'll become a bloodless corpse and a god again, though just now you were a body, and twice you'll renew your fate.

"You too, dear father, now immortal and created by the law of birth to remain through all ages, will want to be able to die when you'll be tortured by the dreadful serpent's blood received through your wounded limbs. The gods will make you, eternal, subject to death, and the three goddesses will unwind your threads."

Something remained for the fates. She sighed from the depths of her breast, and tears slid down her cheeks, and she said, "The fates are overtaking me, and I'm forbidden to speak more, and the use of my voice is being shut off. My arts weren't worth so much that they drew divine anger upon me! I'd rather not have known the future!

"Now my human face seems to be removed from me. Now grass pleases me as food. Now there's an impulse to run through wide fields. I'm being turned into a mare and related forms. Yet why completely? For my father is indeed two-formed."

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et colli spatium, longae pars maxima pallae
cauda fit, utque vagi crines per colla iacebant,
in dextras abiere iubas, pariterque novata est
et vox et facies; nomen quoque monstra dedere. 675 Flebat opemque tuam frustra Philyreius heros,
Delphice, poscebat. nam nec rescindere magni
iussa Iovis poteras, nec, si rescindere posses,
tunc aderas: Elin Messeniaque arva colebas.
illud erat tempus, quo te pastoria pellis
texit, onusque fuit baculum silvestre sinistrae,
alterius dispar septenis fistula cannis.
dumque amor est curae, dum te tua fistula mulcet,
incustoditae Pylios memorantur in agros
processisse boves: videt has Atlantide Maia
natus et arte sua silvis occultat abactas.
senserat hoc furtum nemo nisi notus in illo
rure senex; Battum vicinia tota vocabat.
divitis hic saltus herbosaque pascua Nelei
nobiliumque greges custos servabat equarum.
hunc tenuit blandaque manu seduxit et illi
'quisquis es, hospes' ait, 'si forte armenta requiret
haec aliquis, vidisse nega neu gratia facto
nulla rependatur, nitidam cape praemia vaccam!'
et dedit. accepta voces has reddidit hospes:
'tutus eas! lapis iste prius tua furta loquetur,'
et lapidem ostendit. simulat Iove natus abire;
mox redit et versa pariter cum voce figura
'rustice, vidisti si quas hoc limite' dixit
'ire boves, fer opem furtoque silentia deme!
iuncta suo pretium dabitur tibi femina tauro.'
at senior, postquam est merces geminata, 'sub illis
montibus' inquit 'erunt,' et erant sub montibus illis.
risit Atlantiades et 'me mihi, perfide, prodis?
me mihi prodis?' ait periuraque pectora vertit
in durum silicem, qui nunc quoque dicitur index,
inque nihil merito vetus est infamia saxo. Hinc se sustulerat paribus caducifer alis,
Munychiosque volans agros gratamque Minervae
despectabat humum cultique arbusta Lycei.
illa forte die castae de more puellae
vertice supposito festas in Palladis arces
pura coronatis portabant sacra canistris.

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As she was saying such things, the last part of her complaint was understood only a little, and her words were confused. Soon they seemed neither words nor the sound of a mare but the imitation of a mare, and in a short time she gave clear neighing and moved her arms into grass.

Then her fingers joined and a light hoof of continuous horn bound her five nails together. The size of her mouth and neck grew. The greatest part of her long robe became a tail. The wandering hair that lay over her neck went into a mane on the right side. At the same time her voice and face were made new, and the prodigy gave her a new name.

Battus Turned to Stone

The Philyrean hero wept and sought your help in vain, Delphic god. For you couldn't rescind great Jupiter's commands, nor, even if you could rescind them, were you there then. You were dwelling in Elis and the Messenian fields. That was the time when a shepherd's cloak covered you, and a rustic staff was the burden of your left hand, and a pipe of seven unequal reeds was in the other.

While love is your care, while your pipe soothes you, they say the Pylian cattle, unguarded, went into the fields. The son of Atlas's daughter Maia saw these and, by his art, drove them away hidden in the forest. No one had sensed this theft except an old man known in that countryside. The whole neighborhood called him Battus. He was watching the rich pastures and grassy meadows and the herds of noble mares for Neleus.

Mercury took hold of him and led him aside with a soothing hand and said to him, "Whoever you are, stranger, if by chance anyone asks about this herd, deny you've seen it. And so that no thanks is repaid for the deed, take a sleek cow as your reward!" And he gave her.

Accepting it, the stranger returned these words: "Go safely! That stone will speak of your theft sooner," and he pointed to a stone. Jupiter's son pretended to leave. Soon he returned and, with his appearance changed along with his voice, said, "Peasant, if you've seen any cattle go this way, bring help and don't hide the theft! A female will be given to you along with her mate as a price."

But the old man, after the reward was doubled, said, "They'll be under those mountains," and they were under those mountains. The son of Atlas laughed and said, "You're betraying me to myself, traitor? You're betraying me to myself?" And he turned the perjured heart into hard flint, which even now is called the informer, and ancient infamy rests in the stone, though it deserved none.

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inde revertentes deus adspicit ales iterque
non agit in rectum, sed in orbem curvat eundem:
ut volucris visis rapidissima miluus extis,
dum timet et densi circumstant sacra ministri,
flectitur in gyrum nec longius audet abire
spemque suam motis avidus circumvolat alis,
sic super Actaeas agilis Cyllenius arces
inclinat cursus et easdem circinat auras.
quanto splendidior quam cetera sidera fulget
Lucifer, et quanto quam Lucifer aurea Phoebe,
tanto virginibus praestantior omnibus Herse
ibat eratque decus pompae comitumque suarum.
obstipuit forma Iove natus et aethere pendens
non secus exarsit, quam cum Balearica plumbum
funda iacit: volat illud et incandescit eundo
et, quos non habuit, sub nubibus invenit ignes.
vertit iter caeloque petit terrena relicto
nec se dissimulat: tanta est fiducia formae.
quae quamquam iusta est, cura tamen adiuvat illam
permulcetque comas chlamydemque, ut pendeat apte,
collocat, ut limbus totumque adpareat aurum,
ut teres in dextra, qua somnos ducit et arcet,
virga sit, ut tersis niteant talaria plantis. Pars secreta domus ebore et testudine cultos
tres habuit thalamos, quorum tu, Pandrose, dextrum,
Aglauros laevum, medium possederat Herse.
quae tenuit laevum, venientem prima notavit
Mercurium nomenque dei scitarier ausa est
et causam adventus; cui sic respondit Atlantis
Pleionesque nepos 'ego sum, qui iussa per auras
verba patris porto; pater est mihi Iuppiter ipse.
nec fingam causas, tu tantum fida sorori
esse velis prolisque meae matertera dici:
Herse causa viae; faveas oramus amanti.'
adspicit hunc oculis isdem, quibus abdita nuper
viderat Aglauros flavae secreta Minervae,
proque ministerio magni sibi ponderis aurum
postulat: interea tectis excedere cogit. Vertit ad hanc torvi dea bellica luminis orbem
et tanto penitus traxit suspiria motu,
ut pariter pectus positamque in pectore forti
aegida concuteret: subit, hanc arcana profana

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Mercury and Herse

From there the bearer of the caduceus had lifted himself on equal wings and, flying, looked down on the fields of Munychia and the ground pleasing to Minerva and the groves of the cultivated Lyceum.

It happened on that day that chaste girls, according to custom, were carrying sacred rites in pure woven baskets on their heads to Pallas' festive citadel. From there returning, the winged god saw them and didn't direct his course straight but curved it in the same orbit. As when a very swift kite sees entrails and, while it fears and the dense crowd of priests stand around the sacred rites, it turns in a circle and doesn't dare go farther off but, eager, flies around its hope with moving wings - so the nimble Cyllenian above the Athenian citadel inclined his course and circled the same air.

As much brighter than other stars shines the Morning Star, and as much brighter than the Morning Star shines golden Phoebe, by so much was Herse more outstanding than all the maidens and was the glory of the procession and her companions. Jupiter's son was astonished by her beauty and, hanging in the air, burned - not otherwise than when a Balearic sling hurls lead: it flies and grows white-hot as it goes and finds beneath the clouds fires it didn't have.

He turned his course and, leaving heaven, sought the earth, nor did he disguise himself - so great was his confidence in his beauty. Though this was justified, care nevertheless aided it. He smoothed his hair and arranged his cloak so it would hang properly, so that the border and all the gold would show, so that the wand, smooth in his right hand, by which he leads and wards off sleep, would be seen, so that the sandals would shine on his cleaned feet.

Aglauros' Envy

A secluded part of the house had three chambers adorned with ivory and tortoiseshell. Of these, you, Pandrosos, held the right, Aglauros the left, and Herse had possessed the middle. She who held the left was the first to notice Mercury coming and dared to ask the god's name and the reason for his arrival. To her, the grandson of Atlas and Pleione responded thus:

"I'm the one who carries my father's commands through the air. My father is Jupiter himself. I won't invent reasons. Only be willing to be faithful to your sister and to be called aunt of my offspring. Herse is the cause of my journey. We ask that you favor a lover."

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detexisse manu, tum cum sine matre creatam
Lemnicolae stirpem contra data foedera vidit,
et gratamque deo fore iam gratamque sorori
et ditem sumpto, quod avara poposcerat, auro.
protinus Invidiae nigro squalentia tabo
tecta petit: domus est imis in vallibus huius
abdita, sole carens, non ulli pervia vento,
tristis et ignavi plenissima frigoris et quae
igne vacet semper, caligine semper abundet.
huc ubi pervenit belli metuenda virago,
constitit ante domum (neque enim succedere tectis
fas habet) et postes extrema cuspide pulsat.
concussae patuere fores. videt intus edentem
vipereas carnes, vitiorum alimenta suorum,
Invidiam visaque oculos avertit; at illa
surgit humo pigre semesarumque relinquit
corpora serpentum passuque incedit inerti.
utque deam vidit formaque armisque decoram,
ingemuit vultumque una ac suspiria duxit.
pallor in ore sedet, macies in corpore toto.
nusquam recta acies, livent robigine dentes,
pectora felle virent, lingua est suffusa veneno;
risus abest, nisi quem visi movere dolores;
nec fruitur somno, vigilantibus excita curis,
sed videt ingratos intabescitque videndo
successus hominum carpitque et carpitur una
suppliciumque suum est. quamvis tamen oderat illam,
talibus adfata est breviter Tritonia dictis:
'infice tabe tua natarum Cecropis unam:
sic opus est. Aglauros ea est.' haud plura locuta
fugit et inpressa tellurem reppulit hasta. Illa deam obliquo fugientem lumine cernens
murmura parva dedit successurumque Minervae
indoluit baculumque capit, quod spinea totum
vincula cingebant, adopertaque nubibus atris,
quacumque ingreditur, florentia proterit arva
exuritque herbas et summa cacumina carpit
adflatuque suo populos urbesque domosque
polluit et tandem Tritonida conspicit arcem
ingeniis opibusque et festa pace virentem
vixque tenet lacrimas, quia nil lacrimabile cernit.

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She looked at him with the same eyes with which she'd recently seen the hidden secret of golden Minerva, and she demanded gold of great weight as payment for her service. Meanwhile she forced him to leave the dwelling.

The warrior goddess turned the orb of her fierce eye toward her, and drew sighs from such deep emotion that she shook at once her breast and the aegis placed on her strong breast. It came to her mind that this girl had revealed her secrets with profane hand when she saw the offspring of Vulcan, created without a mother, contrary to the given agreement, and that she would now be pleasing to the god and pleasing to her sister and rich with the gold she'd greedily demanded.

Immediately she sought the dwelling of Envy, squalid with black corruption. This house is hidden in deep valleys, lacking sun, open to no wind, gloomy and full of sluggish cold, always without fire, always abounding in darkness.

When the fearsome warrior of war arrived there, she stopped before the house (for she's not allowed to enter the dwelling) and struck the doorposts with the tip of her spear. The doors shook and opened. She saw inside Envy eating viper flesh - the food of her vices - and seeing her, turned away her eyes. But Envy rose slowly from the ground and left the half-eaten bodies of serpents and walked with sluggish step.

When she saw the goddess beautiful with form and weapons, she groaned and drew sighs along with her expression. Paleness sits on her face, leanness in her whole body. Her gaze is never straight, her teeth are discolored with rust, her breast is green with bile, her tongue is soaked with poison. Laughter is absent except what the sight of pain moves. She doesn't enjoy sleep, waked by vigilant cares, but she sees unwelcome successes and wastes away seeing them, and she attacks and is attacked together - her own punishment.

Though Minerva hated her, she addressed her briefly with such words: "Infect one of Cecrops' daughters with your corruption. It's necessary. Aglauros is the one." Having said no more, she fled and pushed away the earth with her thrust spear.

Envy looked at the fleeing goddess with a sidelong glance and gave small murmurs and grieved that Minerva would succeed. She took up her staff, which thorny bonds entirely surrounded, and covered with black clouds, wherever she walked she trampled flowering fields and scorched grasses and cropped

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sed postquam thalamos intravit Cecrope natae,
iussa facit pectusque manu ferrugine tincta
tangit et hamatis praecordia sentibus inplet
inspiratque nocens virus piceumque per ossa
dissipat et medio spargit pulmone venenum,
neve mali causae spatium per latius errent,
germanam ante oculos fortunatumque sororis
coniugium pulchraque deum sub imagine ponit
cunctaque magna facit; quibus inritata dolore
Cecropis occulto mordetur et anxia nocte
anxia luce gemit lentaque miserrima tabe
liquitur, et glacies incerto saucia sole,
felicisque bonis non lenius uritur Herses,
quam cum spinosis ignis supponitur herbis,
quae neque dant flammas lentoque vapore cremantur.
saepe mori voluit, ne quicquam tale videret,
saepe velut crimen rigido narrare parenti;
denique in adverso venientem limine sedit
exclusura deum. cui blandimenta precesque
verbaque iactanti mitissima 'desine!' dixit,
'hinc ego me non sum nisi te motura repulso.'
'stemus' ait 'pacto' velox Cyllenius 'isto!'
caelestique fores virga patefecit: at illi
surgere conanti partes, quascumque sedendo
flectimur, ignava nequeunt gravitate moveri:
illa quidem pugnat recto se attollere trunco,
sed genuum iunctura riget, frigusque per ungues
labitur, et pallent amisso sanguine venae;
utque malum late solet inmedicabile cancer
serpere et inlaesas vitiatis addere partes,
sic letalis hiems paulatim in pectora venit
vitalesque vias et respiramina clausit,
nec conata loqui est nec, si conata fuisset,
vocis habebat iter: saxum iam colla tenebat,
oraque duruerant, signumque exsangue sedebat;
nec lapis albus erat: sua mens infecerat illam. Has ubi verborum poenas mentisque profanae
cepit Atlantiades, dictas a Pallade terras
linquit et ingreditur iactatis aethera pennis.
sevocat hunc genitor nec causam fassus amoris
'fide minister' ait 'iussorum, nate, meorum,

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the tops of plants and with her breath polluted peoples and cities and houses. At last she saw the Tritonian citadel, flourishing with talents and wealth and festive peace, and she scarcely held back tears because she saw nothing tearful.

But after she'd entered the chamber of Cecrops' daughter, she did as commanded and touched her breast with a rust-stained hand and filled her heart with hooked thorns and breathed in harmful poison and scattered pitch-black substance through her bones and spread venom in the middle of her lungs. And lest the causes of evil should wander through too wide a space, she placed her sister and her sister's fortunate marriage and the god in his beautiful form before her eyes and made everything great.

Irritated by these things with pain, Cecrops' daughter was gnawed by secret grief and groaned anxiously by night, anxiously by day, and, most miserable, melted away in slow decay, and like ice wounded by uncertain sun, she was burned no less by fortunate Herse's blessings than when fire is placed under thorny plants that neither give flames nor are burned with slow heat.

Often she wanted to die lest she see such a thing. Often she wanted to tell it like a crime to her stern father. Finally she sat in the opposing threshold to shut out the god. To him uttering blandishments and prayers and the gentlest words, she said, "Stop! I won't move from here unless you're repulsed."

"Let's stand by that pact!" said swift Cyllenius. And with his heavenly wand he opened the doors. But when she tried to rise, the parts by which we bend when sitting couldn't be moved by their sluggish weight. She indeed fought to raise herself with upright trunk, but the joint of her knees stiffened, and cold slid through her nails, and her veins grew pale with lost blood.

Just as an incurable cancer usually creeps widely and adds uninjured parts to diseased ones, so lethal cold gradually came into her breast and closed off the vital passages and breathing. Nor did she try to speak, nor, if she'd tried, would she have had a path for her voice. Stone now held her neck, and her mouth had hardened, and she sat as a bloodless statue. Nor was the stone white - her mind had stained it.

Europa and the Bull

After the son of Atlas took these punishments for her profane words and mind, he left the lands told by Pallas and mounted the air on his beating wings. His father called him aside and, without confessing the cause of love, said:

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pelle moram solitoque celer delabere cursu,
quaeque tuam matrem tellus a parte sinistra
suspicit (indigenae Sidonida nomine dicunt),
hanc pete, quodque procul montano gramine pasci
armentum regale vides, ad litora verte!'
dixit, et expulsi iamdudum monte iuvenci
litora iussa petunt, ubi magni filia regis
ludere virginibus Tyriis comitata solebat.
non bene conveniunt nec in una sede morantur
maiestas et amor; sceptri gravitate relicta
ille pater rectorque deum, cui dextra trisulcis
ignibus armata est, qui nutu concutit orbem,
induitur faciem tauri mixtusque iuvencis
mugit et in teneris formosus obambulat herbis.
quippe color nivis est, quam nec vestigia duri
calcavere pedis nec solvit aquaticus auster.
colla toris exstant, armis palearia pendent,
cornua vara quidem, sed quae contendere possis
facta manu, puraque magis perlucida gemma.
nullae in fronte minae, nec formidabile lumen:
pacem vultus habet. miratur Agenore nata,
quod tam formosus, quod proelia nulla minetur;
sed quamvis mitem metuit contingere primo,
mox adit et flores ad candida porrigit ora.
gaudet amans et, dum veniat sperata voluptas,
oscula dat manibus; vix iam, vix cetera differt;
et nunc adludit viridique exsultat in herba,
nunc latus in fulvis niveum deponit harenis;
paulatimque metu dempto modo pectora praebet
virginea plaudenda manu, modo cornua sertis
inpedienda novis; ausa est quoque regia virgo
nescia, quem premeret, tergo considere tauri,
cum deus a terra siccoque a litore sensim
falsa pedum primis vestigia ponit in undis;
inde abit ulterius mediique per aequora ponti
fert praedam: pavet haec litusque ablata relictum
respicit et dextra cornum tenet, altera dorso
inposita est; tremulae sinuantur flamine vestes.

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"Faithful minister of my commands, son, drive away delay and glide down with your accustomed swift course to the land that looks up at your mother from the left side (the natives call it the Sidonian land). Seek it, and turn toward the shores the royal herd that you see grazing far off on the mountain grass."

He spoke, and the young cattle, driven long ago from the mountain, sought the shores as commanded, where the great king's daughter used to play, accompanied by Tyrian maidens.

Majesty and love don't go well together nor remain in one seat. Setting aside the weight of his scepter, that father and ruler of the gods, whose right hand is armed with triple fires, who shakes the world with his nod, put on the appearance of a bull and, mixed with the young cattle, lowed and walked beautiful among the tender grass.

Indeed, his color was that of snow that neither the tread of a hard foot has pressed nor the watery south wind dissolved. Muscles stood out on his neck, dewlaps hung from his shoulders, his horns were small indeed but such as you could swear were made by hand, more translucent than a pure gem. No threats were on his forehead, no formidable light. His expression had peace.

Agenor's daughter marveled that he was so beautiful, that he threatened no battles. But though he was gentle, she feared at first to touch him. Soon she approached and held flowers toward his white face. The lover rejoiced and, until the hoped-for pleasure should come, gave kisses to her hands. He could scarcely, scarcely put off the rest. And now he played and leaped on the green grass, now laid his snowy side on the yellow sands.

Gradually, with fear removed, now he offered his breast to be patted by the maiden's hand, now his horns to be wrapped with new garlands. The royal maiden even dared, not knowing whom she was mounting, to sit on the bull's back.

Then the god, gradually from the earth and from the dry shore, placed his false footsteps in the first waves. Then he went farther and carried his prize through the middle of the sea. She was afraid and looked back at the abandoned shore she'd been carried from, and held a horn with her right hand, and the other was placed on his back. Her trembling garments rippled in the breeze.

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BOOK 3

Iamque deus posita fallacis imagine tauri
se confessus erat Dictaeaque rura tenebat,
cum pater ignarus Cadmo perquirere raptam
imperat et poenam, si non invenerit, addit
exilium, facto pius et sceleratus eodem.
orbe pererrato (quis enim deprendere possit
furta Iovis?) profugus patriamque iramque parentis
vitat Agenorides Phoebique oracula supplex
consulit et, quae sit tellus habitanda, requirit.
'bos tibi' Phoebus ait 'solis occurret in arvis,
nullum passa iugum curvique inmunis aratri.
hac duce carpe vias et, qua requieverit herba,
moenia fac condas Boeotiaque illa vocato.'
vix bene Castalio Cadmus descenderat antro,
incustoditam lente videt ire iuvencam
nullum servitii signum cervice gerentem.
subsequitur pressoque legit vestigia gressu
auctoremque viae Phoebum taciturnus adorat.
iam vada Cephisi Panopesque evaserat arva:
bos stetit et tollens speciosam cornibus altis
ad caelum frontem mugitibus inpulit auras
atque ita respiciens comites sua terga sequentis
procubuit teneraque latus submisit in herba.
Cadmus agit grates peregrinaeque oscula terrae
figit et ignotos montes agrosque salutat.
Sacra Iovi facturus erat: iubet ire ministros
et petere e vivis libandas fontibus undas.
silva vetus stabat nulla violata securi,
et specus in media virgis ac vimine densus
efficiens humilem lapidum conpagibus arcum
uberibus fecundus aquis; ubi conditus antro
Martius anguis erat, cristis praesignis et auro;
igne micant oculi, corpus tumet omne venenis,
tresque vibrant linguae, triplici stant ordine dentes.
quem postquam Tyria lucum de gente profecti
infausto tetigere gradu, demissaque in undas
urna dedit sonitum, longo caput extulit antro
caeruleus serpens horrendaque sibila misit.
effluxere urnae manibus sanguisque reliquit

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Cadmus Searches for Europa

And now the god, laying aside the false image of the bull, had confessed himself and was occupying the Cretan fields. Meanwhile her father, unaware, ordered Cadmus to search for his stolen daughter and added exile as punishment if he didn't find her - in this same action both dutiful and cruel.

After wandering the world (for who could catch Jupiter's thefts?), Agenor's son, a fugitive, avoided both his homeland and his father's anger. As a suppliant he consulted Phoebus' oracle and asked what land he should inhabit. Phoebus said, "A cow will meet you in the fields alone, one that has endured no yoke and is free from the curved plow. Let her be your guide, take your road, and where she rests on the grass, there build walls and call that land Boeotia."

Scarcely had Cadmus descended from the Castalian cave when he saw a heifer going slowly, unguarded, wearing no sign of servitude on her neck. He followed and traced her footsteps with measured pace and silently worshiped Phoebus, author of his path. Already he'd passed the shallows of Cephisus and the fields of Panope. The cow stopped and, raising her beautiful head with high horns toward the sky, filled the air with lowings. And looking back at her companions following her tracks, she lay down and rested her side in the tender grass.

Cadmus gave thanks and pressed kisses to the foreign earth and greeted the unknown mountains and fields.

The Serpent of Mars

He was about to make sacrifice to Jupiter. He ordered his servants to go and fetch water for libation from a living spring. An ancient forest stood, violated by no ax, and in its middle a cave, dense with brush and wicker, making a low arch with stones fitted together, abundant with plentiful waters. Hidden in this cave was a serpent of Mars, remarkable for its golden crest. Its eyes flashed with fire, its whole body swelled with venom, and three tongues flickered, and teeth stood in triple rows.

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corpus et attonitos subitus tremor occupat artus.
ille volubilibus squamosos nexibus orbes
torquet et inmensos saltu sinuatur in arcus
ac media plus parte leves erectus in auras
despicit omne nemus tantoque est corpore, quanto,
si totum spectes, geminas qui separat arctos.
nec mora, Phoenicas, sive illi tela parabant
sive fugam, sive ipse timor prohibebat utrumque,
occupat: hos morsu, longis conplexibus illos,
hos necat adflati funesta tabe veneni.
Fecerat exiguas iam sol altissimus umbras:
quae mora sit sociis, miratur Agenore natus
vestigatque viros. tegumen derepta leoni
pellis erat, telum splendenti lancea ferro
et iaculum teloque animus praestantior omni.
ut nemus intravit letataque corpora vidit
victoremque supra spatiosi tergoris hostem
tristia sanguinea lambentem vulnera lingua,
'aut ultor vestrae, fidissima pectora, mortis,
aut comes' inquit 'ero.' dixit dextraque molarem
sustulit et magnum magno conamine misit.
illius inpulsu cum turribus ardua celsis
moenia mota forent, serpens sine vulnere mansit
loricaeque modo squamis defensus et atrae
duritia pellis validos cute reppulit ictus;
at non duritia iaculum quoque vicit eadem,
quod medio lentae spinae curvamine fixum
constitit et totum descendit in ilia ferrum.
ille dolore ferox caput in sua terga retorsit
vulneraque adspexit fixumque hastile momordit,
idque ubi vi multa partem labefecit in omnem,
vix tergo eripuit; ferrum tamen ossibus haesit.
tum vero postquam solitas accessit ad iras
causa recens, plenis tumuerunt guttura venis,
spumaque pestiferos circumfluit albida rictus,
terraque rasa sonat squamis, quique halitus exit
ore niger Stygio, vitiatas inficit auras.
ipse modo inmensum spiris facientibus orbem
cingitur, interdum longa trabe rectior adstat,

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When the people from Tyre reached this grove with unlucky step and lowered their urns into the water, which made a sound, the sea-blue serpent lifted its head from the deep cave and sent out horrible hissing. The urns slipped from their hands, blood left their bodies, and sudden trembling seized their stunned limbs.

The serpent wound its scaly coils in rolling circles and curved itself into immense arcs with its leaping motion. More than half its length raised up into the light air, it looked down on the whole grove. Its body was as large as the constellation that separates the twin Bears, if you looked at the whole thing. Without delay it seized the Phoenicians - whether they were preparing weapons or flight, or fear itself prevented both. Some it killed with bites, some with long embraces, some it slew with the deadly corruption of its poisonous breath.

Cadmus Kills the Serpent

The sun had made the shadows very small, highest in the sky. Agenor's son wondered what was delaying his companions and sought out the men. His covering was a lion's hide torn off, his weapons were a spear with gleaming iron and a javelin - and a spirit better than any weapon. When he entered the grove and saw the dead bodies and the victorious enemy above them with its enormous bulk, licking their sad wounds with its bloody tongue, he said, "Most faithful hearts, I'll either be the avenger of your death or your companion." He spoke and with his right hand lifted a millstone and hurled it with great effort. With its impact, high walls with lofty towers would have been shaken, yet the serpent remained unwounded. Defended by its scales like a breastplate and by the hardness of its black hide, its skin repelled the powerful blows.

But that same hardness didn't conquer the javelin too. Fixed in the middle curve of its flexible spine, it stood firm, and all the iron descended into its vitals. The serpent, fierce with pain, twisted its head back to its own back, looked at the wound, and bit the fixed shaft. When it had loosened this with much force in every direction, it barely pulled it out of its back, though the iron stuck in its bones.

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inpete nunc vasto ceu concitus imbribus amnis
fertur et obstantis proturbat pectore silvas.
cedit Agenorides paulum spolioque leonis
sustinet incursus instantiaque ora retardat
cuspide praetenta: furit ille et inania duro
vulnera dat ferro figitque in acumine dentes.
iamque venenifero sanguis manare palato
coeperat et virides adspergine tinxerat herbas;
sed leve vulnus erat, quia se retrahebat ab ictu
laesaque colla dabat retro plagamque sedere
cedendo arcebat nec longius ire sinebat,
donec Agenorides coniectum in guttura ferrum
usque sequens pressit, dum retro quercus eunti
obstitit et fixa est pariter cum robore cervix.
pondere serpentis curvata est arbor et ima
parte flagellari gemuit sua robora caudae.
Dum spatium victor victi considerat hostis,
vox subito audita est; neque erat cognoscere promptum,
unde, sed audita est: 'quid, Agenore nate, peremptum
serpentem spectas? et tu spectabere serpens.'
ille diu pavidus pariter cum mente colorem
perdiderat, gelidoque comae terrore rigebant:
ecce viri fautrix superas delapsa per auras
Pallas adest motaeque iubet supponere terrae
vipereos dentes, populi incrementa futuri.
paret et, ut presso sulcum patefecit aratro,
spargit humi iussos, mortalia semina, dentes.
inde (fide maius) glaebae coepere moveri,
primaque de sulcis acies adparuit hastae,
tegmina mox capitum picto nutantia cono,
mox umeri pectusque onerataque bracchia telis
exsistunt, crescitque seges clipeata virorum:
sic, ubi tolluntur festis aulaea theatris,
surgere signa solent primumque ostendere vultus,
cetera paulatim, placidoque educta tenore
tota patent imoque pedes in margine ponunt.
Territus hoste novo Cadmus capere arma parabat:
'ne cape!' de populo, quem terra creaverat, unus
exclamat 'nec te civilibus insere bellis!'

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Then truly, when a fresh cause was added to its usual anger, its throat swelled with full veins, white foam flowed around its plague-bearing jaws, the earth rang with scraped scales, and a black breath that came from its Stygian mouth infected the corrupted air.

Now it coiled itself in an immense circle made of spirals, now it stood straighter than a long beam, now it was carried with vast force like a river swollen by rains and knocked over the opposing forests with its chest. Agenor's son gave way a little and sustained its attacks with the lion's spoils and held back its pressing mouth with his extended spear point. The serpent raged and gave futile wounds to the hard iron and fixed its teeth on the sharp point.

And now blood began to flow from its venomous palate and stained the green grass with its spray. But the wound was light because it pulled back from the blow and gave its injured neck backward and prevented the stroke from lodging by withdrawing and didn't let it go deeper - until Agenor's son, following up, pressed the iron thrust into its throat. As it went backward, an oak blocked it, and its neck was pinned together with the tree.

The tree was bent by the serpent's weight and groaned as its timber was lashed by the lowest part of its tail.

The Dragon's Teeth

While the victor considered the size of his conquered enemy, a voice was suddenly heard. It wasn't easy to know from where, but it was heard: "Why, son of Agenor, do you gaze at the slain serpent? You too will be gazed at as a serpent."

For a long time he lost his color along with his mind, equally terrified, and his hair stood stiff with cold dread. Look - Pallas, his supporter, came gliding down through the upper air and ordered him to plow the earth and plant the serpent's teeth - seeds of a future people.

He obeyed, and as he opened a furrow with a pressed plow, he scattered on the ground the commanded teeth - mortal seeds. Then (greater than belief) the soil clumps began to move, and first from the furrows appeared a spear point, then helmets with painted crests nodding, then shoulders and chests and arms

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atque ita terrigenis rigido de fratribus unum
comminus ense ferit, iaculo cadit eminus ipse;
hunc quoque qui leto dederat, non longius illo
vivit et exspirat, modo quas acceperat auras,
exemploque pari furit omnis turba, suoque
Marte cadunt subiti per mutua vulnera fratres.
iamque brevis vitae spatium sortita iuventus
sanguineam tepido plangebat pectore matrem,
quinque superstitibus, quorum fuit unus Echion.
is sua iecit humo monitu Tritonidis arma
fraternaeque fidem pacis petiitque deditque:
hos operis comites habuit Sidonius hospes,
cum posuit iussus Phoebeis sortibus urbem.
Iam stabant Thebae, poteras iam, Cadme, videri
exilio felix: soceri tibi Marsque Venusque
contigerant; huc adde genus de coniuge tanta,
tot natos natasque et, pignora cara, nepotes,
hos quoque iam iuvenes; sed scilicet ultima semper
exspectanda dies hominis, dicique beatus
ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.
Prima nepos inter tot res tibi, Cadme, secundas
causa fuit luctus, alienaque cornua fronti
addita, vosque, canes satiatae sanguine erili.
at bene si quaeras, Fortunae crimen in illo,
non scelus invenies; quod enim scelus error habebat?
Mons erat infectus variarum caede ferarum,
iamque dies medius rerum contraxerat umbras
et sol ex aequo meta distabat utraque,
cum iuvenis placido per devia lustra vagantes
participes operum conpellat Hyantius ore:
'lina madent, comites, ferrumque cruore ferarum,
fortunaeque dies habuit satis; altera lucem
cum croceis invecta rotis Aurora reducet,
propositum repetemus opus: nunc Phoebus utraque
distat idem meta finditque vaporibus arva.
sistite opus praesens nodosaque tollite lina!'
iussa viri faciunt intermittuntque laborem.
Vallis erat piceis et acuta densa cupressu,
nomine Gargaphie succinctae sacra Dianae,

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loaded with weapons rose up, and a harvest of shield-bearing men grew. Just as when curtains are raised in festive theaters, figures usually rise and first show their faces, then gradually the rest, drawn up with smooth movement, stand fully revealed and place their feet on the bottom edge.

Terrified by this new enemy, Cadmus prepared to take up arms. "Don't take them up!" one of the people the earth had created shouted. "And don't insert yourself into civil wars!" And so, with a rigid sword, he struck one of his earth-born brothers in close combat. He himself fell from a javelin at a distance. The one who'd given him death didn't live longer than him and breathed out the air he'd just received. All the crowd raged with the same example, and the sudden brothers fell in mutual wounds by their own warfare.

And now the young men, allotted a brief span of life, were beating their bloody mother with their warm chests. Five survived, one of whom was Echion. At Minerva's warning, he threw his weapons on the ground and sought and gave the pledge of brotherly peace. The Sidonian stranger had these as companions in his work when he founded the city ordered by Phoebus' oracle.

The Curse on the House of Cadmus

Now Thebes stood firm. Now, Cadmus, you could seem fortunate in your exile. Mars and Venus had become your in-laws. Add to this your lineage from such a wife, so many sons and daughters and, dear pledges, your grandchildren - these also now young men. But certainly a person's last day must always be awaited, and no one should be called blessed before death and final funeral rites.

Your first cause of grief among so many fortunate circumstances, Cadmus, was your grandson - horns added to an alien forehead, and you, hounds sated with your master's blood. But if you look closely, you'll find Fortune's crime in that case, not wrongdoing. For what wrongdoing did his mistake have?

Actaeon and Diana

There was a mountain stained with the slaughter of various beasts. Already midday had contracted the shadows of things, and the sun stood equally distant from each goal. When the young Hyantian spoke to his companions wandering through the pathless hunting grounds with calm voice and shared in their

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cuius in extremo est antrum nemorale recessu
arte laboratum nulla: simulaverat artem
ingenio natura suo; nam pumice vivo
et levibus tofis nativum duxerat arcum;
fons sonat a dextra tenui perlucidus unda,
margine gramineo patulos incinctus hiatus.
hic dea silvarum venatu fessa solebat
virgineos artus liquido perfundere rore.
quo postquam subiit, nympharum tradidit uni
armigerae iaculum pharetramque arcusque retentos,
altera depositae subiecit bracchia pallae,
vincla duae pedibus demunt; nam doctior illis
Ismenis Crocale sparsos per colla capillos
colligit in nodum, quamvis erat ipsa solutis.
excipiunt laticem Nepheleque Hyaleque Rhanisque
et Psecas et Phiale funduntque capacibus urnis.
dumque ibi perluitur solita Titania lympha,
ecce nepos Cadmi dilata parte laborum
per nemus ignotum non certis passibus errans
pervenit in lucum: sic illum fata ferebant.
qui simul intravit rorantia fontibus antra,
sicut erant, nudae viso sua pectora nymphae
percussere viro subitisque ululatibus omne
inplevere nemus circumfusaeque Dianam
corporibus texere suis; tamen altior illis
ipsa dea est colloque tenus supereminet omnis.
qui color infectis adversi solis ab ictu
nubibus esse solet aut purpureae Aurorae,
is fuit in vultu visae sine veste Dianae.
quae, quamquam comitum turba est stipata suarum,
in latus obliquum tamen adstitit oraque retro
flexit et, ut vellet promptas habuisse sagittas,
quas habuit sic hausit aquas vultumque virilem
perfudit spargensque comas ultricibus undis
addidit haec cladis praenuntia verba futurae:
'nunc tibi me posito visam velamine narres,
si poteris narrare, licet!' nec plura minata
dat sparso capiti vivacis cornua cervi,
dat spatium collo summasque cacuminat aures

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work:

"Our nets are wet, friends, and our iron with beasts' blood, and the day has had enough good fortune. When tomorrow's Aurora brings back light carried on saffron wheels, we'll take up our planned work again. Now Phoebus stands equally distant from each goal and splits the fields with his heat. Stop the present work and take up the knotted nets!"

The men did as ordered and stopped their labor.

There was a valley dense with pine and sharp cypress, named Gargaphie, sacred to girt Diana. In its farthest recess was a woodland cave, worked by no art - nature had imitated art with its own design. For from living pumice and light tufa it had drawn a natural arch. A spring sounded on the right, clear with thin water, surrounded by a grassy edge around its open pools.

Here the goddess of the forests, tired from hunting, used to bathe her virgin limbs with liquid dew. When she'd entered there, she handed to one of her weapon-bearing nymphs her javelin and quiver and relaxed bow. Another received her draped robe on her arms. Two removed the bindings from her feet. But more skilled than these, Ismenia Crocale gathered up her scattered hair over her neck into a knot, though her own was loose. Nephele and Hyale and Rhanis and Psecas and Phiale drew the water and poured it from capacious urns.

While the Titan goddess was bathing there in her accustomed water, look - Cadmus' grandson, having postponed part of his labors, wandering through the unknown grove with uncertain steps, came to the sacred place. The fates were carrying him thus.

As soon as he entered the cave dripping with springs, the nymphs, as they were, naked, seeing a man, beat their breasts and filled all the grove with sudden shrieks and, surrounding Diana, covered her with their bodies. Yet the goddess herself was taller than them and stood out head and shoulders above them all.

The color that clouds usually have when struck by the opposing sun's rays, or that purple Aurora has - that was the color in Diana's face, seen without clothing. Though she was surrounded by the crowd of

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cum pedibusque manus, cum longis bracchia mutat
cruribus et velat maculoso vellere corpus;
additus et pavor est: fugit Autonoeius heros
et se tam celerem cursu miratur in ipso.
ut vero vultus et cornua vidit in unda,
'me miserum!' dicturus erat: vox nulla secuta est!
ingemuit: vox illa fuit, lacrimaeque per ora
non sua fluxerunt; mens tantum pristina mansit.
quid faciat? repetatne domum et regalia tecta
an lateat silvis? pudor hoc, timor inpedit illud.
Dum dubitat, videre canes, primique Melampus
Ichnobatesque sagax latratu signa dedere,
Cnosius Ichnobates, Spartana gente Melampus.
inde ruunt alii rapida velocius aura,
Pamphagos et Dorceus et Oribasos, Arcades omnes,
Nebrophonosque valens et trux cum Laelape Theron
et pedibus Pterelas et naribus utilis Agre
Hylaeusque ferox nuper percussus ab apro
deque lupo concepta Nape pecudesque secuta
Poemenis et natis comitata Harpyia duobus
et substricta gerens Sicyonius ilia Ladon
et Dromas et Canache Sticteque et Tigris et Alce
et niveis Leucon et villis Asbolos atris
praevalidusque Lacon et cursu fortis Aello
et Thoos et Cyprio velox cum fratre Lycisce
et nigram medio frontem distinctus ab albo
Harpalos et Melaneus hirsutaque corpore Lachne
et patre Dictaeo, sed matre Laconide nati
Labros et Argiodus et acutae vocis Hylactor
quosque referre mora est: ea turba cupidine praedae
per rupes scopulosque adituque carentia saxa,
quaque est difficilis quaque est via nulla, sequuntur.
ille fugit per quae fuerat loca saepe secutus,
heu! famulos fugit ipse suos. clamare libebat:
'Actaeon ego sum: dominum cognoscite vestrum!'
verba animo desunt; resonat latratibus aether.
prima Melanchaetes in tergo vulnera fecit,
proxima Theridamas, Oresitrophos haesit in armo:
tardius exierant, sed per conpendia montis

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her companions, she still stood at an angle and turned her face back. And though she wished she'd had her arrows ready, she took up the water she had and sprinkled the man's face. Scattering his hair with avenging water, she added these words, heralds of coming disaster:

"Now you may tell that you saw me with my garment laid aside - if you'll be able to tell!" With no more threats, she gave the horns of a long-lived stag to his sprinkled head, lengthened his neck, pointed his ear-tips, changed his hands to feet and his arms to long legs, and covered his body with dappled hide. And fear was added. Autonoe's hero fled and marveled at himself being so swift in his running.

But when he saw his face and horns in the water, "Wretched me!" he was about to say - no voice followed! He groaned - that was his voice - and tears flowed down a face not his own. Only his former mind remained.

What should he do? Should he return home and to the royal dwelling, or hide in the forests? Shame prevented the one, fear the other.

Actaeon Torn Apart by His Hounds

While he hesitated, the dogs saw him. First Melampus and keen-scented Ichnobates gave the signal with barking - Ichnobates from Cnossos, Melampus of Spartan breed. Then the others rushed, swifter than the rapid wind: Pamphagos and Dorceus and Oribasos, all Arcadians, and strong Nebrophonos and fierce Theron with Laelape, Pterelas swift of foot and Agre useful for scent, Hylaeus fierce, recently wounded by a boar, and Nape conceived from a wolf and Poemenis who'd followed flocks, and Harpyia accompanied by her two sons, and Sicyonian Ladon wearing a tucked-up belly, and Dromas and Canache and Sticte and Tigris and Alce, and Leucon with snowy hair and Asbolos with black, and very strong Lacon and Aello strong in running, and Thoos and swift Lycisce with her Cyprian brother, and Harpalos distinguished by a black spot in the middle of his white forehead, and Melaneus and Lachne with shaggy body, and Labros and Argiodus born of a Cretan father but Spartan mother, and Hylactor with piercing voice, and those it would take time to recount.

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anticipata via est; dominum retinentibus illis,
cetera turba coit confertque in corpore dentes.
iam loca vulneribus desunt; gemit ille sonumque,
etsi non hominis, quem non tamen edere possit
cervus, habet maestisque replet iuga nota querellis
et genibus pronis supplex similisque roganti
circumfert tacitos tamquam sua bracchia vultus.
at comites rapidum solitis hortatibus agmen
ignari instigant oculisque Actaeona quaerunt
et velut absentem certatim Actaeona clamant
(ad nomen caput ille refert) et abesse queruntur
nec capere oblatae segnem spectacula praedae.
vellet abesse quidem, sed adest; velletque videre,
non etiam sentire canum fera facta suorum.
undique circumstant, mersisque in corpore rostris
dilacerant falsi dominum sub imagine cervi,
nec nisi finita per plurima vulnera vita
ira pharetratae fertur satiata Dianae.
Rumor in ambiguo est; aliis violentior aequo
visa dea est, alii laudant dignamque severa
virginitate vocant: pars invenit utraque causas.
sola Iovis coniunx non tam, culpetne probetne,
eloquitur, quam clade domus ab Agenore ductae
gaudet et a Tyria collectum paelice transfert
in generis socios odium; subit ecce priori
causa recens, gravidamque dolet de semine magni
esse Iovis Semelen; dum linguam ad iurgia solvit,
'profeci quid enim totiens per iurgia?' dixit,
'ipsa petenda mihi est; ipsam, si maxima Iuno
rite vocor, perdam, si me gemmantia dextra
sceptra tenere decet, si sum regina Iovisque
et soror et coniunx, certe soror. at, puto, furto est
contenta, et thalami brevis est iniuria nostri.
concipit++id derat++manifestaque crimina pleno
fert utero et mater, quod vix mihi contigit, uno
de Iove vult fieri: tanta est fiducia formae.
fallat eam faxo; nec sum Saturnia, si non
ab Iove mersa suo Stygias penetrabit in undas.'
Surgit ab his solio fulvaque recondita nube

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This pack, eager for prey, followed through cliffs and crags and rocks without access, and where the way was difficult and where there was no way. He fled through places he'd often pursued through himself. Alas, he fled from his own servants! He wanted to shout: "I am Actaeon! Recognize your master!" Words failed his will. The sky rang with barking.

First Melanchaetes made wounds on his back, next Theridamas, Oresitrophos stuck in his shoulder. They'd gone out later, but by a shortcut through the mountain their path was anticipated. While they held their master, the rest of the pack gathered and sank teeth into his body. Now there were no places left for wounds. He groaned and made a sound, though not a man's, yet one a stag couldn't make. He filled the familiar ridges with sad complaints. Kneeling on front legs like a suppliant, he turned his silent face around like arms, as if begging.

But his companions, ignorant, urged on the swift pack with their usual encouragements and looked for Actaeon with their eyes and called "Actaeon!" in competition as if he were absent (he turned his head at the name), and complained he was absent and, sluggish, wasn't seizing the spectacle of the offered prey.

He'd want to be absent indeed, but he was present. He'd want to see, not also to feel, the savage deeds of his own dogs. They stood around on all sides and, plunging their muzzles into his body, tore apart their master beneath the false image of a stag. Not until life was finished through very many wounds was the anger of quiver-bearing Diana said to be satisfied.

Reactions to Actaeon's Fate

Opinion wavered. To some the goddess seemed more violent than just, others praised her and called her worthy of stern virginity. Each side found reasons. Only Jupiter's wife didn't speak so much about whether to blame or approve as she rejoiced in the disaster of the house descended from Agenor and transferred her hatred, gathered from the Tyrian concubine, to the relatives of her race.

Look - a fresh cause added to the earlier one: she grieved that Semele was pregnant with great Jupiter's seed. While she loosened her tongue for quarrels, she said, "What have I really gained from quarrels? She herself must be sought. I'll destroy her herself, if I'm rightly called greatest Juno, if it's fitting that I

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limen adit Semeles nec nubes ante removit
quam simulavit anum posuitque ad tempora canos
sulcavitque cutem rugis et curva trementi
membra tulit passu; vocem quoque fecit anilem,
ipsaque erat Beroe, Semeles Epidauria nutrix.
ergo ubi captato sermone diuque loquendo
ad nomen venere Iovis, suspirat et 'opto,
Iuppiter ut sit' ait; 'metuo tamen omnia: multi
nomine divorum thalamos iniere pudicos.
nec tamen esse Iovem satis est: det pignus amoris,
si modo verus is est; quantusque et qualis ab alta
Iunone excipitur, tantus talisque, rogato,
det tibi conplexus suaque ante insignia sumat!'
Talibus ignaram Iuno Cadmeida dictis
formarat: rogat illa Iovem sine nomine munus.
cui deus 'elige!' ait 'nullam patiere repulsam,
quoque magis credas, Stygii quoque conscia sunto
numina torrentis: timor et deus ille deorum est.'
laeta malo nimiumque potens perituraque amantis
obsequio Semele 'qualem Saturnia' dixit
'te solet amplecti, Veneris cum foedus initis,
da mihi te talem!' voluit deus ora loquentis
opprimere: exierat iam vox properata sub auras.
ingemuit; neque enim non haec optasse, neque ille
non iurasse potest. ergo maestissimus altum
aethera conscendit vultuque sequentia traxit
nubila, quis nimbos inmixtaque fulgura ventis
addidit et tonitrus et inevitabile fulmen;
qua tamen usque potest, vires sibi demere temptat
nec, quo centimanum deiecerat igne Typhoea,
nunc armatur eo: nimium feritatis in illo est.
est aliud levius fulmen, cui dextra cyclopum
saevitiae flammaeque minus, minus addidit irae:
tela secunda vocant superi; capit illa domumque
intrat Agenoream. corpus mortale tumultus
non tulit aetherios donisque iugalibus arsit.
inperfectus adhuc infans genetricis ab alvo
eripitur patrioque tener (si credere dignum est)
insuitur femori maternaque tempora conplet.

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hold the jeweled scepter in my right hand, if I'm queen and both sister and wife of Jupiter - certainly sister. But I think she's content with a stolen affair, and the injury to my marriage bed is brief. She's conceived - that was lacking - and carries manifest crimes in her full womb and wants to become a mother from Jupiter alone, which scarcely happened to me. Such is her confidence in her beauty! I'll make it deceive her. I'm no daughter of Saturn if she's not plunged by Jupiter himself into the Stygian waters!"

Juno Deceives Semele

She rose from her throne and, hidden in a tawny cloud, approached Semele's threshold. She didn't remove the cloud before she'd disguised herself as an old woman and put gray hair on her temples and furrowed her skin with wrinkles and carried her bent limbs with a trembling step. She also made her voice an old woman's. She herself was Beroe, Semele's Epidaurian nurse.

So when, with conversation engaged and after talking long, they came to Jupiter's name, she sighed and said, "I hope it's Jupiter, but I fear everything. Many have entered chaste bedrooms using the names of gods. Yet it's not enough for him to be Jupiter. Let him give a pledge of love, if he's truly himself. However great and of whatever kind he is when he's received by lofty Juno, so great and such, ask him to give you his embrace and put on his emblems first!"

With such words Juno had molded ignorant Cadmus' daughter. She asked Jupiter for a gift without naming it. To her the god said, "Choose! You'll suffer no refusal. So that you may believe more, let the powers of the Stygian torrent be witness too - that god is fear even to gods."

Happy in her harm and too powerful and about to perish by her lover's compliance, Semele said, "Give yourself to me such as Saturn's daughter usually embraces you when you enter Venus' pact."

The god wanted to stop her mouth as she spoke, but the hasty words had already gone into the air. He groaned, for she couldn't not have wished this, nor could he not have sworn. Most sad, he climbed the high heaven and with his face drew following clouds to which he added rainstorms mixed with lightning and thunder and the inevitable thunderbolt.

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furtim illum primis Ino matertera cunis
educat, inde datum nymphae Nyseides antris
occuluere suis lactisque alimenta dedere.
Dumque ea per terras fatali lege geruntur
tutaque bis geniti sunt incunabula Bacchi,
forte Iovem memorant diffusum nectare curas
seposuisse graves vacuaque agitasse remissos
cum Iunone iocos et 'maior vestra profecto est,
quam quae contingit maribus' dixisse 'voluptas.'
illa negat. placuit quae sit sententia docti
quaerere Tiresiae: Venus huic erat utraque nota.
nam duo magnorum viridi coeuntia silva
corpora serpentum baculi violaverat ictu
deque viro factus (mirabile) femina septem
egerat autumnos; octavo rursus eosdem
vidit, et 'est vestrae si tanta potentia plagae'
dixit, 'ut auctoris sortem in contraria mutet,
nunc quoque vos feriam.' percussis anguibus isdem
forma prior rediit, genetivaque venit imago.
arbiter hic igitur sumptus de lite iocosa
dicta Iovis firmat: gravius Saturnia iusto
nec pro materia fertur doluisse suique
iudicis aeterna damnavit lumina nocte;
at pater omnipotens (neque enim licet inrita cuiquam
facta dei fecisse deo) pro lumine adempto
scire futura dedit poenamque levavit honore.
Ille per Aonias fama celeberrimus urbes
inreprehensa dabat populo responsa petenti;
prima fide vocisque ratae temptamina sumpsit
caerula Liriope, quam quondam flumine curvo
inplicuit clausaeque suis Cephisos in undis
vim tulit: enixa est utero pulcherrima pleno
infantem nymphe, iam tunc qui posset amari,
Narcissumque vocat. de quo consultus, an esset
tempora maturae visurus longa senectae,
fatidicus vates 'si se non noverit' inquit.
vana diu visa est vox auguris: exitus illam
resque probat letique genus novitasque furoris.
namque ter ad quinos unum Cephisius annum

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Yet as much as he could, he tried to remove strength from himself. He didn't arm himself with that fire by which he'd struck down hundred-handed Typhoeus - too much savagery in that. There's another, lighter thunderbolt to which the Cyclopes' right hands added less savagery and flame, less anger. The gods above call it second-rate weaponry. He took this and entered Agenor's house.

Her mortal body didn't bear the heavenly tumult and was burned by the marriage gifts. The infant, still unfinished, was snatched from his mother's womb and (if it's credible) was sewn, tender, into his father's thigh and completed his mother's time.

His aunt Ino secretly raised him in his first cradle, then the Nyseian nymphs hid him, given to them, in their caves and gave him milk for nourishment.

Tiresias

While these things were happening on earth by fated law and the cradle of twice-born Bacchus was safe, they say Jupiter, relaxed with nectar, had set aside heavy cares and exchanged idle jokes with carefree Juno and said, "Your pleasure is surely greater than what falls to males."

She denied it. They decided to ask the opinion of learned Tiresias. Both kinds of Venus were known to him. For once, with a blow of his staff he'd violated the bodies of two great serpents mating in a green forest. And, marvelous, changed from male he'd spent seven autumns as a woman. In the eighth he saw the same ones again and said, "If the power of your blow is so great that it changes the striker's lot to the opposite, I'll strike you now too." After striking the same snakes, his former shape returned and his birth image came back.

Taken therefore as judge of this playful dispute, he confirmed Jupiter's words. Saturn's daughter is said to have grieved more heavily than was just and not in proportion to the matter, and she condemned her judge's eyes to eternal night. But the all-powerful father (for no god is allowed to undo what a god has done) gave knowledge of the future in exchange for the stolen light and lightened the punishment with honor.

Echo and Narcissus

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addiderat poteratque puer iuvenisque videri:
multi illum iuvenes, multae cupiere puellae;
sed fuit in tenera tam dura superbia forma,
nulli illum iuvenes, nullae tetigere puellae.
adspicit hunc trepidos agitantem in retia cervos
vocalis nymphe, quae nec reticere loquenti
nec prior ipsa loqui didicit, resonabilis Echo.
Corpus adhuc Echo, non vox erat et tamen usum
garrula non alium, quam nunc habet, oris habebat,
reddere de multis ut verba novissima posset.
fecerat hoc Iuno, quia, cum deprendere posset
sub Iove saepe suo nymphas in monte iacentis,
illa deam longo prudens sermone tenebat,
dum fugerent nymphae. postquam hoc Saturnia sensit,
'huius' ait 'linguae, qua sum delusa, potestas
parva tibi dabitur vocisque brevissimus usus,'
reque minas firmat. tantum haec in fine loquendi
ingeminat voces auditaque verba reportat.
ergo ubi Narcissum per devia rura vagantem
vidit et incaluit, sequitur vestigia furtim,
quoque magis sequitur, flamma propiore calescit,
non aliter quam cum summis circumlita taedis
admotas rapiunt vivacia sulphura flammas.
o quotiens voluit blandis accedere dictis
et mollis adhibere preces! natura repugnat
nec sinit, incipiat, sed, quod sinit, illa parata est
exspectare sonos, ad quos sua verba remittat.
forte puer comitum seductus ab agmine fido
dixerat: 'ecquis adest?' et 'adest' responderat Echo.
hic stupet, utque aciem partes dimittit in omnis,
voce 'veni!' magna clamat: vocat illa vocantem.
respicit et rursus nullo veniente 'quid' inquit
'me fugis?' et totidem, quot dixit, verba recepit.
perstat et alternae deceptus imagine vocis
'huc coeamus' ait, nullique libentius umquam
responsura sono 'coeamus' rettulit Echo
et verbis favet ipsa suis egressaque silva
ibat, ut iniceret sperato bracchia collo;
ille fugit fugiensque 'manus conplexibus aufer!

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He, most famous throughout the Boeotian cities, gave irreproachable responses to the people who consulted him. Blue Liriope, whom once Cephisus had embraced in his curved stream and, enclosed in his waters, had raped, was first to test his credibility and true voice.

The nymph, delivered from her full womb, brought forth a most beautiful infant, one who even then could be loved, and called him Narcissus. Consulted about whether he would see the long years of mature old age, the prophetic seer said, "If he doesn't know himself."

For a long time the prophet's words seemed vain, but the outcome and the matter proved them true - both the manner of death and the novelty of madness. For Cephisus' son had added one year to thrice five. He could seem both boy and young man. Many young men, many girls desired him, but in his tender form was such hard pride that no young men, no girls touched him.

A vocal nymph saw him driving frightened deer into nets - she who neither learned to be silent when someone spoke nor learned to speak first herself: echoing Echo.

Echo still had a body then, she wasn't just a voice. Yet chattering, she had no other use of her mouth than she has now - the ability to repeat the last words from many. Juno had done this because when she could have caught nymphs often lying beneath her Jupiter on the mountain, Echo cleverly detained the goddess with long conversation while the nymphs fled.

When Saturn's daughter sensed this, she said, "This tongue, by which I've been deceived, will be given little power to you and very brief use of voice." She confirmed her threats with the deed. Echo only doubles words at the end of speech and returns words she's heard.

So when she saw Narcissus wandering through remote countryside and burned with desire, she followed his tracks secretly. The more she followed, the warmer she grew with nearer flame - not otherwise than when sulfur spread around the tops of torches seizes the flames brought near.

Oh, how often she wanted to approach with flattering words and apply soft prayers! Nature fought back and didn't allow her to begin, but she was ready for what it did allow - to wait for sounds to which she could send back her own words.

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ante' ait 'emoriar, quam sit tibi copia nostri';
rettulit illa nihil nisi 'sit tibi copia nostri!'
spreta latet silvis pudibundaque frondibus ora
protegit et solis ex illo vivit in antris;
sed tamen haeret amor crescitque dolore repulsae;
extenuant vigiles corpus miserabile curae
adducitque cutem macies et in aera sucus
corporis omnis abit; vox tantum atque ossa supersunt:
vox manet, ossa ferunt lapidis traxisse figuram.
inde latet silvis nulloque in monte videtur,
omnibus auditur: sonus est, qui vivit in illa.
Sic hanc, sic alias undis aut montibus ortas
luserat hic nymphas, sic coetus ante viriles;
inde manus aliquis despectus ad aethera tollens
'sic amet ipse licet, sic non potiatur amato!'
dixerat: adsensit precibus Rhamnusia iustis.
fons erat inlimis, nitidis argenteus undis,
quem neque pastores neque pastae monte capellae
contigerant aliudve pecus, quem nulla volucris
nec fera turbarat nec lapsus ab arbore ramus;
gramen erat circa, quod proximus umor alebat,
silvaque sole locum passura tepescere nullo.
hic puer et studio venandi lassus et aestu
procubuit faciemque loci fontemque secutus,
dumque sitim sedare cupit, sitis altera crevit,
dumque bibit, visae correptus imagine formae
spem sine corpore amat, corpus putat esse, quod umbra est.
adstupet ipse sibi vultuque inmotus eodem
haeret, ut e Pario formatum marmore signum;
spectat humi positus geminum, sua lumina, sidus
et dignos Baccho, dignos et Apolline crines
inpubesque genas et eburnea colla decusque
oris et in niveo mixtum candore ruborem,
cunctaque miratur, quibus est mirabilis ipse:
se cupit inprudens et, qui probat, ipse probatur,
dumque petit, petitur, pariterque accendit et ardet.
inrita fallaci quotiens dedit oscula fonti,
in mediis quotiens visum captantia collum
bracchia mersit aquis nec se deprendit in illis!

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By chance the boy, separated from his faithful band of companions, had said, "Is anyone here?" and "here" Echo answered. He was amazed and sent his gaze in all directions and shouted with loud voice, "Come!" She called the caller. He looked back and, with no one coming again, said, "Why do you flee me?" And he received as many words as he spoke.

He persisted and, deceived by the image of an alternating voice, said, "Here let us meet!" And Echo, never about to answer any sound more willingly, replied, "Let us meet!" She favored her own words and came out of the forest to throw her arms around his hoped-for neck.

He fled and, fleeing, said, "Take your hands from embraces! I'd die before I'd give you power over me!" She replied nothing except "give you power over me!"

Spurned, she hid in the forests and covered her shamed face with leaves and lived from then on in lonely caves. But still her love clung and grew from the pain of rejection. Wakeful cares wasted her miserable body, and thinness drew tight her skin, and all the moisture of her body went into air. Only voice and bones remained. The voice remains. They say the bones took on the shape of stone. From then on she hid in forests and was seen on no mountain, but she's heard by all. Sound is what lives in her.

Narcissus Falls in Love with Himself

He'd mocked Echo and others born from waves or mountains, and before these, groups of males. Then someone scorned lifted his hands to heaven and said, "So may he love himself! So may he not possess what he loves!" The goddess of Rhamnus agreed with his just prayers.

There was a clear spring, silvery with shining water, which neither shepherds nor goats pastured on the mountain nor any other cattle had touched. No bird nor beast nor branch fallen from a tree had disturbed it. Grass was around it, which the nearby water nourished, and a forest that would never allow the sun to warm the place.

Here the boy, exhausted by eagerness for hunting and heat, lay down, attracted by the appearance of the place and the spring. While he wanted to quench his thirst, another thirst grew. While he drank, seized by the image of his seen beauty, he loved a hope without body. He thought what was a reflection was a

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quid videat, nescit; sed quod videt, uritur illo,
atque oculos idem, qui decipit, incitat error.
credule, quid frustra simulacra fugacia captas?
quod petis, est nusquam; quod amas, avertere, perdes!
ista repercussae, quam cernis, imaginis umbra est:
nil habet ista sui; tecum venitque manetque;
tecum discedet, si tu discedere possis!
Non illum Cereris, non illum cura quietis
abstrahere inde potest, sed opaca fusus in herba
spectat inexpleto mendacem lumine formam
perque oculos perit ipse suos; paulumque levatus
ad circumstantes tendens sua bracchia silvas
'ecquis, io silvae, crudelius' inquit 'amavit?
scitis enim et multis latebra opportuna fuistis.
ecquem, cum vestrae tot agantur saecula vitae,
qui sic tabuerit, longo meministis in aevo?
et placet et video; sed quod videoque placetque,
non tamen invenio'++tantus tenet error amantem++
'quoque magis doleam, nec nos mare separat ingens
nec via nec montes nec clausis moenia portis;
exigua prohibemur aqua! cupit ipse teneri:
nam quotiens liquidis porreximus oscula lymphis,
hic totiens ad me resupino nititur ore.
posse putes tangi: minimum est, quod amantibus obstat.
quisquis es, huc exi! quid me, puer unice, fallis
quove petitus abis? certe nec forma nec aetas
est mea, quam fugias, et amarunt me quoque nymphae!
spem mihi nescio quam vultu promittis amico,
cumque ego porrexi tibi bracchia, porrigis ultro,
cum risi, adrides; lacrimas quoque saepe notavi
me lacrimante tuas; nutu quoque signa remittis
et, quantum motu formosi suspicor oris,
verba refers aures non pervenientia nostras!
iste ego sum: sensi, nec me mea fallit imago;
uror amore mei: flammas moveoque feroque.
quid faciam? roger anne rogem? quid deinde rogabo?
quod cupio mecum est: inopem me copia fecit.
o utinam a nostro secedere corpore possem!
votum in amante novum, vellem, quod amamus, abesset.

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body.

He was amazed at himself and clung motionless with the same expression, like a statue formed from Parian marble. Lying on the ground, he gazed at his eyes, twin stars, and his hair worthy of Bacchus, worthy too of Apollo, and his smooth cheeks and ivory neck and the beauty of his face and the blush mixed in snowy whiteness. He marveled at everything by which he himself was marveled at.

Unwisely he desired himself. He who approved was himself approved. While he sought, he was sought. Equally he kindled and burned. How many useless kisses he gave to the deceiving spring! How many times he plunged arms into the middle water, trying to seize the glimpsed neck, and didn't catch himself in them!

He didn't know what he was seeing, but what he saw burned him, and the same error that deceived his eyes spurred them on. Credulous boy, why do you vainly grasp fleeing images? What you seek exists nowhere. What you love, if you turn away, you'll lose! This is the shadow of a reflected image you see. It has nothing of its own. It comes and stays with you. It will depart with you, if you could depart!

Neither care of Ceres nor care of rest could draw him away from there, but stretched on the dark grass, he gazed with insatiable eyes on the false form and perished through his own eyes. Raising himself a little, stretching his arms to the surrounding forests, he said:

"O forests, has anyone loved more cruelly? For you know, and you've been a convenient hiding place for many. In the long ages of your life that you've lived, do you remember anyone who wasted away like this? I'm pleased and I see, but what I see and what pleases me I still don't find" - such error held the lover - "and what makes me grieve more, no vast sea separates us, nor road nor mountains nor walls with closed gates! We're prevented by a tiny bit of water! He himself wants to be held. For as often as I reached kisses to the clear water, he just as often strove toward me with upturned face.

"You'd think he could be touched - so little obstructs lovers. Whoever you are, come out here! Why do you deceive me, unique boy? Where do you go when sought? Certainly neither my form nor age is such that you'd flee, and nymphs have loved me too! You promise me some hope with friendly face. When I reached arms to you, you reached back. When I smiled, you smiled. I've often noted your tears too when

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iamque dolor vires adimit, nec tempora vitae
longa meae superant, primoque exstinguor in aevo.
nec mihi mors gravis est posituro morte dolores,
hic, qui diligitur, vellem diuturnior esset;
nunc duo concordes anima moriemur in una.'
Dixit et ad faciem rediit male sanus eandem
et lacrimis turbavit aquas, obscuraque moto
reddita forma lacu est; quam cum vidisset abire,
'quo refugis? remane nec me, crudelis, amantem
desere!' clamavit; 'liceat, quod tangere non est,
adspicere et misero praebere alimenta furori!'
dumque dolet, summa vestem deduxit ab ora
nudaque marmoreis percussit pectora palmis.
pectora traxerunt roseum percussa ruborem,
non aliter quam poma solent, quae candida parte,
parte rubent, aut ut variis solet uva racemis
ducere purpureum nondum matura colorem.
quae simul adspexit liquefacta rursus in unda,
non tulit ulterius, sed ut intabescere flavae
igne levi cerae matutinaeque pruinae
sole tepente solent, sic attenuatus amore
liquitur et tecto paulatim carpitur igni;
et neque iam color est mixto candore rubori,
nec vigor et vires et quae modo visa placebant,
nec corpus remanet, quondam quod amaverat Echo.
quae tamen ut vidit, quamvis irata memorque,
indoluit, quotiensque puer miserabilis 'eheu'
dixerat, haec resonis iterabat vocibus 'eheu';
cumque suos manibus percusserat ille lacertos,
haec quoque reddebat sonitum plangoris eundem.
ultima vox solitam fuit haec spectantis in undam:
'heu frustra dilecte puer!' totidemque remisit
verba locus, dictoque vale 'vale' inquit et Echo.
ille caput viridi fessum submisit in herba,
lumina mors clausit domini mirantia formam:
tum quoque se, postquam est inferna sede receptus,
in Stygia spectabat aqua. planxere sorores
naides et sectos fratri posuere capillos,
planxerunt dryades; plangentibus adsonat Echo.

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I was weeping. You also return signs with a nod. And as much as I suspect from the movement of your beautiful mouth, you speak words that don't reach my ears!

"That's me! I've sensed it, and my image doesn't deceive me. I burn with love of myself. I both move and bear the flames. What should I do? Should I be asked or ask? What then will I ask for? What I desire is with me - abundance has made me poor. Oh, if I could separate from my own body! A new prayer in a lover - I'd wish what we love were absent.

"And now pain takes away my strength, and not much time of my life remains. I'm extinguished in my early youth. Nor is death heavy to me, about to lay down grief in death. I'd wish this one who's loved could live longer. Now we two, united in soul, will die in one."

He spoke and, not quite sane, returned to the same face and troubled the water with tears. When the image was rendered obscure by the disturbed pool, when he saw it departing, he cried out, "Where do you flee? Stay, and don't desert me, your lover, cruel one! Let me look at what I can't touch and provide nourishment to my miserable madness!"

While he grieved, he drew down his garment from its top edge and beat his naked breast with marble palms. His breast drew a rosy blush when struck, not otherwise than apples usually do, which are white in part and red in part, or as grapes in varied clusters usually draw a purple color, not yet ripe.

When he saw this again in the liquefied water, he bore it no further. But as yellow wax usually wastes away in gentle fire, and morning frost in the warming sun, so, worn thin by love, he melted and was gradually consumed by hidden fire. No longer was there color mixed with white and red, nor vigor and strength and what just recently pleased when seen, nor did the body remain that Echo once had loved.

Yet when she saw this, though angry and remembering, she grieved. As often as the pitiful boy said "Alas!" she repeated with echoing voice "Alas!" And when he struck his arms with his hands, she too returned the same sound of beating. His last words as he gazed into the familiar water were these: "Alas, boy loved in vain!" The place sent back the same words, and when he said "Farewell," "Farewell," Echo said.

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iamque rogum quassasque faces feretrumque parabant:
nusquam corpus erat; croceum pro corpore florem
inveniunt foliis medium cingentibus albis.
Cognita res meritam vati per Achaidas urbes
attulerat famam, nomenque erat auguris ingens;
spernit Echionides tamen hunc ex omnibus unus
contemptor superum Pentheus praesagaque ridet
verba senis tenebrasque et cladem lucis ademptae
obicit. ille movens albentia tempora canis
'quam felix esses, si tu quoque luminis huius
orbus' ait 'fieres, ne Bacchica sacra videres!
namque dies aderit, quam non procul auguror esse,
qua novus huc veniat, proles Semeleia, Liber,
quem nisi templorum fueris dignatus honore,
mille lacer spargere locis et sanguine silvas
foedabis matremque tuam matrisque sorores.
eveniet! neque enim dignabere numen honore,
meque sub his tenebris nimium vidisse quereris.'
talia dicentem proturbat Echione natus;
dicta fides sequitur, responsaque vatis aguntur.
Liber adest, festisque fremunt ululatibus agri:
turba ruit, mixtaeque viris matresque nurusque
vulgusque proceresque ignota ad sacra feruntur.
'Quis furor, anguigenae, proles Mavortia, vestras
attonuit mentes?' Pentheus ait; 'aerane tantum
aere repulsa valent et adunco tibia cornu
et magicae fraudes, ut, quos non bellicus ensis,
non tuba terruerit, non strictis agmina telis,
femineae voces et mota insania vino
obscenique greges et inania tympana vincant?
vosne, senes, mirer, qui longa per aequora vecti
hac Tyron, hac profugos posuistis sede penates,
nunc sinitis sine Marte capi? vosne, acrior aetas,
o iuvenes, propiorque meae, quos arma tenere,
non thyrsos, galeaque tegi, non fronde decebat?
este, precor, memores, qua sitis stirpe creati,
illiusque animos, qui multos perdidit unus,
sumite serpentis! pro fontibus ille lacuque
interiit: at vos pro fama vincite vestra!

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He laid down his head, weary, in the green grass. Death closed the eyes that marveled at their master's beauty. Then too, after he was received in the infernal dwelling, he was gazing at himself in the Stygian water.

His Naiad sisters mourned and laid their cut hair before their brother. The Dryads mourned. Echo resounded to the mourners. And now they were preparing the pyre and shaken torches and the bier. Nowhere was his body. They found a saffron flower with white leaves surrounding its center.

Pentheus and Bacchus

The known matter had brought deserved fame to the prophet throughout Achaia's cities, and the augur's name was great. Yet Echion's son Pentheus alone, scorner of gods, spurned him and laughed at the old man's prophetic words and reproached him with darkness and the disaster of stolen light.

He, shaking his white temples with hoary hair, said, "How fortunate you'd be if you too were deprived of this light, so you wouldn't see Bacchus' rites! For a day will come, which I prophesy is not far off, when the new Liber, Semele's offspring, will come here. Unless you honor him with temples' honor, you'll be torn and scattered in a thousand places and stain the forests with blood - your mother and your mother's sisters. It will happen! For you won't honor the god with honor, and you'll complain that I saw too much in these shadows."

As he was saying such things, Echion's son pushed him out. His words found confirmation, and the prophet's responses were fulfilled. Liber was present, and the fields roared with festive howling. The crowd rushed - matrons and daughters-in-law mixed with men, and the common people and nobles were carried to the unknown rites.

"What madness, snake-born race, martial offspring, has stunned your minds?" Pentheus said. "Can bronze beaten by bronze, the curved-horned trumpet, and magical tricks prevail so much that those whom no warlike sword, no trumpet has terrified, no battle lines with drawn weapons - are conquered by women's voices and madness stirred by wine and obscene crowds and empty drums?

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ille dedit leto fortes: vos pellite molles
et patrium retinete decus! si fata vetabant
stare diu Thebas, utinam tormenta virique
moenia diruerent, ferrumque ignisque sonarent!
essemus miseri sine crimine, sorsque querenda,
non celanda foret, lacrimaeque pudore carerent;
at nunc a puero Thebae capientur inermi,
quem neque bella iuvant nec tela nec usus equorum,
sed madidus murra crinis mollesque coronae
purpuraque et pictis intextum vestibus aurum,
quem quidem ego actutum (modo vos absistite) cogam
adsumptumque patrem commentaque sacra fateri.
an satis Acrisio est animi, contemnere vanum
numen et Argolicas venienti claudere portas:
Penthea terrebit cum totis advena Thebis?
ite citi' (famulis hoc imperat), 'ite ducemque
attrahite huc vinctum! iussis mora segnis abesto!'
hunc avus, hunc Athamas, hunc cetera turba suorum
corripiunt dictis frustraque inhibere laborant.
acrior admonitu est inritaturque retenta
et crescit rabies remoraminaque ipsa nocebant:
sic ego torrentem, qua nil obstabat eunti,
lenius et modico strepitu decurrere vidi;
at quacumque trabes obstructaque saxa tenebant,
spumeus et fervens et ab obice saevior ibat.
Ecce cruentati redeunt et, Bacchus ubi esset,
quaerenti domino Bacchum vidisse negarunt;
'hunc' dixere 'tamen comitem famulumque sacrorum
cepimus' et tradunt manibus post terga ligatis
sacra dei quendam Tyrrhena gente secutum.
adspicit hunc Pentheus oculis, quos ira tremendos
fecerat, et quamquam poenae vix tempora differt,
'o periture tuaque aliis documenta dature
morte,' ait, 'ede tuum nomen nomenque parentum
et patriam, morisque novi cur sacra frequentes!'
ille metu vacuus 'nomen mihi' dixit 'Acoetes,
patria Maeonia est, humili de plebe parentes.
non mihi quae duri colerent pater arva iuvenci,
lanigerosve greges, non ulla armenta reliquit;

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"Should I marvel at you, old men, who, carried over long seas, placed Tyre here, placed your exiled household gods here - do you now allow it to be captured without war? Should I marvel at you, more vigorous age - O young men, nearer to me, whom it was fitting to hold weapons, not thyrsi, to be covered by helmet, not foliage?

"Be mindful, I pray, of what stock you were created from! Take the spirit of that one who, alone, destroyed many - the serpent! He died for springs and pool. But you - conquer for your fame! He gave death to the brave. You - drive out the soft and keep your ancestral honor!

"If the fates forbade Thebes to stand long, would that siege engines and men might destroy its walls, and iron and fire might sound! We'd be miserable without crime, and our lot would need to be lamented, not hidden, and tears would lack shame. But now Thebes will be captured by an unarmed boy whom neither wars help nor weapons nor use of horses, but hair dripping with myrrh and soft garlands and purple and gold woven into embroidered garments.

"I'll force him right now (just stay out of it) to confess his assumed father and invented rites. Did Acrisius have enough spirit to scorn the vain god and close Argos' gates to his coming? Will Pentheus be terrified by the stranger with all Thebes?

"Go quickly!" (He commanded his servants.) "Go and drag the leader here in chains! Let no sluggish delay attend my commands!"

His grandfather and Athamas and the rest of his people seized him with words and tried in vain to restrain him. He grew fiercer with warning and was irritated by restraint, and his rage increased, and the very hindrances harmed him. So I've seen a torrent, when nothing blocked its path, run down more gently with moderate noise, but wherever beams and blocking rocks held it, it went foaming and boiling and more savage from the obstacle.

Acoetes' Tale

Look, they returned bloody, and when their master asked where Bacchus was, they said they hadn't seen Bacchus. "But we captured this one," they said, "a companion and servant of the rites," and they handed

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pauper et ipse fuit linoque solebat et hamis
decipere et calamo salientis ducere pisces.
ars illi sua census erat; cum traderet artem,
"accipe, quas habeo, studii successor et heres,"
dixit "opes," moriensque mihi nihil ille reliquit
praeter aquas: unum hoc possum adpellare paternum.
mox ego, ne scopulis haererem semper in isdem,
addidici regimen dextra moderante carinae
flectere et Oleniae sidus pluviale capellae
Taygetenque Hyadasque oculis Arctonque notavi
ventorumque domos et portus puppibus aptos.
forte petens Delum Chiae telluris ad oras
adplicor et dextris adducor litora remis
doque levis saltus udaeque inmittor harenae:
nox ibi consumpta est; aurora rubescere primo
coeperat: exsurgo laticesque inferre recentis
admoneo monstroque viam, quae ducat ad undas;
ipse quid aura mihi tumulo promittat ab alto
prospicio comitesque voco repetoque carinam.
"adsumus en" inquit sociorum primus Opheltes,
utque putat, praedam deserto nactus in agro,
virginea puerum ducit per litora forma.
ille mero somnoque gravis titubare videtur
vixque sequi; specto cultum faciemque gradumque:
nil ibi, quod credi posset mortale, videbam.
et sensi et dixi sociis: "quod numen in isto
corpore sit, dubito; sed corpore numen in isto est!
quisquis es, o faveas nostrisque laboribus adsis;
his quoque des veniam!" "pro nobis mitte precari!"
Dictys ait, quo non alius conscendere summas
ocior antemnas prensoque rudente relabi.
hoc Libys, hoc flavus, prorae tutela, Melanthus,
hoc probat Alcimedon et, qui requiemque modumque
voce dabat remis, animorum hortator, Epopeus,
hoc omnes alii: praedae tam caeca cupido est.
"non tamen hanc sacro violari pondere pinum
perpetiar" dixi: "pars hic mihi maxima iuris"
inque aditu obsisto: furit audacissimus omni
de numero Lycabas, qui Tusca pulsus ab urbe

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over, with hands bound behind his back, a certain man from the Tyrrhenian people who followed the god's rites.

Pentheus looked at him with eyes that anger had made terrible, and though he scarcely postponed punishment, he said, "O you about to die and give an example to others by your death, tell your name and your parents' names and your homeland, and why you frequent these new rites!"

He, free from fear, said, "My name is Acoetes. My homeland is Maeonia. My parents were from humble stock. My father left me no fields that sturdy oxen might plow, no wool-bearing flocks, no herds at all. He was poor himself too, and used to deceive with line and hooks and draw leaping fish with his rod. His art was his wealth. When he handed down his art, he said, 'Take what I have, successor and heir of my skill,' and dying he left me nothing but the waters. I can call this alone my inheritance.

"Soon, so I wouldn't always stick to the same rocks, I learned to steer a ship with my right hand guiding the tiller and noted with my eyes the rainy star of the Olenian goat and Taygete and the Hyades and Arctos and the houses of the winds and harbors fit for ships.

"By chance, seeking Delos, I reached the shores of the Chian land and approached the coast with my right-side oars and gave light leaps and landed on the wet sand. Night was spent there. Aurora was beginning to redden. I arose and warned them to bring fresh water and showed the path that led to the springs. I myself looked from a high mound to see what wind was promising me and called my companions and headed back to the ship.

"'Look, we're here,' Opheltes, first of my companions, said, and thinking he'd found booty in a deserted field, led a boy of maiden beauty through the shore. He seemed to stagger, heavy with wine and sleep, and could barely follow. I looked at his clothing and face and gait. I saw nothing there that I could believe mortal. I sensed and told my companions, 'What divinity is in that body I'm uncertain, but divinity is in that body! Whoever you are, be favorable and be present to our labors. Give pardon to these too.'

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exilium dira poenam pro caede luebat;
is mihi, dum resto, iuvenali guttura pugno
rupit et excussum misisset in aequora, si non
haesissem, quamvis amens, in fune retentus.
inpia turba probat factum; tum denique Bacchus
(Bacchus enim fuerat), veluti clamore solutus
sit sopor aque mero redeant in pectora sensus,
"quid facitis? quis clamor?" ait "qua, dicite, nautae,
huc ope perveni? quo me deferre paratis?"
"pone metum" Proreus, "et quos contingere portus
ede velis!" dixit; "terra sistere petita."
"Naxon" ait Liber "cursus advertite vestros!
illa mihi domus est, vobis erit hospita tellus."
per mare fallaces perque omnia numina iurant
sic fore meque iubent pictae dare vela carinae.
dextera Naxos erat: dextra mihi lintea danti
"quid facis, o demens? quis te furor," inquit "Acoete,"
pro se quisque, "tenet? laevam pete!" maxima nutu
pars mihi significat, pars quid velit ore susurro.
obstipui "capiat" que "aliquis moderamina!" dixi
meque ministerio scelerisque artisque removi.
increpor a cunctis, totumque inmurmurat agmen;
e quibus Aethalion "te scilicet omnis in uno
nostra salus posita est!" ait et subit ipse meumque
explet opus Naxoque petit diversa relicta.
tum deus inludens, tamquam modo denique fraudem
senserit, e puppi pontum prospectat adunca
et flenti similis "non haec mihi litora, nautae,
promisistis" ait, "non haec mihi terra rogata est!
quo merui poenam facto? quae gloria vestra est,
si puerum iuvenes, si multi fallitis unum?"
iamdudum flebam: lacrimas manus inpia nostras
ridet et inpellit properantibus aequora remis.
per tibi nunc ipsum (nec enim praesentior illo
est deus) adiuro, tam me tibi vera referre
quam veri maiora fide: stetit aequore puppis
haud aliter, quam si siccam navale teneret.
illi admirantes remorum in verbere perstant
velaque deducunt geminaque ope currere temptant:

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"'Don't pray for us!' Dictys said - no one swifter than he to climb the highest yardarms and slide down, grasping the rope. Libys agreed with this, and fair Melanthus, guardian of the prow, agreed, and Alcimedon and Epopeus, who gave rest and rhythm to the oars with his voice, encourager of spirits - all the others agreed. So blind is eagerness for booty!

"'Yet I won't allow this sacred pine to be violated by such weight,' I said. 'I have the greatest authority here.' I stood in the entrance to block them. Most daring of all their number, Lycabas raged, who'd been driven from a Tuscan city and was paying in exile the penalty for terrible murder. As I stood there, he broke my throat with his youthful fist and would have cast me, knocked out, into the sea if I hadn't clung, though dazed, held back by a rope.

"The impious crowd approved the deed. Then finally Bacchus (for it was Bacchus), as if his sleep had been broken by the shouting and sense returned to his chest from wine, said, 'What are you doing? What's the shouting?' He said. 'Tell me, sailors, by what help did I come here? Where are you preparing to take me?'

"'Put away fear,' Proreus said. 'Tell us what ports you wish to reach, and you'll be set down on the land you request.'

"'Naxos,' Liber said. 'Turn your course there! That's my home. The land will be hospitable to you.'

"The false men swore by the sea and all the gods it would be so, and they ordered me to give sail to the painted ship. Naxos was on the right. As I gave sails to the right, 'What are you doing, madman? What madness holds you, Acoetes?' each one said on his own behalf. 'Head left!' Most indicated by nod what they wanted, some whispered what they wanted with their mouths.

"I was stunned and said, 'Let someone else take the helm!' And I removed myself from service to both crime and art. I was rebuked by all, and the whole crew murmured. Of these, Aethalion said, 'Obviously all our safety rests in you alone!' He approached and took over my work and, leaving Naxos, sought the opposite direction.

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inpediunt hederae remos nexuque recurvo
serpunt et gravidis distinguunt vela corymbis.
ipse racemiferis frontem circumdatus uvis
pampineis agitat velatam frondibus hastam;
quem circa tigres simulacraque inania lyncum
pictarumque iacent fera corpora pantherarum.
exsiluere viri, sive hoc insania fecit
sive timor, primusque Medon nigrescere toto
corpore et expresso spinae curvamine flecti
incipit. huic Lycabas "in quae miracula" dixit
"verteris?" et lati rictus et panda loquenti
naris erat, squamamque cutis durata trahebat.
at Libys obstantis dum vult obvertere remos,
in spatium resilire manus breve vidit et illas
iam non esse manus, iam pinnas posse vocari.
alter ad intortos cupiens dare bracchia funes
bracchia non habuit truncoque repandus in undas
corpore desiluit: falcata novissima cauda est,
qualia dividuae sinuantur cornua lunae.
undique dant saltus multaque adspergine rorant
emerguntque iterum redeuntque sub aequora rursus
inque chori ludunt speciem lascivaque iactant
corpora et acceptum patulis mare naribus efflant.
de modo viginti (tot enim ratis illa ferebat)
restabam solus: pavidum gelidumque trementi
corpore vixque meum firmat deus "excute" dicens
"corde metum Diamque tene!" delatus in illam
accessi sacris Baccheaque sacra frequento.'
'Praebuimus longis' Pentheus 'ambagibus aures,'
inquit 'ut ira mora vires absumere posset.
praecipitem, famuli, rapite hunc cruciataque diris
corpora tormentis Stygiae demittite nocti!'
protinus abstractus solidis Tyrrhenus Acoetes
clauditur in tectis; et dum crudelia iussae
instrumenta necis ferrumque ignesque parantur,
sponte sua patuisse fores lapsasque lacertis
sponte sua fama est nullo solvente catenas.
Perstat Echionides, nec iam iubet ire, sed ipse
vadit, ubi electus facienda ad sacra Cithaeron

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"Then the god, mocking, as if he'd only now finally sensed the deceit, looked at the sea from the curved stern and, like one weeping, said, 'These aren't the shores you promised me, sailors! This isn't the land I asked for! What have I done to deserve punishment? What glory is yours if you young men, if many, deceive one boy?'

"I'd been weeping for some time already. The impious gang laughed at my tears and drove the sea with hurrying oars. By himself now (for no god is more present than he) I swear to you I'm telling you truths as great as truths - the ship stood in the sea no different than if a dry dock held it.

"They, amazed, persisted in the beating of oars and lowered sails and tried to run with double effort. Ivy hindered the oars and with curving knots crept and distinguished the sails with heavy clusters. He himself, his brow encircled with grape-bearing vines, shook a spear veiled with vine-leaf fronds. Around him lay the shapes of tigers and empty images of lynxes and the spotted bodies of panthers.

"The men leaped out, whether madness or fear caused this. First Medon began to turn black in his whole body and be bent in his extracted spine's curve. Lycabas began to say to him, 'Into what marvels are you being changed?' And as he spoke, he had a wide mouth and a hooked nose, and his hardened skin drew scales.

"But Libys, while he wanted to turn the opposing oars, saw his hands recoil to a brief span and these no longer to be hands but now able to be called fins. Another, wanting to give his arms to the twisted ropes, had no arms and, bent back with a truncated body, leaped into the waves. The end of his tail was sickle-shaped, like the horns of a divided moon.

"They gave leaps everywhere and sprinkled much spray and emerged again and went back under the waves again and played in the manner of a dance and tossed their wanton bodies and blew out the received sea through their open nostrils. Of twenty just before (for the ship carried that many), I remained alone. Trembling and cold, my body scarcely stable, the god strengthened me saying, 'Drive fear from your heart and make for Dia!' Carried to it, I approached and frequent the rites and am a Bacchant of Bacchus' rites.'

The Death of Pentheus

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cantibus et clara bacchantum voce sonabat.
ut fremit acer equus, cum bellicus aere canoro
signa dedit tubicen pugnaeque adsumit amorem,
Penthea sic ictus longis ululatibus aether
movit, et audito clamore recanduit ira.
Monte fere medio est, cingentibus ultima silvis,
purus ab arboribus, spectabilis undique, campus:
hic oculis illum cernentem sacra profanis
prima videt, prima est insano concita cursu,
prima suum misso violavit Penthea thyrso
mater et 'o geminae' clamavit 'adeste sorores!
ille aper, in nostris errat qui maximus agris,
ille mihi feriendus aper.' ruit omnis in unum
turba furens; cunctae coeunt trepidumque sequuntur,
iam trepidum, iam verba minus violenta loquentem,
iam se damnantem, iam se peccasse fatentem.
saucius ille tamen 'fer opem, matertera' dixit
'Autonoe! moveant animos Actaeonis umbrae!'
illa, quis Actaeon, nescit dextramque precanti
abstulit, Inoo lacerata est altera raptu.
non habet infelix quae matri bracchia tendat,
trunca sed ostendens dereptis vulnera membris
'adspice, mater!' ait. visis ululavit Agaue
collaque iactavit movitque per aera crinem
avulsumque caput digitis conplexa cruentis
clamat: 'io comites, opus hoc victoria nostra est!'
non citius frondes autumni frigore tactas
iamque male haerentes alta rapit arbore ventus,
quam sunt membra viri manibus direpta nefandis.
talibus exemplis monitae nova sacra frequentant
turaque dant sanctasque colunt Ismenides aras.

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'We've offered ears to long circumlocutions,' Pentheus said, 'so that anger might consume its strength through delay. Seize him headlong, servants, and after torturing his body with terrible torments, send him to Stygian night!'

Immediately Tyrrhenian Acoetes was dragged away and shut in solid walls. While the cruel instruments of death commanded - iron and fires - were being prepared, they say the doors opened on their own and chains slipped from his arms on their own, with no one loosening them.

Echion's son persisted. He no longer ordered others to go, but went himself to where Cithaeron, chosen for performing the rites, resounded with songs and the clear voice of Bacchants. As a fierce horse neighs when the bronze-sounding trumpeter gives the signal for war and takes up love of battle, so Pentheus was moved by the air struck with long howls, and his anger rekindled when he heard the clamor.

About mid-mountain, surrounded by ultimate forests, was a plain free of trees, visible from everywhere. Here, while he observed the rites with profane eyes, his mother first saw him, first was driven in mad running, first violated Pentheus with hurled thyrsus and cried, 'O twin sisters, be present! That boar, which wanders as the greatest in our fields - that boar must be struck by me.'

All the frenzied crowd rushed at one and gathered together and followed him trembling - now trembling, now speaking less violent words, now condemning himself, now confessing he'd sinned. Yet wounded, he said, 'Bring help, aunt Autonoe! May Actaeon's shade move your spirits!'

She didn't know who Actaeon was and tore off his right hand as he prayed. Ino tore off the other with her grasp. The unlucky man had no arms to stretch to his mother, but showing wounds with torn-off limbs and truncated, he said, 'Look, mother!' Seeing them, Agave howled and tossed her neck and moved her hair through the air and, grasping his torn-off head with bloody fingers, cried, 'Io, companions, this work is our victory!'

No more swiftly does wind snatch leaves touched by autumn's cold and now hanging badly from the high tree than the man's limbs were torn by wicked hands. Warned by such examples, the Theban women frequent the new rites and give incense and worship the sacred altars.

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BOOK 4

At non Alcithoe Minyeias orgia censet
accipienda dei, sed adhuc temeraria Bacchum
progeniem negat esse Iovis sociasque sorores
inpietatis habet. festum celebrare sacerdos
inmunesque operum famulas dominasque suorum
pectora pelle tegi, crinales solvere vittas,
serta coma, manibus frondentis sumere thyrsos
iusserat et saevam laesi fore numinis iram
vaticinatus erat: parent matresque nurusque
telasque calathosque infectaque pensa reponunt
turaque dant Bacchumque vocant Bromiumque Lyaeumque
ignigenamque satumque iterum solumque bimatrem;
additur his Nyseus indetonsusque Thyoneus
et cum Lenaeo genialis consitor uvae
Nycteliusque Eleleusque parens et Iacchus et Euhan,
et quae praeterea per Graias plurima gentes
nomina, Liber, habes. tibi enim inconsumpta iuventa est,
tu puer aeternus, tu formosissimus alto
conspiceris caelo; tibi, cum sine cornibus adstas,
virgineum caput est; Oriens tibi victus, adusque
decolor extremo qua tinguitur India Gange.
Penthea tu, venerande, bipenniferumque Lycurgum
sacrilegos mactas, Tyrrhenaque mittis in aequor
corpora, tu biiugum pictis insignia frenis
colla premis lyncum. bacchae satyrique sequuntur,
quique senex ferula titubantis ebrius artus
sustinet et pando non fortiter haeret asello.
quacumque ingrederis, clamor iuvenalis et una
femineae voces inpulsaque tympana palmis
concavaque aera sonant longoque foramine buxus.
'Placatus mitisque' rogant Ismenides 'adsis,'
iussaque sacra colunt; solae Minyeides intus
intempestiva turbantes festa Minerva
aut ducunt lanas aut stamina pollice versant
aut haerent telae famulasque laboribus urguent.
e quibus una levi deducens pollice filum
'dum cessant aliae commentaque sacra frequentant,
nos quoque, quas Pallas, melior dea, detinet' inquit,
'utile opus manuum vario sermone levemus

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The Daughters of Minyas

But Alcithoe, daughter of Minyas, didn't think the god's rites should be accepted. Still reckless, she denied that Bacchus was Jupiter's offspring and had her sisters as companions in impiety. A priest had ordered them to celebrate the festival - servants and mistresses freed from work should cover their breasts with hides, loosen the ribbons from their hair, wear garlands in their hair, take leafy thyrsi in their hands. He'd prophesied that the anger of the injured god would be savage.

The mothers and daughters-in-law obeyed. They put down their webs and baskets and unfinished wool. They gave incense and called on Bacchus - Bromius and Lyaeus and Fire-Born and Twice-Born and Sole Son of Two Mothers. To these are added Nyseus and Unshorn Thyoneus, and with Lenaeus the genial planter of the vine, Nyctelius and Eleleius the Father and Iacchus and Euhan - and all the many other names you have, Liber, throughout Greek nations.

For yours is youth unconsumed. You're an eternal boy. You're seen most beautiful in high heaven. When you stand without horns, your head is like a maiden's. The East is conquered by you, even to India, made dark where it's stained by the farthest Ganges. Revered one, you struck down sacrilegious Pentheus and ax-bearing Lycurgus, you sent the Tyrrhenian bodies into the sea. You press the necks of twin lynxes marked with painted reins. Bacchants and satyrs follow you, and that old man who, drunk, supports his tottering limbs with his staff and clings, not very sturdily, to his bent donkey.

Wherever you walk, youthful shouting and with it women's voices and drums struck by palms and hollow bronze and boxwood with long holes all sound together. "Be present, appeased and gentle," the daughters of Ismenos begged, and they worshiped the commanded rites. Only the daughters of Minyas inside, disturbing the festival at an unseasonable time with Minerva's work, either drew out wool or turned threads with their thumb or stuck to their looms and pressed their servants with labors.

One of them, drawing out thread with her smooth thumb, said, "While the others idle and frequent made-up rites, let's also - we whom Pallas, a better goddess, detains - lighten useful handwork with varied conversation and, taking turns, bring something to idle ears that won't let the time seem long!"

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perque vices aliquid, quod tempora longa videri
non sinat, in medium vacuas referamus ad aures!'
dicta probant primamque iubent narrare sorores.
illa, quid e multis referat (nam plurima norat),
cogitat et dubia est, de te, Babylonia, narret,
Derceti, quam versa squamis velantibus artus
stagna Palaestini credunt motasse figura,
an magis, ut sumptis illius filia pennis
extremos albis in turribus egerit annos,
nais an ut cantu nimiumque potentibus herbis
verterit in tacitos iuvenalia corpora pisces,
donec idem passa est, an, quae poma alba ferebat
ut nunc nigra ferat contactu sanguinis arbor:
hoc placet; hanc, quoniam vulgaris fabula non est,
talibus orsa modis lana sua fila sequente:
'Pyramus et Thisbe, iuvenum pulcherrimus alter,
altera, quas Oriens habuit, praelata puellis,
contiguas tenuere domos, ubi dicitur altam
coctilibus muris cinxisse Semiramis urbem.
notitiam primosque gradus vicinia fecit,
tempore crevit amor; taedae quoque iure coissent,
sed vetuere patres: quod non potuere vetare,
ex aequo captis ardebant mentibus ambo.
conscius omnis abest; nutu signisque loquuntur,
quoque magis tegitur, tectus magis aestuat ignis.
fissus erat tenui rima, quam duxerat olim,
cum fieret, paries domui communis utrique.
id vitium nulli per saecula longa notatum -
quid non sentit amor? - primi vidistis amantes
et vocis fecistis iter, tutaeque per illud
murmure blanditiae minimo transire solebant.
saepe, ubi constiterant hinc Thisbe, Pyramus illinc,
inque vices fuerat captatus anhelitus oris,
"invide" dicebant "paries, quid amantibus obstas?
quantum erat, ut sineres toto nos corpore iungi
aut, hoc si nimium est, vel ad oscula danda pateres?
nec sumus ingrati: tibi nos debere fatemur,
quod datus est verbis ad amicas transitus auris."
talia diversa nequiquam sede locuti

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Her words were approved, and they ordered the first sister to tell a story. She thought about what of many things she should relate (for she knew very many) and was uncertain whether to tell of you, Babylonian Derceto, whom the pools of Palestine believe moved with changed form, scales covering her limbs, or rather how her daughter, having taken wings, spent her final years in white towers, or how a naiad with song and herbs too powerful turned youthful bodies into silent fish until she suffered the same, or how the tree that bore white fruit now bears black fruit from contact with blood.

This last pleased her. Since it wasn't a common tale, she began with these words as her wool followed her thread:

Pyramus and Thisbe

"Pyramus and Thisbe - he the most beautiful of young men, she preferred above all girls the East had - occupied neighboring houses where, they say, Semiramis enclosed the lofty city with brick walls. Proximity made acquaintance and first steps. In time love grew. They would have united by marriage rites too, but their fathers forbade it. What they couldn't forbid - both burned with equally captive minds.

"No confidant was present. They spoke with nods and signs. The more the fire was covered, the more it burned, covered. The wall common to both houses had been split by a thin crack, which it had drawn long ago when it was being built. This flaw, noted by no one through long ages - what doesn't love sense? - you lovers first saw it and made it a path for your voice. Safe through it, your blandishments used to pass with the smallest murmur.

"Often, when Thisbe had stood on this side, Pyramus on that, and each had caught the breath of the other's mouth in turns, they'd say, 'Spiteful wall, why do you stand in lovers' way? How much would it take for you to allow us to be joined in whole body, or, if this is too much, at least to lie open for kisses to be given? We're not ungrateful. We confess we owe you that passage was given for words to friendly ears.'

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sub noctem dixere "vale" partique dedere
oscula quisque suae non pervenientia contra.
postera nocturnos Aurora removerat ignes,
solque pruinosas radiis siccaverat herbas:
ad solitum coiere locum. tum murmure parvo
multa prius questi statuunt, ut nocte silenti
fallere custodes foribusque excedere temptent,
cumque domo exierint, urbis quoque tecta relinquant,
neve sit errandum lato spatiantibus arvo,
conveniant ad busta Nini lateantque sub umbra
arboris: arbor ibi niveis uberrima pomis,
ardua morus, erat, gelido contermina fonti.
pacta placent; et lux, tarde discedere visa,
praecipitatur aquis, et aquis nox exit ab isdem.
'Callida per tenebras versato cardine Thisbe
egreditur fallitque suos adopertaque vultum
pervenit ad tumulum dictaque sub arbore sedit.
audacem faciebat amor. venit ecce recenti
caede leaena boum spumantis oblita rictus
depositura sitim vicini fontis in unda;
quam procul ad lunae radios Babylonia Thisbe
vidit et obscurum timido pede fugit in antrum,
dumque fugit, tergo velamina lapsa reliquit.
ut lea saeva sitim multa conpescuit unda,
dum redit in silvas, inventos forte sine ipsa
ore cruentato tenues laniavit amictus.
serius egressus vestigia vidit in alto
pulvere certa ferae totoque expalluit ore
Pyramus; ut vero vestem quoque sanguine tinctam
repperit, "una duos" inquit "nox perdet amantes,
e quibus illa fuit longa dignissima vita;
nostra nocens anima est. ego te, miseranda, peremi,
in loca plena metus qui iussi nocte venires
nec prior huc veni. nostrum divellite corpus
et scelerata fero consumite viscera morsu,
o quicumque sub hac habitatis rupe leones!
sed timidi est optare necem." velamina Thisbes
tollit et ad pactae secum fert arboris umbram,
utque dedit notae lacrimas, dedit oscula vesti,

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"Having spoken such things in vain from different positions, at nightfall they said 'Farewell' and each gave kisses to their own side - kisses that didn't reach across.

"The next morning's Aurora had removed night's fires, and the sun had dried the frosty grass with its rays. They came together at their usual place. Then in a small murmur, having complained much first, they decided that in the silent night they'd try to deceive their guards and leave through their doors. When they'd left home, they'd also abandon the city's roofs. And so they wouldn't wander as they walked through the wide field, they'd meet at Ninus' tomb and hide beneath the tree's shade. There was a tree there, most abundant with snowy fruit - a tall mulberry beside a cool spring.

"The plan pleased them. The daylight, seeming to depart slowly, plunged into the waters, and night came out from the same waters.

"Clever Thisbe went out through the darkness, the door turned on its hinge, and deceived her people. With covered face she reached the tomb and sat beneath the appointed tree. Love made her bold. Look - a lioness came, her jaws foaming from the recent slaughter of cattle, about to quench her thirst in the water of the nearby spring. Babylonian Thisbe saw her from afar by the moon's rays and fled with fearful foot into a dark cave. As she fled, her fallen garment slipped from her back.

"When the savage lioness had quenched her thirst with much water, as she was returning to the woods, she found the thin cloak without its owner and tore it with her bloody mouth.

"Pyramus, coming out later, saw clear tracks of the beast in the deep dust and grew completely pale in his whole face. But when he also found the garment stained with blood, he said, 'One night will destroy two lovers, of whom she was most worthy of long life. My soul is guilty. I destroyed you, pitiful girl, who ordered you to come at night to places full of fear and didn't come here first myself. Tear apart our body and consume our wicked vitals with savage bite, O whatever lions live beneath this cliff! But it's a coward's wish to seek death.'

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"accipe nunc" inquit "nostri quoque sanguinis haustus!"
quoque erat accinctus, demisit in ilia ferrum,
nec mora, ferventi moriens e vulnere traxit.
ut iacuit resupinus humo, cruor emicat alte,
non aliter quam cum vitiato fistula plumbo
scinditur et tenui stridente foramine longas
eiaculatur aquas atque ictibus aera rumpit.
arborei fetus adspergine caedis in atram
vertuntur faciem, madefactaque sanguine radix
purpureo tinguit pendentia mora colore.
'Ecce metu nondum posito, ne fallat amantem,
illa redit iuvenemque oculis animoque requirit,
quantaque vitarit narrare pericula gestit;
utque locum et visa cognoscit in arbore formam,
sic facit incertam pomi color: haeret, an haec sit.
dum dubitat, tremebunda videt pulsare cruentum
membra solum, retroque pedem tulit, oraque buxo
pallidiora gerens exhorruit aequoris instar,
quod tremit, exigua cum summum stringitur aura.
sed postquam remorata suos cognovit amores,
percutit indignos claro plangore lacertos
et laniata comas amplexaque corpus amatum
vulnera supplevit lacrimis fletumque cruori
miscuit et gelidis in vultibus oscula figens
"Pyrame," clamavit, "quis te mihi casus ademit?
Pyrame, responde! tua te carissima Thisbe
nominat; exaudi vultusque attolle iacentes!"
ad nomen Thisbes oculos a morte gravatos
Pyramus erexit visaque recondidit illa.
'Quae postquam vestemque suam cognovit et ense
vidit ebur vacuum, "tua te manus" inquit "amorque
perdidit, infelix! est et mihi fortis in unum
hoc manus, est et amor: dabit hic in vulnera vires.
persequar extinctum letique miserrima dicar
causa comesque tui: quique a me morte revelli
heu sola poteras, poteris nec morte revelli.
hoc tamen amborum verbis estote rogati,
o multum miseri meus illiusque parentes,
ut, quos certus amor, quos hora novissima iunxit,

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"He lifted Thisbe's garment and carried it to the shade of the agreed tree. When he'd given tears, he gave kisses to the known garment and said, 'Receive now also draughts of our blood!' And with what he was girded, he thrust the iron into his groin. Without delay, dying, he drew it from the hot wound.

"As he lay on his back on the ground, blood spurted high - not otherwise than when a pipe is split with damaged lead and hisses through a thin opening and shoots long streams of water and breaks the air with its blows. The tree's fruits turned to a dark appearance from the spray of slaughter, and the root, soaked with blood, stained the hanging mulberries with purple color.

"Look - with fear not yet laid aside, lest she disappoint her lover, she returned and sought the young man with eyes and heart. How eager she was to tell what dangers she'd escaped! Though she recognized the place and the tree's appearance she'd seen, the fruit's color made her uncertain whether this was it.

"While she hesitated, she saw trembling limbs beating the bloody ground and stepped back. Bearing a face paler than boxwood, she shuddered like the surface of the sea that trembles when grazed by a slight breeze. But after she delayed and recognized her love, she beat her arms, innocent of this, with clear lamentation and tore her hair and, embracing the beloved body, filled the wounds with tears and mixed weeping with blood. Planting kisses on the cold face, she cried out:

"'Pyramus, what chance has taken you from me? Pyramus, answer! Your dearest Thisbe calls your name! Hear and lift your fallen face!'

"At Thisbe's name, Pyramus raised eyes heavy with death and, having seen her, closed them again.

"After she recognized her garment and saw the ivory scabbard empty of sword, she said, 'Your hand and your love destroyed you, unlucky man! I too have a hand brave for this one thing. I too have love. This will give strength for wounds. I'll follow you, extinguished, and I'll be called the most wretched cause and companion of your death. You who could, alas, be torn from me only by death - you won't be able to be torn from me even by death.

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conponi tumulo non invideatis eodem;
at tu quae ramis arbor miserabile corpus
nunc tegis unius, mox es tectura duorum,
signa tene caedis pullosque et luctibus aptos
semper habe fetus, gemini monimenta cruoris."
dixit et aptato pectus mucrone sub imum
incubuit ferro, quod adhuc a caede tepebat.
vota tamen tetigere deos, tetigere parentes;
nam color in pomo est, ubi permaturuit, ater,
quodque rogis superest, una requiescit in urna.'
Desierat: mediumque fuit breve tempus, et orsa est
dicere Leuconoe: vocem tenuere sorores.
'hunc quoque, siderea qui temperat omnia luce,
cepit amor Solem: Solis referemus amores.
primus adulterium Veneris cum Marte putatur
hic vidisse deus; videt hic deus omnia primus.
indoluit facto Iunonigenaeque marito
furta tori furtique locum monstravit, at illi
et mens et quod opus fabrilis dextra tenebat
excidit: extemplo graciles ex aere catenas
retiaque et laqueos, quae lumina fallere possent,
elimat. non illud opus tenuissima vincant
stamina, non summo quae pendet aranea tigno;
utque levis tactus momentaque parva sequantur,
efficit et lecto circumdata collocat arte.
ut venere torum coniunx et adulter in unum,
arte viri vinclisque nova ratione paratis
in mediis ambo deprensi amplexibus haerent.
Lemnius extemplo valvas patefecit eburnas
inmisitque deos; illi iacuere ligati
turpiter, atque aliquis de dis non tristibus optat
sic fieri turpis; superi risere, diuque
haec fuit in toto notissima fabula caelo.
'Exigit indicii memorem Cythereia poenam
inque vices illum, tectos qui laesit amores,
laedit amore pari. quid nunc, Hyperione nate,
forma colorque tibi radiataque lumina prosunt?
nempe, tuis omnes qui terras ignibus uris,
ureris igne novo; quique omnia cernere debes,

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"'Yet be asked by the words of both of us, O my most miserable parents and his, that those whom sure love, whom their last hour joined - don't begrudge them being placed in the same tomb. But you, tree, who now cover the pitiful body of one, soon about to cover two, keep signs of slaughter and always have dark fruit, suited to mourning - memorials of twin blood.'

"She spoke and, fitting the sword-point beneath her lowest chest, fell upon the iron, which was still warm from slaughter. Yet her prayers touched the gods, touched the parents. For the color in the fruit, when it's fully ripe, is black, and what remains from the pyres rests in one urn."

She'd finished. A brief time was in the middle, and Leuconoe began to speak. The sisters kept silent.

The Sun's Love for Leucothoe

"This one too, who controls all things with starry light - the Sun - love captured. We'll tell the Sun's loves. This god is thought to have been first to see Venus' adultery with Mars. This god sees everything first. Grieved by the deed, he showed Juno's son and husband the stolen affair and the place of the theft.

"Both his mind and the work his craftsman's right hand was holding slipped. Immediately he filed slender chains from bronze and nets and snares that could deceive the eyes. That work wouldn't be conquered by the finest threads, nor by the spider web that hangs from the highest beam. He made it so it would follow light touch and small movements, and he placed it, cunningly arranged, around the bed.

"When both wife and adulterer came to the bed together, by the man's art and bonds prepared with new method, both were caught and held in the middle of their embraces. The Lemnian immediately opened the ivory doors and let in the gods. They lay bound shamefully. Some god, not sad, wished to be made so shameful. The gods above laughed, and for a long time this was the most famous story in all heaven.

"Venus the Cytherean exacts punishment for the one mindful of betrayal, and in turn she wounds with equal love him who wounded her secret loves. Now what, son of Hyperion, do your beauty and color and radiant lights help you? You who burn all lands with your fires are burned by a new fire. You who ought to see all things look at Leucothoe and fix on one virgin the eyes you owe the world.

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Leucothoen spectas et virgine figis in una,
quos mundo debes, oculos. modo surgis Eoo
temperius caelo, modo serius incidis undis,
spectandique mora brumalis porrigis horas;
deficis interdum, vitiumque in lumina mentis
transit et obscurus mortalia pectora terres.
nec tibi quod lunae terris propioris imago
obstiterit, palles: facit hunc amor iste colorem.
diligis hanc unam, nec te Clymeneque Rhodosque
nec tenet Aeaeae genetrix pulcherrima Circes
quaeque tuos Clytie quamvis despecta petebat
concubitus ipsoque illo grave vulnus habebat
tempore: Leucothoe multarum oblivia fecit,
gentis odoriferae quam formosissima partu
edidit Eurynome; sed postquam filia crevit,
quam mater cunctas, tam matrem filia vicit.
rexit Achaemenias urbes pater Orchamus isque
septimus a prisco numeratur origine Belo.
'Axe sub Hesperio sunt pascua Solis equorum:
ambrosiam pro gramine habent; ea fessa diurnis
membra ministeriis nutrit reparatque labori.
dumque ibi quadrupedes caelestia pabula carpunt
noxque vicem peragit, thalamos deus intrat amatos,
versus in Eurynomes faciem genetricis, et inter
bis sex Leucothoen famulas ad lumina cernit
levia versato ducentem stamina fuso.
ergo ubi ceu mater carae dedit oscula natae,
"res" ait "arcana est: famulae, discedite neve
eripite arbitrium matri secreta loquendi."
paruerant, thalamoque deus sine teste relicto
"ille ego sum" dixit, "qui longum metior annum,
omnia qui video, per quem videt omnia tellus,
mundi oculus: mihi, crede, places." pavet illa, metuque
et colus et fusus digitis cecidere remissis.
ipse timor decuit. nec longius ille moratus
in veram rediit speciem solitumque nitorem;
at virgo quamvis inopino territa visu
victa nitore dei posita vim passa querella est.
'Invidit Clytie (neque enim moderatus in illa

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"Now you rise earlier than usual in the eastern sky, now you fall later into the waves, and by the delay of watching you extend the hours of winter. Sometimes you fail, and the flaw of your mind passes into your light, and being dark, you terrify mortal hearts. Nor do you grow pale because the image of the moon, nearer to earth, has blocked you. Love makes this color.

"You cherish this one alone. Neither Clymene nor Rhode holds you, nor the most beautiful mother of Aeaean Circe, nor Clytie, who, though scorned, sought your embraces and had a heavy wound at that very time. Leucothoe made you forget many - she whom Eurynome, most beautiful of the fragrant race, brought forth in childbirth. But after the daughter grew, as the mother surpassed all women, so the daughter surpassed her mother.

"Her father Orchamus ruled the Achaemenian cities and was counted seventh from ancient Belus in origin.

"Under the western sky are the pastures of the Sun's horses. They have ambrosia instead of grass. This nourishes their limbs tired from daily service and restores them for labor. While the four-footed horses there crop the heavenly fodder and night fulfills its turn, the god entered his beloved chambers, changed into the appearance of her mother Eurynome. Among twice-six servants, he saw Leucothoe by the lamps, drawing smooth threads with her turned spindle.

"So when he'd given kisses as if a mother to her dear daughter, he said, 'It's a secret matter. Servants, withdraw and don't take from a mother the right to speak secrets.' They obeyed and, with the chamber left without witness, the god said:

"'I'm the one who measures the long year, who sees all things, through whom earth sees all things, the eye of the world. Believe me, you please me.'

"She was afraid. In her fear, both her distaff and spindle fell from her loosened fingers. Fear itself became her. He, delaying no longer, returned to his true appearance and accustomed brightness. Though the maiden was terrified by the unexpected sight, overcome by the god's brightness, she endured force without complaint.

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Solis amor fuerat) stimulataque paelicis ira
vulgat adulterium diffamatamque parenti
indicat. ille ferox inmansuetusque precantem
tendentemque manus ad lumina Solis et "ille
vim tulit invitae" dicentem defodit alta
crudus humo tumulumque super gravis addit harenae.
dissipat hunc radiis Hyperione natus iterque
dat tibi, qua possis defossos promere vultus;
nec tu iam poteras enectum pondere terrae
tollere, nympha, caput corpusque exsangue iacebas:
nil illo fertur volucrum moderator equorum
post Phaethonteos vidisse dolentius ignes.
ille quidem gelidos radiorum viribus artus
si queat in vivum temptat revocare calorem;
sed quoniam tantis fatum conatibus obstat,
nectare odorato sparsit corpusque locumque
multaque praequestus "tanges tamen aethera" dixit.
protinus inbutum caelesti nectare corpus
delicuit terramque suo madefecit odore,
virgaque per glaebas sensim radicibus actis
turea surrexit tumulumque cacumine rupit.
'At Clytien, quamvis amor excusare dolorem
indiciumque dolor poterat, non amplius auctor
lucis adit Venerisque modum sibi fecit in illa.
tabuit ex illo dementer amoribus usa;
nympharum inpatiens et sub Iove nocte dieque
sedit humo nuda nudis incompta capillis,
perque novem luces expers undaeque cibique
rore mero lacrimisque suis ieiunia pavit
nec se movit humo; tantum spectabat euntis
ora dei vultusque suos flectebat ad illum.
membra ferunt haesisse solo, partemque coloris
luridus exsangues pallor convertit in herbas;
est in parte rubor violaeque simillimus ora
flos tegit. illa suum, quamvis radice tenetur,
vertitur ad Solem mutataque servat amorem.'
dixerat, et factum mirabile ceperat auris;
pars fieri potuisse negant, pars omnia veros
posse deos memorant: sed non est Bacchus in illis.

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"Clytie envied her (for the Sun's love in her hadn't been moderate), and, goaded by anger at her rival, she spread word of the adultery and, defaming her, reported her to her father. He, fierce and harsh, though she prayed and stretched hands toward the Sun's light and said 'He took force from an unwilling girl,' cruelly buried her deep in the ground and added a heavy mound of sand above.

"Hyperion's son scattered this with his rays and gave you a path by which you could bring forth your buried face. But you couldn't now lift your head, crushed by the weight of earth, nymph, and your bloodless body lay there. Nothing more painful than this is said to have been seen by the controller of winged horses after Phaethon's fires.

"He indeed tried, if he could, to call back cold limbs to living warmth by the power of his rays. But since fate opposed such great efforts, he sprinkled the body and place with fragrant nectar and, having lamented much, said, 'Yet you'll touch heaven.'

"Immediately the body, soaked with heavenly nectar, melted and moistened the earth with its fragrance. A shoot, gradually driven through the soil with roots, rose up as frankincense and broke through the mound with its peak.

"But Clytie - though love could excuse her grief and grief her betrayal - the author of light visited her no more and put an end to his desire for her. From that time she wasted away, used madly by love. Impatient of the nymphs and under open sky night and day, she sat naked on the bare ground, unkempt with loose hair. For nine days, without water and food, she fed her fast with pure dew and her own tears alone. She didn't move from the ground. She only watched the face of the departing god and turned her own face toward him.

"They say her limbs stuck to the ground, and livid pallor changed part of her color to bloodless plants. Part is red. A flower most like a violet covers her face. She, though held by the root, turns toward the Sun and, changed, preserves her love."

She'd spoken, and the marvelous deed had seized their ears. Some denied it could have happened. Some said true gods could do all things. But Bacchus wasn't among them.

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Poscitur Alcithoe, postquam siluere sorores.
quae radio stantis percurrens stamina telae
'vulgatos taceo' dixit 'pastoris amores
Daphnidis Idaei, quem nymphe paelicis ira
contulit in saxum: tantus dolor urit amantes;
nec loquor, ut quondam naturae iure novato
ambiguus fuerit modo vir, modo femina Sithon.
te quoque, nunc adamas, quondam fidissime parvo,
Celmi, Iovi largoque satos Curetas ab imbri
et Crocon in parvos versum cum Smilace flores
praetereo dulcique animos novitate tenebo.
'Unde sit infamis, quare male fortibus undis
Salmacis enervet tactosque remolliat artus,
discite. causa latet, vis est notissima fontis.
Mercurio puerum diva Cythereide natum
naides Idaeis enutrivere sub antris,
cuius erat facies, in qua materque paterque
cognosci possent; nomen quoque traxit ab illis.
is tria cum primum fecit quinquennia, montes
deseruit patrios Idaque altrice relicta
ignotis errare locis, ignota videre
flumina gaudebat, studio minuente laborem.
ille etiam Lycias urbes Lyciaeque propinquos
Caras adit: videt hic stagnum lucentis ad imum
usque solum lymphae; non illic canna palustris
nec steriles ulvae nec acuta cuspide iunci;
perspicuus liquor est; stagni tamen ultima vivo
caespite cinguntur semperque virentibus herbis.
nympha colit, sed nec venatibus apta nec arcus
flectere quae soleat nec quae contendere cursu,
solaque naiadum celeri non nota Dianae.
saepe suas illi fama est dixisse sorores
"Salmaci, vel iaculum vel pictas sume pharetras
et tua cum duris venatibus otia misce!"
nec iaculum sumit nec pictas illa pharetras,
nec sua cum duris venatibus otia miscet,
sed modo fonte suo formosos perluit artus,
saepe Cytoriaco deducit pectine crines
et, quid se deceat, spectatas consulit undas;

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Salmacis and Hermaphroditus

Alcithoe was asked for her turn after the sisters fell silent. She, running her shuttle through the threads of the standing loom, said:

"I'll pass over the well-known loves of the shepherd Daphnis of Ida, whom a nymph's anger at her rival turned into stone - so great is the pain that burns lovers. Nor do I speak how Sithon once, by a changed law of nature, was ambiguous - now man, now woman. You too, now diamond, once most faithful to young Jupiter, Celmis, and the Curetes born from copious rain, and Crocon changed with Smilax into small flowers - these I pass over. I'll hold minds with sweet novelty.

"Learn why Salmacis is infamous, why she weakens with bad waters those who are strong and softens touched limbs. The cause is hidden, but the spring's power is most famous.

"The nymphs raised in Idaean caves a boy born to the divine Cytherean from Mercury. In his face, mother and father could be recognized. He took his name from them too. When he'd first completed three sets of five years, he left his father's mountains and, Ida his nurse abandoned, he rejoiced to wander through unknown places, to see unknown rivers - eagerness lessening labor.

"He also went to Lycian cities and Caria neighboring Lycia. Here he saw a pool transparent to its lowest bottom with clear water. No marsh reed was there, nor barren sedge, nor rush with sharp point. The liquid was clear. Yet the pool's edges were surrounded by living turf and ever-green grass.

"A nymph lived there, but one not fit for hunting nor accustomed to bend the bow nor to compete in running - the only naiad not known to swift Diana. Often, they say, her sisters told her:

"'Salmacis, either take up a javelin or painted quiver and mix your leisure with harsh hunting!' But she didn't take up a javelin or painted quiver, nor did she mix her leisure with harsh hunting. Instead, she'd bathe her beautiful limbs in her own spring, often draw down her hair with a Cytoran comb, and consult the reflected water about what would suit her.

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nunc perlucenti circumdata corpus amictu
mollibus aut foliis aut mollibus incubat herbis,
saepe legit flores. et tum quoque forte legebat,
cum puerum vidit visumque optavit habere.
'Nec tamen ante adiit, etsi properabat adire,
quam se conposuit, quam circumspexit amictus
et finxit vultum et meruit formosa videri.
tunc sic orsa loqui: "puer o dignissime credi
esse deus, seu tu deus es, potes esse Cupido,
sive es mortalis, qui te genuere, beati,
et frater felix, et fortunata profecto,
si qua tibi soror est, et quae dedit ubera nutrix;
sed longe cunctis longeque beatior illa,
si qua tibi sponsa est, si quam dignabere taeda.
haec tibi sive aliqua est, mea sit furtiva voluptas,
seu nulla est, ego sim, thalamumque ineamus eundem."
nais ab his tacuit. pueri rubor ora notavit;
nescit, enim, quid amor; sed et erubuisse decebat:
hic color aprica pendentibus arbore pomis
aut ebori tincto est aut sub candore rubenti,
cum frustra resonant aera auxiliaria, lunae.
poscenti nymphae sine fine sororia saltem
oscula iamque manus ad eburnea colla ferenti
"desinis, an fugio tecumque" ait "ista relinquo?"
Salmacis extimuit "loca" que "haec tibi libera trado,
hospes" ait simulatque gradu discedere verso,
tum quoque respiciens, fruticumque recondita silva
delituit flexuque genu submisit; at ille,
scilicet ut vacuis et inobservatus in herbis,
huc it et hinc illuc et in adludentibus undis
summa pedum taloque tenus vestigia tinguit;
nec mora, temperie blandarum captus aquarum
mollia de tenero velamina corpore ponit.
tum vero placuit, nudaeque cupidine formae
Salmacis exarsit; flagrant quoque lumina nymphae,
non aliter quam cum puro nitidissimus orbe
opposita speculi referitur imagine Phoebus;
vixque moram patitur, vix iam sua gaudia differt,
iam cupit amplecti, iam se male continet amens.

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"Now, wrapped in translucent garment, she'd lie on soft leaves or soft grass. Often she'd pick flowers. And then too she happened to be picking them when she saw the boy and desired to have what she'd seen.

"Yet she didn't approach, though she hurried to approach, until she'd composed herself, inspected her garments, arranged her expression, and deserved to seem beautiful. Then she began to speak thus:

"'O boy most worthy to be believed a god - if you're a god, you could be Cupid. If you're mortal, blessed are those who begot you, and your brother is fortunate, and truly fortunate is your sister, if you have one, and the nurse who gave you her breasts. But far, far more blessed than all is she, if there's any betrothed to you, if you'll consider any worthy of the torch. If there's anyone, let my pleasure be secret. If there's none, let me be the one, and let us enter the same chamber.'

"The naiad fell silent from these words. The boy's blush marked his face. He didn't know what love was, but blushing became him too. This was the color of fruit hanging from a tree in sun, or tinted ivory, or of red beneath whiteness when bronze sounds as help in vain for the eclipsed moon.

"To the nymph endlessly seeking at least sisterly kisses and now bringing hands to his ivory neck, he said, 'Will you stop, or will I flee and leave you along with this place?'

"Salmacis was frightened and said, 'I grant these places free to you, stranger,' and pretended to leave with turned step. Even then looking back, hidden and concealed in the thicket's forest, she crouched with bent knee. But he, obviously thinking himself unwatched in the empty grass, went here and there and, in the playful water, dipped the tops of his feet and soles to the ankle.

"Without delay, captured by the mild water's warmth, he removed the soft garments from his tender body. Then truly she was pleased, and burning with desire for his naked form, Salmacis blazed. The nymph's eyes also flamed - not otherwise than when the Sun, most shining in pure orb, is reflected back in a mirror's opposite image. She scarcely endured delay, scarcely now put off her joys. Now she wanted to embrace, now she scarcely contained herself, mad.

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ille cavis velox adplauso corpore palmis
desilit in latices alternaque bracchia ducens
in liquidis translucet aquis, ut eburnea si quis
signa tegat claro vel candida lilia vitro.
"vicimus et meus est" exclamat nais, et omni
veste procul iacta mediis inmittitur undis,
pugnantemque tenet, luctantiaque oscula carpit,
subiectatque manus, invitaque pectora tangit,
et nunc hac iuveni, nunc circumfunditur illac;
denique nitentem contra elabique volentem
inplicat ut serpens, quam regia sustinet ales
sublimemque rapit: pendens caput illa pedesque
adligat et cauda spatiantes inplicat alas;
utve solent hederae longos intexere truncos,
utque sub aequoribus deprensum polypus hostem
continet ex omni dimissis parte flagellis.
perstat Atlantiades speretaque gaudia nymphae
denegat; illa premit commissaque corpore toto
sicut inhaerebat, "pugnes licet, inprobe," dixit,
"non tamen effugies. ita, di, iubeatis, et istum
nulla dies a me nec me deducat ab isto."
vota suos habuere deos; nam mixta duorum
corpora iunguntur, faciesque inducitur illis
una. velut, si quis conducat cortice ramos,
crescendo iungi pariterque adolescere cernit,
sic ubi conplexu coierunt membra tenaci,
nec duo sunt et forma duplex, nec femina dici
nec puer ut possit, neutrumque et utrumque videntur.
'Ergo ubi se liquidas, quo vir descenderat, undas
semimarem fecisse videt mollitaque in illis
membra, manus tendens, sed iam non voce virili
Hermaphroditus ait: "nato date munera vestro,
et pater et genetrix, amborum nomen habenti:
quisquis in hos fontes vir venerit, exeat inde
semivir et tactis subito mollescat in undis!"
motus uterque parens nati rata verba biformis
fecit et incesto fontem medicamine tinxit.'
Finis erat dictis, et adhuc Minyeia proles
urguet opus spernitque deum festumque profanat,

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"He, swift, slapped his cupped palms against his body and leaped into the water and, moving alternating arms, shone through in the clear water - as if someone covered ivory figures or white lilies with clear glass.

"'I've won and he's mine!' the naiad cried out and, all clothing thrown far away, plunged into the middle waves and held him struggling, snatched kisses from him fighting, thrust hands beneath, touched unwilling breasts, and now clung to the youth on this side, now on that.

"Finally, though he strained against her and wanted to slip away, she wrapped around him like a serpent that the royal bird seizes and carries high. Hanging, it binds his head and feet and winds its tail around his spreading wings - or as ivy usually weaves long trunks, or as an octopus, when it's seized an enemy beneath the waves, holds it with tentacles sent out from every side.

"The descendant of Atlas persisted and denied the nymph her hoped joys. She pressed close and, with her whole body joined, clung just as she was and said, 'Though you fight, scoundrel, you won't escape. So, gods, command, and may no day separate him from me or me from him!'

"Her prayers found their gods. For the two bodies, mixed, were joined and one face was put upon them. As when someone grafts bark onto branches and sees them, growing, join and mature together, so when their limbs united in tenacious embrace, they weren't two, and their form was double. Neither female could be said nor boy - they seemed neither and both.

"So when Hermaphroditus saw that the clear waters into which he'd descended as male had made him half-male and that his limbs had been softened in them, stretching out hands but now no longer with a man's voice, he said:

"'Grant gifts to your son - both father and mother - to one who bears the name of both: whoever comes as a man into this spring, may he leave half-male and suddenly soften when the water touches him!'

"Both moved parents made the words of their two-formed son binding and stained the spring with unholy drug."

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tympana cum subito non adparentia raucis
obstrepuere sonis, et adunco tibia cornu
tinnulaque aera sonant; redolent murraeque crocique,
resque fide maior, coepere virescere telae
inque hederae faciem pendens frondescere vestis;
pars abit in vites, et quae modo fila fuerunt,
palmite mutantur; de stamine pampinus exit;
purpura fulgorem pictis adcommodat uvis.
iamque dies exactus erat, tempusque subibat,
quod tu nec tenebras nec possis dicere lucem,
sed cum luce tamen dubiae confinia noctis:
tecta repente quati pinguesque ardere videntur
lampades et rutilis conlucere ignibus aedes
falsaque saevarum simulacra ululare ferarum,
fumida iamdudum latitant per tecta sorores
diversaeque locis ignes ac lumina vitant,
dumque petunt tenebras, parvos membrana per artus
porrigitur tenuique includit bracchia pinna;
nec qua perdiderint veterem ratione figuram,
scire sinunt tenebrae: non illas pluma levavit,
sustinuere tamen se perlucentibus alis
conataeque loqui minimam et pro corpore vocem
emittunt peraguntque levi stridore querellas.
tectaque, non silvas celebrant lucemque perosae
nocte volant seroque tenent a vespere nomen.
Tum vero totis Bacchi memorabile Thebis
numen erat, magnasque novi matertera vires
narrat ubique dei de totque sororibus expers
una doloris erat, nisi quem fecere sorores:
adspicit hanc natis thalamoque Athamantis habentem
sublimes animos et alumno numine Iuno
nec tulit et secum: 'potuit de paelice natus
vertere Maeonios pelagoque inmergere nautas
et laceranda suae nati dare viscera matri
et triplices operire novis Minyeidas alis:
nil poterit Iuno nisi inultos flere dolores?
idque mihi satis est? haec una potentia nostra est?
ipse docet, quid agam (fas est et ab hoste doceri),
quidque furor valeat, Penthea caede satisque

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The end was to her words, and still Minyas' offspring pressed on with work and spurned the god and profaned his festival, when suddenly drums, though not visible, resounded with hoarse sounds, and the flute with curved horn and tinkling bronze sounded. Myrrh and crocus smelled sweet.

The Minyeides Transformed

A thing greater than belief - the looms began to grow green, and the hanging cloth to leaf out in ivy's form. Part went into vines, and what just now had been threads changed into vine-tendrils. Vine leaves came out from the warp. Purple gave its gleam to painted grapes.

And now the day had passed, and time approached that you could call neither darkness nor light, but still the boundary of doubtful night with light. Suddenly the roof seemed to shake and lamps seemed to burn with oil and the house to glow with ruddy fires and false images of savage beasts to howl.

For some time now the sisters hid through the smoky dwelling, and in different places they avoided the fires and light. While they sought darkness, a membrane stretched over their small limbs and enclosed their arms with thin wing. The darkness didn't allow them to know by what method they'd lost their old shape. No feather lifted them, yet they supported themselves on translucent wings. When they tried to speak, they sent out the tiniest voice in proportion to their bodies and made complaints with light squeaking. They frequented roofs, not forests. Hating light, they fly at night and take their name from the late evening.

Juno's Revenge on Ino

Then truly Bacchus' power was memorable throughout all Thebes, and his aunt everywhere narrated the great strength of the new god. Of so many sisters, she alone was without grief except what her sisters had made. Juno saw her with lofty spirits from her children and marriage to Athamas and her foster-god, and couldn't bear it.

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ac super ostendit: cur non stimuletur eatque
per cognata suis exempla furoribus Ino?'
Est via declivis funesta nubila taxo:
ducit ad infernas per muta silentia sedes;
Styx nebulas exhalat iners, umbraeque recentes
descendunt illac simulacraque functa sepulcris:
pallor hiemsque tenent late loca senta, novique,
qua sit iter, manes, Stygiam quod ducat ad urbem,
ignorant, ubi sit nigri fera regia Ditis.
mille capax aditus et apertas undique portas
urbs habet, utque fretum de tota flumina terra,
sic omnes animas locus accipit ille nec ulli
exiguus populo est turbamve accedere sentit.
errant exsangues sine corpore at ossibus umbrae,
parsque forum celebrant, pars imi tecta tyranni,
pars aliquas artes, antiquae imitamina vitae.
Sustinet ire illuc caelesti sede relicta
(tantum odiis iraeque dabat) Saturnia Iuno;
quo simul intravit sacroque a corpore pressum
ingemuit limen, tria Cerberus extulit ora
et tres latratus semel edidit; illa sorores
Nocte vocat genitas, grave et inplacabile numen:
carceris ante fores clausas adamante sedebant
deque suis atros pectebant crinibus angues.
quam simul agnorunt inter caliginis umbras,
surrexere deae; sedes scelerata vocatur:
viscera praebebat Tityos lanianda novemque
iugeribus distentus erat; tibi, Tantale, nullae
deprenduntur aquae, quaeque inminet, effugit arbor;
aut petis aut urgues rediturum, Sisyphe, saxum;
volvitur Ixion et se sequiturque fugitque,
molirique suis letum patruelibus ausae
adsiduae repetunt, quas perdant, Belides undas.
Quos omnes acie postquam Saturnia torva
vidit et ante omnes Ixiona, rursus ab illo
Sisyphon adspiciens 'cur hic e fratribus' inquit
'perpetuas patitur poenas, Athamanta superbum
regia dives habet, qui me cum coniuge semper
sprevit?' et exponit causas odiique viaeque,

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She said to herself: "Could a son born from a concubine change the Maeonian sailors and plunge them in the sea and give a mother her son's vitals to be torn and cover the triple Minyeides with new wings - will Juno be able to do nothing but weep unavenged sorrows? Is that enough for me? Is this my only power?

"He himself teaches what I should do (it's right to be taught even by an enemy), and he's shown enough and more than enough what madness can do by Pentheus' slaughter. Why shouldn't Ino be goaded and go through examples related to her own madness?"

There's a downward path, gloomy with deadly yew. It leads to the infernal seats through mute silence. Sluggish Styx exhales mists, and fresh shades descend there and ghosts of those who've had funerals. Pallor and winter hold the neglected places widely. New shades don't know where the path is that leads to the Stygian city, where the fierce palace of black Dis is.

The city has a thousand entrances with capacity and gates open everywhere. As the sea from all earth receives rivers, so that place receives all souls and isn't too small for any population nor feels a crowd approaching. Bloodless shades without body or bones wander. Some frequent the forum, some the dwelling of the lower tyrant, some pursue some arts, imitations of ancient life.

Juno, daughter of Saturn, endured going there, her heavenly seat abandoned - so much did she give to hatred and anger. When she entered and the threshold, pressed by her sacred body, groaned, three-headed Cerberus raised his three mouths and gave three barks at once. She called the sisters born of Night, a grave and implacable power.

They sat before the prison's doors closed with adamant and combed black snakes from their hair. When they recognized her among the shadows of darkness, the goddesses rose. It's called the wicked seat. Tityos offered his vitals to be torn and was stretched over nine acres. You, Tantalus, seized no waters, and the tree that loomed fled. Either you seek or push the stone about to return, Sisyphus. Ixion turned and followed and fled himself. The Belids, who dared to plot death for their male cousins, continually sought again the waters they'd lose.

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quidque velit: quod vellet, erat, ne regia Cadmi
staret, et in facinus traherent Athamanta sorores.
imperium, promissa, preces confundit in unum
sollicitatque deas: sic haec Iunone locuta,
Tisiphone canos, ut erat, turbata capillos
movit et obstantes reiecit ab ore colubras
atque ita 'non longis opus est ambagibus,' inquit;
'facta puta, quaecumque iubes; inamabile regnum
desere teque refer caeli melioris ad auras.'
laeta redit Iuno, quam caelum intrare parantem
roratis lustravit aquis Thaumantias Iris.
Nec mora, Tisiphone madefactam sanguine sumit
inportuna facem, fluidoque cruore rubentem
induitur pallam, tortoque incingitur angue
egrediturque domo. Luctus comitatur euntem
et Pavor et Terror trepidoque Insania vultu.
limine constiterat: postes tremuisse feruntur
Aeolii pallorque fores infecit acernas
solque locum fugit. monstris est territa coniunx,
territus est Athamas, tectoque exire parabant:
obstitit infelix aditumque obsedit Erinys,
nexaque vipereis distendens bracchia nodis
caesariem excussit: motae sonuere colubrae,
parsque iacent umeris, pars circum pectora lapsae
sibila dant saniemque vomunt linguisque coruscant.
inde duos mediis abrumpit crinibus angues
pestiferaque manu raptos inmisit, at illi
Inoosque sinus Athamanteosque pererrant
inspirantque graves animas; nec vulnera membris
ulla ferunt: mens est, quae diros sentiat ictus.
attulerat secum liquidi quoque monstra veneni,
oris Cerberei spumas et virus Echidnae
erroresque vagos caecaeque oblivia mentis
et scelus et lacrimas rabiemque et caedis amorem,
omnia trita simul, quae sanguine mixta recenti
coxerat aere cavo viridi versata cicuta;
dumque pavent illi, vergit furiale venenum
pectus in amborum praecordiaque intima movit.
tum face iactata per eundem saepius orbem

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When Saturn's daughter had seen all these with fierce gaze, and before all Ixion, but looking back from him at Sisyphus, she said, "Why does he from his brothers endure perpetual punishment while proud Athamas' rich palace has him - he who along with his wife always scorned me?"

She explained the causes of her hatred and journey, and what she wanted. What she wanted was that Cadmus' palace shouldn't stand and that the Furies would drag Athamas into crime. She mixed command, promises, and prayers into one and urged the goddesses.

When Juno had spoken thus, Tisiphone, disturbed as she was, moved her gray hair and threw back obstructing snakes from her face and said: "There's no need for long circumlocutions. Consider done whatever you command. Desert this unlovable kingdom and return to heaven's better air."

Juno returned happy. As she was preparing to enter heaven, Iris, daughter of Thaumas, purified her with sprinkled waters.

Without delay, troublesome Tisiphone took up a torch soaked with blood and put on a robe red with flowing gore and girded herself with a twisted snake and left her home. Grief accompanied her going, and Terror and Fear and Madness with trembling face.

She stood in the threshold. The doorposts of the Aeolian palace are said to have trembled, and pallor infected the maple doors, and the sun fled the place. The wife was terrified by the portents, Athamas was terrified, and they were preparing to leave the dwelling. The unlucky Fury stood in the way and blocked the entrance.

Stretching her arms, knotted with viperous coils, she shook her hair. The moved snakes sounded. Some lay on her shoulders, some slipped around her breast, giving hisses and vomiting gore and flashing their tongues.

Then she tore two snakes from the middle of her hair and, seizing them with plague-bearing hand, hurled them. But they wandered through Ino's and Athamas' robes, breathing heavy breaths. They brought no wounds to limbs - the mind is what felt the terrible blows.

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consequitur motis velociter ignibus ignes.
sic victrix iussique potens ad inania magni
regna redit Ditis sumptumque recingitur anguem.
Protinus Aeolides media furibundus in aula
clamat 'io, comites, his retia tendite silvis!
hic modo cum gemina visa est mihi prole leaena'
utque ferae sequitur vestigia coniugis amens
deque sinu matris ridentem et parva Learchum
bracchia tendentem rapit et bis terque per auras
more rotat fundae rigidoque infantia saxo
discutit ora ferox; tum denique concita mater,
seu dolor hoc fecit seu sparsi causa veneni,
exululat passisque fugit male sana capillis
teque ferens parvum nudis, Melicerta, lacertis
'euhoe Bacche' sonat: Bacchi sub nomine Iuno
risit et 'hos usus praestet tibi' dixit 'alumnus!'
inminet aequoribus scopulus: pars ima cavatur
fluctibus et tectas defendit ab imbribus undas,
summa riget frontemque in apertum porrigit aequor;
occupat hunc (vires insania fecerat) Ino
seque super pontum nullo tardata timore
mittit onusque suum; percussa recanduit unda.
At Venus, inmeritae neptis miserata labores,
sic patruo blandita suo est 'o numen aquarum,
proxima cui caelo cessit, Neptune, potestas,
magna quidem posco, sed tu miserere meorum,
iactari quos cernis in Ionio inmenso,
et dis adde tuis. aliqua et mihi gratia ponto est,
si tamen in medio quondam concreta profundo
spuma fui Graiumque manet mihi nomen ab illa.'
adnuit oranti Neptunus et abstulit illis,
quod mortale fuit, maiestatemque verendam
inposuit nomenque simul faciemque novavit
Leucothoeque deum cum matre Palaemona dixit.
Sidoniae comites, quantum valuere secutae
signa pedum, primo videre novissima saxo;
nec dubium de morte ratae Cadmeida palmis
deplanxere domum scissae cum veste capillos,
utque parum iustae nimiumque in paelice saevae

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She'd also brought with her monstrous liquid poisons: foam from Cerberus' mouth and the venom of the Echidna and wandering errors and blindness of mind and crime and tears and rage and love of slaughter - all ground together and mixed with fresh blood, cooked in a hollow bronze cauldron, stirred with green hemlock.

While they were afraid, she poured furious poison into the chest of both and moved their innermost hearts. Then, waving her torch through the same circle many times, she pursued fires swiftly with moving flames. So, victorious and powerful in her commands, she returned to great Dis' empty kingdom and ungirded the snake she'd put on.

Immediately the Aeolid, raving in the middle of his hall, shouted, "Hey, companions, spread nets in these woods! Here I just saw a lioness with twin offspring," and, mad, he followed his wife's tracks like a beast's. From his mother's lap he snatched Learchus, laughing and stretching his little arms, and, like a sling, whirled the infant twice and three times through the air and savagely dashed his baby face on hard stone.

Then finally his mother, stirred - whether grief did this or the poison's cause that had been scattered - howled out and, not sane, fled with loosened hair, and carrying you, little Melicertes, in naked arms, she sounded "Euhoe Bacchus!" At Bacchus' name Juno laughed and said, "May your foster-child grant you these uses!"

A cliff hung over the waters. The lowest part was hollowed by waves and defended the covered waters from rain. The top was rigid and extended its forehead to the open sea. Ino (madness had made her strong) seized this and, slowed by no fear, cast herself over the sea with her burden. The struck wave glowed white.

But Venus, pitying her undeserving granddaughter's labors, coaxed her uncle thus: "O power of waters, whose power, second to heaven, yielded to Neptune, great things indeed I ask, but pity my people whom you see tossed in the immense Ionian, and add them to your gods. I too have some favor with the sea, if indeed I was once formed from foam condensed in the deep and my Greek name remains from it."

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invidiam fecere deae. convicia Iuno
non tulit et 'faciam vos ipsas maxima' dixit
'saevitiae monimenta meae'; res dicta secuta est.
nam quae praecipue fuerat pia, 'persequar' inquit
'in freta reginam' saltumque datura moveri
haud usquam potuit scopuloque adfixa cohaesit;
altera, dum solito temptat plangore ferire
pectora, temptatos sensit riguisse lacertos;
illa, manus ut forte tetenderat in maris undas;
saxea facta manus in easdem porrigit undas;
huius, ut arreptum laniabat vertice crinem,
duratos subito digitos in crine videres:
quo quaeque in gestu deprensa est, haesit in illo.
pars volucres factae, quae nunc quoque gurgite in illo
aequora destringunt summis Ismenides alis.
Nescit Agenorides natam parvumque nepotem
aequoris esse deos; luctu serieque malorum
victus et ostentis, quae plurima viderat, exit
conditor urbe sua, tamquam fortuna locorum,
non sua se premeret, longisque erroribus actus
contigit Illyricos profuga cum coniuge fines.
iamque malis annisque graves dum prima retractant
fata domus releguntque suos sermone labores,
'num sacer ille mea traiectus cuspide serpens'
Cadmus ait 'fuerat, tum cum Sidone profectus
vipereos sparsi per humum, nova semina, dentes?
quem si cura deum tam certa vindicat ira,
ipse precor serpens in longam porrigar alvum.'
dixit, et ut serpens in longam tenditur alvum
durataeque cuti squamas increscere sentit
nigraque caeruleis variari corpora guttis
in pectusque cadit pronus, commissaque in unum
paulatim tereti tenuantur acumine crura.
bracchia iam restant: quae restant bracchia tendit
et lacrimis per adhuc humana fluentibus ora
'accede, o coniunx, accede, miserrima' dixit,
'dumque aliquid superest de me, me tange manumque
accipe, dum manus est, dum non totum occupat anguis.'
ille quidem vult plura loqui, sed lingua repente

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Neptune nodded to her prayer and took from them what was mortal and imposed revered majesty and changed their name and appearance together, and called the god with his mother Leucothoe Palaemon.

The Transformation of Cadmus and Harmonia

The Sidonian companions, as much as they could, followed the footprints and saw the last tracks on the rock. Not doubting her death, they beat the Cadmean house with their palms and tore their hair with their clothing, and made accusation against the goddess as too unjust and too savage to a rival.

Juno didn't bear their insults and said, "I'll make you yourselves the greatest memorials of my savagery." The deed followed the words. For she who had been especially dutiful said, "I'll follow the queen into the waters," and about to give a leap, she couldn't move anywhere and stuck, fastened to the rock.

Another, when she tried to strike her breast with accustomed beating, felt her attempted arms had stiffened. Another, as she happened to have stretched hands into the sea's waves, became stone - a stone hand stretched to the same waves. You'd see this one's fingers suddenly hardened in her hair as she tore her seized head.

In whatever gesture each was caught, she stuck in that. Some became birds, which even now in that gulf skim the waters with their Ismenid wings.

Agenor's son didn't know his daughter and small grandson were sea gods. Defeated by grief and the series of disasters and the many portents he'd seen, the founder left his city, as if the fortune of the place, not his own, pressed him. Driven by long wanderings, he reached Illyrian borders with his fugitive wife.

And now, heavy with troubles and years, as they retraced their house's first fates and reviewed their labors in conversation, Cadmus said:

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in partes est fissa duas, nec verba volenti
sufficiunt, quotiensque aliquos parat edere questus,
sibilat: hanc illi vocem natura reliquit.
nuda manu feriens exclamat pectora coniunx:
'Cadme, mane teque, infelix, his exue monstris!
Cadme, quid hoc? ubi pes, ubi sunt umerique manusque
et color et facies et, dum loquor, omnia? cur non
me quoque, caelestes, in eandem vertitis anguem?'
dixerat, ille suae lambebat coniugis ora
inque sinus caros, veluti cognosceret, ibat
et dabat amplexus adsuetaque colla petebat.
quisquis adest (aderant comites), terretur; at illa
lubrica permulcet cristati colla draconis,
et subito duo sunt iunctoque volumine serpunt,
donec in adpositi nemoris subiere latebras,
nunc quoque nec fugiunt hominem nec vulnere laedunt
quidque prius fuerint, placidi meminere dracones.
Sed tamen ambobus versae solacia formae
magna nepos dederat, quem debellata colebat
India, quem positis celebrabat Achaia templis;
solus Abantiades ab origine cretus eadem
Acrisius superest, qui moenibus arceat urbis
Argolicae contraque deum ferat arma genusque
non putet esse Iovis: neque enim Iovis esse putabat
Persea, quem pluvio Danae conceperat auro.
mox tamen Acrisium (tanta est praesentia veri)
tam violasse deum quam non agnosse nepotem
paenitet: inpositus iam caelo est alter, at alter
viperei referens spolium memorabile monstri
aera carpebat tenerum stridentibus alis,
cumque super Libycas victor penderet harenas,
Gorgonei capitis guttae cecidere cruentae;
quas humus exceptas varios animavit in angues,
unde frequens illa est infestaque terra colubris.
Inde per inmensum ventis discordibus actus
nunc huc, nunc illuc exemplo nubis aquosae
fertur et ex alto seductas aethere longe
despectat terras totumque supervolat orbem.
ter gelidas Arctos, ter Cancri bracchia vidit,

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"Was that sacred serpent I pierced with my spear sacred when I went from Sidon and scattered the viper's teeth, new seeds, over the ground? If the gods' care avenges it with such sure anger, I myself pray to be stretched as a serpent into a long belly."

He spoke, and as a serpent he was stretched into a long belly. He felt scales growing on his hardened skin and black spots varying his bluish body. He fell prone on his chest, and his legs, joined into one, gradually tapered to a smooth point.

His arms still remained. What remained as arms he stretched out and, with tears flowing through still-human face, said, "Come, O wife, come, most miserable! While something remains of me, touch me and take my hand while it's still a hand, while the snake doesn't possess all."

He indeed wanted to speak more, but suddenly his tongue was split in two, and words didn't suffice for his will. Whenever he prepared to make some complaints, he hissed. This voice nature left him.

His wife, striking her naked breast with her hand, cried out, "Cadmus, stay! Remove yourself, unlucky one, from these monsters! Cadmus, what's this? Where are your feet, where are shoulders and hands and color and face and - while I speak - everything? Why don't you too, heavenly ones, turn me into the same serpent?"

She'd spoken. He licked his wife's face and went into her dear lap, as if he recognized it, and gave embraces and sought the neck he knew.

Whoever was present (companions were present) was terrified. But she stroked the smooth neck of the crested dragon, and suddenly there were two and, with joined coil, they crept until they entered the hiding places of a nearby grove.

Even now they neither flee people nor harm with wounds, and, peaceful, they remember what they were before.

Perseus and Andromeda

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saepe sub occasus, saepe est ablatus in ortus,
iamque cadente die, veritus se credere nocti,
constitit Hesperio, regnis Atlantis, in orbe
exiguamque petit requiem, dum Lucifer ignes
evocet Aurorae, currus Aurora diurnos.
hic hominum cunctos ingenti corpore praestans
Iapetionides Atlas fuit: ultima tellus
rege sub hoc et pontus erat, qui Solis anhelis
aequora subdit equis et fessos excipit axes.
mille greges illi totidemque armenta per herbas
errabant, et humum vicinia nulla premebat;
arboreae frondes auro radiante nitentes
ex auro ramos, ex auro poma tegebant.
'hospes' ait Perseus illi, 'seu gloria tangit
te generis magni, generis mihi Iuppiter auctor;
sive es mirator rerum, mirabere nostras;
hospitium requiemque peto.' memor ille vetustae
sortis erat; Themis hanc dederat Parnasia sortem:
'tempus, Atlas, veniet, tua quo spoliabitur auro
arbor, et hunc praedae titulum Iove natus habebit.'
id metuens solidis pomaria clauserat Atlas
moenibus et vasto dederat servanda draconi
arcebatque suis externos finibus omnes.
huic quoque 'vade procul, ne longe gloria rerum,
quam mentiris' ait, 'longe tibi Iuppiter absit!'
vimque minis addit manibusque expellere temptat
cunctantem et placidis miscentem fortia dictis.
viribus inferior (quis enim par esset Atlantis
viribus?) 'at, quoniam parvi tibi gratia nostra est,
accipe munus!' ait laevaque a parte Medusae
ipse retro versus squalentia protulit ora.
quantus erat, mons factus Atlas: nam barba comaeque
in silvas abeunt, iuga sunt umerique manusque,
quod caput ante fuit, summo est in monte cacumen,
ossa lapis fiunt; tum partes altus in omnes
crevit in inmensum (sic, di, statuistis) et omne
cum tot sideribus caelum requievit in illo.
Clauserat Hippotades Aetnaeo carcere ventos,
admonitorque operum caelo clarissimus alto

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But still a great consolation for their changed form was given to both by their grandson, whom conquered India worshiped, whom Achaia celebrated with established temples. Only Abantid Acrisius, born from the same origin, remained, who shut him from the walls of his Argolic city and bore arms against the god and didn't think he was Jupiter's race. Nor did he think Perseus was Jupiter's, whom Danaë had conceived in the golden rain.

Soon, however, Acrisius (so great is truth's presence) repented both having violated the god and having not acknowledged his grandson. One was already placed in heaven. But the other, carrying the memorable spoils of the viper-haired monster, was cleaving the air with whirring wings.

While victorious he hung over Libyan sands, bloody drops fell from the Gorgon's head. The earth received these and brought them to life as various snakes. From this, that land is crowded with hostile serpents.

From there, driven through immense space by discordant winds, now here, now there like a watery cloud, he was carried and from high heaven, withdrawn far away, looked down on lands and flew over the whole world. Three times he saw the frozen Bears, three times the Crab's claws. Often he was carried beneath the west, often to the east.

And now with day falling, fearing to trust himself to night, he stopped in the western world, the kingdom of Atlas, and sought brief rest until the Morning Star should call Aurora's fires, Aurora the daily chariot.

Here was Atlas, son of Iapetus, surpassing all men in huge body. This king ruled the farthest land and the sea that received the Sun's panting horses and their tired axles beneath its waters.

A thousand flocks and as many herds wandered for him through the grass, and no neighborhood pressed the ground. Tree leaves shining with radiant gold covered branches of gold and fruit of gold.

"Guest," Perseus said to him, "if glory of great race touches you, Jupiter is the author of my race. If you're an admirer of deeds, you'll admire ours. I seek hospitality and rest."

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Lucifer ortus erat: pennis ligat ille resumptis
parte ab utraque pedes teloque accingitur unco
et liquidum motis talaribus aera findit.
gentibus innumeris circumque infraque relictis
Aethiopum populos Cepheaque conspicit arva.
illic inmeritam maternae pendere linguae
Andromedan poenas iniustus iusserat Ammon;
quam simul ad duras religatam bracchia cautes
vidit Abantiades, nisi quod levis aura capillos
moverat et tepido manabant lumina fletu,
marmoreum ratus esset opus; trahit inscius ignes
et stupet et visae correptus imagine formae
paene suas quatere est oblitus in aere pennas.
ut stetit, 'o' dixit 'non istis digna catenis,
sed quibus inter se cupidi iunguntur amantes,
pande requirenti nomen terraeque tuumque,
et cur vincla geras.' primo silet illa nec audet
adpellare virum virgo, manibusque modestos
celasset vultus, si non religata fuisset;
lumina, quod potuit, lacrimis inplevit obortis.
saepius instanti, sua ne delicta fateri
nolle videretur, nomen terraeque suumque,
quantaque maternae fuerit fiducia formae,
indicat, et nondum memoratis omnibus unda
insonuit, veniensque inmenso belua ponto
inminet et latum sub pectore possidet aequor.
conclamat virgo: genitor lugubris et una
mater adest, ambo miseri, sed iustius illa,
nec secum auxilium, sed dignos tempore fletus
plangoremque ferunt vinctoque in corpore adhaerent,
cum sic hospes ait 'lacrimarum longa manere
tempora vos poterunt, ad opem brevis hora ferendam est.
hanc ego si peterem Perseus Iove natus et illa,
quam clausam inplevit fecundo Iuppiter auro,
Gorgonis anguicomae Perseus superator et alis
aerias ausus iactatis ire per auras,
praeferrer cunctis certe gener; addere tantis
dotibus et meritum, faveant modo numina, tempto:
ut mea sit servata mea virtute, paciscor.'

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He remembered an old oracle. Themis of Parnassus had given this oracle: "A time will come, Atlas, when your tree will be despoiled of gold, and a son born of Jupiter will have the title of this booty."

Fearing this, Atlas had enclosed his orchard with solid walls and had given it to a huge dragon to guard and kept all outsiders from his borders. To this one too he said, "Go far away, lest the glory of deeds you falsely claim be far from you, and Jupiter be far from you!"

He added violence to threats and tried with hands to expel him, hesitating and mixing brave words with calm ones. Inferior in strength (for who would be equal to Atlas' strength?), he said, "Well then, since your gratitude for me is small, receive a gift!" And, himself turned backward, from the left side he held forth Medusa's squalid face.

As great as he was, Atlas became a mountain. For his beard and hair went into forests, his shoulders and hands were ridges, what before had been his head was the peak on the mountain's top, his bones became stone. Then, grown tall in all parts, he increased to immense size (thus you, gods, ordained), and all heaven with all its stars rested on him.

Hippotes' son had shut the winds in their Aetnaean prison, and the Morning Star, brightest admonisher of work, had risen high in the sky. He bound wings again to his feet on each side and girded himself with his curved weapon and cut the clear air with moving sandals.

With countless nations left around and below, he saw the Ethiopian peoples and Cepheus' fields. There unjust Ammon had ordered Andromeda to pay undeserved punishment for her mother's tongue. When the Abantid saw her with arms bound to hard rocks - except that light breeze had moved her hair and warm tears flowed from her eyes - he'd have thought she was a marble work. Unknowing, he drew fires and was amazed and, seized by the image of the beauty he saw, he almost forgot to beat his wings in air.

When he stopped, he said, "O maiden not worthy of these chains but of those by which eager lovers are joined to each other, reveal to me asking your name and your land's and why you wear bonds."

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accipiunt legem (quis enim dubitaret?) et orant
promittuntque super regnum dotale parentes.
Ecce, velut navis praefixo concita rostro
sulcat aquas iuvenum sudantibus acta lacertis,
sic fera dimotis inpulsu pectoris undis;
tantum aberat scopulis, quantum Balearica torto
funda potest plumbo medii transmittere caeli,
cum subito iuvenis pedibus tellure repulsa
arduus in nubes abiit: ut in aequore summo
umbra viri visa est, visam fera saevit in umbram,
utque Iovis praepes, vacuo cum vidit in arvo
praebentem Phoebo liventia terga draconem,
occupat aversum, neu saeva retorqueat ora,
squamigeris avidos figit cervicibus ungues,
sic celeri missus praeceps per inane volatu
terga ferae pressit dextroque frementis in armo
Inachides ferrum curvo tenus abdidit hamo.
vulnere laesa gravi modo se sublimis in auras
attollit, modo subdit aquis, modo more ferocis
versat apri, quem turba canum circumsona terret.
ille avidos morsus velocibus effugit alis
quaque patet, nunc terga cavis super obsita conchis,
nunc laterum costas, nunc qua tenuissima cauda
desinit in piscem, falcato verberat ense;
belua puniceo mixtos cum sanguine fluctus
ore vomit: maduere graves adspergine pennae.
nec bibulis ultra Perseus talaribus ausus
credere conspexit scopulum, qui vertice summo
stantibus exstat aquis, operitur ab aequore moto.
nixus eo rupisque tenens iuga prima sinistra
ter quater exegit repetita per ilia ferrum.
litora cum plausu clamor superasque deorum
inplevere domos: gaudent generumque salutant
auxiliumque domus servatoremque fatentur
Cassiope Cepheusque pater; resoluta catenis
incedit virgo, pretiumque et causa laboris.
ipse manus hausta victrices abluit unda,
anguiferumque caput dura ne laedat harena,
mollit humum foliis natasque sub aequore virgas

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At first she was silent and didn't dare address a man, a maiden. With modest hands she'd have hidden her face if she hadn't been bound. She filled her eyes with welling tears as she could. When he insisted more, lest she seem unwilling to confess her own faults, she revealed her name and her land's and how great her mother's confidence in her beauty had been.

She hadn't yet recounted everything when the wave roared and a monster came from the immense sea and loomed and possessed the wide water beneath its chest. The maiden cried out. Her father, mournful, and with him her mother were present - both miserable but she more justly. They brought no help but worthy-for-the-time weeping and lamentation and clung to the bound body.

Then the stranger said, "There can be long time for tears remaining for you. The hour for bringing help is brief. If I, Perseus born of Jupiter and her whom Jupiter, enclosed, filled with fertile gold, Perseus conqueror of the snake-haired Gorgon and one who dared to go through the airy air on beaten wings - if I should seek her, I'd certainly be preferred as son-in-law to all. To such great gifts I try to add merit too, if the gods favor. I bargain that she be mine, saved by my courage."

They accept the terms (for who would hesitate?) and beg and promise beyond that a kingdom as dowry, the parents.

Look - as a ship, driven with fixed prow, furrows the waters, driven by young men's sweating arms, so the beast with its chest's impact pushed waves aside. It was as far from the rocks as a Balearic sling can send lead through the middle of the sky when suddenly the youth, feet pushing from earth, shot high up into the clouds.

When his shadow was seen in the sea's surface, the beast raged at the shadow it saw. As Jupiter's bird, when it's seen a dragon in empty field offering its dark backs to the Sun, seizes it from behind lest it turn back its savage jaws and fixes eager talons in the scaly neck - so, sent headlong through empty space in swift flight, Perseus pressed the beast's back and, on its roaring right shoulder, Inachus' descendant plunged iron up to the curved barb.

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sternit et inponit Phorcynidos ora Medusae.
virga recens bibulaque etiamnum viva medulla
vim rapuit monstri tactuque induruit huius
percepitque novum ramis et fronde rigorem.
at pelagi nymphae factum mirabile temptant
pluribus in virgis et idem contingere gaudent
seminaque ex illis iterant iactata per undas:
nunc quoque curaliis eadem natura remansit,
duritiam tacto capiant ut ab aere quodque
vimen in aequore erat, fiat super aequora saxum.
Dis tribus ille focos totidem de caespite ponit,
laevum Mercurio, dextrum tibi, bellica virgo,
ara Iovis media est; mactatur vacca Minervae,
alipedi vitulus, taurus tibi, summe deorum.
protinus Andromedan et tanti praemia facti
indotata rapit; taedas Hymenaeus Amorque
praecutiunt; largis satiantur odoribus ignes,
sertaque dependent tectis et ubique lyraeque
tibiaque et cantus, animi felicia laeti
argumenta, sonant; reseratis aurea valvis
atria tota patent, pulchroque instructa paratu
Cepheni proceres ineunt convivia regis.
Postquam epulis functi generosi munere Bacchi
diffudere animos, cultusque genusque locorum
quaerit Lyncides moresque animumque virorum;
qui simul edocuit, 'nunc, o fortissime,' dixit
'fare, precor, Perseu, quanta virtute quibusque
artibus abstuleris crinita draconibus ora!'
narrat Agenorides gelido sub Atlante iacentem
esse locum solidae tutum munimine molis;
cuius in introitu geminas habitasse sorores
Phorcidas unius partitas luminis usum;
id se sollerti furtim, dum traditur, astu
supposita cepisse manu perque abdita longe
deviaque et silvis horrentia saxa fragosis
Gorgoneas tetigisse domos passimque per agros
perque vias vidisse hominum simulacra ferarumque
in silicem ex ipsis visa conversa Medusa.
se tamen horrendae clipei, quem laeva gerebat,

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Wounded by the heavy wound, now it lifted itself high in air, now it plunged under water, now it turned like a fierce boar that a surrounding crowd of dogs terrifies. He fled the eager bites with swift wings. Where it lay open, now the back covered with hollow shells, now the sides' ribs, now where the tail thinned out into fish, he struck with his curved sword.

The beast vomited mixed waves with red blood from its mouth. His wings grew heavy with spray. Perseus no longer dared trust his soaked sandals. He saw a rock that stood up with its highest peak from the still water, covered by the moved sea. Leaning on it and holding the cliff's first ridge with his left hand, three and four times he drove the repeated iron through its vitals.

Shores and the gods' homes above filled with applause and shouting. They rejoiced and greeted him as son-in-law and helper and savior of their house - Cassiope and father Cepheus confessed it. The maiden walked forth, freed from chains, the prize and cause of his labor.

He himself washed his victorious hands in drawn water. And lest the snake-bearing head harm the hard sand, he softened the ground with leaves and spread shoots born under water and placed Medusa Phorcys' daughter's face upon them.

The fresh shoot, still alive and with absorbent pith, seized the monster's power and at its touch hardened and received new stiffness in branches and leaves. The sea nymphs tried the marvelous thing on many more shoots and rejoiced that the same thing happened, and they repeated seeds cast through the waves. Even now the same nature remained for coral - that they take hardness from air and that what was a shoot in water becomes stone above water.

To three gods he built three altars from turf: the left to Mercury, the right to you, warrior maiden, Jupiter's altar in the middle. A cow was sacrificed to Minerva, a calf to the wing-footed one, a bull to you, highest of gods.

Immediately he seized Andromeda and the reward of such a deed without dowry. Hymenaeus and Amor shake torches before them. Fires are sated with generous fragrances. Garlands hang from roofs, and

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aere repercusso formam adspexisse Medusae,
dumque gravis somnus colubrasque ipsamque tenebat,
eripuisse caput collo; pennisque fugacem
Pegason et fratrem matris de sanguine natos.
Addidit et longi non falsa pericula cursus,
quae freta, quas terras sub se vidisset ab alto
et quae iactatis tetigisset sidera pennis;
ante exspectatum tacuit tamen. excipit unus
ex numero procerum quaerens, cur sola sororum
gesserit alternis inmixtos crinibus angues.
hospes ait: 'quoniam scitaris digna relatu,
accipe quaesiti causam. clarissima forma
multorumque fuit spes invidiosa procorum
illa, nec in tota conspectior ulla capillis
pars fuit: inveni, qui se vidisse referret.
hanc pelagi rector templo vitiasse Minervae
dicitur: aversa est et castos aegide vultus
nata Iovis texit, neve hoc inpune fuisset,
Gorgoneum crinem turpes mutavit in hydros.
nunc quoque, ut attonitos formidine terreat hostes,
pectore in adverso, quos fecit, sustinet angues.'

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everywhere lyres and flutes and songs - happy proofs of joyful spirits - sound. Golden halls, opened wide, stand fully open. Beautiful with splendid preparation, Cepheus' nobles enter the king's banquet.

After they'd performed the feast and spread their spirits with generous Bacchus' gift, Lyncides asked about the customs and nature of places and the manner and spirit of the men. When one instructed him, "Now, most brave one," he said, "tell, I pray, Perseus, with what courage and by what arts you bore off the head with snake hair."

The Agenoreid told that beneath cold Atlas there lay a place safe with the protection of solid mass. At its entrance lived twin sisters, the Phorcids, who shared the use of one eye. This he, by clever guile, stealthily captured with substituted hand while it was being passed. Then through remote, hidden places and rocks bristling with rough forests, he reached the Gorgons' homes. And throughout fields and paths he saw shapes of men and beasts changed to flint from seeing Medusa herself.

Yet he himself had looked at horrid Medusa's form in the bronze of the shield his left hand bore, reflected back. While heavy sleep held her and her snakes, he snatched the head from her neck. And wing-swift Pegasus and his brother were born from their mother's blood.

He added too the not-false dangers of his long journey - what seas, what lands he'd seen from on high, and what stars he'd touched with beaten wings. Yet he fell silent before expected.

One of the nobles' number asked, inquiring why alone of the sisters she'd worn snakes mixed in alternating hair. The guest said:

"Since you ask what's worthy of telling, receive the cause of what you've asked. She was most famous in beauty and the envious hope of many suitors. Of all her, no part was more conspicuous than her hair. I met one who said he'd seen her. They say the sea's ruler violated her in Minerva's temple. Jupiter's daughter turned away and covered her chaste face with her aegis. And lest this go unpunished, she changed the Gorgon's hair into foul snakes. Even now, to terrify stupefied enemies with fear, she bears on her opposing chest the snakes she made."

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BOOK 5

Dumque ea Cephenum medio Danaeius heros
agmine commemorat, fremida regalia turba
atria conplentur, nec coniugialia festa
qui canat est clamor, sed qui fera nuntiet arma;
inque repentinos convivia versa tumultus
adsimilare freto possis, quod saeva quietum
ventorum rabies motis exasperat undis.
primus in his Phineus, belli temerarius auctor,
fraxineam quatiens aeratae cuspidis hastam
'en' ait, 'en adsum praereptae coniugis ultor;
nec mihi te pennae nec falsum versus in aurum
Iuppiter eripiet!' conanti mittere Cepheus
'quid facis?' exclamat, 'quae te, germane, furentem
mens agit in facinus? meritisne haec gratia tantis
redditur? hac vitam servatae dote rependis?
quam tibi non Perseus, verum si quaeris, ademit,
sed grave Nereidum numen, sed corniger Ammon,
sed quae visceribus veniebat belua ponti
exsaturanda meis; illo tibi tempore rapta est,
quo peritura fuit, nisi si, crudelis, id ipsum
exigis, ut pereat, luctuque levabere nostro.
scilicet haud satis est, quod te spectante revincta est
et nullam quod opem patruus sponsusve tulisti;
insuper, a quoquam quod sit servata, dolebis
praemiaque eripies? quae si tibi magna videntur,
ex illis scopulis, ubi erant adfixa, petisses.
nunc sine, qui petiit, per quem haec non orba senectus,
ferre, quod et meritis et voce est pactus, eumque
non tibi, sed certae praelatum intellege morti.'
Ille nihil contra, sed et hunc et Persea vultu
alterno spectans petat hunc ignorat an illum:
cunctatusque brevi contortam viribus hastam,
quantas ira dabat, nequiquam in Persea misit.
ut stetit illa toro, stratis tum denique Perseus
exsiluit teloque ferox inimica remisso
pectora rupisset, nisi post altaria Phineus
isset: et (indignum) scelerato profuit ara.
fronte tamen Rhoeti non inrita cuspis adhaesit,
qui postquam cecidit ferrumque ex osse revulsum est
calcitrat et positas adspergit sanguine mensas.

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Perseus and Phineus

While the hero, son of Danaë, was recounting these things among the crowd of Cepheus' people, the royal halls filled with a riotous throng. This wasn't the clamor that sings of wedding festivals, but that which announces fierce war. The banquet, turned into sudden tumult, you could compare to a calm sea that savage winds' rage stirs up with moved waves.

First among these was Phineus, reckless instigator of war, shaking an ash-wood spear with bronze tip. "Look," he said, "look, I'm here, avenger of my stolen bride! Neither your wings nor Jupiter falsely turned to gold will snatch you from me!"

As he prepared to hurl it, Cepheus cried out, "What are you doing? Brother, what mad spirit drives you to this crime? Is this the gratitude returned for such great merit? Do you repay with this the dowry of a saved life? It wasn't Perseus - if you seek the truth - who took her from you, but the grave power of the Nereids, horned Ammon, and the beast that came from the sea's depths to be sated on my own flesh. She was stolen from you at that time when she was about to die - unless, cruel man, you demand exactly that, that she perish, and you'll be lightened by our grief.

"Obviously it's not enough that you watched as she was bound and you, uncle and betrothed, brought no help. Beyond that, you'll grieve that she was saved by anyone and will snatch away the reward? If it seems great to you, you should have sought it from those rocks where she was fastened. Now allow him who sought her, through whom this old age isn't childless, to take what he bargained for both by merit and by word, and understand that he was preferred to you not, but to certain death."

Phineus said nothing in reply but looked alternately at Cepheus and Perseus, uncertain which one to attack. Hesitating briefly, he hurled the spear, twisted with all the strength anger gave, in vain at Perseus. When it stuck in the couch, then finally Perseus leaped up from the cushions and, fierce, would have pierced his enemy's chest with the thrown weapon - except that Phineus went behind the altars. And (shameful!) the altar helped the wicked man.

Yet the spear wasn't useless - it stuck in Rhoetus' forehead. After he fell and the iron was pulled from the bone, he kicked and spattered the laid tables with blood.

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tum vero indomitas ardescit vulgus in iras,
telaque coniciunt, et sunt, qui Cephea dicunt
cum genero debere mori; sed limine tecti
exierat Cepheus testatus iusque fidemque
hospitiique deos, ea se prohibente moveri.
bellica Pallas adest et protegit aegide fratrem
datque animos.
Erat Indus Athis, quem flumine Gange
edita Limnaee vitreis peperisse sub undis
creditur, egregius forma, quam divite cultu
augebat, bis adhuc octonis integer annis,
indutus chlamydem Tyriam, quam limbus obibat
aureus; ornabant aurata monilia collum
et madidos murra curvum crinale capillos;
ille quidem iaculo quamvis distantia misso
figere doctus erat, sed tendere doctior arcus.
tum quoque lenta manu flectentem cornua Perseus
stipite, qui media positus fumabat in ara,
perculit et fractis confudit in ossibus ora.
Hunc ubi laudatos iactantem in sanguine vultus
Assyrius vidit Lycabas, iunctissimus illi
et comes et veri non dissimulator amoris,
postquam exhalantem sub acerbo vulnere vitam
deploravit Athin, quos ille tetenderat arcus
arripit et 'mecum tibi sint certamina!' dixit;
'nec longum pueri fato laetabere, quo plus
invidiae quam laudis habes.' haec omnia nondum
dixerat: emicuit nervo penetrabile telum
vitatumque tamen sinuosa veste pependit.
vertit in hunc harpen spectatam caede Medusae
Acrisioniades adigitque in pectus; at ille
iam moriens oculis sub nocte natantibus atra
circumspexit Athin seque adclinavit ad illum
et tulit ad manes iunctae solacia mortis.
Ecce Syenites, genitus Metione, Phorbas
et Libys Amphimedon, avidi committere pugman,
sanguine, quo late tellus madefacta tepebat,
conciderant lapsi; surgentibus obstitit ensis,
alterius costis, iugulo Phorbantis adactus.
At non Actoriden Erytum, cui lata bipennis

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Then truly the crowd blazed up in untamed anger and hurled weapons. Some said Cepheus with his son-in-law should die. But Cepheus had gone out through the threshold of the dwelling, calling to witness justice and faith and the gods of hospitality that these things were happening against his will.

Warrior Pallas was present and protected her brother with her aegis and gave him courage.

The Battle Begins

There was an Indian, Athis, whom Limnaea, born from the Ganges river, was believed to have brought forth beneath glassy waves. Outstanding in beauty, which he increased with rich dress, still only twice eight years old, he wore a Tyrian cloak that a golden border surrounded. Golden necklaces adorned his neck and myrrh his wet hair in a curved band.

Though he was skilled at hitting distant targets with hurled javelin, he was more skilled at drawing the bow. Then too, as he was bending the pliant horns with his hand, Perseus struck him with a log that stood smoking on the middle altar and crushed his face into his shattered bones.

When Assyrian Lycabas saw him throwing up his handsome face in blood - Lycabas, most closely joined to him, both companion and not hiding his true love - after he'd mourned Athis breathing out life beneath the cruel wound, he seized the bow Athis had drawn and said, "Let your contest be with me! You won't rejoice long in the boy's fate - by which you have more envy than praise."

He hadn't yet finished all these words when the arrow flew from the string, penetrable - yet avoided, it hung in his billowing robe. Perseus turned on him the curved sword tested in Medusa's slaughter and drove it into his chest. But he, already dying, with eyes swimming in black night, looked around for Athis and leaned toward him and carried to the shades the solace of shared death.

The Slaughter Continues

Look - Phorbas, son of Methion from Syene, and Libyan Amphimedon, eager to join the fight, had fallen, slipping on blood with which the ground far and wide was soaked and warm. As they rose, his sword blocked them - driven into one's ribs, into Phorbas' throat.

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telum erat, hamato Perseus petit ense, sed altis
exstantem signis multaeque in pondere massae
ingentem manibus tollit cratera duabus
infligitque viro; rutilum vomit ille cruorem
et resupinus humum moribundo vertice pulsat.
inde Semiramio Polydegmona sanguine cretum
Caucasiumque Abarin Sperchionidenque Lycetum
intonsumque comas Helicen Phlegyanque Clytumque
sternit et exstructos morientum calcat acervos.
Nec Phineus ausus concurrere comminus hosti
intorquet iaculum, quod detulit error in Idan,
expertem frustra belli et neutra arma secutum.
ille tuens oculis inmitem Phinea torvis
'quandoquidem in partes' ait 'abstrahor, accipe, Phineu,
quem fecisti, hostem pensaque hoc vulnere vulnus!'
iamque remissurus tractum de corpore telum
sanguine defectos cecidit conlapsus in artus.
Tum quoque Cephenum post regem primus Hodites
ense iacet Clymeni, Prothoenora percutit Hypseus,
Hypsea Lyncides. fuit et grandaevus in illis
Emathion, aequi cultor timidusque deorum,
qui, quoniam prohibent anni bellare, loquendo
pugnat et incessit sceleratque devovet arma;
huic Chromis amplexo tremulis altaria palmis
decutit ense caput, quod protinus incidit arae
atque ibi semianimi verba exsecrantia lingua
edidit et medios animam exspiravit in ignes.
Hinc gemini fratres Broteasque et caestibus Ammon
invicti, vinci si possent caestibus enses,
Phinea cecidere manu Cererisque sacerdos
Ampycus albenti velatus tempora vitta,
tu quoque, Lampetide, non hos adhibendus ad usus,
sed qui, pacis opus, citharam cum voce moveres;
iussus eras celebrare dapes festumque canendo.
quem procul adstantem plectrumque inbelle tenentem
Pedasus inridens 'Stygiis cane cetera' dixit
'manibus!' et laevo mucronem tempore fixit;
concidit et digitis morientibus ille retemptat
fila lyrae, casuque ferit miserabile carmen.
nec sinit hunc inpune ferox cecidisse Lycormas

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But Perseus didn't attack Erytus, son of Actor, with his curved sword - his weapon was a broad two-edged ax - but lifting with both hands a huge mixing bowl, standing out with high figures and great in massive weight, he struck it against the man. Erytus vomited red blood and fell backward and beat the ground with his dying head.

Then Perseus laid low Polydegmon, created from Semiramis' blood, and Caucasian Abaris and Lycetus from Spercheus and Helices with unshorn hair and Phlegyas and Clytus, and trampled over built-up heaps of the dying.

Nor did Phineus dare to engage the enemy in close combat but hurled a javelin, which error carried against Idas, free in vain from war and following neither side's weapons. He, looking at cruel Phineus with fierce eyes, said, "Since I'm dragged to a side, Phineus, take the enemy you've made and repay wound with this wound!"

And now about to hurl back the spear drawn from his body, he fell collapsed in limbs drained of blood.

Then too Hodites, first after King Cepheus, fell by Clymenes' sword. Hypseus struck down Prothoenor, Lyncides struck Hypseus. Among them was also aged Emathion, cultivator of justice and fearing the gods. Since years prevented him from fighting, he fought with words and assailed and cursed the wicked weapons.

As he clung to the altar with trembling palms, Chromis struck off his head with a sword. It immediately fell on the altar, and there his half-living tongue spoke cursing words and breathed out its soul in the middle of the fires.

Then twin brothers Broteas and Ammon, invincible with boxing gloves (if gloves could be conquered by swords), fell by Phineus' hand, and Ampycus, priest of Ceres, his temples veiled with white ribbon. You too, Lampetides, not to be brought to these uses, but who would move the lyre with voice - work of peace! You'd been ordered to grace the feast and celebrate it with song.

Pedasus, seeing him standing at a distance and holding the unwarlike plectrum, mocked him and said, "Sing the rest to the Stygian shades!" and fixed his blade in his left temple. He fell and, with dying fingers, tried again the strings of the lyre and struck by chance a pitiful song.

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raptaque de dextro robusta repagula posti
ossibus inlisit mediae cervicis, at ille
procubuit terrae mactati more iuvenci.
demere temptabat laevi quoque robora postis
Cinyphius Pelates; temptanti dextera fixa est
cuspide Marmaridae Corythi lignoque cohaesit;
haerenti latus hausit Abas, nec corruit ille,
sed retinente manum moriens e poste pependit.
sternitur et Melaneus, Perseia castra secutus,
et Nasamoniaci Dorylas ditissimus agri,
dives agri Dorylas, quo non possederat alter
latius aut totidem tollebat turis acervos.
huius in obliquo missum stetit inguine ferrum:
letifer ille locus. quem postquam vulneris auctor
singultantem animam et versantem lumina vidit
Bactrius Halcyoneus, 'hoc, quod premis,' inquit 'habeto
de tot agris terrae!' corpusque exsangue reliquit.
torquet in hunc hastam calido de vulnere raptam
ultor Abantiades; media quae nare recepta
cervice exacta est in partesque eminet ambas;
dumque manum Fortuna iuvat, Clytiumque Claninque,
matre satos una, diverso vulnere fudit:
nam Clytii per utrumque gravi librata lacerto
fraxinus acta femur, iaculum Clanis ore momordit.
occidit et Celadon Mendesius, occidit Astreus
matre Palaestina dubio genitore creatus,
Aethionque sagax quondam ventura videre,
tunc ave deceptus falsa, regisque Thoactes
armiger et caeso genitore infamis Agyrtes.
Plus tamen exhausto superest; namque omnibus unum
opprimere est animus, coniurata undique pugnant
agmina pro causa meritum inpugnante fidemque;
hac pro parte socer frustra pius et nova coniunx
cum genetrice favent ululatuque atria conplent,
sed sonus armorum superat gemitusque cadentum,
pollutosque simul multo Bellona penates
sanguine perfundit renovataque proelia miscet.
Circueunt unum Phineus et mille secuti
Phinea: tela volant hiberna grandine plura
praeter utrumque latus praeterque et lumen et aures.

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Fierce Lycormas didn't let him fall unavenged. He snatched the sturdy bar from the right doorpost and struck it against the bones of his middle neck. Phorbas fell to earth like a sacrificed ox.

Cinyphian Pelates was trying to remove the bar from the left post too. As he tried, his right hand was fixed by the spear of Marmari

dan Corythos and stuck to the wood. As he clung there, Abas pierced his side. He didn't fall but, dying, hung by his hand held by the post.

Melaneus also was laid low, who'd followed Perseus' camp, and Dorylas, richest of Nasamonian land. Rich in land was Dorylas - none possessed more widely or piled up so many heaps of incense. The spear sent stood stuck in his groin at an angle - that deadly place.

When Bactrian Halcyoneus, author of the wound, saw him gasping out his soul and rolling his eyes, he said, "Keep this, of so many fields of land, that you're lying on!" And left the bloodless corpse.

The avenger, son of Abas, hurled back at him a spear snatched from the warm wound. It was received in the middle of his nose and went through the back of his neck and stuck out from both sides.

While Fortune aided his hand, he laid low with different wounds Clytius and Clanis, born from one mother. For a heavy ash shaft, balanced by his strong arm and driven through both of Clytius' thighs, while Clanis bit a javelin with his mouth.

Celadon of Mende died, and Astreus died, created from a Palestinian mother and doubtful father, and Aethion, once keen to see the future, then deceived by a false omen, and Thoactes, armor-bearer of the king and Agyrtes, infamous from his slain father.

More remained, though he was exhausted. For all had one spirit - to crush him. Bands conspired from all sides fought for a cause attacking merit and faith. On this side, the father-in-law, dutiful in vain, and the new wife with her mother favored him and filled the halls with wailing. But the sound of weapons and groans of the falling drowned them out, and Bellona meanwhile soaked the household gods, polluted with much blood, and stirred up renewed battles.

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adplicat hic umeros ad magnae saxa columnae
tutaque terga gerens adversaque in agmina versus
sustinet instantes: instabat parte sinistra
Chaonius Molpeus, dextra Nabataeus Ethemon.
tigris ut auditis diversa valle duorum
exstimulata fame mugitibus armentorum
nescit, utro potius ruat, et ruere ardet utroque,
sic dubius Perseus, dextra laevane feratur,
Molpea traiecti submovit vulnere cruris
contentusque fuga est; neque enim dat tempus Ethemon,
sed furit et cupiens alto dare vulnera collo
non circumspectis exactum viribus ensem
fregit, in extrema percussae parte columnae:
lamina dissiluit dominique in gutture fixa est.
non tamen ad letum causas satis illa valentes
plaga dedit; trepidum Perseus et inermia frustra
bracchia tendentem Cyllenide confodit harpe.
Verum ubi virtutem turbae succumbere vidit,
'auxilium' Perseus, 'quoniam sic cogitis ipsi,'
dixit 'ab hoste petam: vultus avertite vestros,
si quis amicus adest!' et Gorgonis extulit ora.
'quaere alium, tua quem moveant miracula' dixit
Thescelus; utque manu iaculum fatale parabat
mittere, in hoc haesit signum de marmore gestu.
proximus huic Ampyx animi plenissima magni
pectora Lyncidae gladio petit: inque petendo
dextera diriguit nec citra mota nec ultra est.
at Nileus, qui se genitum septemplice Nilo
ementitus erat, clipeo quoque flumina septem
argento partim, partim caelaverat auro,
'adspice' ait 'Perseu, nostrae primordia gentis:
magna feres tacitas solacia mortis ad umbras,
a tanto cecidisse viro'; pars ultima vocis
in medio suppressa sono est, adapertaque velle
ora loqui credas, nec sunt ea pervia verbis.
increpat hos 'vitio' que 'animi, non viribus' inquit
'Gorgoneis torpetis' Eryx. 'incurrite mecum
et prosternite humi iuvenem magica arma moventem!'
incursurus erat: tenuit vestigia tellus,
inmotusque silex armataque mansit imago.

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Perseus Turns the Tide

Phineus and a thousand who followed Phineus surrounded one man. Weapons flew thicker than winter's hail past both sides and past his eyes and ears. He placed his shoulders against the stone of a great column and, bearing a safe back and turning to face the opposing ranks, withstood those pressing. From the left side pressed Chaonius Molpeus, from the right Nabataean Ethemon.

As a tigress, stimulated by hunger in a different valley when she's heard the lowings of two herds, doesn't know which one she should rather rush at and burns to rush at both - so Perseus, uncertain whether to attack right or left, drove Molpeus back with a wound through his leg and was content with his flight. For Ethemon didn't give time but raged and, wanting to give wounds to his high neck, not looking carefully, drove his sword with all his strength and broke it on the edge of the struck column. The blade flew off and stuck in its master's throat.

Yet that blow didn't give strong enough causes for death. Perseus, with his Cyllenian curved sword, pierced him trembling and stretching useless arms in vain.

But when he saw his courage succumbing to the crowd, Perseus said, "Since you yourselves force me, I'll seek help from my enemy! Turn away your faces, if any friend is present!" And he held forth the Gorgon's face.

"Seek another whom your marvels move," said Thescelus. But as he prepared with his hand to hurl the fatal javelin, he froze in that gesture - a marble statue.

Next to him, Ampyx attacked the chest, full of great spirit, of Lyncides with his sword. As he attacked, his right hand stiffened and moved neither forward nor back.

But Nileus, who'd falsely claimed he was born from the seven-channeled Nile and had engraved seven rivers on his shield, part in silver, part in gold, said, "Look, Perseus, at the origin of our race! You'll carry great consolation to the silent shades - that you fell by so great a man." The last part of his voice was suppressed in mid-sound. You'd believe his open mouth wanted to speak, but they weren't open to words.

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Hi tamen ex merito poenas subiere, sed unus
miles erat Persei: pro quo dum pugnat, Aconteus
Gorgone conspecta saxo concrevit oborto;
quem ratus Astyages etiamnum vivere, longo
ense ferit: sonuit tinnitibus ensis acutis.
dum stupet Astyages, naturam traxit eandem,
marmoreoque manet vultus mirantis in ore.
nomina longa mora est media de plebe virorum
dicere: bis centum restabant corpora pugnae,
Gorgone bis centum riguerunt corpora visa.
Paenitet iniusti tum denique Phinea belli;
sed quid agat? simulacra videt diversa figuris
adgnoscitque suos et nomine quemque vocatum
poscit opem credensque parum sibi proxima tangit
corpora: marmor erant; avertitur atque ita supplex
confessasque manus obliquaque bracchia tendens
'vincis' ait, 'Perseu! remove tua monstra tuaeque
saxificos vultus, quaecumque est, tolle Medusae,
tolle, precor! non nos odium regnique cupido
conpulit ad bellum, pro coniuge movimus arma!
causa fuit meritis melior tua, tempore nostra:
non cessisse piget; nihil, o fortissime, praeter
hanc animam concede mihi, tua cetera sunto!'
talia dicenti neque eum, quem voce rogabat,
respicere audenti 'quod' ait, 'timidissime Phineu,
et possum tribuisse et magnum est munus inerti,++
pone metum!++tribuam: nullo violabere ferro.
quin etiam mansura dabo monimenta per aevum,
inque domo soceri semper spectabere nostri,
ut mea se sponsi soletur imagine coniunx.'
dixit et in partem Phorcynida transtulit illam,
ad quam se trepido Phineus obverterat ore.
tum quoque conanti sua vertere lumina cervix
deriguit, saxoque oculorum induruit umor,
sed tamen os timidum vultusque in marmore supplex
submissaeque manus faciesque obnoxia mansit.
Victor Abantiades patrios cum coniuge muros
intrat et inmeriti vindex ultorque parentis
adgreditur Proetum; nam fratre per arma fugato
Acrisioneas Proetus possederat arces.

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Eryx rebuked them and said, "You're made torpid by a flaw of spirit, not by Gorgon's powers! Rush in with me and throw to the ground this youth wielding magic weapons!" He was about to rush in - the earth held his footsteps, and he remained, motionless stone, an armed statue.

These, however, suffered punishment deservedly. But there was one soldier of Perseus. While Aconteus fought for him, he hardened into stone on seeing the Gorgon. Astyages, thinking he still lived, struck him with his long sword. It rang with sharp clanging. While Astyages was stunned, he drew the same nature and remained with a wondering expression on his marble face.

It would take too long to tell the names of men from the middle ranks. Two hundred bodies remained for battle - two hundred bodies stiffened when the Gorgon was seen.

Phineus Begs for Mercy

Then finally Phineus repented the unjust war. But what could he do? He saw statues in various forms and recognized his own men. Calling each by name, he sought help and, not quite believing, touched the nearest bodies - they were marble.

He turned away and, suppliant with confessing hands and slanting arms extended, said, "You win, Perseus! Remove your portents and the stone-making face of your Medusa, whoever she is - remove her, I pray! Neither hatred nor desire for kingship drove us to war. We took up arms for a wife! Your cause was better by merit, mine by time. I don't regret yielding. Grant nothing, most brave one, except this life - let all else be yours!"

As he spoke such things and didn't dare look at him whom he begged with his voice, Perseus said, "What I can grant and it's a great gift to a coward - put away fear! - I'll grant. You'll be violated by no iron. Moreover, I'll give memorials lasting through ages. You'll always be gazed upon in my father-in-law's house, so that my wife may console herself with the image of her betrothed."

He spoke and carried Phorcys' daughter to that side to which Phineus had turned with frightened face. Even then, as he tried to turn his eyes, his neck stiffened and the moisture of his eyes hardened into stone. Yet his timid mouth and suppliant expression in the marble and submissive hands and servile

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sed nec ope armorum nec, quam male ceperat, arce
torva colubriferi superavit lumina monstri.
Te tamen, o parvae rector, Polydecta, Seriphi,
nec iuvenis virtus per tot spectata labores
nec mala mollierant, sed inexorabile durus
exerces odium, nec iniqua finis in ira est;
detrectas etiam laudem fictamque Medusae
arguis esse necem. 'dabimus tibi pignora veri.
parcite luminibus!' Perseus ait oraque regis
ore Medusaeo silicem sine sanguine fecit.
Hactenus aurigenae comitem Tritonia fratri
se dedit; inde cava circumdata nube Seriphon
deserit, a dextra Cythno Gyaroque relictis,
quaque super pontum via visa brevissima, Thebas
virgineumque Helicona petit. quo monte potita
constitit et doctas sic est adfata sorores:
'fama novi fontis nostras pervenit ad aures,
dura Medusaei quem praepetis ungula rupit.
is mihi causa viae; volui mirabile factum
cernere; vidi ipsum materno sanguine nasci.'
excipit Uranie: 'quaecumque est causa videndi
has tibi, diva, domos, animo gratissima nostro es.
vera tamen fama est: est Pegasus huius origo
fontis' et ad latices deduxit Pallada sacros.
quae mirata diu factas pedis ictibus undas
silvarum lucos circumspicit antiquarum
antraque et innumeris distinctas floribus herbas
felicesque vocat pariter studioque locoque
Mnemonidas; quam sic adfata est una sororum:
'o, nisi te virtus opera ad maiora tulisset,
in partem ventura chori Tritonia nostri,
vera refers meritoque probas artesque locumque,
et gratam sortem, tutae modo simus, habemus.
sed (vetitum est adeo sceleri nihil) omnia terrent
virgineas mentes, dirusque ante ora Pyreneus
vertitur, et nondum tota me mente recepi.
Daulida Threicio Phoceaque milite rura
ceperat ille ferox iniustaque regna tenebat;
templa petebamus Parnasia: vidit euntes
nostraque fallaci veneratus numina vultu

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face remained.

Perseus Returns Home

Victorious, the son of Abas entered his ancestral walls with his wife - avenger and protector of his innocent parent. He attacked Proetus, for Proetus had driven out his brother by arms and possessed Acrisius' citadel. But neither by the help of arms nor by the citadel he'd wrongly seized did he overcome the fierce eyes of the snake-haired monster.

Yet you, Polydectes, ruler of little Seriphus - neither the youth's courage tested through so many labors nor your troubles had softened you. No, hard, you exercised inexorable hatred, and there was no limit to unjust anger. You even disparaged his praise and argued that Medusa's death was feigned.

"We'll give you proof of truth. Spare your eyes!" Perseus said, and with Medusa's face made the king's face into flint without blood.

Minerva Visits the Muses

Thus far Minerva, daughter of the golden one, had given herself as companion to her brother. From there, enclosed in a hollow cloud, she left Seriphus, Cythnos and Gyaros left on the right. Taking what seemed the shortest route over the sea, she sought Thebes and virgin Helicon.

When she'd gained the mountain, she stopped and addressed the learned sisters thus: "Fame of a new spring has reached our ears - one that the hard hoof of the wing-footed horse opened. This was my reason for the journey. I wanted to see the marvelous deed. I saw him born from his mother's blood."

Urania received her: "Whatever is the cause for seeing our home, goddess, you're most welcome to our spirit. Yet the fame is true. Pegasus is the origin of this spring." And she led Pallas to the sacred waters.

After marveling long at the waves made by the hoof's blows, she looked around at the groves of ancient forests and caves and grass marked with countless flowers, and called the daughters of Mnemosyne fortunate equally in their pursuit and place.

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"Mnemonides" (cognorat enim), "consistite" dixit
"nec dubitate, precor, tecto grave sidus et imbrem"
(imber erat) "vitare meo; subiere minores
saepe casas superi." dictis et tempore motae
adnuimusque viro primasque intravimus aedes.
desierant imbres, victoque aquilonibus austro
fusca repurgato fugiebant nubila caelo:
inpetus ire fuit; claudit sua tecta Pyreneus
vimque parat, quam nos sumptis effugimus alis.
ipse secuturo similis stetit arduus arce
"qua" que "via est vobis, erit et mihi" dixit "eadem"
seque iacit vecors e summae culmine turris
et cadit in vultus discussisque ossibus oris
tundit humum moriens scelerato sanguine tinctam.'
Musa loquebatur: pennae sonuere per auras,
voxque salutantum ramis veniebat ab altis.
suspicit et linguae quaerit tam certa loquentes
unde sonent hominemque putat Iove nata locutum;
ales erat. numeroque novem sua fata querentes
institerant ramis imitantes omnia picae.
miranti sic orsa deae dea 'nuper et istae
auxerunt volucrum victae certamine turbam.
Pieros has genuit Pellaeis dives in arvis,
Paeonis Euippe mater fuit; illa potentem
Lucinam noviens, noviens paritura, vocavit.
intumuit numero stolidarum turba sororum
perque tot Haemonias et per tot Achaidas urbes
huc venit et tali committit proelia voce:
"desinite indoctum vana dulcedine vulgus
fallere; nobiscum, si qua est fiducia vobis,
Thespiades, certate, deae. nec voce, nec arte
vincemur totidemque sumus: vel cedite victae
fonte Medusaeo et Hyantea Aganippe,
vel nos Emathiis ad Paeonas usque nivosos
cedemus campis! dirimant certamina nymphae."
'Turpe quidem contendere erat, sed cedere visum
turpius; electae iurant per flumina nymphae
factaque de vivo pressere sedilia saxo.
tunc sine sorte prior quae se certare professa est,
bella canit superum falsoque in honore gigantas

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One of the sisters addressed her thus: "O Minerva, who would have come to our chorus if your courage hadn't carried you to greater works, you speak truth and rightly approve our arts and place. We have a grateful lot, if only we're safe. But (so nothing is forbidden to crime) everything terrifies virgin minds, and dread Pyreneus turns before my eyes, and I haven't yet recovered my full mind.

"That fierce man had seized Daulis and Phocean fields with Thracian soldiers and held unjust kingdoms. We were seeking Parnassus' temple. He saw us going and, revering our divinity with false expression, said (for he'd recognized us), 'Daughters of Mnemosyne, stop, I pray, and don't hesitate to avoid beneath my roof the harsh constellation and rain' (there was rain). 'Lesser gods have often entered smaller huts.'

"Moved by his words and the weather, we nodded to the man and entered his first dwelling. The rains had stopped and, with the south wind conquering the north winds, the dark clouds fled from the cleared sky. There was an impulse to go. Pyreneus closed his dwelling and prepared violence - which we escaped by taking wings.

"He himself, as if about to follow, stood high on the citadel and said, 'Whatever path is yours will also be mine,' and, mad, he threw himself from the peak of the highest tower and fell on his face. With shattered bones of his mouth, he beat the ground, dying, stained with wicked blood."

The Contest with the Pierides

The Muse was speaking when wings sounded through the air and voices came from high branches, greeting. She looked up and sought from where such clear-speaking tongues sounded and thought, daughter of Jove, that a human spoke. It was a bird. Nine in number, lamenting their fate, sat on branches, imitating everything - magpies.

As she marveled, the goddess thus began to the goddess: "These too recently increased the crowd of birds, defeated in contest. Rich Pierus in Pellaean fields fathered them. Their mother was Paeonian Euippe. About to give birth nine times, she called nine times on powerful Lucina.

"The crowd of foolish sisters swelled with their number and came here through so many Haemonian and Achaean cities and entered combat with such a voice:

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ponit et extenuat magnorum facta deorum;
emissumque ima de sede Typhoea terrae
caelitibus fecisse metum cunctosque dedisse
terga fugae, donec fessos Aegyptia tellus
ceperit et septem discretus in ostia Nilus.
huc quoque terrigenam venisse Typhoea narrat
et se mentitis superos celasse figuris;
"duxque gregis" dixit "fit Iuppiter: unde recurvis
nunc quoque formatus Libys est cum cornibus Ammon;
Delius in corvo, proles Semeleia capro,
fele soror Phoebi, nivea Saturnia vacca,
pisce Venus latuit, Cyllenius ibidis alis."
'Hactenus ad citharam vocalia moverat ora:
poscimur Aonides,++sed forsitan otia non sint,
nec nostris praebere vacet tibi cantibus aures.'
'ne dubita vestrumque mihi refer ordine carmen!'
Pallas ait nemorisque levi consedit in umbra;
Musa refert: 'dedimus summam certaminis uni;
surgit et inmissos hedera collecta capillos
Calliope querulas praetemptat pollice chordas
atque haec percussis subiungit carmina nervis:
"Prima Ceres unco glaebam dimovit aratro,
prima dedit fruges alimentaque mitia terris,
prima dedit leges; Cereris sunt omnia munus;
illa canenda mihi est. utinam modo dicere possim
carmina digna dea! certe dea carmine digna est.
'"Vasta giganteis ingesta est insula membris
Trinacris et magnis subiectum molibus urguet
aetherias ausum sperare Typhoea sedes.
nititur ille quidem pugnatque resurgere saepe,
dextra sed Ausonio manus est subiecta Peloro,
laeva, Pachyne, tibi, Lilybaeo crura premuntur,
degravat Aetna caput, sub qua resupinus harenas
eiectat flammamque ferox vomit ore Typhoeus.
saepe remoliri luctatur pondera terrae
oppidaque et magnos devolvere corpore montes:
inde tremit tellus, et rex pavet ipse silentum,
ne pateat latoque solum retegatur hiatu
inmissusque dies trepidantes terreat umbras.
hanc metuens cladem tenebrosa sede tyrannus

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"'Stop deceiving the ignorant crowd with vain sweetness! Compete with us, Thespian goddesses, if you have any confidence. We won't be conquered in voice or art, and we're equal in number. Either yield, defeated, from the Medusaean spring and Hyantean Aganippe, or we'll yield from Emathian fields to snowy Paeonia! Let nymphs judge the contest.'

"It was indeed shameful to compete, but it seemed more shameful to yield. The chosen nymphs swore by streams and sat on seats made from living rock.

"Then, without drawing lots, she who'd first declared she'd compete sang the gods' war and put the giants in false honor and diminished the great gods' deeds. She told how Typhoeus, sent from earth's lowest seat, made fear for the gods and all gave their backs in flight until the Egyptian land received them, exhausted, and the Nile, divided into seven mouths.

"She told that earth-born Typhoeus came here too and the gods hid themselves in false forms. 'The flock's leader,' she said, 'became Jupiter - from which Libyan Ammon is now shaped with curved horns. The Delian god became a raven, Semele's offspring a goat, Phoebus' sister a cat, Saturn's daughter a snowy cow, Venus hid as a fish, Mercury with an ibis' wings.'

"Thus far she'd moved her vocal mouth to the lyre. We Muses are asked for our song - but perhaps you don't have leisure, nor can you lend ears to our songs."

"Don't doubt, and tell me your song in order!" Pallas said and sat in the grove's light shade.

Calliope's Song: The Rape of Proserpina

The Muse continued: "We gave the contest's burden to one. Calliope arose and, her hair bound with ivy, tried the plaintive strings with her thumb and joined this song to the struck chords:

"'Ceres first moved the soil with curved plow, first gave crops and gentle nourishment to lands, first gave laws. All things are Ceres' gift. She must be sung by me. If only I could speak songs worthy of the goddess! Certainly the goddess is worthy of song.

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exierat curruque atrorum vectus equorum
ambibat Siculae cautus fundamina terrae.
postquam exploratum satis est loca nulla labare
depositoque metu, videt hunc Erycina vagantem
monte suo residens natumque amplexa volucrem
'arma manusque meae, mea, nate, potentia' dixit,
'illa, quibus superas omnes, cape tela, Cupido,
inque dei pectus celeres molire sagittas,
cui triplicis cessit fortuna novissima regni.
tu superos ipsumque Iovem, tu numina ponti
victa domas ipsumque, regit qui numina ponti:
Tartara quid cessant? cur non matrisque tuumque
imperium profers? agitur pars tertia mundi,
et tamen in caelo, quae iam patientia nostra est,
spernimur, ac mecum vires minuuntur Amoris.
Pallada nonne vides iaculatricemque Dianam
abscessisse mihi? Cereris quoque filia virgo,
si patiemur, erit; nam spes adfectat easdem.
at tu pro socio, si qua est ea gratia, regno
iunge deam patruo.' dixit Venus; ille pharetram
solvit et arbitrio matris de mille sagittis
unam seposuit, sed qua nec acutior ulla
nec minus incerta est nec quae magis audiat arcus,
oppositoque genu curvavit flexile cornum
inque cor hamata percussit harundine Ditem.
'"Haud procul Hennaeis lacus est a moenibus altae,
nomine Pergus, aquae: non illo plura Caystros
carmina cycnorum labentibus audit in undis.
silva coronat aquas cingens latus omne suisque
frondibus ut velo Phoebeos submovet ictus;
frigora dant rami, Tyrios humus umida flores:
perpetuum ver est. quo dum Proserpina luco
ludit et aut violas aut candida lilia carpit,
dumque puellari studio calathosque sinumque
inplet et aequales certat superare legendo,
paene simul visa est dilectaque raptaque Diti:
usque adeo est properatus amor. dea territa maesto
et matrem et comites, sed matrem saepius, ore
clamat, et ut summa vestem laniarat ab ora,
collecti flores tunicis cecidere remissis,

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"'A vast island was piled on gigantic limbs - Trinacria - and presses with great masses Typhoeus, who dared to hope for the heavenly seats. He indeed strives and struggles often to rise, but his right hand is pressed beneath Ausonian Pelorus, his left beneath you, Pachynus, Lilybaeum weighs down his legs, Aetna presses his head. Beneath it, lying on his back, fierce Typhoeus spits out sand and vomits flame from his mouth.

"'Often he struggles to heave off the earth's weight and roll towns and great mountains from his body. Then the land trembles and the king of the silent himself fears lest the ground lie open and, uncovered by broad chasm, let in daylight and terrify the trembling shades.

"'Fearing this disaster, the tyrant left his dark seat and, carried on a chariot of black horses, carefully circled the foundations of Sicilian land. After he'd explored enough that no places were crumbling and laid aside his fear, Venus the Erycinian, sitting on her mountain and embracing her winged son, said:

"'Arms and hands and my power, my son - those by which you conquer all - take your weapons, Cupid, and drive swift arrows into the god's chest to whom fell the last lot of the threefold kingdom.

"'You conquer the gods above and Jupiter himself, you conquer the defeated powers of the sea and him who rules the sea's powers. Why do the realms of Tartarus hold back? Why don't you extend your and your mother's empire? A third part of the world is at stake. Yet in heaven - which is already our patience - we're spurned, and with me Love's powers are diminished.

"'Don't you see Pallas and Diana the huntress have withdrawn from me? Ceres' daughter too will be a virgin if we allow it, for she aims at the same hopes. But you, for our allied kingdom, if there's any gratitude in that, join the goddess to her uncle.'

"Venus spoke. Cupid loosened his quiver and, at his mother's bidding, from a thousand arrows separated one - but than which none was sharper, none less uncertain, none that obeyed the bow more. Bracing his knee, he bent the pliant horn and struck Dis in the heart with the barbed reed.

"'Not far from Henna's walls is a deep lake named Pergus. Not more songs of swans does Cayster hear on its gliding waves. A forest crowns the water, encircling every side, and with its foliage as a veil wards off Phoebus' blows. The branches give coolness, the moist ground Tyrian flowers. There's perpetual

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tantaque simplicitas puerilibus adfuit annis,
haec quoque virgineum movit iactura dolorem.
raptor agit currus et nomine quemque vocando
exhortatur equos, quorum per colla iubasque
excutit obscura tinctas ferrugine habenas,
perque lacus altos et olentia sulphure fertur
stagna Palicorum rupta ferventia terra
et qua Bacchiadae, bimari gens orta Corintho,
inter inaequales posuerunt moenia portus.
'"Est medium Cyanes et Pisaeae Arethusae,
quod coit angustis inclusum cornibus aequor:
hic fuit, a cuius stagnum quoque nomine dictum est,
inter Sicelidas Cyane celeberrima nymphas.
gurgite quae medio summa tenus exstitit alvo
adgnovitque deam 'ne' c 'longius ibitis!' inquit;
'non potes invitae Cereris gener esse: roganda,
non rapienda fuit. quodsi conponere magnis
parva mihi fas est, et me dilexit Anapis;
exorata tamen, nec, ut haec, exterrita nupsi.'
dixit et in partes diversas bracchia tendens
obstitit. haud ultra tenuit Saturnius iram
terribilesque hortatus equos in gurgitis ima
contortum valido sceptrum regale lacerto
condidit; icta viam tellus in Tartara fecit
et pronos currus medio cratere recepit.
'"At Cyane, raptamque deam contemptaque fontis
iura sui maerens, inconsolabile vulnus
mente gerit tacita lacrimisque absumitur omnis
et, quarum fuerat magnum modo numen, in illas
extenuatur aquas: molliri membra videres,
ossa pati flexus, ungues posuisse rigorem;
primaque de tota tenuissima quaeque liquescunt,
caerulei crines digitique et crura pedesque
(nam brevis in gelidas membris exilibus undas
transitus est); post haec umeri tergusque latusque
pectoraque in tenues abeunt evanida rivos;
denique pro vivo vitiatas sanguine venas
lympha subit, restatque nihil, quod prendere possis.
'"Interea pavidae nequiquam filia matri
omnibus est terris, omni quaesita profundo.

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spring.

"'In this grove, while Proserpina played and picked either violets or white lilies, and while with girlish eagerness she filled baskets and her robe and competed to surpass her equals in gathering, she was almost simultaneously seen and loved and seized by Dis - so hurried was love.

"'The goddess, terrified, with sad voice called her mother and companions, but her mother more often. Since she'd torn her garment from its top edge, the gathered flowers fell from her loosened tunic. Such simplicity accompanied her girlish years that even this loss moved virgin grief.

"'The ravisher drove his chariot and, calling each by name, urged on his horses. Over their necks and manes he shook the dark rust-stained reins and was carried through deep lakes and the Palici's pools, boiling with sulfur from broken earth, and where the Bacchiadae, people born from two-sea'd Corinth, raised walls between unequal harbors.

"'There is a bay between Cyane and Pisaean Arethusa that narrows, enclosed by confining horns. Here lived Cyane, most famous among Sicilian nymphs, from whose pool too the name was given. From the middle of her pool she rose, up to her waist, and recognized the goddess.

"'You'll go no farther!' she said. 'You can't be Ceres' son-in-law against her will. She should have been asked, not snatched. If I may compare small things to great, Anapis also loved me - yet I married persuaded, not, like this one, terrified.'

"She spoke and, stretching arms in opposite directions, blocked the way. Saturn's son no longer held back his anger and, urging on his terrible horses, hurled his royal scepter, twisted with strong arm, into the pool's depths. The struck earth made a road to Tartarus and received the headlong chariot in its middle crater.

"'But Cyane, grieving for the goddess snatched and her fountain's rights scorned, bore an inconsolable wound in her silent mind and was consumed entirely in tears. Into those waters of which she'd just been the great divinity, she melted away.

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illam non udis veniens Aurora capillis
cessantem vidit, non Hesperus; illa duabus
flammiferas pinus manibus succendit ab Aetna
perque pruinosas tulit inrequieta tenebras;
rursus ubi alma dies hebetarat sidera, natam
solis ab occasu solis quaerebat ad ortus.
fessa labore sitim conceperat, oraque nulli
conluerant fontes, cum tectam stramine vidit
forte casam parvasque fores pulsavit; at inde
prodit anus divamque videt lymphamque roganti
dulce dedit, tosta quod texerat ante polenta.
dum bibit illa datum, duri puer oris et audax
constitit ante deam risitque avidamque vocavit.
offensa est neque adhuc epota parte loquentem
cum liquido mixta perfudit diva polenta:
conbibit os maculas et, quae modo bracchia gessit,
crura gerit; cauda est mutatis addita membris,
inque brevem formam, ne sit vis magna nocendi,
contrahitur, parvaque minor mensura lacerta est.
mirantem flentemque et tangere monstra parantem
fugit anum latebramque petit aptumque pudori
nomen habet variis stellatus corpora guttis.
'"Quas dea per terras et quas erraverit undas,
dicere longa mora est; quaerenti defuit orbis;
Sicaniam repetit, dumque omnia lustrat eundo,
venit et ad Cyanen. ea ni mutata fuisset,
omnia narrasset; sed et os et lingua volenti
dicere non aderant, nec, quo loqueretur, habebat;
signa tamen manifesta dedit notamque parenti,
illo forte loco delapsam in gurgite sacro
Persephones zonam summis ostendit in undis.
quam simul agnovit, tamquam tum denique raptam
scisset, inornatos laniavit diva capillos
et repetita suis percussit pectora palmis.
nescit adhuc, ubi sit; terras tamen increpat omnes
ingratasque vocat nec frugum munere dignas,
Trinacriam ante alias, in qua vestigia damni
repperit. ergo illic saeva vertentia glaebas
fregit aratra manu, parilique irata colonos
ruricolasque boves leto dedit arvaque iussit

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"'You'd see her limbs soften, her bones yield to bending, her nails lose their hardness. First the slenderest parts of all liquefied: blue hair and fingers and legs and feet (for brief is the passage from slender limbs to cool waters). After this, shoulders and back and sides and breasts vanished into thin streams. Finally, instead of living blood in corrupted veins, water entered, and nothing remained that you could grasp.

"'Meanwhile the terrified daughter was sought in vain by her mother through all lands, all depths. Neither Aurora coming with wet hair saw her resting, nor Hesperus. She lit two pine torches with flames from Aetna and, restless, carried them through frosty darkness. Again, when kindly day had dimmed the stars, she sought her daughter from sun's setting to sun's rising.

"'Tired from labor, she'd conceived thirst, and no springs had washed her mouth, when by chance she saw a hut covered with thatch and knocked on its small doors. From there an old woman came out and, seeing the goddess, gave her sweet liquid when she asked - which she'd made thick before with toasted barley.

"'While she drank what was given, a hard-faced and bold boy stood before the goddess and laughed and called her greedy. Offended, while she hadn't yet finished drinking, the goddess drenched him as he spoke with the liquid mixed with barley. His face drank the spots and, where he'd just had arms, he had legs. A tail was added to his changed limbs, and he was contracted to brief form lest he have great power to harm, and smaller than a small lizard's measure.

"'Wondering and weeping and preparing to touch the portent, the old woman fled. The creature sought hiding and has a name suited to shame - body starred with various spots.

"'What lands and what waters the goddess wandered through would take long to tell. The world failed her searching. She returned to Sicily and, as she passed through everything in her wandering, came to Cyane. She, had she not been changed, would have told all. But she had neither mouth nor tongue willing to speak, nor had she anything with which to speak.

"'Yet she gave clear signs and showed, known to the parent, Persephone's belt, fallen by chance in that place, in the sacred pool, displayed in the topmost waters. When she recognized it, as if only then she'd

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fallere depositum vitiataque semina fecit.
fertilitas terrae latum vulgata per orbem
falsa iacet: primis segetes moriuntur in herbis,
et modo sol nimius, nimius modo corripit imber;
sideraque ventique nocent, avidaeque volucres
semina iacta legunt; lolium tribulique fatigant
triticeas messes et inexpugnabile gramen.
'"Tum caput Eleis Alpheias extulit undis
rorantesque comas a fronte removit ad aures
atque ait 'o toto quaesitae virginis orbe
et frugum genetrix, inmensos siste labores
neve tibi fidae violenta irascere terrae.
terra nihil meruit patuitque invita rapinae,
nec sum pro patria supplex: huc hospita veni.
Pisa mihi patria est et ab Elide ducimus ortus,
Sicaniam peregrina colo, sed gratior omni
haec mihi terra solo est: hos nunc Arethusa penates,
hanc habeo sedem. quam tu, mitissima, serva.
mota loco cur sim tantique per aequoris undas
advehar Ortygiam, veniet narratibus hora
tempestiva meis, cum tu curaque levata
et vultus melioris eris. mihi pervia tellus
praebet iter, subterque imas ablata cavernas
hic caput attollo desuetaque sidera cerno.
ergo dum Stygio sub terris gurgite labor,
visa tua est oculis illic Proserpina nostris:
illa quidem tristis neque adhuc interrita vultu,
sed regina tamen, sed opaci maxima mundi,
sed tamen inferni pollens matrona tyranni!'
Mater ad auditas stupuit ceu saxea voces
attonitaeque diu similis fuit, utque dolore
pulsa gravi gravis est amentia, curribus oras
exit in aetherias: ibi toto nubila vultu
ante Iovem passis stetit invidiosa capillis
'pro' que 'meo veni supplex tibi, Iuppiter,' inquit
'sanguine proque tuo: si nulla est gratia matris,
nata patrem moveat, neu sit tibi cura, precamur,
vilior illius, quod nostro est edita partu.
en quaesita diu tandem mihi nata reperta est,
si reperire vocas amittere certius, aut si

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known of the rape, the goddess tore her unkempt hair and struck her breast repeatedly with her palms.

"'She still didn't know where her daughter was, yet she accused all lands and called them ungrateful and unworthy of crops' gift - Trinacria before the others, in which she'd found traces of her loss. Therefore there, with savage hand, she broke the plows turning the soil, and in equal anger gave farmers and farm-cattle to death and ordered the fields to fail their trust and spoiled the seeds.

"'The land's fertility, famous through the wide world, lay false. The crops died in their first shoots. Now too much sun, now too much rain destroyed them. Stars and winds harmed them, and greedy birds gathered the scattered seeds. Tares and thorns exhausted the wheat harvests, and invincible grass.

"'Then Alpheus' head lifted from the Elean waves and pushed back his dripping hair from forehead to ears and said:

"'O mother of crops and mother of the maiden sought through the whole world, cease your immense labors and don't rage violently against the land faithful to you. The land deserved nothing and lay open, unwilling, to rape. Nor am I a suppliant for my homeland - I came here as a guest. Pisa is my homeland and I trace my origin from Elis. I live in Sicily as a foreigner, but this land is more pleasing to me than any soil. Now Arethusa has these household gods, this dwelling. Preserve it, most gentle one.

"'Why I was moved from my place and carried through such expanse of sea's waves to Ortygia - a suitable hour for my story will come when you're lightened of care and have a better expression. Earth gives me a passable path and, carried beneath the deepest caverns, here I lift my head and see the stars again, unused to them.

"'So while I glided beneath the earth in the Stygian pool, I saw your Proserpina there with my own eyes. She indeed was sad and not yet without frightened expression, but still a queen, still greatest of the shadowy world, still nonetheless the powerful matron of the infernal tyrant.'

"The mother, hearing these words, stood stupefied as if turned to stone and for a long time was like one stunned. When heavy grief was driven out by heavy madness, she rode her chariot to the heavenly shores. There, with clouded whole face and hair disheveled, she stood resentfully before Jupiter and said:

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scire, ubi sit, reperire vocas. quod rapta, feremus,
dummodo reddat eam! neque enim praedone marito
filia digna tua est, si iam mea filia non est.'
Iuppiter excepit 'commune est pignus onusque
nata mihi tecum; sed si modo nomina rebus
addere vera placet, non hoc iniuria factum,
verum amor est; neque erit nobis gener ille pudori,
tu modo, diva, velis. ut desint cetera, quantum est
esse Iovis fratrem! quid, quod nec cetera desunt
nec cedit nisi sorte mihi?++sed tanta cupido
si tibi discidii est, repetet Proserpina caelum,
lege tamen certa, si nullos contigit illic
ore cibos; nam sic Parcarum foedere cautum est.'
'"Dixerat, at Cereri certum est educere natam;
non ita fata sinunt, quoniam ieiunia virgo
solverat et, cultis dum simplex errat in hortis,
puniceum curva decerpserat arbore pomum
sumptaque pallenti septem de cortice grana
presserat ore suo, solusque ex omnibus illud
Ascalaphus vidit, quem quondam dicitur Orphne,
inter Avernales haud ignotissima nymphas,
ex Acheronte suo silvis peperisse sub atris;
vidit et indicio reditum crudelis ademit.
ingemuit regina Erebi testemque profanam
fecit avem sparsumque caput Phlegethontide lympha
in rostrum et plumas et grandia lumina vertit.
ille sibi ablatus fulvis amicitur in alis
inque caput crescit longosque reflectitur ungues
vixque movet natas per inertia bracchia pennas
foedaque fit volucris, venturi nuntia luctus,
ignavus bubo, dirum mortalibus omen.
'"Hic tamen indicio poenam linguaque videri
commeruisse potest; vobis, Acheloides, unde
pluma pedesque avium, cum virginis ora geratis?
an quia, cum legeret vernos Proserpina flores,
in comitum numero, doctae Sirenes, eratis?
quam postquam toto frustra quaesistis in orbe,
protinus, et vestram sentirent aequora curam,
posse super fluctus alarum insistere remis
optastis facilesque deos habuistis et artus

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"'I come as a suppliant to you, Jupiter, for my blood and for yours. If no gratitude comes from the mother, let the daughter move her father. Don't let your care for her, I pray, be less valuable because she was born from my childbirth. Look, my daughter sought long is finally found - if you call finding to lose more certainly, or if you call knowing where she is finding. That she was seized I'll bear, if only he returns her! For your daughter isn't worthy of a predator husband, even if mine no longer is.'

"Jupiter responded: 'The daughter is a pledge and burden common to me and you. But if only we're pleased to add true names to things, this wasn't injury done but love. Nor will that son-in-law be a shame to us, goddess, if only you're willing. How much it is to be Jupiter's brother! What if the rest weren't lacking - but they're not, and he yields to me only by lot.

"'But if such desire for separation is in you, Proserpina will return to heaven - but by a fixed law, if she's touched no food there with her mouth. For so was it secured by the Parcae's pact.'

"He'd spoken, but Ceres was resolved to lead back her daughter. The fates didn't allow it thus, since the maiden had broken her fast and, while innocently she wandered in the cultivated gardens, had plucked a red fruit from a curved tree and, taking seven grains from the pale rind, had pressed them in her mouth.

"No one saw this except Ascalaphus, whom once Orphne (they say), not the most obscure among Avernus' nymphs, bore from her own Acheron in dark forests. He saw and by cruel testimony took away her return.

"Erebus' queen groaned and made the witness a foul bird. Sprinkling his head with Phlegethon's water, she turned it into a beak and feathers and huge eyes. Taken from himself, he was wrapped in tawny wings and grew into a head and bent back into long talons and barely moved his feathers, born through his sluggish arms. He became a foul bird, herald of coming grief, the lazy screech-owl, dire omen to mortals.

"'He, however, could seem to have deserved punishment by his tongue and testimony. But you, Acheloides, from what source do you have feathers and birds' feet while wearing maidens' faces? Is it because, learned Sirens, you were in the number of companions when Proserpina was gathering spring flowers?

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vidistis vestros subitis flavescere pennis.
ne tamen ille canor mulcendas natus ad aures
tantaque dos oris linguae deperderet usum,
virginei vultus et vox humana remansit.
'"At medius fratrisque sui maestaeque sororis
Iuppiter ex aequo volventem dividit annum:
nunc dea, regnorum numen commune duorum,
cum matre est totidem, totidem cum coniuge menses.
vertitur extemplo facies et mentis et oris;
nam modo quae poterat Diti quoque maesta videri,
laeta deae frons est, ut sol, qui tectus aquosis
nubibus ante fuit, victis e nubibus exit.
'"Exigit alma Ceres nata secura recepta,
quae tibi causa fugae, cur sis, Arethusa, sacer fons.
conticuere undae, quarum dea sustulit alto
fonte caput viridesque manu siccata capillos
fluminis Elei veteres narravit amores.
'pars ego nympharum, quae sunt in Achaide,' dixit
'una fui, nec me studiosius altera saltus
legit nec posuit studiosius altera casses.
sed quamvis formae numquam mihi fama petita est,
quamvis fortis eram, formosae nomen habebam,
nec mea me facies nimium laudata iuvabat,
quaque aliae gaudere solent, ego rustica dote
corporis erubui crimenque placere putavi.
lassa revertebar (memini) Stymphalide silva;
aestus erat, magnumque labor geminaverat aestum:
invenio sine vertice aquas, sine murmure euntes,
perspicuas ad humum, per quas numerabilis alte
calculus omnis erat, quas tu vix ire putares.
cana salicta dabant nutritaque populus unda
sponte sua natas ripis declivibus umbras.
accessi primumque pedis vestigia tinxi,
poplite deinde tenus; neque eo contenta, recingor
molliaque inpono salici velamina curvae
nudaque mergor aquis. quas dum ferioque trahoque
mille modis labens excussaque bracchia iacto,
nescio quod medio sensi sub gurgite murmur
territaque insisto propioris margine ripae.
"quo properas, Arethusa?" suis Alpheos ab undis,

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"'After you sought her in vain through the whole world, you wished immediately that the seas too might feel your care - that you could walk on waves with your wings as oars. You found the gods easy and saw your limbs suddenly turn yellow with feathers. Yet lest that song, born to soothe ears, and such great gift of voice should lose the use of tongue, virgin faces and human voice remained.

"'But Jupiter, mediating between his brother and sad sister, divided the turning year in equal parts. Now the goddess, a shared divinity of two kingdoms, is with her mother for as many months, with her husband for as many. Immediately her face and mind's expression changed. For the brow that could seem sad even to Dis is joyful - as the sun, which before was covered by watery clouds, comes forth victorious from the clouds.

Arethusa's Story

"'Nurturing Ceres, secure with her daughter received, asks what was the cause of your flight, why you are, Arethusa, a sacred spring. The waters fell silent. The goddess from their deep spring raised her head and, drying her green hair with her hand, told the old loves of the Elean river.

"'I was one part of the nymphs that are in Achaia,' she said. 'No other more eagerly gathered glades, no other more eagerly set nets. But though fame of beauty was never sought by me, though I was brave, I had the name of beautiful. Nor did my too-praised appearance please me. That gift of body in which others usually rejoice - I, a rustic, blushed at and thought it a crime to please.

"'Tired, I was returning (I remember) from the Stymphalian forest. There was heat, and labor had doubled the great heat. I found waters going without ripple, without murmur, transparent to the bottom - through which every pebble deep down was countable - waters you'd scarcely think were moving.

"'Gray willows and poplars nourished by water gave spontaneous shade to the sloping banks. I approached and first dipped the tracks of my foot, then to the knee. Not content with this, I ungirded myself and placed my soft garments on a curved willow and plunged naked into the waters.

"'While I struck and drew them, gliding in a thousand ways, and threw my shaken arms, I sensed some murmur in the middle of the pool. Frightened, I stood on the nearer bank's edge.

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"quo properas?" iterum rauco mihi dixerat ore.
sicut eram, fugio sine vestibus (altera vestes
ripa meas habuit): tanto magis instat et ardet,
et quia nuda fui, sum visa paratior illi.
sic ego currebam, sic me ferus ille premebat,
ut fugere accipitrem penna trepidante columbae,
ut solet accipiter trepidas urguere columbas.
usque sub Orchomenon Psophidaque Cyllenenque
Maenaliosque sinus gelidumque Erymanthon et Elin
currere sustinui, nec me velocior ille;
sed tolerare diu cursus ego viribus inpar
non poteram, longi patiens erat ille laboris.
per tamen et campos, per opertos arbore montes,
saxa quoque et rupes et, qua via nulla, cucurri.
sol erat a tergo: vidi praecedere longam
ante pedes umbram, nisi si timor illa videbat;
sed certe sonitusque pedum terrebat et ingens
crinales vittas adflabat anhelitus oris.
fessa labore fugae "fer opem, deprendimur," inquam
"armigerae, Diana, tuae, cui saepe dedisti
ferre tuos arcus inclusaque tela pharetra!"
mota dea est spissisque ferens e nubibus unam
me super iniecit: lustrat caligine tectam
amnis et ignarus circum cava nubila quaerit
bisque locum, quo me dea texerat, inscius ambit
et bis "io Arethusa" vocavit, "io Arethusa!"
quid mihi tunc animi miserae fuit? anne quod agnae est,
si qua lupos audit circum stabula alta frementes,
aut lepori, qui vepre latens hostilia cernit
ora canum nullosque audet dare corpore motus?
non tamen abscedit; neque enim vestigia cernit
longius ulla pedum: servat nubemque locumque.
occupat obsessos sudor mihi frigidus artus,
caeruleaeque cadunt toto de corpore guttae,
quaque pedem movi, manat lacus, eque capillis
ros cadit, et citius, quam nunc tibi facta renarro,
in latices mutor. sed enim cognoscit amatas
amnis aquas positoque viri, quod sumpserat, ore
vertitur in proprias, et se mihi misceat, undas.
Delia rupit humum, caecisque ego mersa cavernis

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"'Where do you hurry, Arethusa?' Alpheus said from his waters. 'Where do you hurry?' he said again to me in a hoarse voice. Just as I was, I fled without my garments (the other bank held my clothes). He pressed harder and burned more - because I was naked, I seemed readier to him.

"'So I ran, so that fierce one pressed me - as doves usually flee a hawk on trembling wing, as a hawk usually presses trembling doves. I sustained running all the way beneath Orchomenus and Psophis and Cyllene and Maenalus' folds and cold Erymanthus and Elis, nor was he swifter than I.

"'But I couldn't endure the course long, unequal in strength. He could bear long labor. Yet through fields and tree-covered mountains and rocks and crags and where there was no path, I ran. The sun was at my back. I saw a long shadow go before my feet - unless fear saw it. But certainly the sound of feet terrified me, and his huge panting breath blew at my hair's ribbons.

"'Worn out by the labor of flight, I said, Bring help - I'm caught! - to your weapon-bearer, Diana, to whom you've often given the carrying of your bow and arrows enclosed in the quiver!'

"'The goddess was moved and, carrying one from thick clouds, threw it over me. The river searched for me, concealed in darkness, and, unknowing, circled around the hollow cloud. Twice, unaware, he circled the place where the goddess had covered me, and twice he called "Io Arethusa! Io Arethusa!"

"'What spirit did I, wretched, then have? Wasn't it that of a lamb if it hears wolves roaring around high pens, or of a hare who, hiding in a thicket, sees the hostile mouths of dogs and dares give no motion to its body?

"'Yet he didn't leave. For he saw no footprints going farther. He watched the cloud and the place. Cold sweat seized my besieged limbs. Blue drops fell from my whole body. Wherever I moved my foot, a pool flowed. From my hair dew fell. More swiftly than I now tell you the deed, I was changed into waters.

"'But still the river recognized his beloved waters. Laying aside the man's form he'd assumed, he turned into his own waves to mix himself with me. The Delian goddess broke the ground, and I, plunged in dark caverns, was carried to Ortygia, which is pleasing to me by the goddess's name - it first brought me to the upper air.'

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advehor Ortygiam, quae me cognomine divae
grata meae superas eduxit prima sub auras.'
'"Hac Arethusa tenus; geminos dea fertilis angues
curribus admovit frenisque coercuit ora
et medium caeli terraeque per aera vecta est
atque levem currum Tritonida misit in urbem
Triptolemo partimque rudi data semina iussit
spargere humo, partim post tempora longa recultae.
iam super Europen sublimis et Asida terram
vectus erat iuvenis: Scythicas advertitur oras.
rex ibi Lyncus erat; regis subit ille penates.
qua veniat, causamque viae nomenque rogatus
et patriam, 'patria est clarae mihi' dixit 'Athenae;
Triptolemus nomen; veni nec puppe per undas,
nec pede per terras: patuit mihi pervius aether.
dona fero Cereris, latos quae sparsa per agros
frugiferas messes alimentaque mitia reddant.'
barbarus invidit tantique ut muneris auctor
ipse sit, hospitio recipit somnoque gravatum
adgreditur ferro: conantem figere pectus
lynca Ceres fecit rursusque per aera iussit
Mopsopium iuvenem sacros agitare iugales."
'Finierat doctos e nobis maxima cantus;
at nymphae vicisse deas Helicona colentes
concordi dixere sono: convicia victae
cum iacerent, "quoniam" dixi "certamine vobis
supplicium meruisse parum est maledictaque culpae
additis et non est patientia libera nobis,
ibimus in poenas et, qua vocat ira, sequemur."
rident Emathides spernuntque minacia verba,
conantesque loqui et magno clamore protervas
intentare manus pennas exire per ungues
adspexere suos, operiri bracchia plumis,
alteraque alterius rigido concrescere rostro
ora videt volucresque novas accedere silvis;
dumque volunt plangi, per bracchia mota levatae
aere pendebant, nemorum convicia, picae.
Nunc quoque in alitibus facundia prisca remansit
raucaque garrulitas studiumque inmane loquendi.'

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"Here Arethusa ended. The fertile goddess yoked twin snakes to her chariot and restrained their mouths with reins and was carried through middle air between heaven and earth. She sent her light chariot to the Tritonian city and gave seeds to Triptolemus and ordered him to scatter them partly on rough ground, partly on land recultivated after long time.

"Now the youth had been carried high over Europe and Asian land. He turned toward Scythian shores. A king there was Lyncus. He entered that king's household. Asked from where he came and the cause of his journey and his name and homeland, he said:

"'My homeland is famous Athens. My name is Triptolemus. I came neither by ship through waves nor by foot through lands - the passable air lay open to me. I bring Ceres' gifts, which scattered through wide fields may return fruitful harvests and gentle nourishment.'

"The barbarian envied and, so he himself might be author of so great a gift, received him in hospitality and attacked him, weighed down with sleep, with iron. As he tried to pierce his chest, Ceres made him a lynx and ordered the Mopsopian youth to drive the sacred pair again through air."

The Pierides Transformed

'The greatest of us had finished her learned song. But the nymphs, dwelling on Helicon, said with harmonious sound that the goddesses had won. When the defeated hurled insults, I said, "Since punishing you by contest isn't enough and you add abuse to fault, and our patience isn't free, we'll go to punishments and follow where anger calls."

'The Emathides laughed and spurned the threatening words. Attempting to speak and with great clamor to threaten with shameless hands, they saw feathers come out through their nails and plumage cover their arms.

'Each saw the other's mouth harden into rigid beak and a new bird join the forests. While they wanted to beat their breasts, lifted by arms' movement, they hung in air - the forests' taunts, magpies.

'Even now in birds their old eloquence remained and their hoarse chatter and immense eagerness for speaking.'

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BOOK 6

Praebuerat dictis Tritonia talibus aures
carminaque Aonidum iustamque probaverat iram;
tum secum: 'laudare parum est, laudemur et ipsae
numina nec sperni sine poena nostra sinamus.'
Maeoniaeque animum fatis intendit Arachnes,
quam sibi lanificae non cedere laudibus artis
audierat. non illa loco nec origine gentis
clara, sed arte fuit: pater huic Colophonius Idmon
Phocaico bibulas tinguebat murice lanas;
occiderat mater, sed et haec de plebe suoque
aequa viro fuerat; Lydas tamen illa per urbes
quaesierat studio nomen memorabile, quamvis
orta domo parva parvis habitabat Hypaepis.
huius ut adspicerent opus admirabile, saepe
deseruere sui nymphae vineta Timoli,
deseruere suas nymphae Pactolides undas.
nec factas solum vestes, spectare iuvabat
tum quoque, cum fierent: tantus decor adfuit arti,
sive rudem primos lanam glomerabat in orbes,
seu digitis subigebat opus repetitaque longo
vellera mollibat nebulas aequantia tractu,
sive levi teretem versabat pollice fusum,
seu pingebat acu; scires a Pallade doctam.
quod tamen ipsa negat tantaque offensa magistra
'certet' ait 'mecum: nihil est, quod victa recusem!'
Pallas anum simulat: falsosque in tempora canos
addit et infirmos, baculo quos sustinet, artus.
tum sic orsa loqui 'non omnia grandior aetas,
quae fugiamus, habet: seris venit usus ab annis.
consilium ne sperne meum: tibi fama petatur
inter mortales faciendae maxima lanae;
cede deae veniamque tuis, temeraria, dictis
supplice voce roga: veniam dabit illa roganti.'
adspicit hanc torvis inceptaque fila relinquit
vixque manum retinens confessaque vultibus iram
talibus obscuram resecuta est Pallada dictis:
'mentis inops longaque venis confecta senecta,
et nimium vixisse diu nocet. audiat istas,
si qua tibi nurus est, si qua est tibi filia, voces;

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Arachne Challenges Minerva

Minerva had lent her ears to such words and approved the Muses' songs and their just anger. Then she said to herself: "To praise isn't enough. Let me myself be praised as a divinity, and let's not allow my power to be spurned without punishment."

She turned her mind to the fates of Lydian Arachne, whom she'd heard didn't yield to her in praise of the wool-working art. Arachne wasn't famous for her place or family origin but for her art. Her father, Idmon from Colophon, used to dye thirsty wools with Phocaean purple. Her mother had died, but she too had been from common people and equal to her husband.

Yet Arachne, through Lydian cities, had sought a memorable name with her skill, though born in a small home and living in small Hypaepae. Often to look at her marvelous work, the nymphs left their vineyards of Tmolus, often the Pactolid nymphs left their waters. It was pleasing to watch not only the finished garments but also when they were being made - such grace attended her art.

Whether she gathered rough wool into first balls, or worked the material with her fingers, or with long drawing softened the fleeces repeatedly, making them equal to clouds, or turned the smooth spindle with light thumb, or embroidered with needle - you'd know she'd been taught by Pallas. Yet she herself denied it, and, offended by such a great teacher, said, "Let her compete with me! There's nothing I'd refuse if defeated!"

Pallas pretended to be an old woman. She added false gray hair to her temples and weak limbs that she supported with a staff. Then she began to speak thus:

"Not everything that greater age has is to be avoided. Experience comes from late years. Don't spurn my advice. Seek fame among mortals as greatest at making wool. Yield to the goddess and, reckless girl, ask pardon for your words with suppliant voice. She'll give pardon to one who asks."

Arachne looked at her with fierce eyes and left off her begun threads. She barely held back her hand and, confessing anger in her expression, answered disguised Pallas with such words:

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consilii satis est in me mihi, neve monendo
profecisse putes, eadem est sententia nobis.
cur non ipsa venit? cur haec certamina vitat?'
tum dea 'venit!' ait formamque removit anilem
Palladaque exhibuit: venerantur numina nymphae
Mygdonidesque nurus; sola est non territa virgo,
sed tamen erubuit, subitusque invita notavit
ora rubor rursusque evanuit, ut solet aer
purpureus fieri, cum primum Aurora movetur,
et breve post tempus candescere solis ab ortu.
perstat in incepto stolidaeque cupidine palmae
in sua fata ruit; neque enim Iove nata recusat
nec monet ulterius nec iam certamina differt.
haud mora, constituunt diversis partibus ambae
et gracili geminas intendunt stamine telas:
tela iugo vincta est, stamen secernit harundo,
inseritur medium radiis subtemen acutis,
quod digiti expediunt, atque inter stamina ductum
percusso paviunt insecti pectine dentes.
utraque festinant cinctaeque ad pectora vestes
bracchia docta movent, studio fallente laborem.
illic et Tyrium quae purpura sensit aenum
texitur et tenues parvi discriminis umbrae;
qualis ab imbre solent percussis solibus arcus
inficere ingenti longum curvamine caelum;
in quo diversi niteant cum mille colores,
transitus ipse tamen spectantia lumina fallit:
usque adeo, quod tangit, idem est; tamen ultima distant.
illic et lentum filis inmittitur aurum
et vetus in tela deducitur argumentum.
Cecropia Pallas scopulum Mavortis in arce
pingit et antiquam de terrae nomine litem.
bis sex caelestes medio Iove sedibus altis
augusta gravitate sedent; sua quemque deorum
inscribit facies: Iovis est regalis imago;
stare deum pelagi longoque ferire tridente
aspera saxa facit, medioque e vulnere saxi
exsiluisse fretum, quo pignore vindicet urbem;
at sibi dat clipeum, dat acutae cuspidis hastam,

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"You come senseless and worn out by long old age, and having lived too long harms you. Let your daughter-in-law, if you have one, or your daughter, if you have one, hear these words. I have enough counsel in myself. Don't think you've helped by warning. My mind is the same. Why doesn't she herself come? Why does she avoid this contest?"

Then the goddess said, "She's come!" and removed her old woman's form and revealed Pallas. The nymphs and Phrygian women worshiped the divinity. Only the maiden wasn't terrified. Yet she blushed. A sudden blush marked her unwilling face and faded again - as the sky usually becomes purple when Aurora first moves and, after a brief time, grows white at the sun's rising.

She persisted in her plan and, from foolish desire for victory, rushed into her own fate. For Jupiter's daughter didn't refuse, nor warned further, nor now delayed the contest.

Without delay, both took positions in different places and stretched twin webs on slender warp. The web was bound to the beam, a reed separated the threads. The woof was inserted in the middle by sharp shuttles, which their fingers sped, and drawn through the warp, the notched teeth of the struck comb beat it into place.

Both hurried, their garments belted to their chests, their skilled arms moving, eagerness making them forget labor. There was woven purple that had felt the Tyrian bronze, and fine shades of small distinction - like the arc that rainbows usually paint across the long curve of vast sky when struck by sunlight. In it, though a thousand varied colors shine, the transition itself deceives watching eyes. So much is what touches the same, yet the ends differ. There too pliant gold was sent through the threads, and an ancient story was drawn in the web.

Minerva's Tapestry

Pallas painted the Martian rock on the Cecropian citadel and the ancient dispute about the land's name. Twelve gods sat on high seats with Jupiter in the middle, in august dignity. She inscribed each god with his own appearance. Jupiter's image was regal. She made the god of the sea stand and strike rough rocks with his long trident, and from the middle of the rock's wound, seawater leaped forth - by which pledge

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dat galeam capiti, defenditur aegide pectus,
percussamque sua simulat de cuspide terram
edere cum bacis fetum canentis olivae;
mirarique deos: operis Victoria finis.
ut tamen exemplis intellegat aemula laudis,
quod pretium speret pro tam furialibus ausis
quattuor in partes certamina quattuor addit,
clara colore suo, brevibus distincta sigillis:
Threiciam Rhodopen habet angulus unus et Haemum,
nunc gelidos montes, mortalia corpora quondam,
nomina summorum sibi qui tribuere deorum;
altera Pygmaeae fatum miserabile matris
pars habet: hanc Iuno victam certamine iussit
esse gruem populisque suis indicere bellum;
pinxit et Antigonen, ausam contendere quondam
cum magni consorte Iovis, quam regia Iuno
in volucrem vertit, nec profuit Ilion illi
Laomedonve pater, sumptis quin candida pennis
ipsa sibi plaudat crepitante ciconia rostro;
qui superest solus, Cinyran habet angulus orbum;
isque gradus templi, natarum membra suarum,
amplectens saxoque iacens lacrimare videtur.
circuit extremas oleis pacalibus oras
(is modus est) operisque sua facit arbore finem.
Maeonis elusam designat imagine tauri
Europam: verum taurum, freta vera putares;
ipsa videbatur terras spectare relictas
et comites clamare suas tactumque vereri
adsilientis aquae timidasque reducere plantas.
fecit et Asterien aquila luctante teneri,
fecit olorinis Ledam recubare sub alis;
addidit, ut satyri celatus imagine pulchram
Iuppiter inplerit gemino Nycteida fetu,
Amphitryon fuerit, cum te, Tirynthia, cepit,
aureus ut Danaen, Asopida luserit ignis,
Mnemosynen pastor, varius Deoida serpens.
te quoque mutatum torvo, Neptune, iuvenco
virgine in Aeolia posuit; tu visus Enipeus
gignis Aloidas, aries Bisaltida fallis,

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he claimed the city.

But to herself she gave a shield, gave a spear with sharp point, gave a helmet to her head. Her breast was defended by the aegis. She showed the earth, struck by her spear, bringing forth the fruit-bearing olive with gray berries, and the gods marveling. Victory was the work's end.

Yet so that her rival for praise might understand from examples what reward she should hope for such mad attempts, she added four contests to the four corners, clear in their own color, distinguished with small pictures.

One corner had Thracian Rhodope and Haemus - now frozen mountains, once mortal bodies who had assigned themselves the names of the highest gods. Another part had the Pygmy mother's miserable fate. Juno, when she'd defeated her in contest, ordered her to be a crane and declare war on her own people.

She painted Antigone too, who once dared to compete with great Jupiter's consort. Royal Juno changed her into a bird. Nor did Ilium help her, nor her father Laomedon - instead, taking white feathers, she, as a stork, applauds herself with clattering beak.

The corner that remained alone had Cinyras, bereft - him embracing the temple steps, his daughters' limbs, and lying on stone, he seemed to weep. She surrounded the edges with peaceful olives (that was the boundary) and finished her work with her own tree.

Arachne's Tapestry

Lydian Arachne portrayed Europa deceived by the bull's image. You'd think it a real bull, real waters. She herself seemed to look at the abandoned lands and call her companions and fear the touch of leaping water and draw back her timid feet.

She made Asterie held struggling by an eagle, made Leda reclining beneath a swan's wings. She added how Jupiter, hidden in a satyr's image, filled beautiful Nycteis with twin offspring, was Amphitryon when he took you, Tirynthian woman, was golden to deceive Danaë, was fire to trick Asopis, a shepherd to Mnemosyne, a spotted serpent to Deois.

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et te flava comas frugum mitissima mater
sensit equum, sensit volucrem crinita colubris
mater equi volucris, sensit delphina Melantho:
omnibus his faciemque suam faciemque locorum
reddidit. est illic agrestis imagine Phoebus,
utque modo accipitris pennas, modo terga leonis
gesserit, ut pastor Macareida luserit Issen,
Liber ut Erigonen falsa deceperit uva,
ut Saturnus equo geminum Chirona crearit.
ultima pars telae, tenui circumdata limbo,
nexilibus flores hederis habet intertextos.
Non illud Pallas, non illud carpere Livor
possit opus: doluit successu flava virago
et rupit pictas, caelestia crimina, vestes,
utque Cytoriaco radium de monte tenebat,
ter quater Idmoniae frontem percussit Arachnes.
non tulit infelix laqueoque animosa ligavit
guttura: pendentem Pallas miserata levavit
atque ita 'vive quidem, pende tamen, inproba' dixit,
'lexque eadem poenae, ne sis secura futuri,
dicta tuo generi serisque nepotibus esto!'
post ea discedens sucis Hecateidos herbae
sparsit: et extemplo tristi medicamine tactae
defluxere comae, cum quis et naris et aures,
fitque caput minimum; toto quoque corpore parva est:
in latere exiles digiti pro cruribus haerent,
cetera venter habet, de quo tamen illa remittit
stamen et antiquas exercet aranea telas.
Lydia tota fremit, Phrygiaeque per oppida facti
rumor it et magnum sermonibus occupat orbem.
ante suos Niobe thalamos cognoverat illam,
tum cum Maeoniam virgo Sipylumque colebat;
nec tamen admonita est poena popularis Arachnes,
cedere caelitibus verbisque minoribus uti.
multa dabant animos; sed enim nec coniugis artes
nec genus amborum magnique potentia regni
sic placuere illi, quamvis ea cuncta placerent,
ut sua progenies; et felicissima matrum
dicta foret Niobe, si non sibi visa fuisset.

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You too, Neptune, changed to a fierce bull, she placed with the Aeolian maiden. You, seeming to be Enipeus, fathered the Aloads. A ram, you deceived the Bisaltid. And you, golden-haired mother of crops, most gentle, felt you as a horse. The snake-haired mother of the winged horse felt you as a bird. Melantho felt you as a dolphin.

To all these she gave their own appearance and the appearance of their places. There in rustic image was Phoebus, and how he'd worn now a hawk's feathers, now a lion's hide, how as a shepherd he'd deceived Macarean Isse, how Bacchus had deceived Erigone with false grapes, how Saturn as a horse created twin Chiron.

The last part of the web, surrounded by a thin border, had flowers interwoven with clinging ivy.

Neither Pallas nor Envy could criticize that work. The golden warrior-maiden grieved at the success and tore the embroidered cloth - the crimes of gods - and, as she held the shuttle from Mount Cytorus, three and four times struck Idmonian Arachne's forehead.

The unlucky girl couldn't bear it. Spirited, she tied a noose around her throat. As she hung, Pallas pitied her and lifted her and said, "Live, yes, but hang, wicked girl, and let this same law of punishment, lest you be secure about the future, be declared for your race and distant descendants!"

After that, departing, she sprinkled her with juices of Hecate's herb. Immediately, touched by the sad drug, her hair fell off, and with it her nose and ears. Her head became very small. Her whole body too was tiny. Slender fingers stuck to her side as legs. The rest was belly, from which nevertheless she sent thread and, as a spider, practices her ancient webs.

All Lydia roared, and through Phrygian towns rumor of the deed spread and occupied the great world with talk.

Niobe's Pride

Niobe had known Arachne before her marriage, when as a maiden she'd lived in Maeonia and at Sipylus. Yet, warned by the punishment of her countrywoman Arachne, she wasn't advised to yield to gods and use humbler words.

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nam sata Tiresia venturi praescia Manto
per medias fuerat divino concita motu
vaticinata vias: 'Ismenides, ite frequentes
et date Latonae Latonigenisque duobus
cum prece tura pia lauroque innectite crinem:
ore meo Latona iubet.' paretur, et omnes
Thebaides iussis sua tempora frondibus ornant
turaque dant sanctis et verba precantia flammis.
Ecce venit comitum Niobe celeberrima turba
vestibus intexto Phrygiis spectabilis auro
et, quantum ira sinit, formosa; movensque decoro
cum capite inmissos umerum per utrumque capillos
constitit, utque oculos circumtulit alta superbos,
'quis furor auditos' inquit 'praeponere visis
caelestes? aut cur colitur Latona per aras,
numen adhuc sine ture meum est? mihi Tantalus auctor,
cui licuit soli superorum tangere mensas;
Pleiadum soror est genetrix mea; maximus Atlas
est avus, aetherium qui fert cervicibus axem;
Iuppiter alter avus; socero quoque glorior illo.
me gentes metuunt Phrygiae, me regia Cadmi
sub domina est, fidibusque mei commissa mariti
moenia cum populis a meque viroque reguntur.
in quamcumque domus adverti lumina partem,
inmensae spectantur opes; accedit eodem
digna dea facies; huc natas adice septem
et totidem iuvenes et mox generosque nurusque!
quaerite nunc, habeat quam nostra superbia causam,
nescio quoque audete satam Titanida Coeo
Latonam praeferre mihi, cui maxima quondam
exiguam sedem pariturae terra negavit!
nec caelo nec humo nec aquis dea vestra recepta est:
exsul erat mundi, donec miserata vagantem
"hospita tu terris erras, ego" dixit "in undis"
instabilemque locum Delos dedit. illa duorum
facta parens: uteri pars haec est septima nostri.
sum felix (quis enim neget hoc?) felixque manebo
(hoc quoque quis dubitet?): tutam me copia fecit.
maior sum quam cui possit Fortuna nocere,

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Many things gave her spirit. But neither her husband's arts nor the lineage of both nor their great kingdom's power pleased her thus (though all these things pleased her) as her own offspring. Niobe would have been called the most fortunate of mothers if she hadn't seemed so to herself.

For Manto, daughter of Tiresias, prophet of the future, moved by divine impulse, had prophesied through the middle of the streets: "Women of Ismenos, go in crowds and give incense to Latona and Latona's two children with pious prayer and bind your hair with laurel. Latona commands through my mouth."

They obeyed. All Theban women adorned their temples with the ordered leaves and gave incense and praying words to the holy flames.

Look - Niobe came with a most celebrated crowd of companions, spectacular in Phrygian garments woven with gold and, as much as anger allowed, beautiful. Moving her lovely head, her hair flowing over both shoulders, she stopped. Casting her proud eyes around on high, she said:

"What madness is this - to prefer heard gods to seen? Or why is Latona worshiped at altars while my divinity is still without incense? Tantalus is my father - he alone was allowed to touch the gods' tables. My mother is the Pleiads' sister. Greatest Atlas is my grandfather, who bears the heavenly axis on his shoulders. Jupiter is my other grandfather, and I glory in this father-in-law too.

"The Phrygian peoples fear me. The royal house of Cadmus is under me as mistress. The walls, committed to my husband's lyre, along with the people are ruled by me and my husband. Wherever I turn my eyes to any part of my house, immense riches are seen. Add to this a face worthy of a goddess. To this add seven daughters and as many sons and soon sons-in-law and daughters-in-law!

"Now ask what cause our pride has! And dare to prefer to me Latona - I don't know, some Titan's daughter, child of Coeus - to whom the vast earth once denied a tiny seat when she was about to give birth! Your goddess wasn't received in sky nor earth nor waters. She was an exile from the world until Delos pitied her wandering and said, 'You wander on lands as a guest, I on waves,' and gave her an unstable place.

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multaque ut eripiat, multo mihi plura relinquet.
excessere metum mea iam bona. fingite demi
huic aliquid populo natorum posse meorum:
non tamen ad numerum redigar spoliata duorum,
Latonae turbam, qua quantum distat ab orba?
ite - satis pro re sacri - laurumque capillis
ponite!' deponunt et sacra infecta relinquunt,
quodque licet, tacito venerantur murmure numen.
Indignata dea est summoque in vertice Cynthi
talibus est dictis gemina cum prole locuta:
'en ego vestra parens, vobis animosa creatis,
et nisi Iunoni nulli cessura dearum,
an dea sim, dubitor perque omnia saecula cultis
arceor, o nati, nisi vos succurritis, aris.
nec dolor hic solus; diro convicia facto
Tantalis adiecit vosque est postponere natis
ausa suis et me, quod in ipsam reccidat, orbam
dixit et exhibuit linguam scelerata paternam.'
adiectura preces erat his Latona relatis:
'desine!' Phoebus ait, 'poenae mora longa querella est!'
dixit idem Phoebe, celerique per aera lapsu
contigerant tecti Cadmeida nubibus arcem.
Planus erat lateque patens prope moenia campus,
adsiduis pulsatus equis, ubi turba rotarum
duraque mollierat subiectas ungula glaebas.
pars ibi de septem genitis Amphione fortes
conscendunt in equos Tyrioque rubentia suco
terga premunt auroque graves moderantur habenas.
e quibus Ismenus, qui matri sarcina quondam
prima suae fuerat, dum certum flectit in orbem
quadripedis cursus spumantiaque ora coercet,
'ei mihi!' conclamat medioque in pectore fixa
tela gerit frenisque manu moriente remissis
in latus a dextro paulatim defluit armo.
proximus audito sonitu per inane pharetrae
frena dabat Sipylus, veluti cum praescius imbris
nube fugit visa pendentiaque undique rector
carbasa deducit, ne qua levis effluat aura:
frena tamen dantem non evitabile telum

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"She became parent of two - that's one-seventh of my womb. I'm fortunate (who would deny this?) and I'll remain fortunate (who would doubt this too?). Abundance has made me safe. I'm too great for Fortune to harm. Though she might snatch much, she'll leave me much more. My blessings have passed beyond fear.

"Imagine something could be taken from this population of my children. Stripped, I still won't be reduced to the number of two - Latona's crowd! How much does that differ from childless? Go - the sacred rites are done enough for the matter - and put down the laurel from your hair!"

They put it down and left the rites unfinished and, as much as was allowed, they worshiped the divinity with silent murmur.

Latona's Revenge

The goddess was indignant. On Cynthus' highest peak, she spoke with these words to her twin offspring:

"Look, I your mother, proud in having created you and yielding to no goddess except Juno - I'm doubted whether I'm a goddess, and through all ages I'm barred, O children, from worshiped altars unless you help me. Nor is this my only grief. Tantalus' daughter has added insults to terrible deed and dared to set you beneath her children and called me childless (may that fall back on herself!) and showed her wicked father's tongue."

Latona was about to add prayers to these complaints, but Phoebus said, "Stop! Long delay of punishment is the complaint!" Phoebe said the same, and in swift glide through air they reached Cadmus' citadel, covered with clouds.

There was a plain, flat and spreading wide near the walls, beaten down by constant horses, where the crowd of wheels and hard hoof had softened the ground beneath. Part there of the seven born from Amphion, brave boys, mounted horses and pressed backs reddened with Tyrian dye and guided reins heavy with gold.

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consequitur, summaque tremens cervice sagitta
haesit, et exstabat nudum de gutture ferrum;
ille, ut erat, pronus per crura admissa iubasque
volvitur et calido tellurem sanguine foedat.
Phaedimus infelix et aviti nominis heres
Tantalus, ut solito finem inposuere labori,
transierant ad opus nitidae iuvenale palaestrae;
et iam contulerant arto luctantia nexu
pectora pectoribus, cum tento concita nervo,
sicut erant iuncti, traiecit utrumque sagitta.
ingemuere simul, simul incurvata dolore
membra solo posuere, simul suprema iacentes
lumina versarunt, animam simul exhalarunt.
adspicit Alphenor laniataque pectora plangens
advolat, ut gelidos conplexibus adlevet artus,
inque pio cadit officio; nam Delius illi
intima fatifero rupit praecordia ferro.
quod simul eductum est, pars et pulmonis in hamis
eruta cumque anima cruor est effusus in auras.
at non intonsum simplex Damasicthona vulnus
adficit: ictus erat, qua crus esse incipit et qua
mollia nervosus facit internodia poples.
dumque manu temptat trahere exitiabile telum,
altera per iugulum pennis tenus acta sagitta est.
expulit hanc sanguis seque eiaculatus in altum
emicat et longe terebrata prosilit aura.
ultimus Ilioneus non profectura precando
bracchia sustulerat 'di' que 'o communiter omnes,'
dixerat ignarus non omnes esse rogandos
'parcite!' motus erat, cum iam revocabile telum
non fuit, arcitenens; minimo tamen occidit ille
vulnere, non alte percusso corde sagitta.
Fama mali populique dolor lacrimaeque suorum
tam subitae matrem certam fecere ruinae,
mirantem potuisse irascentemque, quod ausi
hoc essent superi, quod tantum iuris haberent;
nam pater Amphion ferro per pectus adacto
finierat moriens pariter cum luce dolorem.
heu! quantum haec Niobe Niobe distabat ab illa,

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Of these, Ismenus, who once had been his mother's first burden, while he steered the four-footed course in a sure circle and restrained the foaming mouth, cried "Alas!" and bore a weapon fixed in his middle chest and, letting the reins slip from his dying hand, gradually slid from his right shoulder to the side.

Next, Sipylus, hearing the sound of the quiver through empty air, gave reins, as when a captain, foreseeing rain, flees when he's seen a cloud and, as steersman, furls all hanging sails lest any light breeze escape. Yet giving reins, the unavoidable weapon followed him. The arrow, trembling, stuck in his highest neck and the bare iron protruded from his throat.

He, as he was, leaning forward through the mane over the loosened legs, rolled and stained the earth with warm blood. Unlucky Phaedimus and Tantalus, heir of his grandfather's name, when they'd put an end to their usual labor, had passed to the work of bright youth - the wrestling ground. And now they'd brought their struggling chests together in tight embrace when an arrow, driven from the taut string, as they were joined, pierced them both.

They groaned together. Together they laid their limbs, bent with pain, on the ground. Together, lying, they turned their last eyes and together breathed out their souls.

Alphenor saw them and, beating his torn chest, flew to them to lift the cold limbs in his embrace, and fell in his dutiful act. For the Delian god broke his innermost heart with death-bearing iron. When this was drawn out, part of his lung, torn on the barbs, was pulled out, and blood was poured into air with his soul.

But not a simple wound afflicted unshorn Damasichthon. He was struck where the leg begins and where the sinewy knee makes the soft joint. While he tried with his hand to draw out the deadly weapon, another arrow, driven through his throat to the feathers. Blood expelled this and, shooting high, spurted out and leaped far through the pierced air.

Last, Ilioneus lifted arms that wouldn't help by praying and said, "O gods, all together" (saying this unknowing that all shouldn't be asked), "spare me!" The archer was moved when now the arrow couldn't be called back. Yet he died from the smallest wound, the arrow not having struck deep into his heart.

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quae modo Latois populum submoverat aris
et mediam tulerat gressus resupina per urbem
invidiosa suis; at nunc miseranda vel hosti!
corporibus gelidis incumbit et ordine nullo
oscula dispensat natos suprema per omnes;
a quibus ad caelum liventia bracchia tollens
'pascere, crudelis, nostro, Latona, dolore,
pascere' ait 'satiaque meo tua pectora luctu!
[corque ferum satia!' dixit. 'per funera septem]
efferor: exsulta victrixque inimica triumpha!
cur autem victrix? miserae mihi plura supersunt,
quam tibi felici; post tot quoque funera vinco!'
Dixerat, et sonuit contento nervus ab arcu;
qui praeter Nioben unam conterruit omnes:
illa malo est audax. stabant cum vestibus atris
ante toros fratrum demisso crine sorores;
e quibus una trahens haerentia viscere tela
inposito fratri moribunda relanguit ore;
altera solari miseram conata parentem
conticuit subito duplicataque vulnere caeco est.
[oraque compressit, nisi postquam spiritus ibat]
haec frustra fugiens collabitur, illa sorori
inmoritur; latet haec, illam trepidare videres.
sexque datis leto diversaque vulnera passis
ultima restabat; quam toto corpore mater,
tota veste tegens 'unam minimamque relinque!
de multis minimam posco' clamavit 'et unam.'
dumque rogat, pro qua rogat, occidit: orba resedit
exanimes inter natos natasque virumque
deriguitque malis; nullos movet aura capillos,
in vultu color est sine sanguine, lumina maestis
stant inmota genis, nihil est in imagine vivum.
ipsa quoque interius cum duro lingua palato
congelat, et venae desistunt posse moveri;
nec flecti cervix nec bracchia reddere motus
nec pes ire potest; intra quoque viscera saxum est.
flet tamen et validi circumdata turbine venti
in patriam rapta est: ibi fixa cacumine montis
liquitur, et lacrimas etiam nunc marmora manant.

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Niobe's Daughters Slain

Rumor of the disaster and her people's grief and tears of her own made the mother certain of such sudden ruin - marveling that they'd dared this, that the gods had so much right. For father Amphion, driving iron through his chest, had ended in dying both life and grief together.

Alas, how much this Niobe differed from that Niobe who just before had driven people from Latona's altars and carried her steps, head high, through the middle of the city, envied by her own! But now pitied even by an enemy!

She lay upon the cold bodies and without order gave last kisses, distributed to all her children. From these, raising bruised arms to heaven, she said:

"Feed on our grief, cruel Latona, feed! And sate your heart with my mourning! [Sate your savage heart! Through seven deaths] I'm carried out. Exult, victorious enemy, and triumph! But why victorious? More remain to me, wretched, than to you, fortunate. After so many deaths too, I conquer!"

She'd spoken, and the bowstring sounded from the drawn bow. This terrified all except Niobe alone. She was bold from disaster. The sisters stood with black clothing before their brothers' biers, hair hanging down. One of them, drawing the arrow sticking in her vitals, collapsed dying with her mouth on her brother laid beneath.

Another, trying to console her wretched mother, suddenly fell silent and was doubled over by an unseen wound. [And compressed her mouth after the breath had gone.] This one, fleeing in vain, collapsed. That one died upon her sister. One hid. You'd see that one trembling.

With six given to death and suffering various wounds, the last remained. With her whole body, her whole clothing, the mother covered her and cried out, "Leave one, the smallest! Of many I ask for one, the smallest."

While she prayed, the one for whom she prayed died. Bereft, she sat down among her lifeless sons and daughters and husband and stiffened from disasters. No breeze moved her hair. The color in her face was bloodless. Her eyes stood motionless in sad cheeks. Nothing in the image was alive.

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Tum vero cuncti manifestam numinis iram
femina virque timent cultuque inpensius omnes
magna gemelliparae venerantur numina divae;
utque fit, a facto propiore priora renarrant.
e quibus unus ait: 'Lyciae quoque fertilis agris
non inpune deam veteres sprevere coloni.
res obscura quidem est ignobilitate virorum,
mira tamen: vidi praesens stagnumque locumque
prodigio notum. nam me iam grandior aevo
inpatiensque viae genitor deducere lectos
iusserat inde boves gentisque illius eunti
ipse ducem dederat, cum quo dum pascua lustro,
ecce lacu medio sacrorum nigra favilla
ara vetus stabat tremulis circumdata cannis.
restitit et pavido "faveas mihi!" murmure dixit
dux meus, et simili "faveas!" ego murmure dixi.
Naiadum Faunine foret tamen ara rogabam
indigenaene, dei, cum talia rettulit hospes:
"non hac, o iuvenis, montanum numen in ara est;
illa suam vocat hanc, cui quondam regia coniunx
orbem interdixit, quam vix erratica Delos
orantem accepit tum, cum levis insula nabat;
illic incumbens cum Palladis arbore palmae
edidit invita geminos Latona noverca.
hinc quoque Iunonem fugisse puerpera fertur
inque suo portasse sinu, duo numina, natos.
iamque Chimaeriferae, cum sol gravis ureret arva,
finibus in Lyciae longo dea fessa labore
sidereo siccata sitim collegit ab aestu,
uberaque ebiberant avidi lactantia nati.
forte lacum mediocris aquae prospexit in imis
vallibus; agrestes illic fruticosa legebant
vimina cum iuncis gratamque paludibus ulvam;
accessit positoque genu Titania terram
pressit, ut hauriret gelidos potura liquores.
rustica turba vetat; dea sic adfata vetantis:
'quid prohibetis aquis? usus communis aquarum est.
nec solem proprium natura nec aera fecit
nec tenues undas: ad publica munera veni;

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Her very tongue too froze with her hard palate inside, and her veins ceased to be able to move. Her neck couldn't bend, nor her arms give back motion, nor her foot go. Inside too her vitals were stone.

Yet she wept. Surrounded by a whirlwind of strong wind, she was snatched to her homeland. There, fixed on a mountain's peak, she melts, and even now the marble streams with tears.

Then truly all - woman and man - feared the goddess's manifest anger, and with more intent worship all venerated the great divinity of the twin-bearing goddess. As happens, from a more recent deed they retold earlier ones.

The Lycian Peasants

One of them said: "Lycian farmers too, in fields fertile, once didn't spurn the goddess without punishment. The matter is obscure indeed from the men's humble status, yet marvelous. I myself, present, saw the pool and the place famous from the prodigy.

"For my father, now older in years and unable to travel, had ordered me to drive chosen cattle from there, and had given himself a guide from that race. While I was surveying the pastures with him, look - in the middle of the lake stood an ancient altar, black with sacred ash, surrounded by trembling reeds.

"My guide stopped and said with fearful murmur, 'Favor me!' And I too said with similar murmur, 'Favor me!' I asked whether the altar was of the Naiads or Faunus or a local god, when my companion told such things:

"'No mountain deity is in this altar, youth. She claims this as her own - she to whom once the royal wife forbade the world, whom wandering Delos scarcely received when she prayed, when the island was still floating light. There, leaning against Pallas' tree with a palm, Latona brought forth twins despite her hostile stepmother.

"'From there too they say the new mother fled Juno and carried in her lap her two children - two divinities. And now when, under Chimaera-bearing Lycia's borders, the sun burned the fields heavily, the goddess, tired from long labor and parched from the starry heat, conceived thirst, and her thirsty nursing children had drunk dry her breasts.

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quae tamen ut detis, supplex peto. non ego nostros
abluere hic artus lassataque membra parabam,
sed relevare sitim. caret os umore loquentis,
et fauces arent, vixque est via vocis in illis.
haustus aquae mihi nectar erit, vitamque fatebor
accepisse simul: vitam dederitis in unda.
hi quoque vos moveant, qui nostro bracchia tendunt
parva sinu,' et casu tendebant bracchia nati.
quem non blanda deae potuissent verba movere?
hi tamen orantem perstant prohibere minasque,
ni procul abscedat, conviciaque insuper addunt.
nec satis est, ipsos etiam pedibusque manuque
turbavere lacus imoque e gurgite mollem
huc illuc limum saltu movere maligno.
distulit ira sitim; neque enim iam filia Coei
supplicat indignis nec dicere sustinet ultra
verba minora dea tollensque ad sidera palmas
'aeternum stagno' dixit 'vivatis in isto!'
eveniunt optata deae: iuvat esse sub undis
et modo tota cava submergere membra palude,
nunc proferre caput, summo modo gurgite nare,
saepe super ripam stagni consistere, saepe
in gelidos resilire lacus, sed nunc quoque turpes
litibus exercent linguas pulsoque pudore,
quamvis sint sub aqua, sub aqua maledicere temptant.
vox quoque iam rauca est, inflataque colla tumescunt,
ipsaque dilatant patulos convicia rictus;
terga caput tangunt, colla intercepta videntur,
spina viret, venter, pars maxima corporis, albet,
limosoque novae saliunt in gurgite ranae."'
Sic ubi nescio quis Lycia de gente virorum
rettulit exitium, satyri reminiscitur alter,
quem Tritoniaca Latous harundine victum
adfecit poena. 'quid me mihi detrahis?' inquit;
'a! piget, a! non est' clamabat 'tibia tanti.'
clamanti cutis est summos direpta per artus,
nec quicquam nisi vulnus erat; cruor undique manat,
detectique patent nervi, trepidaeque sine ulla
pelle micant venae; salientia viscera possis

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"'By chance she saw a pool of moderate water in a low valley. Rustic people there were gathering bushy osiers with rushes and sedge pleasing to marshes. The Titan's daughter approached and, knee placed, pressed the earth to drink the cool liquids as she was about to quench her thirst.

"'The rustic crowd forbade it. The goddess thus addressed those forbidding: "Why do you forbid me water? Use of water is common. Nature didn't make the sun private, nor air, nor thin waters. I come to a public gift. Yet I ask as a suppliant that you give it. I wasn't preparing to wash my limbs and weary body here but to relieve thirst. As I speak, my mouth lacks moisture and my throat is dry, and scarcely is there a path for voice in it.

"'"A draught of water will be nectar to me, and I'll confess I've received life at the same time. You'll have given life in water. Let these children too move you, who stretch little arms from my lap." And by chance the children were stretching arms.

"'Whom could the goddess's gentle words not have moved? Yet they persisted in forbidding her as she prayed and added threats unless she went far away, and added insults besides. Not enough - they even disturbed the pools themselves with feet and hands and, with malicious leaping, stirred up soft mud from the bottom of the deep pool here and there.

"'Anger drove out thirst. For no longer did Coeus' daughter supplicate the unworthy nor endure to speak words lesser than a goddess. Raising her palms to the stars, she said, "Live forever in that pool!"

"'The goddess's wishes came true. It pleases them to be under water. Now to submerge all their limbs in the hollow marsh, now to put forth their heads, now to swim in the pool's surface, often to stand on the pool's bank, often to leap back into the cool waters.

"'But even now they exercise their foul tongues in quarrels and, shame driven out, though they're under water, they try to curse under water. Their voice too is now hoarse, their swollen throats swell, and their very insults dilate their wide mouths. Their backs touch their heads, their necks seem cut off. Their spine is green, their belly, the body's largest part, is white. They leap as new frogs in the muddy pool.'"

Marsyas

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et perlucentes numerare in pectore fibras.
illum ruricolae, silvarum numina, fauni
et satyri fratres et tunc quoque carus Olympus
et nymphae flerunt, et quisquis montibus illis
lanigerosque greges armentaque bucera pavit.
fertilis inmaduit madefactaque terra caducas
concepit lacrimas ac venis perbibit imis;
quas ubi fecit aquam, vacuas emisit in auras.
inde petens rapidus ripis declivibus aequor
Marsya nomen habet, Phrygiae liquidissimus amnis.
Talibus extemplo redit ad praesentia dictis
vulgus et exstinctum cum stirpe Amphiona luget;
mater in invidia est: hanc tunc quoque dicitur unus
flesse Pelops umeroque, suas a pectore postquam
deduxit vestes, ebur ostendisse sinistro.
concolor hic umerus nascendi tempore dextro
corporeusque fuit; manibus mox caesa paternis
membra ferunt iunxisse deos, aliisque repertis,
qui locus est iuguli medius summique lacerti,
defuit: inpositum est non conparentis in usum
partis ebur, factoque Pelops fuit integer illo.
Finitimi proceres coeunt, urbesque propinquae
oravere suos ire ad solacia reges,
Argosque et Sparte Pelopeiadesque Mycenae
et nondum torvae Calydon invisa Dianae
Orchomenosque ferax et nobilis aere Corinthus
Messeneque ferox Patraeque humilesque Cleonae
et Nelea Pylos neque adhuc Pittheia Troezen,
quaeque urbes aliae bimari clauduntur ab Isthmo
exteriusque sitae bimari spectantur ab Isthmo;
credere quis posset? solae cessastis Athenae.
obstitit officio bellum, subvectaque ponto
barbara Mopsopios terrebant agmina muros.
Threicius Tereus haec auxiliaribus armis
fuderat et clarum vincendo nomen habebat;
quem sibi Pandion opibusque virisque potentem
et genus a magno ducentem forte Gradivo
conubio Procnes iunxit; non pronuba Iuno,
non Hymenaeus adest, non illi Gratia lecto:

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After someone or other from the Lycian people had told this destruction, another remembered the satyr whom Latona's son, with Minerva's reed, conquered and punished.

"Why do you tear me from myself?" he said. "Ah, it grieves me! Ah, a flute isn't worth this!" he was shouting. As he shouted, his skin was stripped off over his highest limbs, and he was nothing but a wound. Blood flowed everywhere. Uncovered, his sinews lay open, and his veins, trembling without any skin, throbbed. You could count his leaping vitals and the transparent fibers in his chest.

The country gods, the forest's divinities, fauns and brother satyrs, and Olympus, dear even then, and the nymphs wept for him, and whoever in those mountains tended wool-bearing flocks and cattle with horns. The fertile earth grew wet and, soaked, received the falling tears and drank them with its deep veins.

When it had made them water, it sent them into the open air. From there, seeking the sea with rapid course down sloping banks, Marsyas has his name - the clearest river of Phrygia.

Pelops' Ivory Shoulder

From such words the crowd immediately returned to present things and mourned Amphion, extinct with his line. The mother was blamed. Yet then too, one is said to have wept for her - Pelops. After he drew the garment from his chest, he showed ivory on his left shoulder.

This shoulder, at the time of birth, had been the same color as the right and was of flesh. Soon, they say, when his limbs were cut by his father's hands, the gods joined the parts. With others found, the place that's between the neck and top of the arm was missing. Ivory was placed in use of the missing part, and Pelops was made whole by that deed.

Tereus and Procne

Neighboring nobles gathered. Nearby cities begged their kings to go for consolation: Argos and Sparta and Pelopid Mycenae and Calydon not yet hated by fierce Diana, fertile Orchomenus and Corinth famous for bronze, fierce Messene and humble Patrae and Cleonae, and Nelean Pylos and not yet

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Eumenides tenuere faces de funere raptas,
Eumenides stravere torum, tectoque profanus
incubuit bubo thalamique in culmine sedit.
hac ave coniuncti Procne Tereusque, parentes
hac ave sunt facti; gratata est scilicet illis
Thracia, disque ipsi grates egere; diemque,
quaque data est claro Pandione nata tyranno
quaque erat ortus Itys, festum iussere vocari:
usque adeo latet utilitas.
Iam tempora Titan
quinque per autumnos repetiti duxerat anni,
cum blandita viro Procne 'si gratia' dixit
'ulla mea est, vel me visendae mitte sorori,
vel soror huc veniat: redituram tempore parvo
promittes socero; magni mihi muneris instar
germanam vidisse dabis.' iubet ille carinas
in freta deduci veloque et remige portus
Cecropios intrat Piraeaque litora tangit.
ut primum soceri data copia, dextera dextrae
iungitur, et fausto committitur omine sermo.
coeperat, adventus causam, mandata referre
coniugis et celeres missae spondere recursus:
ecce venit magno dives Philomela paratu,
divitior forma; quales audire solemus
naidas et dryadas mediis incedere silvis,
si modo des illis cultus similesque paratus.
non secus exarsit conspecta virgine Tereus,
quam si quis canis ignem supponat aristis
aut frondem positasque cremet faenilibus herbas.
digna quidem facies; sed et hunc innata libido
exstimulat, pronumque genus regionibus illis
in Venerem est: flagrat vitio gentisque suoque.
impetus est illi comitum corrumpere curam
nutricisque fidem nec non ingentibus ipsam
sollicitare datis totumque inpendere regnum
aut rapere et saevo raptam defendere bello;
et nihil est, quod non effreno captus amore
ausit, nec capiunt inclusas pectora flammas.
iamque moras male fert cupidoque revertitur ore

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Pitthean Troezen, and whatever other cities are enclosed by the two-sea'd Isthmus or seen from outside the two-sea'd Isthmus.

Who could believe it? Athens alone held back. War opposed the duty. Barbarian bands, brought over sea, were terrifying the Mopsopian walls. Thracian Tereus with auxiliary arms had scattered these and, by conquering, had a famous name.

Pandion, powerful in wealth and men and tracing his race by chance from great Gradivus, joined him in marriage to Procne. But Juno the bride-maker wasn't present, nor Hymenaeus, nor the Grace at that bed. The Furies held torches snatched from a funeral. The Furies spread the couch. A profane owl settled on the roof and sat on the marriage chamber's peak.

With this bird Procne and Tereus were joined. With this bird they became parents. Thrace indeed congratulated them, and they themselves gave thanks to the gods. The day when Pandion's daughter was given to the famous tyrant, and when Itys was born, they ordered to be called festivals - so much does usefulness hide.

Now Titan had led through five autumns the returning year's seasons, when Procne, coaxing her husband, said, "If any favor is mine, either send me to visit my sister, or let my sister come here. You'll promise to your father-in-law she'll return in brief time. You'll give me the equivalent of a great gift if I see my sister."

He ordered ships launched into the waters and, with sail and oar, entered the Cecropian port and touched Piraeus' shores. As soon as the chance of seeing his father-in-law was given, right hand was joined to right hand, and conversation began with good omen.

He'd begun to relate the reason for his coming, to report his wife's commands, and to promise the sent one's swift return - when, look, Philomela came, rich in great preparation, richer in beauty - like the naiads and dryads we usually hear of walking through the middle forests, if only you'd give them similar dress and similar adornment.

Tereus' Crime

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ad mandata Procnes et agit sua vota sub illa.
facundum faciebat amor, quotiensque rogabat
ulterius iusto, Procnen ita velle ferebat.
addidit et lacrimas, tamquam mandasset et illas.
pro superi, quantum mortalia pectora caecae
noctis habent! ipso sceleris molimine Tereus
creditur esse pius laudemque a crimine sumit.
quid, quod idem Philomela cupit, patriosque lacertis
blanda tenens umeros, ut eat visura sororem,
perque suam contraque suam petit ipsa salutem.
spectat eam Tereus praecontrectatque videndo
osculaque et collo circumdata bracchia cernens
omnia pro stimulis facibusque ciboque furoris
accipit, et quotiens amplectitur illa parentem,
esse parens vellet: neque enim minus inpius esset.
vincitur ambarum genitor prece: gaudet agitque
illa patri grates et successisse duabus
id putat infelix, quod erit lugubre duabus.
Iam labor exiguus Phoebo restabat, equique
pulsabant pedibus spatium declivis Olympi:
regales epulae mensis et Bacchus in auro
ponitur; hinc placido dant turgida corpora somno.
at rex Odrysius, quamvis secessit, in illa
aestuat et repetens faciem motusque manusque
qualia vult fingit quae nondum vidit et ignes
ipse suos nutrit cura removente soporem.
lux erat, et generi dextram conplexus euntis
Pandion comitem lacrimis commendat obortis:
'hanc ego, care gener, quoniam pia causa coegit,
et voluere ambae (voluisti tu quoque, Tereu)
do tibi perque fidem cognataque pectora supplex,
per superos oro, patrio ut tuearis amore
et mihi sollicitae lenimen dulce senectae
quam primum (omnis erit nobis mora longa) remittas;
tu quoque quam primum (satis est procul esse sororem),
si pietas ulla est, ad me, Philomela, redito!'
mandabat pariterque suae dabat oscula natae,
et lacrimae mites inter mandata cadebant;
utque fide pignus dextras utriusque poposcit

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Not otherwise did Tereus burn on seeing the maiden than if someone put fire under dry grain or burned leaves and hay stored in barns. Worthy indeed was her appearance, but his innate lust also spurred him, and that region's race is prone to Venus. He burned with his people's vice and his own.

His impulse was to corrupt the care of her companions and the nurse's loyalty, and also to solicit her herself with great gifts and spend his whole kingdom, or to seize her and defend the seized one with savage war. There was nothing that, seized by unbridled love, he didn't dare, nor could his chest contain the enclosed flames.

And now he barely endured delays and, with eager mouth, returned to Procne's commands and pursued his own desires beneath hers. Love made him eloquent. Whenever he asked for more than was just, he said Procne wanted it thus. He added tears too, as if she'd commanded those as well.

O gods above, how much blind night mortal hearts have! By the very undertaking of his crime, Tereus was believed to be dutiful and took praise from his crime. What's more - Philomela desired the same thing. Coaxing, holding her father's arms around his neck, she sought, for her own welfare and against it, to go to see her sister.

Tereus watched her and, seeing, touched her in advance. Seeing her kisses and arms placed around her father's neck, he took all as goads and torches and food for his madness. Whenever she embraced her father, he wished he were her father - for he'd be no less wicked.

Her father was conquered by the prayers of both. She rejoiced and gave thanks to her father and, unlucky girl, thought what would be sad for both had succeeded for both.

Now little labor remained for Phoebus. His horses struck with feet the slope of descending Olympus. Royal feasts and Bacchus in gold were set on tables. Then they gave their swollen bodies to peaceful sleep.

But the Odrysian king, though he'd withdrawn, burned for her and, repeating her face and movements and hands, he imagined what he wished - what he hadn't yet seen - and fed his own fires, care removing sleep.

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inter seque datas iunxit natamque nepotemque
absentes pro se memori rogat ore salutent;
supremumque vale pleno singultibus ore
vix dixit timuitque suae praesagia mentis.
Ut semel inposita est pictae Philomela carinae,
admotumque fretum remis tellusque repulsa est,
'vicimus!' exclamat, 'mecum mea vota feruntur!'
exsultatque et vix animo sua gaudia differt
barbarus et nusquam lumen detorquet ab illa,
non aliter quam cum pedibus praedator obuncis
deposuit nido leporem Iovis ales in alto;
nulla fuga est capto, spectat sua praemia raptor.
Iamque iter effectum, iamque in sua litora fessis
puppibus exierant, cum rex Pandione natam
in stabula alta trahit, silvis obscura vetustis,
atque ibi pallentem trepidamque et cuncta timentem
et iam cum lacrimis, ubi sit germana, rogantem
includit fassusque nefas et virginem et unam
vi superat frustra clamato saepe parente,
saepe sorore sua, magnis super omnia divis.
illa tremit velut agna pavens, quae saucia cani
ore excussa lupi nondum sibi tuta videtur,
utque columba suo madefactis sanguine plumis
horret adhuc avidosque timet, quibus haeserat, ungues.
mox ubi mens rediit, passos laniata capillos,
lugenti similis caesis plangore lacertis
intendens palmas 'o diris barbare factis,
o crudelis' ait, 'nec te mandata parentis
cum lacrimis movere piis nec cura sororis
nec mea virginitas nec coniugialia iura?
omnia turbasti; paelex ego facta sororis,
tu geminus coniunx, hostis mihi debita Procne!
quin animam hanc, ne quod facinus tibi, perfide, restet,
eripis? atque utinam fecisses ante nefandos
concubitus: vacuas habuissem criminis umbras.
si tamen haec superi cernunt, si numina divum
sunt aliquid, si non perierunt omnia mecum,
quandocumque mihi poenas dabis! ipsa pudore
proiecto tua facta loquar: si copia detur,

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Light came, and Pandion, grasping the hand of his departing son-in-law, commended his companion with welling tears:

"Dear son-in-law, since dutiful cause has compelled and both wished it (you too wished it, Tereus), I give her to you. By faith and kindred hearts, as a suppliant, I pray by the gods above, guard her with fatherly love and send back as soon as possible (any delay will be long to me) the sweet solace of my anxious old age. You too, Philomela, if there's any dutifulness, return to me as soon as possible (it's enough your sister is far)!"

He was commanding and at the same time giving kisses to his daughter. Gentle tears fell during his commands. As pledge of faith, he asked for the right hands of both and, joining them given together, begged them to greet his absent daughter and grandson for him with mindful voice. His last farewell he scarcely spoke with mouth full of sobs, and he feared his mind's forebodings.

Philomela's Rape

As soon as Philomela was placed on the painted ship and the sea was moved by oars and land was pushed back, "We've won!" he exclaimed. "My desires are carried with me!" The barbarian exulted and scarcely postponed his joys in his mind. Never did he turn his gaze from her - not otherwise than when Jupiter's eagle with hooked talons has placed a hare in its high nest. There's no escape for the captured. The ravisher watches his prize.

And now the journey was done, now they'd left the weary ships on their own shores, when the king dragged Pandion's daughter into high stables, dark with ancient forests. There, pale and trembling and fearing everything and now with tears asking where her sister was, he shut her in and, confessing his wickedness, overpowered her - a maiden and alone - by force.

In vain she called often on her father, often on her sister, most of all on the great gods. She trembled like a frightened lamb that, wounded, shaken from a gray wolf's mouth, doesn't yet seem safe to itself, or like a dove that, its feathers soaked with its own blood, still shudders and fears the greedy talons in which it had stuck.

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in populos veniam; si silvis clausa tenebor,
inplebo silvas et conscia saxa movebo;
audiet haec aether et si deus ullus in illo est!'
Talibus ira feri postquam commota tyranni
nec minor hac metus est, causa stimulatus utraque,
quo fuit accinctus, vagina liberat ensem
arreptamque coma fixis post terga lacertis
vincla pati cogit; iugulum Philomela parabat
spemque suae mortis viso conceperat ense:
ille indignantem et nomen patris usque vocantem
luctantemque loqui conprensam forcipe linguam
abstulit ense fero. radix micat ultima linguae,
ipsa iacet terraeque tremens inmurmurat atrae,
utque salire solet mutilatae cauda colubrae,
palpitat et moriens dominae vestigia quaerit.
hoc quoque post facinus (vix ausim credere) fertur
saepe sua lacerum repetisse libidine corpus.
Sustinet ad Procnen post talia facta reverti;
coniuge quae viso germanam quaerit, at ille
dat gemitus fictos commentaque funera narrat,
et lacrimae fecere fidem. velamina Procne
deripit ex umeris auro fulgentia lato
induiturque atras vestes et inane sepulcrum
constituit falsisque piacula manibus infert
et luget non sic lugendae fata sororis.
Signa deus bis sex acto lustraverat anno;
quid faciat Philomela? fugam custodia claudit,
structa rigent solido stabulorum moenia saxo,
os mutum facti caret indice. grande doloris
ingenium est, miserisque venit sollertia rebus:
stamina barbarica suspendit callida tela
purpureasque notas filis intexuit albis,
indicium sceleris; perfectaque tradidit uni,
utque ferat dominae, gestu rogat; illa rogata
pertulit ad Procnen nec scit, quid tradat in illis.
evolvit vestes saevi matrona tyranni
germanaeque suae fatum miserabile legit
et (mirum potuisse) silet: dolor ora repressit,
verbaque quaerenti satis indignantia linguae

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Soon, when her mind returned, she tore her disheveled hair and, like one mourning, beating her arms with blows, stretching forth her palms, said:

"O barbarian with terrible deeds, O cruel one! Didn't my father's commands with dutiful tears move you, nor care for my sister, nor my virginity, nor marriage rights? You've confused everything! I've been made my sister's rival. You, a double husband. Procne should be my enemy!

"Why don't you, traitor, snatch this soul, so that no crime remains for you? Would that you'd done it before the wicked intercourse! I'd have had shades empty of guilt. If the gods above see this, if the powers of gods are anything, if all things haven't perished with me - whenever you'll pay me penalties!

"I myself, shame thrown aside, will speak your deeds! If chance is given, I'll come to the people. If I'm held shut in the forests, I'll fill the forests and move the conscious rocks. Heaven will hear this, and if any god is in it!"

Philomela's Tongue Cut Out

Savage tyrant's anger was stirred by such words, and his fear was no less. Goaded by both causes, he freed his sword from the sheath where it was girded and, seizing her by the hair, forced her to bear bonds with arms fixed behind her back.

Philomela was offering her throat and had conceived hope of her death when she saw the sword. But he, while she was protesting and calling constantly on her father's name and struggling to speak, seized her tongue with tongs and cut it off with his savage sword.

The root of her tongue quivered. The tongue itself lay and murmured, trembling, on the black earth. As the tail of a mutilated snake usually leaps, it throbbed and, dying, sought its mistress's footsteps. After this deed too (I'd scarcely dare believe it), they say he often returned to the mangled body with his lust.

After such deeds he endured to return to Procne. She, seeing her husband, asked for her sister. But he gave false groans and told invented deaths. Tears made it believable. Procne tore from her shoulders her garments gleaming with broad gold and put on black clothes and set up an empty tomb and brought offerings to the false shades and mourned the fate of a sister not thus to be mourned.

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defuerunt, nec flere vacat, sed fasque nefasque
confusura ruit poenaeque in imagine tota est.
Tempus erat, quo sacra solent trieterica Bacchi
Sithoniae celebrare nurus: (nox conscia sacris,
nocte sonat Rhodope tinnitibus aeris acuti)
nocte sua est egressa domo regina deique
ritibus instruitur furialiaque accipit arma;
vite caput tegitur, lateri cervina sinistro
vellera dependent, umero levis incubat hasta.
concita per silvas turba comitante suarum
terribilis Procne furiisque agitata doloris,
Bacche, tuas simulat: venit ad stabula avia tandem
exululatque euhoeque sonat portasque refringit
germanamque rapit raptaeque insignia Bacchi
induit et vultus hederarum frondibus abdit
attonitamque trahens intra sua moenia ducit.
Ut sensit tetigisse domum Philomela nefandam,
horruit infelix totoque expalluit ore;
nacta locum Procne sacrorum pignora demit
oraque develat miserae pudibunda sororis
amplexumque petit; sed non attollere contra
sustinet haec oculos paelex sibi visa sororis
deiectoque in humum vultu iurare volenti
testarique deos, per vim sibi dedecus illud
inlatum, pro voce manus fuit. ardet et iram
non capit ipsa suam Procne fletumque sororis
corripiens 'non est lacrimis hoc' inquit 'agendum,
sed ferro, sed si quid habes, quod vincere ferrum
possit. in omne nefas ego me, germana, paravi:
aut ego, cum facibus regalia tecta cremabo,
artificem mediis inmittam Terea flammis,
aut linguam atque oculos et quae tibi membra pudorem
abstulerunt ferro rapiam, aut per vulnera mille
sontem animam expellam! magnum quodcumque paravi;
quid sit, adhuc dubito.'
Peragit dum talia Procne,
ad matrem veniebat Itys; quid possit, ab illo
admonita est oculisque tuens inmitibus 'a! quam
es similis patri!' dixit nec plura locuta

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Procne's Revenge

The god had surveyed the signs through the completed year's twelve passages. What should Philomela do? Guard prevented flight. The stable's walls were built with solid stone. Her mute mouth lacked proof of the deed. Great is grief's ingenuity, and cleverness comes in wretched matters.

Cleverly she hung threads on a barbarian loom and wove purple marks into white threads - evidence of the crime. When it was finished, she handed it to one woman and asked by gesture that she carry it to her mistress. She, asked, carried it to Procne and didn't know what she was handing over in it.

The savage tyrant's wife unrolled the cloth and read her sister's miserable fate. And (marvelous she could!) she was silent. Grief pressed her mouth. Words indignant enough for her tongue failed her seeking them. Nor was there room for tears, but she rushed, confusing right and wrong, and was wholly in the image of punishment.

It was the time when Thracian wives usually celebrated Bacchus' triennial rites. (Night was privy to the rites. At night Rhodope sounded with ringing of sharp bronze.) At night the queen left her home and was equipped for the god's rites and took up furious weapons. Her head was covered with vine, deerskin hung from her left side, a light spear rested on her shoulder.

Swift through the forests with an accompanying crowd of her companions, terrible Procne, driven by grief's furies, Bacchus, feigned yours. She came at last to the remote stable, howled out and sounded "Euhoe!" and broke down the doors and seized her sister. Dressing the seized one with signs of Bacchus, she hid her face with ivy fronds and, dragging the stunned girl, led her within her walls.

When Philomela sensed she'd touched the wicked house, the unlucky girl shuddered and grew pale in her whole face. Procne, finding a place, removed the sacred emblems and unveiled her wretched sister's shameful face and sought an embrace.

But she couldn't raise her eyes against her - she seemed to herself her sister's rival. With her face cast down to the ground and wanting to swear and call the gods to witness that that disgrace was inflicted on her by force, her hand stood for her voice.

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triste parat facinus tacitaque exaestuat ira.
ut tamen accessit natus matrique salutem
attulit et parvis adduxit colla lacertis
mixtaque blanditiis puerilibus oscula iunxit,
mota quidem est genetrix, infractaque constitit ira
invitique oculi lacrimis maduere coactis;
sed simul ex nimia mentem pietate labare
sensit, ab hoc iterum est ad vultus versa sororis
inque vicem spectans ambos 'cur admovet' inquit
'alter blanditias, rapta silet altera lingua?
quam vocat hic matrem, cur non vocat illa sororem?
cui sis nupta, vide, Pandione nata, marito!
degeneras! scelus est pietas in coniuge Tereo.'
nec mora, traxit Ityn, veluti Gangetica cervae
lactentem fetum per silvas tigris opacas,
utque domus altae partem tenuere remotam,
tendentemque manus et iam sua fata videntem
et 'mater! mater!' clamantem et colla petentem
ense ferit Procne, lateri qua pectus adhaeret,
nec vultum vertit. satis illi ad fata vel unum
vulnus erat: iugulum ferro Philomela resolvit,
vivaque adhuc animaeque aliquid retinentia membra
dilaniant. pars inde cavis exsultat aenis,
pars veribus stridunt; manant penetralia tabo.
His adhibet coniunx ignarum Terea mensis
et patrii moris sacrum mentita, quod uni
fas sit adire viro, comites famulosque removit.
ipse sedens solio Tereus sublimis avito
vescitur inque suam sua viscera congerit alvum,
tantaque nox animi est, 'Ityn huc accersite!' dixit.
dissimulare nequit crudelia gaudia Procne
iamque suae cupiens exsistere nuntia cladis
'intus habes, quem poscis' ait: circumspicit ille
atque, ubi sit, quaerit; quaerenti iterumque vocanti,
sicut erat sparsis furiali caede capillis,
prosiluit Ityosque caput Philomela cruentum
misit in ora patris nec tempore maluit ullo
posse loqui et meritis testari gaudia dictis.
Thracius ingenti mensas clamore repellit

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Procne burned and couldn't contain her own anger. Rebuking her sister's weeping, she said, "This isn't to be done with tears but with iron, or with something, if you have it, that can overcome iron. I've prepared myself for every wickedness, sister. Either I'll burn the royal dwelling with torches and hurl craftsman Tereus into the middle flames, or I'll snatch tongue and eyes and the limbs that stole your modesty with iron, or I'll drive out his guilty soul through a thousand wounds! Something great I've prepared - what it is, I still doubt."

Itys Slain

While Procne pondered such things, Itys came to his mother. What she could do, she was warned by him. Looking with pitiless eyes, "Ah, how like your father you are!" she said. Speaking no more, she prepared the sad deed and seethed with silent anger.

Yet when her son approached and brought greeting to his mother and drew her neck with little arms and mixed kisses with boyish blandishments, the mother indeed was moved. Her anger broke and stopped, and her unwilling eyes grew wet with forced tears.

But when she sensed her mind wavering from too much tenderness, she turned again from him to her sister's face and, looking at both in turn, said, "Why does one add blandishments while the other, robbed of tongue, is silent? Why doesn't she call me sister whom he calls mother? See whom you're married to, daughter of Pandion! You degenerate! Dutifulness is a crime in Tereus as husband."

Without delay, she dragged Itys - as a Ganges tigress drags a suckling deer's fawn through dark forests. When they'd reached a remote part of the high house, and as he stretched out hands and now saw his fate and cried "Mother! Mother!" and sought her neck, Procne struck him with a sword where chest joins side, nor did she turn her face away.

That one wound was enough for his fate. But Philomela cut his throat with iron. Still living and retaining something of soul, they tore apart his limbs. Part leaped in hollow bronze, part hissed on spits. The chambers dripped with gore.

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vipereasque ciet Stygia de valle sorores
et modo, si posset, reserato pectore diras
egerere inde dapes semesaque viscera gestit,
flet modo seque vocat bustum miserabile nati,
nunc sequitur nudo genitas Pandione ferro.
corpora Cecropidum pennis pendere putares:
pendebant pennis. quarum petit altera silvas,
altera tecta subit, neque adhuc de pectore caedis
excessere notae, signataque sanguine pluma est.
ille dolore suo poenaeque cupidine velox
vertitur in volucrem, cui stant in vertice cristae.
prominet inmodicum pro longa cuspide rostrum;
nomen epops volucri, facies armata videtur.
Hic dolor ante diem longaeque extrema senectae
tempora Tartareas Pandiona misit ad umbras.
sceptra loci rerumque capit moderamen Erectheus,
iustitia dubium validisne potentior armis.
quattuor ille quidem iuvenes totidemque crearat
femineae sortis, sed erat par forma duarum.
e quibus Aeolides Cephalus te coniuge felix,
Procri, fuit; Boreae Tereus Thracesque nocebant,
dilectaque diu caruit deus Orithyia,
dum rogat et precibus mavult quam viribus uti;
ast ubi blanditiis agitur nihil, horridus ira,
quae solita est illi nimiumque domestica vento,
'et merito!' dixit; 'quid enim mea tela reliqui,
saevitiam et vires iramque animosque minaces,
admovique preces, quarum me dedecet usus?
apta mihi vis est: vi tristia nubila pello,
vi freta concutio nodosaque robora verto
induroque nives et terras grandine pulso;
idem ego, cum fratres caelo sum nactus aperto
(nam mihi campus is est), tanto molimine luctor,
ut medius nostris concursibus insonet aether
exsiliantque cavis elisi nubibus ignes;
idem ego, cum subii convexa foramina terrae
supposuique ferox imis mea terga cavernis,
sollicito manes totumque tremoribus orbem.
hac ope debueram thalamos petiisse, socerque

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To these courses Procne admitted unknowing Tereus. Feigning it a sacred rite of ancestral custom that only a husband was allowed to approach, she removed companions and servants. Tereus himself, sitting on his ancestral throne, feasted and stuffed his own flesh into his own belly.

Such was his mind's blindness - he said, "Call Itys here!" Procne couldn't hide her cruel joys. Now, wanting to be the messenger of her own disaster, she said, "You have inside what you seek."

He looked around and asked where he was. Asking and calling again, just as she was, her hair scattered with furious slaughter, Philomela leaped forth and hurled Itys' bloody head into his father's face. Never at any time did she wish more to be able to speak and testify her joys with deserved words.

The Thracian with a great cry pushed back the tables and called the viperous sisters from the Stygian valley. Now, if he could, with opened chest, he wanted to bring forth the terrible feast and half-eaten flesh from within. Now he wept and called himself his son's miserable tomb. Now he pursued with drawn sword the daughters born of Pandion.

The Transformation into Birds

You'd think the Cecropid bodies hung on wings - they hung on wings. Of these, one sought the forests, another entered the roof. Not yet had the marks of slaughter left their breasts - the feather was signed with blood.

He, swift from his grief and desire for punishment, was changed into a bird. A crest stands on his head. An immoderately long beak projects instead of his long spear. The bird's name is hoopoe - its face seems armed.

This grief sent Pandion to the Tartarean shades before his day and the end of long old age. Erectheus took the scepter of the place and rule of affairs - doubtful whether more powerful in justice or arms. He indeed had created four sons and as many of female lot, but two daughters' beauty was equal.

Of these, Aeolus' son Cephalus was happy with you as wife, Procris. Boreas was harmed by Tereus and the Thracians. The god long loved Orithyia but was denied - while he asked and preferred to use prayers rather than force.

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non orandus erat mihi sed faciendus Erectheus.'
haec Boreas aut his non inferiora locutus
excussit pennas, quarum iactatibus omnis
adflata est tellus latumque perhorruit aequor,
pulvereamque trahens per summa cacumina pallam
verrit humum pavidamque metu caligine tectus
Orithyian amans fulvis amplectitur alis.
dum volat, arserunt agitati fortius ignes,
nec prius aerii cursus suppressit habenas,
quam Ciconum tenuit populos et moenia raptor.
illic et gelidi coniunx Actaea tyranni
et genetrix facta est, partus enixa gemellos,
cetera qui matris, pennas genitoris haberent.
non tamen has una memorant cum corpore natas,
barbaque dum rutilis aberat subnixa capillis,
inplumes Calaisque puer Zetesque fuerunt;
mox pariter pennae ritu coepere volucrum
cingere utrumque latus, pariter flavescere malae.
ergo ubi concessit tempus puerile iuventae,
vellera cum Minyis nitido radiantia villo
per mare non notum prima petiere carina.

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But when he achieved nothing with blandishments, rough with anger - which is usual for him and too familiar to the wind - he said, "And deservedly! For why did I leave behind my weapons - savagery and strength and angry, threatening spirits - and employ prayers, whose use shames me?

"Force is suited to me. By force I drive away sad clouds, by force I shake the seas and overturn knotted oaks and harden snows and beat lands with hail. I too, when I've met my brothers in open sky (for that field is mine), wrestle with such effort that middle heaven rings with our collisions and fires leap out, struck from hollow clouds.

"I too, when I've entered earth's vaulted holes and, fierce, placed my back beneath the deepest caverns, I disturb the shades and the whole world with tremors. By this help I should have sought marriage. Erectheus should not have been prayed to by me but made my father-in-law."

Boreas spoke these things or no less and shook his wings. By their beating all the earth was blown and the wide sea shuddered. Dragging his dusty cloak over the mountain peaks, he swept the ground and, covered in darkness, loving, embraced Orithyia with tawny wings.

While he flew, his stirred fires burned more strongly. Nor did he stop his airy course's reins before the raptor held the Cicones' people and walls. There the Actaean tyrant's cold wife became a mother too and brought forth twin births - the rest they had from their mother, their father's wings.

Yet these aren't said to have been born with their bodies at once. While beard was absent from their reddish hair, boy Calais and boy Zetes were featherless. Soon, equally, feathers in the manner of birds began to surround each side, equally their cheeks to grow golden.

So when youth's time yielded to their boyhood time, with the Minyans, in the first ship, they sought through the unknown sea the fleece shining with bright wool.

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BOOK 7

Iamque fretum Minyae Pagasaea puppe secabant,
perpetuaque trahens inopem sub nocte senectam
Phineus visus erat, iuvenesque Aquilone creati
virgineas volucres miseri senis ore fugarant,
multaque perpessi claro sub Iasone tandem
contigerant rapidas limosi Phasidos undas.
dumque adeunt regem Phrixeaque vellera poscunt
lexque datur Minyis magnorum horrenda laborum,
concipit interea validos Aeetias ignes
et luctata diu, postquam ratione furorem
vincere non poterat, 'frustra, Medea, repugnas:
nescio quis deus obstat,' ait, 'mirumque, nisi hoc est,
aut aliquid certe simile huic, quod amare vocatur.
nam cur iussa patris nimium mihi dura videntur?
sunt quoque dura nimis! cur, quem modo denique vidi,
ne pereat, timeo? quae tanti causa timoris?
excute virgineo conceptas pectore flammas,
si potes, infelix! si possem, sanior essem!
sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido,
mens aliud suadet: video meliora proboque,
deteriora sequor. quid in hospite, regia virgo,
ureris et thalamos alieni concipis orbis?
haec quoque terra potest, quod ames, dare. vivat an ille
occidat, in dis est. vivat tamen! idque precari
vel sine amore licet: quid enim commisit Iason?
quem, nisi crudelem, non tangat Iasonis aetas
et genus et virtus? quem non, ut cetera desint,
ore movere potest? certe mea pectora movit.
at nisi opem tulero, taurorum adflabitur ore
concurretque suae segeti, tellure creatis
hostibus, aut avido dabitur fera praeda draconi.
hoc ego si patiar, tum me de tigride natam,
tum ferrum et scopulos gestare in corde fatebor!
cur non et specto pereuntem oculosque videndo
conscelero? cur non tauros exhortor in illum
terrigenasque feros insopitumque draconem?
di meliora velint! quamquam non ista precanda,
sed facienda mihi. - prodamne ego regna parentis,
atque ope nescio quis servabitur advena nostra,
ut per me sospes sine me det lintea ventis

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Jason and Medea

And now the Argonauts were cutting through the sea in their Pagasaean ship. They had seen Phineus, who drags out his wretched old age in perpetual night, and the sons born of the North Wind had driven the bird-women from the old man's face. After enduring many trials under famous Jason, they had finally reached the swift waters of muddy Phasis.

While they approach the king and demand the fleece of Phrixus, and the Argonauts are given a law of terrible labors, meanwhile the daughter of Aeetes conceives a powerful flame. After she struggled for a long time but couldn't defeat her madness with reason, she said: "In vain do you resist, Medea! Some god is working against you. It would be strange if this weren't - or something very like it - what people call love. Why else do my father's commands seem too harsh to me? They are too harsh! Why do I fear that this man - whom I've only just now seen - might die? What's the cause of such great fear? Shake off the flames you've conceived in your virgin heart, if you can, poor girl! If I could, I'd be saner! But a new force drags me against my will, and desire urges one thing, my mind another. I see what's better and approve it, but I follow what's worse. Why do you burn for a stranger, royal maiden, and imagine marriage to someone from another world? This land too can give you someone to love. Whether he lives or dies lies with the gods. Yet let him live! I can pray for that even without love - for what has Jason done wrong? Who, unless cruel, wouldn't be moved by Jason's youth, his lineage, his courage? Who - even if all else were lacking - wouldn't be moved by his face? He's certainly moved my heart. But unless I bring help, he'll be blasted by the breath of bulls, he'll fight against his own crop - enemies born from the earth - or he'll be given as savage prey to the greedy dragon. If I allow this, then I'll confess I was born of a tigress, that I carry iron and rocks in my heart! Why don't I just watch him die and make my eyes guilty by seeing it? Why don't I urge on the bulls against him, the fierce earth-born men, the sleepless dragon? May the gods will better things! Though these aren't things to pray for - these are things for me to do.

"But should I betray my father's kingdom, and some stranger be saved by my help, so that - safe because of me - he can set sail without me and become another woman's husband, while I, Medea, am left to

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virque sit alterius, poenae Medea relinquar?
si facere hoc aliamve potest praeponere nobis,
occidat ingratus! sed non is vultus in illo,
non ea nobilitas animo est, ea gratia formae,
ut timeam fraudem meritique oblivia nostri.
et dabit ante fidem, cogamque in foedera testes
esse deos. quid tuta times? accingere et omnem
pelle moram: tibi se semper debebit Iason,
te face sollemni iunget sibi perque Pelasgas
servatrix urbes matrum celebrabere turba.
ergo ego germanam fratremque patremque deosque
et natale solum ventis ablata relinquam?
nempe pater saevus, nempe est mea barbara tellus,
frater adhuc infans; stant mecum vota sororis,
maximus intra me deus est! non magna relinquam,
magna sequar: titulum servatae pubis Achivae
notitiamque soli melioris et oppida, quorum
hic quoque fama viget, cultusque artesque locorum,
quemque ego cum rebus, quas totus possidet orbis,
Aesoniden mutasse velim, quo coniuge felix
et dis cara ferar et vertice sidera tangam.
quid, quod nescio qui mediis concurrere in undis
dicuntur montes ratibusque inimica Charybdis
nunc sorbere fretum, nunc reddere, cinctaque saevis
Scylla rapax canibus Siculo latrare profundo?
nempe tenens, quod amo, gremioque in Iasonis haerens
per freta longa ferar; nihil illum amplexa verebor
aut, siquid metuam, metuam de coniuge solo. -
coniugiumne putas speciosaque nomina culpae
inponis, Medea, tuae? - quin adspice, quantum
adgrediare nefas, et, dum licet, effuge crimen!'
dixit, et ante oculos rectum pietasque pudorque
constiterant, et victa dabat iam terga Cupido.
Ibat ad antiquas Hecates Perseidos aras,
quas nemus umbrosum secretaque silva tegebat,
et iam fortis erat, pulsusque recesserat ardor,
cum videt Aesoniden exstinctaque flamma reluxit.
erubuere genae, totoque recanduit ore,
utque solet ventis alimenta adsumere, quaeque
parva sub inducta latuit scintilla favilla

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punishment? If he can do this, if he can prefer another to me, let the ingrate die! But there's no such look in him, no such nobility in his spirit, no such grace of form that I should fear betrayal or that he'd forget what I deserve. He'll give his pledge first, and I'll compel the gods to witness our pact. Why do you fear when you're safe? Prepare yourself and banish all delay! Jason will always owe himself to you. He'll join himself to you in solemn ceremony, and you'll be celebrated as savior by crowds of mothers through the Greek cities.

"So shall I leave my sister and brother and father and the gods and my native land, carried off by the winds? Yes - my father is savage, yes - my land is barbarous, my brother is still an infant. The prayers of my sister stand with me, and the greatest god is within me! I won't be leaving great things - I'll be following great things: the glory of saving Greek youth, knowledge of a better land and cities whose fame flourishes even here, the culture and arts of those places, and him whom I'd wish to exchange for all the riches the whole world possesses - the son of Aeson. With him as husband I'll be called blessed, dear to the gods, and I'll touch the stars with my head. What of it, that they say certain mountains clash together in the middle of the waves, and that Charybdis, enemy of ships, now swallows the strait, now spews it back, and that savage Scylla, girdled with fierce dogs, barks in the Sicilian deep? Surely holding what I love, clinging to Jason's embrace, I'll be carried across the long seas. I'll fear nothing while embracing him - or if I fear anything, I'll fear only for my husband."

"Do you call it marriage, Medea, and impose fine names on your guilt? No - look at how great a crime you're undertaking, and, while you can, escape the sin!"

She spoke, and before her eyes stood righteousness and piety and shame, and already defeated Cupid was turning his back.

Medea's Choice

She was going to the ancient altars of Hecate, daughter of Perses, which a shaded grove and secluded forest concealed. Already she was strong, and her passion had been driven back and withdrawn, when

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crescere et in veteres agitata resurgere vires,
sic iam lenis amor, iam quem languere putares,
ut vidit iuvenem, specie praesentis inarsit.
et casu solito formosior Aesone natus
illa luce fuit: posses ignoscere amanti.
spectat et in vultu veluti tum denique viso
lumina fixa tenet nec se mortalia demens
ora videre putat nec se declinat ab illo;
ut vero coepitque loqui dextramque prehendit
hospes et auxilium submissa voce rogavit
promisitque torum, lacrimis ait illa profusis:
'quid faciam, video: nec me ignorantia veri
decipiet, sed amor. servabere munere nostro,
servatus promissa dato!' per sacra triformis
ille deae lucoque foret quod numen in illo
perque patrem soceri cernentem cuncta futuri
eventusque suos et tanta pericula iurat:
creditus accepit cantatas protinus herbas
edidicitque usum laetusque in tecta recessit.
Postera depulerat stellas Aurora micantes:
conveniunt populi sacrum Mavortis in arvum
consistuntque iugis; medio rex ipse resedit
agmine purpureus sceptroque insignis eburno.
ecce adamanteis Vulcanum naribus efflant
aeripedes tauri, tactaeque vaporibus herbae
ardent, utque solent pleni resonare camini,
aut ubi terrena silices fornace soluti
concipiunt ignem liquidarum adspergine aquarum,
pectora sic intus clausas volventia flammas
gutturaque usta sonant; tamen illis Aesone natus
obvius it. vertere truces venientis ad ora
terribiles vultus praefixaque cornua ferro
pulvereumque solum pede pulsavere bisulco
fumificisque locum mugitibus inpleverunt.
deriguere metu Minyae; subit ille nec ignes
sentit anhelatos (tantum medicamina possunt!)
pendulaque audaci mulcet palearia dextra
suppositosque iugo pondus grave cogit aratri
ducere et insuetum ferro proscindere campum:
mirantur Colchi, Minyae clamoribus augent

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she sees the son of Aeson and the extinguished flame flared up again. Her cheeks blushed, and heat kindled in all her face. Just as a spark that lay small beneath banked ash is accustomed to take on fuel from the winds and to grow when stirred and rise again to its old strength, so her now-gentle love, which you would have thought was languishing, when she saw the young man, blazed up at the sight of him in person. And by chance Aeson's son was more beautiful than usual that day - you could forgive the lover. She gazes, and as if seeing his face for the first time, she holds her eyes fixed and, out of her mind, doesn't think she's looking at a mortal face, and she doesn't turn away from him.

When the stranger began to speak and took her hand and begged for help in a submissive voice and promised marriage, she said with flowing tears: "I see what I'm doing. It won't be ignorance of the truth that deceives me, but love. You'll be saved by my gift. Once saved, give me what you promise!" He swears by the sacred rites of the three-formed goddess and by whatever divine power was in that grove, and by the father of his father-in-law who sees all future events, and by his own success and such great dangers. When she believed him, she immediately received the enchanted herbs and learned their use, and went back happily to her dwelling.

Jason's Trial

The next Aurora had driven away the glittering stars. The people gather at the sacred field of Mars and take their places on the ridges. The king himself sits in the middle of the throng, distinguished by his purple robe and ivory scepter.

Look - the bronze-footed bulls breathe fire from their adamantine nostrils, and the grass they touch burns from their vapors. Just as full furnaces are accustomed to roar, or when flint stones dissolved in an earthen forge take on fire from the sprinkling of liquid water, so their breasts, rolling enclosed flames within, and their scorched throats resound. Yet Aeson's son goes to meet them. They turned their terrible faces toward the face of the approaching man, their horns tipped with iron, and they struck the dusty ground with cloven hooves and filled the place with smoke-making bellows.

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adiciuntque animos. galea tum sumit aena
vipereos dentes et aratos spargit in agros.
semina mollit humus valido praetincta veneno,
et crescunt fiuntque sati nova corpora dentes,
utque hominis speciem materna sumit in alvo
perque suos intus numeros conponitur infans
nec nisi maturus communes exit in auras,
sic, ubi visceribus gravidae telluris imago
effecta est hominis, feto consurgit in arvo,
quodque magis mirum est, simul edita concutit arma.
quos ubi viderunt praeacutae cuspidis hastas
in caput Haemonii iuvenis torquere parantis,
demisere metu vultumque animumque Pelasgi;
ipsa quoque extimuit, quae tutum fecerat illum.
utque peti vidit iuvenem tot ab hostibus unum,
palluit et subito sine sanguine frigida sedit,
neve parum valeant a se data gramina, carmen
auxiliare canit secretasque advocat artes.
ille gravem medios silicem iaculatus in hostes
a se depulsum Martem convertit in ipsos:
terrigenae pereunt per mutua vulnera fratres
civilique cadunt acie. gratantur Achivi
victoremque tenent avidisque amplexibus haerent.
tu quoque victorem conplecti, barbara, velles:
obstitit incepto pudor, at conplexa fuisses,
sed te, ne faceres, tenuit reverentia famae.
quod licet, adfectu tacito laetaris agisque
carminibus grates et dis auctoribus horum.
Pervigilem superest herbis sopire draconem,
qui crista linguisque tribus praesignis et uncis
dentibus horrendus custos erat arboris aureae.
hunc postquam sparsit Lethaei gramine suci
verbaque ter dixit placidos facientia somnos,
quae mare turbatum, quae concita flumina sistunt,
somnus in ignotos oculos sibi venit, et auro
heros Aesonius potitur spolioque superbus
muneris auctorem secum, spolia altera, portans
victor Iolciacos tetigit cum coniuge portus.
Haemoniae matres pro gnatis dona receptis
grandaevique ferunt patres congestaque flamma

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The Argonauts froze with fear. He goes forward and doesn't feel their panting fires - so much can drugs do! He strokes their hanging dewlaps with a bold hand, forces them under the yoke, compels them to drag the heavy weight of the plow and to break the field unaccustomed to iron. The Colchians marvel. The Argonauts increase their courage with shouts. Then he takes up the bronze helmet and scatters the serpent's teeth in the plowed fields. The earth softens the seeds steeped in powerful poison, and the sown teeth grow and become new bodies. Just as a baby takes on human form in its mother's womb and is put together there through its own stages and doesn't come out into the common air until mature, so when the image of a man was completed in the womb of the pregnant earth, it rises in the fertile field, and - what's more amazing - it shakes the weapons born with it at the same time.

When they saw them preparing to hurl spears with sharpened points at the Haemonian youth's head, the Greeks lowered their faces and spirits in fear. She too was terrified - she who had made him safe. When she saw the young man alone attacked by so many enemies, she grew pale and suddenly sat down cold and bloodless, and lest the plants she gave might be too weak, she sang a helping spell and called upon secret arts.

He hurled a heavy stone into the middle of the enemies and turned the war repelled from himself onto them. The earth-born brothers perish through mutual wounds and fall in civil battle. The Greeks congratulate him and hold the victor and cling to him with eager embraces. You too, barbarian girl, wanted to embrace the victor - shame blocked your intent, but you would have embraced him if reverence for your reputation hadn't held you back. What's permitted, you do: you rejoice with silent feeling and give thanks in songs and to the gods who authored these things.

The Golden Fleece

There remains the task of putting to sleep with herbs the ever-watchful dragon, who, distinguished by his crest and three tongues and hooked teeth, was the dreadful guardian of the golden tree. After he sprinkled him with the plant of Lethean juice and spoke three times the words that bring peaceful sleep, which calm the troubled sea and stop rushing rivers, sleep came to eyes that didn't know it, and the

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tura liquefaciunt, inductaque cornibus aurum
victima vota cadit, sed abest gratantibus Aeson
iam propior leto fessusque senilibus annis,
cum sic Aesonides: 'o cui debere salutem
confiteor, coniunx, quamquam mihi cuncta dedisti
excessitque fidem meritorum summa tuorum,
si tamen hoc possunt (quid enim non carmina possunt?)
deme meis annis et demptos adde parenti!'
nec tenuit lacrimas: mota est pietate rogantis,
dissimilemque animum subiit Aeeta relictus;
nec tamen adfectus talis confessa 'quod' inquit
'excidit ore tuo, coniunx, scelus? ergo ego cuiquam
posse tuae videor spatium transcribere vitae?
nec sinat hoc Hecate, nec tu petis aequa; sed isto,
quod petis, experiar maius dare munus, Iason.
arte mea soceri longum temptabimus aevum,
non annis revocare tuis, modo diva triformis
adiuvet et praesens ingentibus adnuat ausis.'
Tres aberant noctes, ut cornua tota coirent
efficerentque orbem; postquam plenissima fulsit
ac solida terras spectavit imagine luna,
egreditur tectis vestes induta recinctas,
nuda pedem, nudos umeris infusa capillos,
fertque vagos mediae per muta silentia noctis
incomitata gradus: homines volucresque ferasque
solverat alta quies, nullo cum murmure saepes,
inmotaeque silent frondes, silet umidus aer,
sidera sola micant: ad quae sua bracchia tendens
ter se convertit, ter sumptis flumine crinem
inroravit aquis ternisque ululatibus ora
solvit et in dura submisso poplite terra
'Nox' ait 'arcanis fidissima, quaeque diurnis
aurea cum luna succeditis ignibus astra,
tuque, triceps Hecate, quae coeptis conscia nostris
adiutrixque venis cantusque artisque magorum,
quaeque magos, Tellus, pollentibus instruis herbis,
auraeque et venti montesque amnesque lacusque,
dique omnes nemorum, dique omnes noctis adeste,
quorum ope, cum volui, ripis mirantibus amnes
in fontes rediere suos, concussaque sisto,

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Aesonian hero took possession of the gold and, proud of his spoil, carrying with him the giver of the gift - his other spoil - touched as victor the Iolcan harbors with his wife.

Medea Rejuvenates Aeson

The mothers of Haemonia brought gifts for their recovered sons, and the aged fathers brought them, and they melted heaped incense in the flame, and the sacrificial victim with gold laid on its horns fell to fulfill vows. But Aeson was absent from those giving thanks, already closer to death and worn out with old age.

Then Aeson's son said: "O wife, to whom I confess I owe my safety - although you've given me everything and the sum of your deserving has exceeded belief - if however your spells can do this (for what can't spells do?), take years from mine and add the taken years to my parent!" And he couldn't hold back tears.

She was moved by the piety of his request, and the mind of abandoned Aeetes entered her thoughts - so different from this. Yet not confessing such feelings, she said: "What crime has fallen from your mouth, husband? So do I seem able to transfer any portion of your life to someone else? Hecate wouldn't allow this, nor do you ask what's fair. But I'll try to give a greater gift than what you ask, Jason. By my art we'll attempt to restore your father-in-law's long life, not by calling back your years - if only the three-formed goddess will help and be present and approve of my great daring."

Three nights were lacking before the horns would come completely together and make a circle. After the moon shone fullest and looked upon the earth with solid image, she goes out of the house dressed in loose robes, her feet bare, her hair spread bare over her shoulders, and she carries wandering steps through the mute silences of midnight, unaccompanied. Deep rest had released people and birds and beasts. The hedges made no murmur. The motionless leaves are silent, the moist air is silent. Only the stars sparkle. Stretching her arms toward them, she turns herself three times, three times sprinkles her hair with water taken from the river, and three times opens her mouth with howls, and kneeling on the

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stantia concutio cantu freta, nubila pello
nubilaque induco, ventos abigoque vocoque,
vipereas rumpo verbis et carmine fauces,
vivaque saxa sua convulsaque robora terra
et silvas moveo iubeoque tremescere montis
et mugire solum manesque exire sepulcris!
te quoque, Luna, traho, quamvis Temesaea labores
aera tuos minuant; currus quoque carmine nostro
pallet avi, pallet nostris Aurora venenis!
vos mihi taurorum flammas hebetastis et unco
inpatiens oneris collum pressistis aratro,
vos serpentigenis in se fera bella dedistis
custodemque rudem somni sopistis et aurum
vindice decepto Graias misistis in urbes:
nunc opus est sucis, per quos renovata senectus
in florem redeat primosque recolligat annos,
et dabitis. neque enim micuerunt sidera frustra,
nec frustra volucrum tractus cervice draconum
currus adest.' aderat demissus ab aethere currus.
quo simul adscendit frenataque colla draconum
permulsit manibusque leves agitavit habenas,
sublimis rapitur subiectaque Thessala Tempe
despicit et certis regionibus adplicat angues:
et quas Ossa tulit, quas altum Pelion herbas,
Othrysque Pindusque et Pindo maior Olympus,
perspicit et placitas partim radice revellit,
partim succidit curvamine falcis aenae.
multa quoque Apidani placuerunt gramina ripis,
multa quoque Amphrysi, neque eras inmunis, Enipeu;
nec non Peneos nec non Spercheides undae
contribuere aliquid iuncosaque litora Boebes;
carpsit et Euboica vivax Anthedone gramen,
nondum mutato vulgatum corpore Glauci.
Et iam nona dies curru pennisque draconum
nonaque nox omnes lustrantem viderat agros,
cum rediit; neque erant tacti nisi odore dracones,
et tamen annosae pellem posuere senectae.
constitit adveniens citra limenque foresque
et tantum caelo tegitur refugitque viriles
contactus, statuitque aras de caespite binas,

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hard earth she says:

"Night, most faithful to secrets, and you golden stars who succeed the fires of day along with the moon, and you, three-headed Hecate, who comes as witness to my undertakings and helper to the songs and arts of magicians, and you, Earth, who furnish magicians with powerful herbs, and breezes and winds and mountains and rivers and lakes, and all gods of the groves, all gods of night, be present! By your help, when I wished, rivers have returned to their sources while their banks wondered, I calm the stirred seas and stir the calm with my song, I drive away clouds and bring clouds in, I banish winds and call them forth, I break vipers' jaws with words and spells, and I move living rocks and oaks torn from their earth and forests, and I command mountains to tremble and the ground to bellow and ghosts to come forth from tombs! You too, Moon, I draw down, though Temesaean bronzes labor to diminish your distress. My grandfather's chariot too grows pale from my song, Aurora grows pale from my poisons! You dulled the flames of the bulls for me and pressed their necks - impatient of the burden - under the curved plow, you gave fierce wars to the serpent-born against themselves and put the guardian unaccustomed to sleep to sleep and sent the gold to Greek cities with its protector deceived. Now I need juices by which renewed old age may return to its flower and gather back its first years - and you will give them. For the stars haven't shone in vain, nor has my chariot arrived in vain, drawn by the necks of winged dragons."

The chariot was there, sent down from the sky. As soon as she mounted and stroked the bridled necks of the dragons and shook the light reins with her hands, she was swept aloft and looked down on Thessalian Tempe below and directed the serpents to certain regions. She examines the herbs that Ossa bore and lofty Pelion, and Othrys and Pindus and Olympus greater than Pindus, and she tears up some that please her partly by the root, partly cuts with the curve of a bronze sickle. Many plants from the banks of Apidanus pleased her too, many from Amphrysus, and you weren't exempt, Enipeus. The Peneus waves and the Spercheus waters contributed something too, and the rush-grown shores of Boebe. She plucked also the life-giving grass from Euboean Anthedon, not yet famous for the changed body of Glaucus.

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dexteriore Hecates, ast laeva parte Iuventae.
has ubi verbenis silvaque incinxit agresti,
haud procul egesta scrobibus tellure duabus
sacra facit cultrosque in guttura velleris atri
conicit et patulas perfundit sanguine fossas;
tum super invergens liquidi carchesia mellis
alteraque invergens tepidi carchesia lactis,
verba simul fudit terrenaque numina civit
umbrarumque rogat rapta cum coniuge regem,
ne properent artus anima fraudare senili.
Quos ubi placavit precibusque et murmure longo,
Aesonis effetum proferri corpus ad auras
iussit et in plenos resolutum carmine somnos
exanimi similem stratis porrexit in herbis.
hinc procul Aesoniden, procul hinc iubet ire ministros
et monet arcanis oculos removere profanos.
diffugiunt iussi; passis Medea capillis
bacchantum ritu flagrantis circuit aras
multifidasque faces in fossa sanguinis atra
tinguit et infectas geminis accendit in aris
terque senem flamma, ter aqua, ter sulphure lustrat.
Interea validum posito medicamen aeno
fervet et exsultat spumisque tumentibus albet.
illic Haemonia radices valle resectas
seminaque floresque et sucos incoquit atros;
adicit extremo lapides Oriente petitos
et quas Oceani refluum mare lavit harenas;
addit et exceptas luna pernocte pruinas
et strigis infamis ipsis cum carnibus alas
inque virum soliti vultus mutare ferinos
ambigui prosecta lupi; nec defuit illis
squamea Cinyphii tenuis membrana chelydri
vivacisque iecur cervi; quibus insuper addit
ova caputque novem cornicis saecula passae.
his et mille aliis postquam sine nomine rebus
propositum instruxit mortali barbara maius,
arenti ramo iampridem mitis olivae
omnia confudit summisque inmiscuit ima.
ecce vetus calido versatus stipes aeno
fit viridis primo nec longo tempore frondes

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And now the ninth day and ninth night had seen her surveying all the fields with her chariot and the dragons' wings, when she returned. The dragons had not been touched except by the scent, and yet they shed the skin of their aged old age. Arriving, she stopped outside the threshold and doors and is covered only by the sky and avoids male contact. She sets up two altars of turf, one on the right for Hecate, one on the left for Youth. After she garlanded these with verbena and wild forest growth, not far off she dug out two trenches in the earth and performs rites. She plunges knives into the throat of a black-fleeced sheep and drenches the open ditches with blood. Then pouring cups of liquid honey on top and pouring cups of warm milk on top, she utters words at the same time and summons the earthly powers and begs the king of shades with his stolen wife not to hurry to cheat the old man's limbs of his soul.

The Transformation of Aeson

After she placated them with prayers and long murmuring, she ordered Aeson's worn-out body to be brought out into the open air, and she stretched him out, dissolved in deep sleep by her spell, on spread grass, like one lifeless. She orders the son of Aeson to go far from there, orders the attendants to go far, and warns them to remove their profane eyes from the mysteries. They flee as ordered. Medea with streaming hair in the manner of Bacchantes circles the blazing altars and dips the many-cleft torches in the ditch of black blood and lights the blood-stained torches on the twin altars and three times purifies the old man with flame, three times with water, three times with sulfur.

Meanwhile the powerful potion placed in the bronze vessel boils and leaps up and whitens with swelling foam. In it she boils roots cut in a Haemonian valley and seeds and flowers and black juices. She adds stones sought from the farthest East and sands that the ebbing Ocean sea has washed. She adds hoar-frost gathered under the full moon and the infamous wings of a screech owl with the flesh itself, and the entrails of an ambiguous wolf accustomed to change its savage looks into a man's face. Nor was there lacking to these things the scaly thin membrane of a Cinyphian water-snake and the liver of a long-lived deer. To these she adds also the egg and head of a crow that has lived nine generations.

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induit et subito gravidis oneratur olivis:
at quacumque cavo spumas eiecit aeno
ignis et in terram guttae cecidere calentes,
vernat humus, floresque et mollia pabula surgunt.
quae simul ac vidit, stricto Medea recludit
ense senis iugulum veteremque exire cruorem
passa replet sucis; quos postquam conbibit Aeson
aut ore acceptos aut vulnere, barba comaeque
canitie posita nigrum rapuere colorem,
pulsa fugit macies, abeunt pallorque situsque,
adiectoque cavae supplentur corpore rugae,
membraque luxuriant: Aeson miratur et olim
ante quater denos hunc se reminiscitur annos.
Viderat ex alto tanti miracula monstri
Liber et admonitus, iuvenes nutricibus annos
posse suis reddi, capit hoc a Colchide munus.
Neve doli cessent, odium cum coniuge falsum
Phasias adsimulat Peliaeque ad limina supplex
confugit; atque illam, quoniam gravis ipse senecta est,
excipiunt natae; quas tempore callida parvo
Colchis amicitiae mendacis imagine cepit,
dumque refert inter meritorum maxima demptos
Aesonis esse situs atque hac in parte moratur,
spes est virginibus Pelia subiecta creatis,
arte suum parili revirescere posse parentem,
idque petunt pretiumque iubent sine fine pacisci.
illa brevi spatio silet et dubitare videtur
suspenditque animos ficta gravitate rogantum.
mox ubi pollicita est, 'quo sit fiducia maior
muneris huius' ait, 'qui vestri maximus aevo est
dux gregis inter oves, agnus medicamine fiet.'
protinus innumeris effetus laniger annis
attrahitur flexo circum cava tempora cornu;
cuius ut Haemonio marcentia guttura cultro
fodit et exiguo maculavit sanguine ferrum,
membra simul pecudis validosque venefica sucos
mergit in aere cavo: minuunt ea corporis artus
cornuaque exurunt nec non cum cornibus annos,
et tener auditur medio balatus aeno:
nec mora, balatum mirantibus exsilit agnus

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After the foreign woman prepared her purpose beyond mortal limits with these and a thousand other nameless things, she stirred everything together with a dry branch of cultivated olive long since dead and mixed top with bottom. Look - the old stick turned in the hot bronze becomes green first, and in a short time puts on leaves and suddenly is laden with ripe olives. Wherever the boiling spewed foam from the hollow bronze and hot drops fell to earth, the ground springs with new growth, and flowers and soft grass rise up.

As soon as Medea saw this, she opened the old man's throat with drawn sword and, allowing the old blood to flow out, filled him with juices. After Aeson drank them - either received through his mouth or through the wound - his beard and hair, setting aside their whiteness, quickly took on black color. Leanness is driven away and flees, pallor and decay depart, the hollow wrinkles are filled out with added flesh, and his limbs grow robust. Aeson marvels and remembers this was himself forty years before.

Medea's Trick on Pelias' Daughters

Bacchus had seen from on high the miracle of such a marvel, and reminded that his nurses' years could be restored to them, received this gift from the Colchian woman.

And lest trickery should cease, Medea the Phasian pretends false hatred with her husband and as a suppliant flees to Pelias' threshold. Since he himself is burdened by heavy old age, his daughters receive her. In a short time the cunning Colchian woman captured them with an image of false friendship. While among her greatest services she tells how she removed Aeson's decline and dwells on this part, hope is planted in Pelias' virgin daughters that their parent can grow young again by similar art, and they ask for this and bid her name a price without limit.

For a brief space she's silent and seems to hesitate and keeps the minds of those asking in suspense with feigned seriousness. Soon when she promised: "So that you may have greater confidence in this gift," she said, "the leader of your flock who's the oldest in years among the sheep will become a lamb by my drug."

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lascivitque fuga lactantiaque ubera quaerit.
Obstipuere satae Pelia, promissaque postquam
exhibuere fidem, tum vero inpensius instant.
ter iuga Phoebus equis in Hibero flumine mersis
dempserat et quarta radiantia nocte micabant
sidera, cum rapido fallax Aeetias igni
imponit purum laticem et sine viribus herbas.
iamque neci similis resoluto corpore regem
et cum rege suo custodes somnus habebat,
quem dederant cantus magicaeque potentia linguae;
intrarant iussae cum Colchide limina natae
ambierantque torum: 'quid nunc dubitatis inertes?
stringite' ait 'gladios veteremque haurite crurorem,
ut repleam vacuas iuvenali sanguine venas!
in manibus vestris vita est aetasque parentis:
si pietas ulla est nec spes agitatis inanis,
officium praestate patri telisque senectam
exigite, et saniem coniecto emittite ferro!'
his, ut quaeque pia est, hortatibus inpia prima est
et, ne sit scelerata, facit scelus: haud tamen ictus
ulla suos spectare potest, oculosque reflectunt,
caecaque dant saevis aversae vulnera dextris.
ille cruore fluens, cubito tamen adlevat artus,
semilacerque toro temptat consurgere, et inter
tot medius gladios pallentia bracchia tendens
'quid facitis, gnatae? quid vos in fata parentis
armat?' ait: cecidere illis animique manusque;
plura locuturo cum verbis guttura Colchis
abstulit et calidis laniatum mersit in undis.
Quod nisi pennatis serpentibus isset in auras,
non exempta foret poenae: fugit alta superque
Pelion umbrosum, Philyreia tecta, superque
Othryn et eventu veteris loca nota Cerambi:
hic ope nympharum sublatus in aera pennis,
cum gravis infuso tellus foret obruta ponto,
Deucalioneas effugit inobrutus undas.
Aeoliam Pitanen a laeva parte relinquit
factaque de saxo longi simulacra draconis
Idaeumque nemus, quo nati furta, iuvencum,
occuluit Liber falsi sub imagine cervi,

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Immediately a wool-bearer worn out by countless years is dragged forward, his curved horn bent around his hollow temples. After she pierced his withered throat with a Haemonian knife and barely stained the blade with a little blood, the witch plunges the sheep's limbs at the same time with powerful juices in a hollow bronze vessel. These diminish the body's parts and burn away the horns, and with the horns the years. A tender bleating is heard from the middle of the bronze. And without delay, while they're still marveling at the bleating, a lamb leaps out and frisks in flight and seeks milk-giving udders.

Pelias' daughters are astonished, and after the promises have shown their truth, then they press all the more urgently. Three times Phoebus had unyoked his horses, plunged in the Spanish river, and on the fourth night the glittering stars were shining, when the deceitful daughter of Aeetes placed pure water and herbs without strength on a swift fire. And now the king in a death-like sleep with relaxed body, and with the king his guards, had sleep that her chants and the power of her magic tongue had given. The daughters, as ordered, had entered the threshold with the Colchian woman and stood around the bed.

"Why do you hesitate now, you sluggish girls? Draw your swords," she said, "and drain the old blood so I may fill the empty veins with youthful blood! In your hands lies your parent's life and age. If you have any piety and don't nurture vain hopes, perform your duty to your father and drive out old age with weapons and let out the corruption by plunging in the blade!"

At these urgings, each one - the more dutiful she is - is first to be undutiful, and to avoid being guilty, she commits a crime. Yet not one of them can watch her own blows. They turn back their eyes and, blinded, give wounds with averted savage hands. He, streaming with blood, still raises his body on his elbow and, half-mangled, tries to rise from the bed, and amid so many swords, stretching out his pale arms, he says: "What are you doing, daughters? What arms you for your parent's death?" Their spirits and hands fell. As he was about to speak more, the Colchian woman cut off his throat with his words and plunged the mangled body in the hot waters.

Medea's Flight

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quaque pater Corythi parva tumulatus harena est,
et quos Maera novo latratu terruit agros,
Eurypylique urbem, qua Coae cornua matres
gesserunt tum, cum discederet Herculis agmen,
Phoebeamque Rhodon et Ialysios Telchinas,
quorum oculos ipso vitiantes omnia visu
Iuppiter exosus fraternis subdidit undis;
transit et antiquae Cartheia moenia Ceae,
qua pater Alcidamas placidam de corpore natae
miraturus erat nasci potuisse columbam.
inde lacus Hyries videt et Cycneia Tempe,
quae subitus celebravit olor: nam Phylius illic
imperio pueri volucrisque ferumque leonem
tradiderat domitos; taurum quoque vincere iussus
vicerat et spreto totiens iratus amore
praemia poscenti taurum suprema negabat;
ille indignatus 'cupies dare' dixit et alto
desiluit saxo; cuncti cecidisse putabant:
factus olor niveis pendebat in aere pennis;
at genetrix Hyrie, servati nescia, flendo
delicuit stagnumque suo de nomine fecit.
adiacet his Pleuron, in qua trepidantibus alis
Ophias effugit natorum vulnera Combe;
inde Calaureae Letoidos adspicit arva
in volucrem versi cum coniuge conscia regis.
dextera Cyllene est, in qua cum matre Menephron
concubiturus erat saevarum more ferarum;
Cephison procul hinc deflentem fata nepotis
respicit in tumidam phocen ab Apolline versi
Eumelique domum lugentis in aere natum.
Tandem vipereis Ephyren Pirenida pennis
contigit: hic aevo veteres mortalia primo
corpora vulgarunt pluvialibus edita fungis.
sed postquam Colchis arsit nova nupta venenis
flagrantemque domum regis mare vidit utrumque,
sanguine natorum perfunditur inpius ensis,
ultaque se male mater Iasonis effugit arma.
hinc Titaniacis ablata draconibus intrat
Palladias arces, quae te, iustissima Phene,
teque, senex Peripha, pariter videre volantes

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If she hadn't gone into the air on winged serpents, she wouldn't have escaped punishment. She flies high and over shadowy Pelion - dwelling of Philyra - and over Othrys and places famous from the fate of ancient Cerambis: here, lifted into the air on wings by the help of nymphs when the heavy earth was buried under the poured-in sea, he escaped unwetted from Deucalion's flood. She leaves Aeolian Pitane on the left side and the stone likeness of a long dragon, and the Idaean grove where Liber hid his son's theft - the calf - under the false image of a deer, and where Corythus' father is buried in a little sand, and the fields that Maera terrified with strange barking, and Eurypylus' city where the Coan mothers bore horns when Hercules' army departed, and Phoebean Rhodes and the Ialysian Telchines, whose eyes - corrupting everything by their very sight - Jupiter hated and buried under his brother's waves.

She passes too the walls of ancient Ceos, Cartheia, where father Alcidamas was going to marvel that a peaceful dove could be born from his daughter's body. From there she sees the lake of Hyrie and Cycnus' Tempe, which the sudden swan made famous. For there Phylius on the command of a boy had given over tamed birds and a savage lion. Ordered also to conquer a bull, he had conquered it, and angry at the love spurned so many times, he denied the bull as the final prize. The other said indignantly: "You'll wish you'd given it," and leaped from a high cliff. Everyone thought he had fallen. Made a swan, he hung in the air on snowy wings. But his mother Hyrie, not knowing he was saved, melted away in weeping and made a pool from her own name.

Near these lies Pleuron, where Combe the Ophian fled on trembling wings from the wounds of her sons. From there she looks upon the fields of Calaurea, belonging to Leto, which saw the king and his wife, both aware, changed into a bird. On the right is Cyllene, where Menephron was going to lie with his mother in the manner of savage beasts. Far from here she looks back on Cephisus mourning the fate of his grandson, changed by Apollo into a swollen seal, and Eumelos' house mourning his son flying in the air.

At last on viperous wings she reached Pirene of Ephyra. Here in the ancient age old tales spread that mortal bodies were produced from rain-born mushrooms. But after the Colchian woman's new bride burned with poisons and both seas saw the king's house in flames, the impious sword is drenched in the

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innixamque novis neptem Polypemonis alis.
excipit hanc Aegeus facto damnandus in uno,
nec satis hospitium est, thalami quoque foedere iungit.
Iamque aderat Theseus, proles ignara parenti,
qui virtute sua bimarem pacaverat Isthmon:
huius in exitium miscet Medea, quod olim
attulerat secum Scythicis aconiton ab oris.
illud Echidnaeae memorant e dentibus ortum
esse canis: specus est tenebroso caecus hiatu,
est via declivis, per quam Tirynthius heros
restantem contraque diem radiosque micantes
obliquantem oculos nexis adamante catenis
Cerberon abstraxit, rabida qui concitus ira
inplevit pariter ternis latratibus auras
et sparsit virides spumis albentibus agros;
has concresse putant nactasque alimenta feracis
fecundique soli vires cepisse nocendi;
quae quia nascuntur dura vivacia caute,
agrestes aconita vocant. ea coniugis astu
ipse parens Aegeus nato porrexit ut hosti.
sumpserat ignara Theseus data pocula dextra,
cum pater in capulo gladii cognovit eburno
signa sui generis facinusque excussit ab ore.
effugit illa necem nebulis per carmina motis;
At genitor, quamquam laetatur sospite nato,
attonitus tamen est, ingens discrimine parvo
committi potuisse nefas: fovet ignibus aras
muneribusque deos inplet, feriuntque secures
colla torosa boum vinctorum cornua vittis.
nullus Erecthidis fertur celebratior illo
inluxisse dies: agitant convivia patres
et medium vulgus nec non et carmina vino
ingenium faciente canunt: 'te, maxime Theseu,
mirata est Marathon Cretaei sanguine tauri,
quodque suis securus arat Cromyona colonus,
munus opusque tuum est; tellus Epidauria per te
clavigeram vidit Vulcani occumbere prolem,
vidit et inmitem Cephisias ora Procrusten,
Cercyonis letum vidit Cerealis Eleusin.
occidit ille Sinis magnis male viribus usus,

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blood of her sons, and the wicked mother, avenged, fled Jason's weapons.

Medea in Athens; Theseus Arrives

Carried from here by Titan's dragons, she enters the Palladian citadel, which saw you, most just Phene, and you, old Periphas, flying equally, and Polypemon's granddaughter supported on new wings. Aegeus receives her here - to be condemned for this one deed - and it's not enough to offer hospitality: he joins her in marriage bond too.

And now Theseus had arrived, his parentage unknown to his parent, he who by his courage had pacified the two-sea Isthmus. For his destruction Medea mixes aconite, which she had long ago brought with her from Scythian shores. They tell that this was born from the teeth of the Echidnaean dog. There's a cave, blind with shadowy opening. There's a sloping path by which the Tirynthian hero dragged resisting Cerberus, who twisted his eyes obliquely away from daylight and gleaming rays, bound in chains of adamant. Driven mad with rabid fury, he filled the air equally with triple barkings and spattered the green fields with white foam. They think this congealed and, getting nourishment from the fertile and productive soil, took on the power to harm. Because this grows hardy on hard rock, country people call it aconite.

This, by his wife's cunning, Aegeus himself as parent offered to his son as to an enemy. Theseus had taken the cup given with an unknowing hand, when his father recognized on the ivory hilt of his sword the marks of his lineage and knocked the crime from his mouth. She escaped death by raising mists through spells.

Celebration of Theseus

But the father, though he rejoices in his son's safety, is nevertheless astonished that so great a crime could have been committed with so small a margin. He honors the altars with fires and fills the gods with gifts, and axes strike the knotted necks of oxen whose horns are bound with ribbons. No day is said

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qui poterat curvare trabes et agebat ab alto
ad terram late sparsuras corpora pinus.
tutus ad Alcathoen, Lelegeia moenia, limes
conposito Scirone patet, sparsisque latronis
terra negat sedem, sedem negat ossibus unda;
quae iactata diu fertur durasse vetustas
in scopulos: scopulis nomen Scironis inhaeret.
si titulos annosque tuos numerare velimus,
facta prement annos. pro te, fortissime, vota
publica suscipimus, Bacchi tibi sumimus haustus.'
consonat adsensu populi precibusque faventum
regia, nec tota tristis locus ullus in urbe est.
Nec tamen (usque adeo nulla est sincera voluptas,
sollicitumque aliquid laetis intervenit) Aegeus
gaudia percepit nato secura recepto:
bella parat Minos; qui quamquam milite, quamquam
classe valet, patria tamen est firmissimus ira
Androgeique necem iustis ulciscitur armis.
ante tamen bello vires adquirit amicas,
quaque potens habitus volucri freta classe pererrat:
hinc Anaphen sibi iungit et Astypaleia regna,
(promissis Anaphen, regna Astypaleia bello);
hinc humilem Myconon cretosaque rura Cimoli
florentemque thymo Syron planamque Seriphon
marmoreamque Paron, quamque inpia prodidit Arne
Siphnon et accepto, quod avara poposcerat, auro
mutata est in avem, quae nunc quoque diligit aurum,
nigra pedes, nigris velata monedula pennis.
At non Oliaros Didymeque et Tenos et Andros
et Gyaros nitidaeque ferax Peparethos olivae
Cnosiacas iuvere rates; latere inde sinistro
Oenopiam Minos petit, Aeacideia regna:
Oenopiam veteres adpellavere, sed ipse
Aeacus Aeginam genetricis nomine dixit.
turba ruit tantaeque virum cognoscere famae
expetit; occurrunt illi Telamonque minorque
quam Telamon Peleus et proles tertia Phocus;
ipse quoque egreditur tardus gravitate senili
Aeacus et, quae sit veniendi causa, requirit.
admonitus patrii luctus suspirat et illi

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to have dawned more celebrated than that one throughout Athens. The fathers hold banquets, and the common people too, and - their talent loosened by wine - they sing songs: "You, greatest Theseus, Marathon marveled at for the blood of the Cretan bull, and that the Cromyonian farmer plows his fields in safety is your gift and work. The Epidaurian land through you saw the club-bearing offspring of Vulcan fall. The Cephisian shore saw cruel Procrustes. Cerealis Eleusin saw Cercyon's death. That Sinis fell, who used his great strength badly, who could bend tree-branches and used to drive pines from on high to earth to scatter bodies far and wide. The road to Alcathoë, Lelegia's walls, lies safe with Sciron defeated, and earth denies a resting place to the robber's scattered bones, the wave denies his bones a place. Tossed about for a long time, they say antiquity hardened them into rocks: the name Sciron clings to the rocks. If we wanted to count up your honors and your years, your deeds would outweigh your years. For you, bravest one, we undertake public vows, we drink Bacchus' draughts to you!"

The palace resounds with the people's approval and the prayers of those favoring him, and there's no sad place in the whole city.

Minos Prepares for War

Yet (so much is no pleasure unmixed, and something troubling intervenes in joys), Aegeus didn't receive secure joy at his recovered son. Minos prepares for war. Though he's strong in soldiers, strong in fleet, he's most powerful in a father's anger and avenges Androgeus' death with just weapons. But before war, he acquires friendly forces, and powerful in his swift fleet he roams the seas.

He joins to himself Anaphe and Astypaleia's kingdoms (he won Anaphe by promises, Astypaleia's kingdoms by war). From here humble Myconos and the chalky fields of Cimolus and Syros flowering with thyme and flat Seriphos and marbled Paros, and Siphnos - which impious Arne betrayed - and having received the gold that the greedy woman demanded, she was changed into a bird that even now loves gold, a jackdaw black of feet, clothed in black wings.

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dicta refert rector populorum talia centum:
'arma iuves oro pro gnato sumpta piaeque
pars sis militiae; tumulo solacia posco.'
huic Asopiades 'petis inrita' dixit 'et urbi
non facienda meae; neque enim coniunctior ulla
Cecropidis est hac tellus: ea foedera nobis.'
tristis abit 'stabunt' que 'tibi tua foedera magno'
dixit et utilius bellum putat esse minari
quam gerere atque suas ibi praeconsumere vires.
classis ab Oenopiis etiamnum Lyctia muris
spectari poterat, cum pleno concita velo
Attica puppis adest in portusque intrat amicos,
quae Cephalum patriaeque simul mandata ferebat.
Aeacidae longo iuvenes post tempore visum
agnovere tamen Cephalum dextrasque dedere
inque patris duxere domum: spectabilis heros
et veteris retinens etiamnum pignora formae
ingreditur ramumque tenens popularis olivae
a dextra laevaque duos aetate minores
maior habet, Clyton et Buten, Pallante creatos.
Postquam congressus primi sua verba tulerunt,
Cecropidae Cephalus peragit mandata rogatque
auxilium foedusque refert et iura parentum,
imperiumque peti totius Achaidos addit.
sic ubi mandatam iuvit facundia causam,
Aeacus, in capulo sceptri nitente sinistra,
'ne petite auxilium, sed sumite' dixit, 'Athenae,
nec dubie vires, quas haec habet insula, vestras
ducite, et (o maneat rerum status iste mearum!)
robora non desunt; superat mihi miles et hoc est,
gratia dis, felix et inexcusabile tempus.'
'immo ita sit' Cephalus, 'crescat tua civibus opto
urbs' ait; 'adveniens equidem modo gaudia cepi,
cum tam pulchra mihi, tam par aetate iuventus
obvia processit; multos tamen inde requiro,
quos quondam vidi vestra prius urbe receptus.'
Aeacus ingemuit tristique ita voce locutus:
'flebile principium melior fortuna secuta est;
hanc utinam possem vobis memorare sine illo!
ordine nunc repetam, neu longa ambage morer vos,

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But Oliaros and Didyme and Tenos and Andros and Gyaros and Parepethos fertile in gleaming olives didn't help the Cnosian ships. From there on the left side Minos seeks Oenopia, the kingdom of Aeacus. The ancients called it Oenopia, but Aeacus himself called it Aegina from his mother's name.

The Story of the Myrmidons

The crowd rushes out and desires to know a man of such great fame. Telamon and Peleus - younger than Telamon - and Phocus, the third son, meet him. Aeacus himself also comes out, slow with the weight of old age, and asks what the reason for his coming is. Reminded of his paternal grief, the ruler of a hundred peoples sighs and gives him this answer:

"I ask you to help with arms taken up for my pious son and be part of my dutiful war. I seek solace for the tomb."

The son of Asopus said to him: "You ask in vain, and things not to be done for my city. For no land is more closely allied with the Cecropids: such are our treaties."

Sad, he departs and says: "Your treaties will cost you dearly," and he thinks it more useful to threaten war than to wage it and spend his strength there.

The Lyctian fleet could still be seen from Oenopia's walls when an Attic ship, driven with full sail, arrives and enters the friendly harbor, carrying Cephalus and at the same time his homeland's commands. The sons of Aeacus, though it was long since they had seen him, still recognized Cephalus and gave hands and led him into their father's house. The conspicuous hero advances, still retaining signs of his old beauty, and holds a branch of his native olive and has two younger in age on the right and left - Clytus and Butes, created by Pallas, the older man holds them.

Cephalus' Embassy and the Plague Story Begins

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ossa cinisque iacent, memori quos mente requiris,
et quota pars illi rerum periere mearum!
dira lues ira populis Iunonis iniquae
incidit exosae dictas a paelice terras.
dum visum mortale malum tantaeque latebat
causa nocens cladis, pugnatum est arte medendi:
exitium superabat opem, quae victa iacebat.
principio caelum spissa caligine terras
pressit et ignavos inclusit nubibus aestus;
dumque quater iunctis explevit cornibus orbem
Luna, quater plenum tenuata retexuit orbem,
letiferis calidi spirarunt aestibus austri.
constat et in fontis vitium venisse lacusque,
miliaque incultos serpentum multa per agros
errasse atque suis fluvios temerasse venenis.
strage canum primo volucrumque oviumque boumque
inque feris subiti deprensa potentia morbi.
concidere infelix validos miratur arator
inter opus tauros medioque recumbere sulco;
lanigeris gregibus balatus dantibus aegros
sponte sua lanaeque cadunt et corpora tabent;
acer equus quondam magnaeque in pulvere famae
degenerat palmas veterumque oblitus honorum
ad praesepe gemit leto moriturus inerti.
non aper irasci meminit, non fidere cursu
cerva nec armentis incurrere fortibus ursi.
omnia languor habet: silvisque agrisque viisque
corpora foeda iacent, vitiantur odoribus aurae.
mira loquar: non illa canes avidaeque volucres,
non cani tetigere lupi; dilapsa liquescunt
adflatuque nocent et agunt contagia late.
'Pervenit ad miseros damno graviore colonos
pestis et in magnae dominatur moenibus urbis.
viscera torrentur primo, flammaeque latentis
indicium rubor est et ductus anhelitus; igni
aspera lingua tumet, tepidisque arentia ventis
ora patent, auraeque graves captantur hiatu.
non stratum, non ulla pati velamina possunt,
nuda sed in terra ponunt praecordia, nec fit
corpus humo gelidum, sed humus de corpore fervet.

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After the first greetings exchanged their words, Cephalus the Cecropid completes his commands and asks for help and recalls the treaty and ancestral rights, and adds that the empire of all Achaia is sought. When eloquence had helped the entrusted cause, Aeacus, leaning his left hand on the head of his scepter, said: "Don't ask for help, but take it, Athens, and don't hesitate - consider the forces this island has as yours, and (O may this condition of my affairs remain!) strength doesn't fail me. I have soldiers to spare, and - thanks to the gods - this is a fortunate time and one I can't excuse."

"May it indeed be so," Cephalus said. "I pray your city may grow in citizens. As I came just now I indeed took joy when such beautiful youth, so equal in age, came to meet me. Yet I miss many I once saw when I was received in your city before."

Aeacus groaned and spoke with sad voice: "A lamentable beginning was followed by better fortune. Would that I could tell you about this without that! Now I'll relate it in order, lest a long digression delay you. Those whom you miss with remembering mind lie as bones and ash, and what a portion of my affairs perished with them! A dire plague fell on my people through the anger of hostile Juno, who hated the lands named for her rival. While it seemed a mortal disease and the cause of such great harmful destruction lay hidden, we fought with the art of healing. But the destruction overcame help, which lay defeated.

"First the sky pressed the earth with thick darkness and trapped sluggish heat in clouds. While the moon filled out its circle with horns joined four times, four times waned and unwove the full circle, deadly southern winds breathed with lethal heat. It's established that the corruption came into springs and pools too, and thousands of snakes wandered through the untilled fields and polluted the rivers with their poisons. The power of the sudden disease was caught first in the destruction of dogs and birds and sheep and cattle and wild beasts. The unlucky plowman marvels that his strong bulls collapse in the middle of work and fall in the middle of the furrow. Wool-bearing flocks give sick bleats. The wool falls off spontaneously and their bodies waste away. The spirited horse, once of great fame in the dust, degenerates from his palms, forgets his old honors, and groans at the manger, about to die an inglorious death. The boar doesn't remember to rage, nor the deer to trust in running, nor the bears to attack

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nec moderator adest, inque ipsos saeva medentes
erumpit clades, obsuntque auctoribus artes;
quo propior quisque est servitque fidelius aegro,
in partem leti citius venit, utque salutis
spes abiit finemque vident in funere morbi,
indulgent animis et nulla, quid utile, cura est:
utile enim nihil est. passim positoque pudore
fontibus et fluviis puteisque capacibus haerent,
nec sitis est exstincta prius quam vita bibendo.
inde graves multi nequeunt consurgere et ipsis
inmoriuntur aquis, aliquis tamen haurit et illas;
tantaque sunt miseris invisi taedia lecti,
prosiliunt aut, si prohibent consistere vires,
corpora devolvunt in humum fugiuntque penates
quisque suos, sua cuique domus funesta videtur,
et quia causa latet, locus est in crimine; partim
semianimes errare viis, dum stare valebant,
adspiceres, flentes alios terraque iacentes
lassaque versantes supremo lumina motu;
membraque pendentis tendunt ad sidera caeli,
hic illic, ubi mors deprenderat, exhalantes.
'Quid mihi tunc animi fuit? an, quod debuit esse,
ut vitam odissem et cuperem pars esse meorum?
quo se cumque acies oculorum flexerat, illic
vulgus erat stratum, veluti cum putria motis
poma cadunt ramis agitataque ilice glandes.
templa vides contra gradibus sublimia longis:
Iuppiter illa tenet. quis non altaribus illis
inrita tura dedit? quotiens pro coniuge coniunx,
pro gnato genitor dum verba precantia dicit,
non exoratis animam finivit in aris,
inque manu turis pars inconsumpta reperta est!
admoti quotiens templis, dum vota sacerdos
concipit et fundit durum inter cornua vinum,
haud exspectato ceciderunt vulnere tauri!
ipse ego sacra Iovi pro me patriaque tribusque
cum facerem natis, mugitus victima diros
edidit et subito conlapsa sine ictibus ullis
exiguo tinxit subiectos sanguine cultros.
exta quoque aegra notas veri monitusque deorum

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strong herds. Languor holds everything. In woods and fields and roads foul bodies lie. The air is corrupted with stenches.

"Strange to say: neither dogs nor greedy birds nor gray wolves touched them. They fell apart, melted, and harm by their breath and spread contagion widely.

"The pestilence reached the wretched farmers with greater loss and ruled in the walls of the great city. First the entrails burn, and redness is the sign of hidden flame, and the drawn breath is fiery. The rough tongue swells, and parched mouths gape for the warm winds, and heavy air is sought with gaping mouth. They can't endure blankets or any coverings, but place their bare breasts on the earth. Nor does the body become cool from the ground - the ground grows hot from the body. Nor is there any physician present. The savage plague breaks out against the healers themselves, and arts harm their practitioners. The closer anyone is and the more faithfully he serves the sick, the more quickly he comes to a share of death. As hope of health has departed and they see the end of the disease in death, they indulge their spirits and have no care for what's useful - for nothing is useful. Everywhere, shame set aside, they cling to fountains and rivers and deep wells, and thirst isn't extinguished before life by drinking. Many, too heavy to rise, die in the very waters. Yet someone drinks even those. Such is the loathing of their hateful beds to the wretched that they leap out, or if strength prevents them from standing, they roll their bodies to the ground and flee their homes, each one. Each one's own house seems deadly to him, and because the cause lies hidden, the place is blamed. You could see some half-dead wandering the roads while they had strength to stand, others weeping and lying on the ground and turning their weary eyes in their final movement. They stretch their limbs toward the stars of heaven, breathing out their spirits here and there, wherever death had caught them.

The Depths of the Plague

"What was my state of mind then? Wasn't it what it should have been - to hate life and wish to be part of my people? Wherever the gaze of my eyes turned, there was a crowd lying strewn about, just as when rotten apples fall from shaken branches and acorns from the shaken oak. You see a temple opposite,

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perdiderant: tristes penetrant ad viscera morbi.
ante sacros vidi proiecta cadavera postes,
ante ipsas, quo mors foret invidiosior, aras.
pars animam laqueo claudunt mortisque timorem
morte fugant ultroque vocant venientia fata.
corpora missa neci nullis de more feruntur
funeribus (neque enim capiebant funera portae):
aut inhumata premunt terras aut dantur in altos
indotata rogos; et iam reverentia nulla est,
deque rogis pugnant alienisque ignibus ardent.
qui lacriment, desunt, indefletaeque vagantur
natorumque patrumque animae iuvenumque senumque,
nec locus in tumulos, nec sufficit arbor in ignes.
Attonitus tanto miserarum turbine rerum,
"Iuppiter o!" dixi, "si te non falsa loquuntur
dicta sub amplexus Aeginae Asopidos isse,
nec te, magne pater, nostri pudet esse parentem,
aut mihi redde meos aut me quoque conde sepulcro!"
ille notam fulgore dedit tonitruque secundo.
"accipio sintque ista precor felicia mentis
signa tuae!" dixi, "quod das mihi, pigneror omen."
forte fuit iuxta patulis rarissima ramis
sacra Iovi quercus de semine Dodonaeo;
hic nos frugilegas adspeximus agmine longo
grande onus exiguo formicas ore gerentes
rugosoque suum servantes cortice callem;
dum numerum miror, "totidem, pater optime," dixi,
"tu mihi da cives et inania moenia supple!"
intremuit ramisque sonum sine flamine motis
alta dedit quercus: pavido mihi membra timore
horruerant, stabantque comae; tamen oscula terrae
roboribusque dedi, nec me sperare fatebar;
sperabam tamen atque animo mea vota fovebam.
nox subit, et curis exercita corpora somnus
occupat: ante oculos eadem mihi quercus adesse
et ramis totidem totidemque animalia ramis
ferre suis visa est pariterque tremescere motu
graniferumque agmen subiectis spargere in arvis;
crescere desubito et maius maiusque videri
ac se tollere humo rectoque adsistere trunco

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raised on long steps. Jupiter holds it. Who didn't give fruitless incense at those altars? How many times while a spouse says words of prayer for spouse, a father for son, did they end their life at altars not entreated, and a portion of incense was found unconsumed in their hand! How many times were bulls, led to temples while the priest conceives vows and pours hard wine between the horns, fallen without waiting for the wound! When I myself was making sacrifice to Jupiter for myself and homeland and three sons, the victim gave out dread bellowings and suddenly collapsed without any blows and stained the knives beneath with scanty blood. Even the diseased entrails had lost the marks of truth and warnings of the gods: sad diseases penetrate to the viscera. I saw corpses thrown down before sacred doorposts, before the very altars - so death would be more hateful. Some close off breath with a noose and flee fear of death with death and of their own will call on coming fate. Bodies sent to death aren't carried with customary funerals (for the gates couldn't hold the funerals): either they lie on earth unburied or are given without gifts to high pyres. And now there's no reverence, and they fight over pyres and burn in others' fires. There are none to weep. The souls of sons and fathers and youths and old men wander unwept. There's no place for tombs, no tree suffices for fires.

Prayer and Miracle

"Stunned by such great turmoil of miseries, I said: 'O Jupiter, if they don't tell false tales that you lay with Aegina, Asopus' daughter, and, great father, you're not ashamed to be my parent, either give back my people to me or bury me too in the tomb!' He gave a sign with lightning and favorable thunder. 'I accept, and may these be auspicious signs of your will, I pray!' I said. 'What you give me, I take as an omen.'

"By chance there was nearby a sacred oak of Jupiter with wide-spreading branches, from Dodonean seed. Here we noticed grain-carrying ants in a long column bearing a great burden in their small mouths and keeping to their path along the wrinkled bark. While I marvel at their number, I said: 'Best father, give me as many citizens and fill my empty walls!' The tall oak trembled and gave a sound from its branches moved without wind. My limbs had bristled with trembling fear and my hair stood up. Yet I

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et maciem numerumque pedum nigrumque colorem
ponere et humanam membris inducere formam.
somnus abit: damno vigilans mea visa querorque
in superis opis esse nihil; at in aedibus ingens
murmur erat, vocesque hominum exaudire videbar
iam mihi desuetas; dum suspicor has quoque somni
esse, venit Telamon properus foribusque reclusis
"speque fideque, pater", dixit "maiora videbis:
egredere!" egredior, qualesque in imagine somni
visus eram vidisse viros, ex ordine tales
adspicio noscoque: adeunt regemque salutant.
vota Iovi solvo populisque recentibus urbem
partior et vacuos priscis cultoribus agros,
Myrmidonasque voco nec origine nomina fraudo.
corpora vidisti; mores, quos ante gerebant,
nunc quoque habent: parcum genus est patiensque laborum
quaesitique tenax et quod quaesita reservet.
hi te ad bella pares annis animisque sequentur,
cum primum qui te feliciter attulit eurus'
(eurus enim attulerat) 'fuerit mutatus in austrum.'
Talibus atque aliis longum sermonibus illi
inplevere diem; lucis pars ultima mensae
est data, nox somnis. iubar aureus extulerat Sol,
flabat adhuc eurus redituraque vela tenebat:
ad Cephalum Pallante sati, cui grandior aetas,
ad regem Cephalus simul et Pallante creati
conveniunt, sed adhuc regem sopor altus habebat.
excipit Aeacides illos in limine Phocus;
nam Telamon fraterque viros ad bella legebant.
Phocus in interius spatium pulchrosque recessus
Cecropidas ducit, cum quis simul ipse resedit.
adspicit Aeoliden ignota ex arbore factum
ferre manu iaculum, cuius fuit aurea cuspis.
pauca prius mediis sermonibus ille locutus
'sum nemorum studiosus' ait 'caedisque ferinae;
qua tamen e silva teneas hastile recisum,
iamdudum dubito: certe si fraxinus esset,
fulva colore foret; si cornus, nodus inesset.
unde sit, ignoro, sed non formosius isto
viderunt oculi telum iaculabile nostri.'

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gave kisses to the earth and to the oak, and I didn't confess I was hoping - yet I was hoping and nourished my prayers in my spirit.

"Night comes, and sleep occupies bodies worn out with cares. Before my eyes the same oak seemed to be present and to bear on its branches as many living creatures as there were branches, and likewise to tremble with movement and scatter its grain-bearing army on the fields beneath. Suddenly they seemed to grow and become larger and larger and to raise themselves from the ground and stand with upright trunk, and to put off leanness and their number of feet and black color and put on human form in their limbs.

"Sleep departs. Awake, I complain about my vision and blame the gods for lack of help. But there was a great murmur in the house, and I seemed to hear the voices of men, now unaccustomed to me. While I suspect these too are part of sleep, Telamon comes in a hurry and with doors thrown open says: 'Father, you'll see greater things than your hope and belief: come out!' I come out. Just as in the image of dream I had seemed to see men, I see such in order and recognize them. They approach and greet their king. I pay vows to Jupiter and divide the city among fresh peoples and the fields vacant of their ancient farmers, and I call them Myrmidons and don't cheat the name of its origin. You've seen their bodies. They have now the character they had before: a thrifty race, patient of labors, tenacious of what's sought and preserving what's sought. These will follow you to wars, equal in years and spirits, as soon as the east wind that brought you happily" (for the east wind had brought him) "has changed to the south."

Cephalus and the Magic Spear

With these and other speeches they filled the long day. The final part of daylight was given to the table, night to sleep. Golden Sun had raised his gleam. The east wind was still blowing and held back the sails for return. Pallas' sons, of whom the elder had greater age, come to Cephalus, and Cephalus and those created by Pallas at the same time come to the king. But the king was still held by deep sleep. Phocus, son of Aeacus, receives them at the threshold, for Telamon and his brother were choosing men for war. Phocus leads the Cecropids into the inner space and beautiful recesses, with whom he sat down himself.

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excipit Actaeis e fratribus alter et 'usum
maiorem specie mirabere' dixit 'in isto.
consequitur, quodcumque petit, fortunaque missum
non regit, et revolat nullo referente cruentum.'
tum vero iuvenis Nereius omnia quaerit,
cur sit et unde datum, quis tanti muneris auctor.
quae petit, ille refert, sed enim narrare pudori est,
qua tulerit mercede; silet tactusque dolore
coniugis amissae lacrimis ita fatur obortis:
'hoc me, nate dea, (quis possit credere?) telum
flere facit facietque diu, si vivere nobis
fata diu dederint; hoc me cum coniuge cara
perdidit: hoc utinam caruissem munere semper!
'Procris erat, si forte magis pervenit ad aures
Orithyia tuas, raptae soror Orithyiae,
si faciem moresque velis conferre duarum,
dignior ipsa rapi! pater hanc mihi iunxit Erectheus,
hanc mihi iunxit amor: felix dicebar eramque;
non ita dis visum est, aut nunc quoque forsitan essem.
alter agebatur post sacra iugalia mensis,
cum me cornigeris tendentem retia cervis
vertice de summo semper florentis Hymetti
lutea mane videt pulsis Aurora tenebris
invitumque rapit. liceat mihi vera referre
pace deae: quod sit roseo spectabilis ore,
quod teneat lucis, teneat confinia noctis,
nectareis quod alatur aquis, ego Procrin amabam;
pectore Procris erat, Procris mihi semper in ore.
sacra tori coitusque novos thalamosque recentes
primaque deserti referebam foedera lecti:
mota dea est et "siste tuas, ingrate, querellas;
Procrin habe!" dixit, "quod si mea provida mens est,
non habuisse voles." meque illi irata remisit.
cum redeo mecumque deae memorata retracto,
esse metus coepit, ne iura iugalia coniunx
non bene servasset: facies aetasque iubebat
credere adulterium, prohibebant credere mores;
sed tamen afueram, sed et haec erat, unde redibam,
criminis exemplum, sed cuncta timemus amantes.
quaerere, quod doleam, statuo donisque pudicam

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He notices the Aeolid carrying a spear made from an unknown tree, whose point was gold. After a few words amid the conversation, he said: "I'm a lover of forests and hunting wild game, yet I've been wondering for a while from what forest you hold the spear-shaft cut. Certainly if it were ash, it would be tawny in color; if it were cornel, a knot would be in it. I don't know where it's from, but our eyes have not seen a more beautiful throwing weapon."

One of the Attic brothers responds and says: "You'll marvel at its usefulness more than its appearance. It hits whatever it aims at, and chance doesn't control where it's thrown, and it flies back bloody without anyone retrieving it."

Then truly the Nereid youth asks everything - why it is and whence given, who the author of such a gift. He tells what he asks, but it's shameful to tell at what price he obtained it. He's silent, and touched by grief at his lost wife, he speaks with tears welling up:

"This weapon makes me weep, son of a goddess (who would believe it?), and will make me weep for long if the fates give us long life. This destroyed me along with my dear wife. Would that I had always lacked this gift!

The Story of Procris

"It was Procris - if perhaps Orithyia has come more to your ears, the sister of stolen Orithyia. If you wanted to compare the looks and character of the two, she herself was more worthy to be stolen. Her father Erechtheus joined her to me, love joined her to me. I was called happy and I was. The gods didn't see it that way, or perhaps I still would be. The second month was passing after our marriage rites, when Aurora with rosy face saw me as I was spreading nets for horned deer on the summit of ever-flowering Hymettus, in the early morning with darkness driven away, and she seized me against my will. May I be allowed to speak truth with respect to the goddess: though she's beautiful to look at with her rosy face, though she holds the boundaries of day and night, though she's nourished on nectar waters - I loved Procris. Procris was in my heart, Procris always on my lips. I kept bringing up the sacred bonds of our

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sollicitare fidem; favet huic Aurora timori
inmutatque meam (videor sensisse) figuram.
Palladias ineo non cognoscendus Athenas
ingrediorque domum; culpa domus ipsa carebat
castaque signa dabat dominoque erat anxia rapto:
vix aditus per mille dolos ad Erecthida factus.
ut vidi, obstipui meditataque paene reliqui
temptamenta fide; male me, quin vera faterer,
continui, male, quin, et oportuit, oscula ferrem.
tristis erat (sed nulla tamen formosior illa
esse potest tristi) desiderioque dolebat
coniugis abrepti: tu collige, qualis in illa,
Phoce, decor fuerit, quam sic dolor ipse decebat!
quid referam, quotiens temptamina nostra pudici
reppulerint mores, quotiens "ego" dixerit "uni
servor; ubicumque est, uni mea gaudia servo."
cui non ista fide satis experientia sano
magna foret? non sum contentus et in mea pugno
vulnera, dum census dare me pro nocte loquendo
muneraque augendo tandem dubitare coegi.
exclamo male victor: "adest, mala, fictus adulter!
verus eram coniunx! me, perfida, teste teneris."
illa nihil; tacito tantummodo victa pudore
insidiosa malo cum coniuge limina fugit;
offensaque mei genus omne perosa virorum
montibus errabat, studiis operata Dianae.
tum mihi deserto violentior ignis ad ossa
pervenit: orabam veniam et peccasse fatebar
et potuisse datis simili succumbere culpae
me quoque muneribus, si munera tanta darentur.
haec mihi confesso, laesum prius ulta pudorem,
redditur et dulces concorditer exigit annos;
dat mihi praeterea, tamquam se parva dedisset
dona, canem munus; quem cum sua traderet illi
Cynthia, "currendo superabit" dixerat "omnes."
dat simul et iaculum, manibus quod, cernis, habemus.
muneris alterius quae sit fortuna, requiris?
accipe mirandum: novitate movebere facti!
'Carmina Laiades non intellecta priorum
solverat ingeniis, et praecipitata iacebat

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bed and our fresh union and our marriage chamber and the first pledges of the bed I'd left. The goddess was moved and said: 'Stop your complaints, ungrateful man! Have Procris!' - and she added - 'if my foreseeing mind is right, you won't want to have had her.' And she sent me back to her, angry.

"As I return and go over what the goddess said, fear began that my wife had not kept her marriage vows well. Her face and age commanded me to believe in adultery, her character forbade me to believe it. Yet I had been away, yet she from whom I was returning was an example of the crime. Yet we lovers fear everything. I resolve to seek what would pain me and to test her chaste faith with gifts. Aurora favors this fear and changes my appearance (I seemed to sense it). Unrecognizable, I enter Palladian Athens and go into the house. The house itself was free from fault and gave signs of chastity and was anxious for its stolen master. Scarcely was access made through a thousand tricks to Erechtheus' daughter. When I saw her, I nearly abandoned my planned tests of her faithfulness. I barely restrained myself from confessing the truth, barely from giving - as I should have - kisses. She was sad - but no one could be more beautiful than her in sadness - and she grieved with longing for her stolen husband. Imagine, Phocus, what beauty was in her, whom sadness itself so became!

"Why should I recount how many times her modest character repelled my attempts, how many times she said: 'I'm kept for one man. Wherever he is, I keep my joys for one.' What sane man wouldn't have had great proof enough of faithfulness with those? I'm not content and fight to make my own wounds, speaking that I'd give vast wealth for a night and increasing my gifts, until finally I forced her to hesitate. I cry out, badly victorious: 'Adulteress, a false seducer is present! I was your true husband! You're caught by me as witness, faithless woman.'

"She says nothing. Conquered only by silent shame, she flees the treacherous threshold with her cruel husband. Offended by me, she hated the whole race of men and wandered in the mountains, devoted to Diana's pursuits. Then fire more violent reached my bones when I was deserted. I begged for pardon and confessed I'd sinned, and that I too could have succumbed to fault with gifts given, if such great gifts had been given. After I confessed this, she - having first avenged her injured modesty - was given back to me and we passed sweet years in harmony. Moreover, as if she'd given a small gift by giving herself, she

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inmemor ambagum vates obscura suarum:
protinus Aoniis inmittitur altera Thebis
[scilicet alma Themis nec talia linquit inulta!]
pestis, et exitio multi pecorumque suoque
rurigenae pavere feram; vicina iuventus
venimus et latos indagine cinximus agros.
illa levi velox superabat retia saltu
summaque transibat postarum lina plagarum:
copula detrahitur canibus, quas illa sequentes
effugit et coetum non segnior alite ludit.
poscor et ipse meum consensu Laelapa magno
(muneris hoc nomen): iamdudum vincula pugnat
exuere ipse sibi colloque morantia tendit.
vix bene missus erat, nec iam poteramus, ubi esset,
scire; pedum calidus vestigia pulvis habebat,
ipse oculis ereptus erat: non ocior illo
hasta nec excussae contorto verbere glandes
nec Gortyniaco calamus levis exit ab arcu.
collis apex medii subiectis inminet arvis:
tollor eo capioque novi spectacula cursus,
quo modo deprendi, modo se subducere ab ipso
vulnere visa fera est; nec limite callida recto
in spatiumque fugit, sed decipit ora sequentis
et redit in gyrum, ne sit suus inpetus hosti:
inminet hic sequiturque parem similisque tenenti
non tenet et vanos exercet in aera morsus.
ad iaculi vertebar opem; quod dextera librat
dum mea, dum digitos amentis addere tempto,
lumina deflexi. revocataque rursus eodem
rettuleram: medio (mirum) duo marmora campo
adspicio; fugere hoc, illud captare putares.
scilicet invictos ambo certamine cursus
esse deus voluit, si quis deus adfuit illis.'
hactenus, et tacuit; 'iaculo quod crimen in ipso est?'
Phocus ait; iaculi sic crimina reddidit ille:
'Gaudia principium nostri sunt, Phoce, doloris:
illa prius referam. iuvat o meminisse beati
temporis, Aeacide, quo primos rite per annos
coniuge eram felix, felix erat illa marito.
mutua cura duos et amor socialis habebat,

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gives me a dog - her gift - which Cynthia, when she handed it over, had said: 'He'll surpass all in running.' She gives at the same time the spear you see, which we hold in our hands.

"Do you ask what fortune the other gift had? Accept the marvel - you'll be moved by the strangeness of the event!

The Beast and Laelaps

"The son of Laius had solved riddles not understood by earlier minds, and the prophet, forgetful of her puzzles, lay headlong, her obscure words fallen. Immediately another pestilence was sent to Aonian Thebes [surely nurturing Themis doesn't leave such things unavenged!], and many country-dwellers feared the beast to their own and their flocks' destruction. The neighboring youth came and we encircled the wide fields with nets. She, swift with light leap, jumped over the nets and passed over the tops of the stakes' ropes. The leashes were slipped from the dogs, which she fleeing eluded and mocked the gathered pack, no slower than a bird.

"I myself was asked for my Laelaps by great consensus (this was the gift's name). He'd been struggling for a long while to free himself from his bonds and was straining against what held him by his neck. Scarcely had he been released, and now we couldn't know where he was. The warm dust held the traces of his feet. He himself had been snatched from sight. No spear more swift than he nor balls hurled by twisted whirl nor light arrow that goes from a Cretan bow. There's a peak of a central hill that looks out over the fields below. I climb there and catch sight of the strange race: now the beast seems caught, now to withdraw from the very wound. Cunning, she doesn't flee in a straight line and into space, but deceives the mouth of the pursuer and returns in a circle so there won't be momentum for her enemy. He presses close and follows, equal, and like one holding, he doesn't hold and works his jaws in empty air.

"I was turning to help with my spear. While my right hand balances it, while I try to fit my fingers to the thong, I turned my eyes away. When I directed them back again to the same spot - marvel! - I see two

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nec Iovis illa meo thalamos praeferret amori,
nec me quae caperet, non si Venus ipsa veniret,
ulla erat; aequales urebant pectora flammae.
sole fere radiis feriente cacumina primis
venatum in silvas iuvenaliter ire solebam
nec mecum famuli nec equi nec naribus acres
ire canes nec lina sequi nodosa solebant:
tutus eram iaculo; sed cum satiata ferinae
dextera caedis erat, repetebam frigus et umbras
et quae de gelidis exibat vallibus aura:
aura petebatur medio mihi lenis in aestu,
auram exspectabam, requies erat illa labori.
"aura" (recordor enim), "venias" cantare solebam,
"meque iuves intresque sinus, gratissima, nostros,
utque facis, relevare velis, quibus urimur, aestus!"
forsitan addiderim (sic me mea fata trahebant),
blanditias plures et "tu mihi magna voluptas"
dicere sim solitus, "tu me reficisque fovesque,
tu facis, ut silvas, ut amem loca sola: meoque
spiritus iste tuus semper captatur ab ore."
vocibus ambiguis deceptam praebuit aurem
nescio quis nomenque aurae tam saepe vocatum
esse putat nymphae: nympham mihi credit amari.
criminis extemplo ficti temerarius index
Procrin adit linguaque refert audita susurra.
credula res amor est: subito conlapsa dolore,
ut mihi narratur, cecidit; longoque refecta
tempore se miseram, se fati dixit iniqui
deque fide questa est et crimine concita vano,
quod nihil est, metuit, metuit sine corpore nomen
et dolet infelix veluti de paelice vera.
saepe tamen dubitat speratque miserrima falli
indiciique fidem negat et, nisi viderit ipsa,
damnatura sui non est delicta mariti.
postera depulerant Aurorae lumina noctem:
egredior silvamque peto victorque per herbas
"aura, veni" dixi "nostroque medere labori!"
et subito gemitus inter mea verba videbar
nescio quos audisse; "veni" tamen "optima!" dicens
fronde levem rursus strepitum faciente caduca

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marble statues in the middle of the field. You'd think one was fleeing, the other seemed to catch. Clearly some god - if any god was present for them - wanted both to be unconquered in the race."

He fell silent to this point, and Phocus said: "What crime is in the spear itself?" He told the spear's crime thus:

The Death of Procris

"The beginning of our grief, Phocus, is joy. Those I'll relate first. It delights me, O son of Aeacus, to remember that blessed time when I was rightly happy for the first years with my wife, and she was happy with her husband. Mutual care and shared love held us two. She wouldn't have preferred Jove's bed to my love, nor was there any woman who could capture me, not even if Venus herself came. Equal flames burned our hearts.

"Usually when the sun's rays were striking the highest peaks, I used to go hunting into the woods in youthful fashion, and neither servants nor horses nor keen-nosed dogs nor knotted nets used to go with me. I was safe with my spear. But when my right hand had been sated with slaughter of game, I would seek the cool and shade and the breeze that came from the cold valleys. I sought the gentle breeze in the middle heat. I waited for the breeze - that was my rest from labor. 'Breeze' (for I remember) I used to sing, 'may you come and help me and enter my embrace, most welcome one, and - as you do - be willing to relieve the heat by which I'm burned!'

"Perhaps I added more endearments (thus my fate was drawing me). I used to say: 'You are great pleasure to me. You restore and cherish me. You make me love the woods and solitary places. That breath of yours is always caught by my mouth.'

"Someone's ear, deceived by ambiguous words, thought the name of breeze so often called was a nymph's name. He believes a nymph is loved by me. Immediately a rash informer of false crime visits Procris and reports in whispered tongue what he'd heard. Love is a credulous thing. Struck by sudden grief, as it's told to me, she fell. After a long time restored, she called herself wretched, called her fate

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sum ratus esse feram telumque volatile misi:
Procris erat medioque tenens in pectore vulnus
"ei mihi" conclamat! vox est ubi cognita fidae
coniugis, ad vocem praeceps amensque cucurri.
semianimem et sparsas foedantem sanguine vestes
et sua (me miserum!) de vulnere dona trahentem
invenio corpusque meo mihi carius ulnis
mollibus attollo scissaque a pectore veste
vulnera saeva ligo conorque inhibere cruorem
neu me morte sua sceleratum deserat, oro.
viribus illa carens et iam moribunda coegit
haec se pauca loqui: "per nostri foedera lecti
perque deos supplex oro superosque meosque,
per si quid merui de te bene perque manentem
nunc quoque, cum pereo, causam mihi mortis amorem,
ne thalamis Auram patiare innubere nostris!"
dixit, et errorem tum denique nominis esse
et sensi et docui. sed quid docuisse iuvabat?
labitur, et parvae fugiunt cum sanguine vires,
dumque aliquid spectare potest, me spectat et in me
infelicem animam nostroque exhalat in ore;
sed vultu meliore mori secura videtur.'
Flentibus haec lacrimans heros memorabat, et ecce
Aeacus ingreditur duplici cum prole novoque
milite; quem Cephalus cum fortibus accipit armis.

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unfair, and complained about my faith and, stirred by empty crime, she fears what is nothing, fears a name without body, and grieves, poor girl, as if over a real mistress.

"Yet she often doubts and hopes most wretchedly to be deceived and denies faith to the informer, and unless she sees herself, she won't condemn her husband's faults. The next daylight had driven away night. I go out and seek the forest and, victorious over the grass, say: 'Breeze, come,' and 'heal my labor!' And suddenly amid my words I seemed to hear I don't know what groans. Still saying 'Come, best one!' when a falling leaf made a slight rustle, I thought it was a beast and threw my flying weapon. It was Procris, and holding the wound in the middle of her breast, she cries out: 'Ah, woe is me!' When I recognized the voice of my faithful wife, I ran headlong and out of my mind toward the voice.

"Half-dead and staining her scattered garments with blood and pulling from her wound her own gift (wretched me!), I find her. I lift in my arms the body dearer to me than mine, tear the garment from her breast, bind her savage wounds, and try to stop the blood flow, and beg her not to leave me, guilty by her death, to desecrate me. She, lacking strength and now dying, was forced to speak these few words: 'By the bonds of our bed and by the gods - I beg as suppliant - the gods above and mine, by whatever I've deserved well from you, and by the love that remains even now as I perish, the cause of my death - don't allow Aura to marry into our marriage chambers!'

"She spoke, and then at last I sensed and understood it was an error of the name. But what did teaching help? She sinks, and her small strength flees with her blood, and while she can look at anything, she looks at me and breathes out her unhappy soul in my face and onto my lips. But she seems to die more secure with better expression."

Weeping, the hero was relating these things with tears, and look - Aeacus enters with his two sons and the new soldiers, whom Cephalus receives with their strong weapons.

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BOOK 8

Iam nitidum retegente diem noctisque fugante
tempora Lucifero cadit Eurus, et umida surgunt
nubila: dant placidi cursum redeuntibus Austri
Aeacidis Cephaloque; quibus feliciter acti
ante exspectatum portus tenuere petitos.
interea Minos Lelegeia litora vastat
praetemptatque sui vires Mavortis in urbe
Alcathoi, quam Nisus habet, cui splendidus ostro
inter honoratos medioque in vertice canos
crinis inhaerebat, magni fiducia regni.
Sexta resurgebant orientis cornua lunae,
et pendebat adhuc belli fortuna, diuque
inter utrumque volat dubiis Victoria pennis.
regia turris erat vocalibus addita muris,
in quibus auratam proles Letoia fertur
deposuisse lyram: saxo sonus eius inhaesit.
saepe illuc solita est ascendere filia Nisi
et petere exiguo resonantia saxa lapillo,
tum cum pax esset; bello quoque saepe solebat
spectare ex illa rigidi certamina Martis,
iamque mora belli procerum quoque nomina norat
armaque equosque habitusque Cydoneasque pharetras;
noverat ante alios faciem ducis Europaei,
plus etiam, quam nosse sat est: hac iudice Minos,
seu caput abdiderat cristata casside pennis,
in galea formosus erat; seu sumpserat aere
fulgentem clipeum, clipeum sumpsisse decebat;
torserat adductis hastilia lenta lacertis:
laudabat virgo iunctam cum viribus artem;
inposito calamo patulos sinuaverat arcus:
sic Phoebum sumptis iurabat stare sagittis;
cum vero faciem dempto nudaverat aere
purpureusque albi stratis insignia pictis
terga premebat equi spumantiaque ora regebat,
vix sua, vix sanae virgo Niseia compos
mentis erat: felix iaculum, quod tangeret ille,
quaeque manu premeret, felicia frena vocabat.
impetus est illi, liceat modo, ferre per agmen
virgineos hostile gradus, est impetus illi
turribus e summis in Cnosia mittere corpus

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Scylla and Nisus

Now as Lucifer revealed the shining day and drove away the hours of night, the East wind fell and damp clouds rose. Gentle south winds gave a course to the returning Aeacids and to Cephalus, and, prosperously driven, they held the harbors they sought before they expected.

Meanwhile Minos lays waste the Lelegian shores and tests the strength of his Mars against the city of Alcathoë, which Nisus holds. Among his honored gray hairs, in the middle of his crown, a lock of hair clung, splendid with purple - the confidence of his great kingdom.

The sixth horns of the rising moon kept returning, and still the fortune of war hung in balance, and for a long time Victory flew on doubtful wings between the two sides. There was a royal tower added to the vocal walls, on which they say Apollo's offspring laid down his golden lyre: its sound stuck to the stone. Nisus' daughter used to climb up there often and strike the resonant stones with a little pebble, when there was peace. In wartime too she often used to watch from there the contests of harsh Mars, and now by war's delay she even knew the names of the chiefs and their arms and horses and dress and Cretan quivers. She knew the face of the European leader before the others - more than enough to know. In her judgment, Minos was beautiful in his helmet whether he had hidden his head in a crested helm with plumes. If he had taken up a shield gleaming with bronze, it became him to have taken the shield. When he had hurled the flexible javelin with drawn-back muscles, the maiden praised the art joined with strength. When he had bent the wide bow with arrow fitted, she swore Phoebus stood like that taking up his arrows. But when truly he bared his face with bronze removed and, clad in purple, pressed the white back of his horse adorned with embroidered cloths and controlled its foaming mouth, the Nisian maiden was scarcely in control of herself, scarcely in her sane mind. She called the javelin he touched fortunate, called fortunate the reins he pressed with his hand. She has an impulse - if only it were allowed - to carry her virgin steps through the enemy ranks. She has an impulse to hurl her body from the high towers into the Cretan camp, or to open the bronze gates to the enemy, or whatever else Minos might want.

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castra vel aeratas hosti recludere portas,
vel siquid Minos aliud velit. utque sedebat
candida Dictaei spectans tentoria regis,
'laeter,' ait 'doleamne geri lacrimabile bellum,
in dubio est; doleo, quod Minos hostis amanti est.
sed nisi bella forent, numquam mihi cognitus esset!
me tamen accepta poterat deponere bellum
obside: me comitem, me pacis pignus haberet.
si quae te peperit, talis, pulcherrime regum,
qualis es ipse, fuit, merito deus arsit in illa.
o ego ter felix, si pennis lapsa per auras
Cnosiaci possem castris insistere regis
fassaque me flammasque meas, qua dote, rogarem,
vellet emi, tantum patrias ne posceret arces!
nam pereant potius sperata cubilia, quam sim
proditione potens! - quamvis saepe utile vinci
victoris placidi fecit clementia multis.
iusta gerit certe pro nato bella perempto:
et causaque valet causamque tuentibus armis.
at, puto, vincemur; qui si manet exitus urbem,
cur suus haec illi reseret mea moenia Mavors
et non noster amor? melius sine caede moraque
inpensaque sui poterit superare cruoris.
non metuam certe, ne quis tua pectora, Minos,
vulneret inprudens: quis enim tam durus, ut in te
derigere inmitem non inscius audeat hastam?
coepta placent, et stat sententia tradere mecum
dotalem patriam finemque inponere bello;
verum velle parum est! aditus custodia servat,
claustraque portarum genitor tenet: hunc ego solum
infelix timeo, solus mea vota moratur.
di facerent, sine patre forem! sibi quisque profecto
est deus: ignavis precibus Fortuna repugnat.
altera iamdudum succensa cupidine tanto
perdere gauderet, quodcumque obstaret amori.
et cur ulla foret me fortior? ire per ignes
et gladios ausim; nec in hoc tamen ignibus ullis
aut gladiis opus est, opus est mihi crine paterno.
illa mihi est auro pretiosior, illa beatam
purpura me votique mei factura potentem.'

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As she sat gazing at the white tents of the Dictaean king, she said: "Whether I should rejoice or grieve that this tearful war is waged is in doubt. I grieve that Minos is an enemy to me as lover. But unless there were wars, he never would have been known to me! Yet he could lay down the war if he accepted me as hostage. He could have me as companion, me as pledge of peace. If she who bore you, most beautiful of kings, was such as you yourself are, a god justly burned for her. O I'd be three times blessed if, gliding on wings through the air, I could stand in the Cretan king's camp and, confessing myself and my flames, ask at what dowry he'd wish to be bought - so long as he doesn't demand my father's citadel! For may the marriage I hope for perish sooner than that I be powerful through betrayal! Though often the clemency of a peaceful victor has made it useful for many to be conquered. He certainly wages just wars for his son who was killed: both the cause is strong and the arms that defend the cause. We'll be conquered, I think. If that outcome awaits the city, why should his Mars open these walls for him and not my love? Better without slaughter and delay and expense of his own blood he'll be able to conquer. I certainly won't fear that someone might wound your breast, Minos, unknowingly: for who is so hard that he'd dare unwittingly to aim a cruel spear at you?

"The plan pleases me, and my resolve stands to hand over with myself my homeland as dowry and put an end to the war. But to will it is not enough! A guard keeps the entrance, and my father holds the locks of the gates. Him alone I unhappily fear. He alone delays my prayers. Would that the gods make me fatherless! Surely everyone is his own god: Fortune fights against cowardly prayers. Another girl, long since inflamed by such great desire, would rejoice to destroy whatever stood in love's way. And why would any girl be braver than me? I'd dare to go through fires and swords. Yet in this case there's no need for fires or swords. I need my father's hair. That's more precious to me than gold. That purple lock will make me blessed and powerful over my prayer."

The Betrayal

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Talia dicenti curarum maxima nutrix
nox intervenit, tenebrisque audacia crevit.
prima quies aderat, qua curis fessa diurnis
pectora somnus habet: thalamos taciturna paternos
intrat et (heu facinus!) fatali nata parentem
crine suum spoliat praedaque potita nefanda
per medios hostes (meriti fiducia tanta est)
pervenit ad regem; quem sic adfata paventem est:
'suasit amor facinus: proles ego regia Nisi
Scylla tibi trado patriaeque meosque penates;
praemia nulla peto nisi te: cape pignus amoris
purpureum crinem nec me nunc tradere crinem,
sed patrium tibi crede caput!' sceleratque dextra
munera porrexit; Minos porrecta refugit
turbatusque novi respondit imagine facti:
'di te summoveant, o nostri infamia saecli,
orbe suo, tellusque tibi pontusque negetur!
certe ego non patiar Iovis incunabula, Creten,
qui meus est orbis, tantum contingere monstrum.'
Dixit, et ut leges captis iustissimus auctor
hostibus inposuit, classis retinacula solvi
iussit et aeratas impelli remige puppes.
Scylla freto postquam deductas nare carinas
nec praestare ducem sceleris sibi praemia vidit,
consumptis precibus violentam transit in iram
intendensque manus passis furibunda capillis
'quo fugis' exclamat 'meritorum auctore relicta,
o patriae praelate meae, praelate parenti?
quo fugis, inmitis, cuius victoria nostrum
et scelus et meritum est? nec te data munera, nec te
noster amor movit, nec quod spes omnis in unum
te mea congesta est? nam quo deserta revertar?
in patriam? superata iacet! sed finge manere:
proditione mea clausa est mihi! patris ad ora?
quem tibi donavi? cives odere merentem,
finitimi exemplum metuunt: exponimur orbae
terrarum, nobis ut Crete sola pateret.
hac quoque si prohibes et nos, ingrate, relinquis,
non genetrix Europa tibi est, sed inhospita Syrtis,
Armeniae tigres austroque agitata Charybdis.

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While she spoke such things, Night, greatest nurse of cares, intervened, and boldness grew in the darkness. The first quiet came, when sleep holds hearts wearied by the day's cares. Silent, she enters her father's bedchamber and - O the crime! - the daughter despoils her own parent of his fateful lock. Possessing the wicked spoil, she goes through the middle of the enemies (such is her confidence in what she's deserved) and reaches the king. She addresses him trembling thus:

"Love urged the crime. I, royal offspring of Nisus, Scylla, hand over to you my father and my household gods. I seek no reward except you. Take this purple hair as pledge of my love - and don't believe I'm handing over hair, but my father's head!" And with guilty hand she held out the gift.

Minos shrank back from what was held out and, disturbed by the sight of the strange deed, replied: "May the gods remove you, O disgrace of our age, from their world, and may land and sea be denied to you! Certainly I won't allow such a monster to touch Crete, cradle of Jupiter, which is my world."

He spoke, and as a most just author of laws, he imposed terms on the captive enemies, ordered the cables of the fleet loosened and the bronze ships driven by oar.

Scylla's Transformation

After Scylla saw the ships launched to sail on the strait and didn't see the leader give her the rewards of her crime, her prayers exhausted, she passes into violent anger and, stretching out her hands, raging with streaming hair, she cries out: "Where do you flee, leaving behind the author of your successes, you who are preferred to my homeland, preferred to my parent? Where do you flee, cruel one, whose victory is both my crime and my merit? Neither the gift given nor my love moved you, nor that all my hope was heaped up in you alone? For where shall I return, abandoned? To my homeland? It lies conquered! But suppose it remains: it's closed to me by my betrayal. To my father's face? Whom I gave to you? My citizens hate me though I deserve well. My neighbors fear my example. I've made myself exiled from the lands so that Crete alone would be open to me. If you deny me this too and leave me, ingrate, Europa was not your mother, but the inhospitable Syrtes, Armenian tigers, and Charybdis driven by the south

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Nec Iove tu natus, nec mater imagine tauri
ducta tua est: generis falsa est ea fabula! verus,
[et ferus et captus nullius amore iuvencae]
qui te progenuit, taurus fuit. exige poenas,
Nise pater! gaudete malis, modo prodita, nostris,
moenia! nam, fateor, merui et sum digna perire.
sed tamen ex illis aliquis, quos impia laesi,
me perimat! cur, qui vicisti crimine nostro,
insequeris crimen? scelus hoc patriaeque patrique est,
officium tibi sit! te vere coniuge digna est,
quae torvum ligno decepit adultera taurum
discordemque utero fetum tulit. ecquid ad aures
perveniunt mea dicta tuas, an inania venti
verba ferunt idemque tuas, ingrate, carinas?
iam iam Pasiphaen non est mirabile taurum
praeposuisse tibi: tu plus feritatis habebas.
me miseram! properare iubet! divulsaque remis
unda sonat, mecumque simul mea terra recedit.
nil agis, o frustra meritorum oblite meorum:
insequar invitum puppimque amplexa recurvam
per freta longa trahar.' Vix dixerat, insilit undis
consequiturque rates faciente cupidine vires
Cnosiacaeque haeret comes invidiosa carinae.
quam pater ut vidit (nam iam pendebat in aura
et modo factus erat fulvis haliaeetus alis),
ibat, ut haerentem rostro laceraret adunco;
illa metu puppim dimisit, et aura cadentem
sustinuisse levis, ne tangeret aequora, visa est.
pluma subit palmis: in avem mutata vocatur
Ciris et a tonso est hoc nomen adepta capillo.
Vota Iovi Minos taurorum corpora centum
solvit, ut egressus ratibus Curetida terram
contigit, et spoliis decorata est regia fixis.
creverat obprobrium generis, foedumque patebat
matris adulterium monstri novitate biformis;
destinat hunc Minos thalamo removere pudorem
multiplicique domo caecisque includere tectis.
Daedalus ingenio fabrae celeberrimus artis
ponit opus turbatque notas et lumina flexum
ducit in errorem variarum ambage viarum.

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wind. Nor are you born of Jove, nor was your mother deceived by the image of a bull. That story of your birth is false! The real bull that fathered you was savage and captivated by no cow's love.

"Exact punishment, father Nisus! Rejoice in my evils, walls I just now betrayed! For I confess I've deserved it and I'm worthy to die. But still, let one of those whom I impiously harmed kill me! Why do you, who conquered by my crime, pursue the crime? This should be a crime to homeland and father, but an obligation to you! She's truly a worthy wife for you, the adulteress who deceived the fierce bull with wood and carried a discordant offspring in her womb. Do my words reach your ears at all, or do the winds carry my empty words and - ingrate! - your ships alike? Now, now it's not surprising that Pasiphaë preferred the bull to you: you had more savagery. Woe is me! He orders haste! The wave struck by oars resounds, and at the same time as me my land recedes. You do nothing, O forgetful of my deserts in vain: I'll follow you against your will and, embracing the curved stern, I'll be dragged through the long seas."

She'd scarcely spoken when she leaped into the waves and followed the ships - desire giving her strength - and she clung as a hated companion to the Cretan ship. When her father saw her (for now he was hanging in the air, just now changed into a tawny sea eagle), he was going to tear at her where she clung with hooked beak. She let go of the stern in fear, and a light breeze seemed to have held her falling, lest she touch the waters. Feathers cover her. Changed into a bird, she's called Ciris, and she got this name from her shorn hair.

The Cretan Labyrinth and Icarus' Fall

Minos paid vows to Jupiter with bodies of a hundred bulls after he disembarked on ships and touched the Curetan land, and the palace was decorated with hung spoils. The shame of his race had grown, and the foul adultery of his mother was revealed by the strangeness of the two-formed monster. Minos resolves to remove this bedroom shame and enclose it in a house of many rooms and blind chambers.

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non secus ac liquidus Phrygiis Maeandros in arvis
ludit et ambiguo lapsu refluitque fluitque
occurrensque sibi venturas aspicit undas
et nunc ad fontes, nunc ad mare versus apertum
incertas exercet aquas: ita Daedalus implet
innumeras errore vias vixque ipse reverti
ad limen potuit: tanta est fallacia tecti.
Quo postquam geminam tauri iuvenisque figuram
clausit, et Actaeo bis pastum sanguine monstrum
tertia sors annis domuit repetita novenis,
utque ope virginea nullis iterata priorum
ianua difficilis filo est inventa relecto,
protinus Aegides rapta Minoide Diam
vela dedit comitemque suam crudelis in illo
litore destituit; desertae et multa querenti
amplexus et opem Liber tulit, utque perenni
sidere clara foret, sumptam de fronte coronam
inmisit caelo: tenues volat illa per auras
dumque volat, gemmae nitidos vertuntur in ignes
consistuntque loco specie remanente coronae,
qui medius Nixique genu est Anguemque tenentis.
Daedalus interea Creten longumque perosus
exilium tactusque loci natalis amore
clausus erat pelago. 'terras licet' inquit 'et undas
obstruat: et caelum certe patet; ibimus illac:
omnia possideat, non possidet aera Minos.'
dixit et ignotas animum dimittit in artes
naturamque novat. nam ponit in ordine pennas
a minima coeptas, longam breviore sequenti,
ut clivo crevisse putes: sic rustica quondam
fistula disparibus paulatim surgit avenis;
tum lino medias et ceris alligat imas
atque ita conpositas parvo curvamine flectit,
ut veras imitetur aves. puer Icarus una
stabat et, ignarus sua se tractare pericla,
ore renidenti modo, quas vaga moverat aura,
captabat plumas, flavam modo pollice ceram
mollibat lusuque suo mirabile patris
impediebat opus. postquam manus ultima coepto
inposita est, geminas opifex libravit in alas

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Daedalus, most famous for the skill of his craft, sets up the work and confuses the signs and leads sight into error by the wandering of varied passages - not otherwise than liquid Maeander plays in the Phrygian fields and with ambiguous flow both flows back and flows forward, meeting itself and looking at its coming waves, and now turned toward its sources, now toward the open sea, exercises its uncertain waters. So Daedalus fills countless paths with error, and he himself was scarcely able to return to the threshold: such is the deception of the building.

After he shut in there the twin form of bull and youth, and the monster twice fed on Attic blood, the third lot, repeated after nine years, subdued it, and when the difficult door, never retraced by any before, was found by virgin help with thread left behind, immediately the son of Aegeus, seizing the Minoan daughter, set sail for Dia, and cruel on that shore he abandoned his companion. To the deserted one complaining much, Liber brought embraces and help, and so that she would be famous with an eternal star, he took the crown from her forehead and sent it to heaven. It flies through the thin air, and while it flies, the gems are turned into shining fires and take their place with the appearance of a crown remaining, which is between the Kneeler and the one holding the Snake.

Daedalus and Icarus

Meanwhile Daedalus, hating Crete and his long exile and touched by love of his native place, was shut in by the sea. "Though he blocks lands and waves," he said, "yet surely the sky lies open: we'll go that way. Though Minos possesses all, he doesn't possess the air." He spoke and turns his mind to unknown arts and changes nature. For he arranges feathers in order, beginning from the smallest, with shorter following longer, so you'd think they grew on a slope: thus a rustic pipe once rises gradually from unequal reeds. Then he binds the middle ones with thread and the lowest with wax and, arranged thus, he bends them with a slight curve to imitate real birds.

The boy Icarus stood beside him and, unaware he was handling his own danger, with smiling face was now catching feathers that the wandering breeze had moved, now softening yellow wax with his thumb,

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ipse suum corpus motaque pependit in aura;
instruit et natum 'medio' que 'ut limite curras,
Icare,' ait 'moneo, ne, si demissior ibis,
unda gravet pennas, si celsior, ignis adurat:
inter utrumque vola. nec te spectare Booten
aut Helicen iubeo strictumque Orionis ensem:
me duce carpe viam!' pariter praecepta volandi
tradit et ignotas umeris accommodat alas.
inter opus monitusque genae maduere seniles,
et patriae tremuere manus; dedit oscula nato
non iterum repetenda suo pennisque levatus
ante volat comitique timet, velut ales, ab alto
quae teneram prolem produxit in aera nido,
hortaturque sequi damnosasque erudit artes
et movet ipse suas et nati respicit alas.
hos aliquis tremula dum captat harundine pisces,
aut pastor baculo stivave innixus arator
vidit et obstipuit, quique aethera carpere possent,
credidit esse deos. et iam Iunonia laeva
parte Samos (fuerant Delosque Parosque relictae)
dextra Lebinthos erat fecundaque melle Calymne,
cum puer audaci coepit gaudere volatu
deseruitque ducem caelique cupidine tractus
altius egit iter. rapidi vicinia solis
mollit odoratas, pennarum vincula, ceras;
tabuerant cerae: nudos quatit ille lacertos,
remigioque carens non ullas percipit auras,
oraque caerulea patrium clamantia nomen
excipiuntur aqua, quae nomen traxit ab illo.
at pater infelix, nec iam pater, 'Icare,' dixit,
'Icare,' dixit 'ubi es? qua te regione requiram?'
'Icare' dicebat: pennas aspexit in undis
devovitque suas artes corpusque sepulcro
condidit, et tellus a nomine dicta sepulti.
Hunc miseri tumulo ponentem corpora nati
garrula limoso prospexit ab elice perdix
et plausit pennis testataque gaudia cantu est,
unica tunc volucris nec visa prioribus annis,
factaque nuper avis longum tibi, Daedale, crimen.
namque huic tradiderat, fatorum ignara, docendam

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and with his play was impeding his father's marvelous work. After the final hand was placed on the undertaking, the craftsman balanced his own body on twin wings and hung poised in the stirred air. He instructs his son too: "I warn you to fly in the middle course, Icarus," he says, "lest, if you go too low, the wave weigh down your wings, or if too high, the fire burn them. Fly between both. And I don't order you to look at Boötes or Helice or Orion's drawn sword: take your path with me as guide!"

At the same time he hands over the rules of flying and fits the unfamiliar wings to his shoulders. Amid the work and warnings the old man's cheeks grew wet, and his father's hands trembled. He gave kisses to his son not to be taken again, and lifted on wings, he flies ahead and fears for his companion, like a bird from on high that has led its tender offspring from the nest into the air, and urges him to follow and teaches the dangerous arts and moves his own wings and looks back at his son's wings.

Someone catching fish with trembling reed, or a shepherd leaning on his staff, or a plowman on his plow saw them and was astonished and believed those who could travel through the air were gods. And now Juno's Samos was on the left (Delos and Paros had been left behind), and Lebinthos was on the right and Calymne fertile in honey, when the boy began to rejoice in bold flight and deserted his guide and, drawn by desire for heaven, drove his course higher. The nearness of the swift sun softened the fragrant wax, the bindings of his feathers. The wax melted. He shakes his bare arms, and lacking oarage, he catches no air, and his mouth, crying out his father's name, is seized by the blue water, which took its name from him.

But his father, unhappy, and now no longer a father, said "Icarus," said "Icarus, where are you? In what region shall I seek you?" "Icarus," he was saying - and he saw feathers in the waves. He cursed his arts and placed the body in a tomb, and the land is called from the name of the buried one.

The Partridge

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progeniem germana suam, natalibus actis
bis puerum senis, animi ad praecepta capacis;
ille etiam medio spinas in pisce notatas
traxit in exemplum ferroque incidit acuto
perpetuos dentes et serrae repperit usum;
primus et ex uno duo ferrea bracchia nodo
vinxit, ut aequali spatio distantibus illis
altera pars staret, pars altera duceret orbem.
Daedalus invidit sacraque ex arce Minervae
praecipitem misit, lapsum mentitus; at illum,
quae favet ingeniis, excepit Pallas avemque
reddidit et medio velavit in aere pennis,
sed vigor ingenii quondam velocis in alas
inque pedes abiit; nomen, quod et ante, remansit.
non tamen haec alte volucris sua corpora tollit,
nec facit in ramis altoque cacumine nidos:
propter humum volitat ponitque in saepibus ova
antiquique memor metuit sublimia casus.
Iamque fatigatum tellus Aetnaea tenebat
Daedalon, et sumptis pro supplice Cocalus armis
mitis habebatur; iam lamentabile Athenae
pendere desierant Thesea laude tributum:
templa coronantur, bellatricemque Minervam
cum Iove disque vocant aliis, quos sanguine voto
muneribusque datis et acerris turis honorant;
sparserat Argolicas nomen vaga fama per urbes
Theseos, et populi, quos dives Achaia cepit,
huius opem magnis inploravere periclis,
huius opem Calydon, quamvis Meleagron haberet,
sollicita supplex petiit prece: causa petendi
sus erat, infestae famulus vindexque Dianae.
Oenea namque ferunt pleni successibus anni
primitias frugum Cereri, sua vina Lyaeo,
Palladios flavae latices libasse Minervae;
coeptus ab agricolis superos pervenit ad omnes
ambitiosus honor: solas sine ture relictas
praeteritae cessasse ferunt Latoidos aras.
tangit et ira deos. 'at non inpune feremus,
quaeque inhonoratae, non et dicemur inultae'
inquit, et Olenios ultorem spreta per agros

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As he was placing his wretched son's body in the tomb, a chattering partridge looked out from a muddy hollow and beat its wings and showed joy in song, a unique bird then and not seen in earlier years. Made a bird recently, Daedalus, a long reproach to you. For his sister had handed over her offspring to him for teaching, unaware of the fates - a boy twelve years old, of a mind capable of instruction. He even noticed the spine in the middle of a fish, took it as a model and cut perpetual teeth in sharp iron and discovered the use of the saw. He was also first to bind two iron arms from a single joint, so that with them set at equal distance, one part would stand still, the other would trace a circle.

Daedalus envied him and threw him headlong from the sacred citadel of Minerva, lying that he fell. But Pallas, who favors talent, caught him and made him a bird and covered him with wings in mid-air. But the vigor of his once-swift mind passed into his wings and feet. The name he had before remained. Yet this bird doesn't lift its body high, nor does it make nests in branches and lofty treetops. It flits near the ground and lays eggs in hedges, and mindful of its ancient fall, it fears high places.

Theseus and Athens

And now the Aetnaean land held weary Daedalus, and Cocalus, taking up arms on behalf of the suppliant, was considered mild. And now Athens had ceased to pay the lamentable tribute, thanks to Theseus' glory. The temples are garlanded, and they invoke warlike Minerva along with Jupiter and the other gods, whom they honor with vowed blood and given gifts and heaps of incense. Spreading fame had scattered Theseus' name through Argolic cities, and the peoples that rich Achaia held implored his help in great dangers. Calydon, though it had Meleager, with anxious prayer begged his help as a suppliant. The cause of the begging was a boar, servant and avenger of hostile Diana.

The Calydonian Boar

For they tell that Oeneus, in a year full of success, offered first fruits of grain to Ceres, his wine to Lyaeus, and the yellow liquid of Pallas to fair Minerva. The ambitious honor begun by farmers reached

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misit aprum, quanto maiores herbida tauros
non habet Epiros, sed habent Sicula arva minores:
sanguine et igne micant oculi, riget horrida cervix,
et setae similes rigidis hastilibus horrent:
fervida cum rauco latos stridore per armos
spuma fluit, dentes aequantur dentibus Indis,
fulmen ab ore venit, frondes afflatibus ardent.
is modo crescentes segetes proculcat in herba,
nunc matura metit fleturi vota coloni
et Cererem in spicis intercipit: area frustra
et frustra exspectant promissas horrea messes.
sternuntur gravidi longo cum palmite fetus
bacaque cum ramis semper frondentis olivae.
saevit et in pecudes: non has pastorve canisve,
non armenta truces possunt defendere tauri.
diffugiunt populi nec se nisi moenibus urbis
esse putant tutos, donec Meleagros et una
lecta manus iuvenum coiere cupidine laudis:
Tyndaridae gemini, praestantes caestibus alter,
alter equo, primaeque ratis molitor Iason,
et cum Pirithoo, felix concordia, Theseus,
et duo Thestiadae prolesque Aphareia, Lynceus
et velox Idas, et iam non femina Caeneus,
Leucippusque ferox iaculoque insignis Acastus
Hippothousque Dryasque et cretus Amyntore Phoenix
Actoridaeque pares et missus ab Elide Phyleus.
nec Telamon aberat magnique creator Achillis
cumque Pheretiade et Hyanteo Iolao
inpiger Eurytion et cursu invictus Echion
Naryciusque Lelex Panopeusque Hyleusque feroxque
Hippasus et primis etiamnum Nestor in annis,
et quos Hippocoon antiquis misit Amyclis,
Penelopaeque socer cum Parrhasio Ancaeo,
Ampycidesque sagax et adhuc a coniuge tutus
Oeclides nemorisque decus Tegeaea Lycaei:
rasilis huic summam mordebat fibula vestem,
crinis erat simplex, nodum conlectus in unum,
ex umero pendens resonabat eburnea laevo
telorum custos, arcum quoque laeva tenebat;
talis erat cultu, facies, quam dicere vere

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all the gods above. Only Latona's daughter's altars are said to have been passed over and left without incense. Anger touches even gods. "But we won't endure this unpunished, and though unhonored, we won't be called unavenged either," she said, and angry at being scorned, she sent an avenger through the Olenian fields - a boar as much larger than the grassy bulls of Epirus as bulls of Sicilian fields are smaller. His eyes flashed with blood and fire, his neck was rigid and bristly, and his bristles stood up stiff like rigid spear-shafts. Hot foam flowed with harsh hissing across his broad shoulders, his teeth equaled Indian tusks, lightning came from his mouth, and leaves burned from his breath. Now he tramples the growing crops in the grass, now cuts down the ripe prayers of the weeping farmer and intercepts Ceres in the ears. The threshing floor and granaries await the promised harvests in vain. The heavy fruits are laid low with their long vines, and berries with branches of the ever-leafed olive. He rages also against flocks: neither shepherd nor dog nor fierce bulls can defend the herds. The people flee and don't think themselves safe except in the city's walls, until Meleager and a chosen band of youths came together with desire for glory.

The Heroes Gather

The twin Tyndarids, one outstanding in boxing, the other with horses, and Jason, builder of the first ship, and Theseus with Pirithous, a blessed partnership, and the two sons of Thestius and Aphareus' offspring, Lynceus and swift Idas, and Caeneus, now no longer a woman, and fierce Leucippus and Acastus distinguished with javelin, and Hippothous and Dryas and Phoenix, son of Amyntor, and the twin sons of Actor and Phyleus sent from Elis. Telamon wasn't absent either, nor the creator of great Achilles, along with Pheretias' son and Hyantean Iolaus, tireless Eurytion and Echion unconquered in running, and Narycius Lelex and Panopeus and Hyleus and fierce Hippasus and Nestor still in his early years, and those whom Hippocoon sent from ancient Amyclae, and Penelope's father-in-law with Parrhasian Ancaeus, and wise Ampyx's son, and Oecles' son still safe from his wife, and the glory of the Tegean grove of Lycaeus.

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virgineam in puero, puerilem in virgine possis.
hanc pariter vidit, pariter Calydonius heros
optavit renuente deo flammasque latentes
hausit et 'o felix, siquem dignabitur' inquit
'ista virum!' nec plura sinit tempusque pudorque
dicere: maius opus magni certaminis urguet.
Silva frequens trabibus, quam nulla ceciderat aetas,
incipit a plano devexaque prospicit arva:
quo postquam venere viri, pars retia tendunt,
vincula pars adimunt canibus, pars pressa sequuntur
signa pedum, cupiuntque suum reperire periclum.
concava vallis erat, quo se demittere rivi
adsuerant pluvialis aquae; tenet ima lacunae
lenta salix ulvaeque leves iuncique palustres
viminaque et longa parvae sub harundine cannae:
hinc aper excitus medios violentus in hostes
fertur, ut excussis elisi nubibus ignes.
sternitur incursu nemus, et propulsa fragorem
silva dat: exclamant iuvenes praetentaque forti
tela tenent dextra lato vibrantia ferro.
ille ruit spargitque canes, ut quisque furenti
obstat, et obliquo latrantes dissipat ictu.
cuspis Echionio primum contorta lacerto
vana fuit truncoque dedit leve vulnus acerno;
proxima, si nimiis mittentis viribus usa
non foret, in tergo visa est haesura petito:
longius it; auctor teli Pagasaeus Iason.
'Phoebe,' ait Ampycides, 'si te coluique coloque,
da mihi, quod petitur, certo contingere telo!'
qua potuit, precibus deus adnuit: ictus ab illo est,
sed sine vulnere aper: ferrum Diana volanti
abstulerat iaculo; lignum sine acumine venit.
ira feri mota est, nec fulmine lenius arsit:
emicat ex oculis, spirat quoque pectore flamma,
utque volat moles adducto concita nervo,
cum petit aut muros aut plenas milite turres,
in iuvenes certo sic impete vulnificus sus
fertur et Hippalmon Pelagonaque, dextra tuentes
cornua, prosternit: socii rapuere iacentes;
at non letiferos effugit Enaesimus ictus

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A polished clasp held together her top garment. Her hair was simple, gathered in a single knot. From her left shoulder hung an ivory quiver, guardian of her arrows, and her left hand also held a bow. Such was her dress. Her face - which you could truly call girlish in a boy, boyish in a girl. The Calydonian hero saw her and at the same time desired her, though the god refused, and he drank in hidden flames and said: "O blessed, if that woman will deem any man worthy!" Neither time nor shame allowed him to say more: a greater work of a great contest urges him.

The Boar Hunt Begins

There was a forest thick with trees that no age had cut down. It begins from the plain and looks down on sloping fields. After the men came there, some spread nets, some take off the leashes from dogs, some follow the pressed tracks of feet and desire to find their danger.

There was a hollow valley where rainwater streams were accustomed to flow down. The lowest part of the pool held pliant willow and light sedges and marsh rushes and osiers and small reeds under tall cane. From here the boar, roused, rushes violently into the middle of enemies, like lightning struck from clouds. The forest is laid flat by his charge, and the driven wood gives a crash. The young men shout and hold out weapons in strong hands, vibrating with broad iron. He rushes and scatters the dogs as each one opposes his fury, and he disperses the barking pack with slanting blow.

The spear first hurled by Echion's arm was in vain and gave a light wound to a maple trunk. The next, if it hadn't used too much of the sender's strength, seemed likely to stick in the back aimed at: it goes farther. Jason of Pagasae was the author of the weapon. "Phoebus," said Ampyx's son, "if I have worshiped and worship you, grant me to hit what I seek with sure weapon!" As much as he could, the god nodded to his prayers. The boar was struck by him, but without wound: Diana had taken away the iron from the flying javelin. The wood came without point.

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Hippocoonte satus: trepidantem et terga parantem
vertere succiso liquerunt poplite nervi.
forsitan et Pylius citra Troiana perisset
tempora, sed sumpto posita conamine ab hasta
arboris insiluit, quae stabat proxima, ramis
despexitque, loco tutus, quem fugerat, hostem.
dentibus ille ferox in querno stipite tritis
inminet exitio fidensque recentibus armis
Eurytidae magni rostro femur hausit adunco.
at gemini, nondum caelestia sidera, fratres,
ambo conspicui, nive candidioribus ambo
vectabantur equis, ambo vibrata per auras
hastarum tremulo quatiebant spicula motu.
vulnera fecissent, nisi saetiger inter opacas
nec iaculis isset nec equo loca pervia silvas.
persequitur Telamon studioque incautus eundi
pronus ab arborea cecidit radice retentus.
dum levat hunc Peleus, celerem Tegeaea sagittam
inposuit nervo sinuatoque expulit arcu:
fixa sub aure feri summum destrinxit harundo
corpus et exiguo rubefecit sanguine saetas;
nec tamen illa sui successu laetior ictus
quam Meleagros erat: primus vidisse putatur
et primus sociis visum ostendisse cruorem
et 'meritum' dixisse 'feres virtutis honorem.'
erubuere viri seque exhortantur et addunt
cum clamore animos iaciuntque sine ordine tela:
turba nocet iactis et, quos petit, impedit ictus.
ecce furens contra sua fata bipennifer Arcas
'discite, femineis quid tela virilia praestent,
o iuvenes, operique meo concedite!' dixit.
'ipsa suis licet hunc Latonia protegat armis,
invita tamen hunc perimet mea dextra Diana.'
talia magniloquo tumidus memoraverat ore
ancipitemque manu tollens utraque securim
institerat digitis pronos suspensus in ictus:
occupat audentem, quaque est via proxima leto,
summa ferus geminos derexit ad inguina dentes.
concidit Ancaeus glomerataque sanguine multo
viscera lapsa fluunt: madefacta est terra cruore.

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The savage's anger was stirred, and it burned no less than lightning. Fire flashes from his eyes, and flame breathes from his breast too. Just as a mass flies driven by drawn cord when it seeks walls or towers full of soldiers, so with sure impetus the wound-dealing boar rushes at the youths and overthrows Hippalmus and Pelagon, who were guarding the right horn. Their comrades snatched them up as they lay. But Enaesimus, son of Hippocoon, didn't escape lethal blows: as he trembled and prepared to turn his back, his sinews left his cut hamstring failing. Perhaps even the Pylian would have perished before Trojan times, but taking a leap from the effort placed in his spear, he jumped into the branches of a tree that stood nearest and, safe in place, looked down on the enemy he'd fled. The boar, ferocious, grinding his teeth on an oaken stump, looms toward destruction and, confident in his fresh weapons, drank the thigh of great Eurytus' son with hooked snout.

But the twin brothers, not yet celestial stars, both conspicuous, both riding on horses whiter than snow, both were shaking the quivering points of spears vibrated through the air. They would have made wounds if the bristled one hadn't gone among shadowy forests to places passable neither by javelins nor horse. Telamon pursues and, incautious in his eagerness to go, fell flat, held back by a tree root. While Peleus lifts him, the Tegean woman placed a swift arrow on the string and shot it from the bent bow. Fixed under the beast's ear, the arrow grazed the top of his body and reddened the bristles with a little blood. Yet she wasn't more joyful at the success of her shot than Meleager was. He's thought to have been first to see and first to show his companions the blood he'd seen and said: "You'll bear the honor deserved by your courage."

The men blushed and urge themselves on and add spirit with shouts and throw weapons without order. The crowd harms the throws and blocks the blows it seeks. Look - the Arcadian, raging with double ax against his own fates: "Learn, young men, how much manly weapons surpass womanly ones, and yield to my work! Though Latona herself protect him with her weapons, yet my right hand will kill him against Diana's will." Swollen with such boastful words spoken from a big-talking mouth and raising the double ax with both hands, he had stood on tiptoes, suspended for blows. The beast caught the daring

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ibat in adversum proles Ixionis hostem
Pirithous valida quatiens venabula dextra;
cui 'procul' Aegides 'o me mihi carior' inquit
'pars animae consiste meae! licet eminus esse
fortibus: Ancaeo nocuit temeraria virtus.'
dixit et aerata torsit grave cuspide cornum;
quo bene librato votique potente futuro
obstitit aesculea frondosus ab arbore ramus.
misit et Aesonides iaculum: quod casus ab illo
vertit in inmeriti fatum latrantis et inter
ilia coniectum tellure per ilia fixum est.
at manus Oenidae variat, missisque duabus
hasta prior terra, medio stetit altera tergo.
nec mora, dum saevit, dum corpora versat in orbem
stridentemque novo spumam cum sanguine fundit,
vulneris auctor adest hostemque inritat ad iram
splendidaque adversos venabula condit in armos.
gaudia testantur socii clamore secundo
victricemque petunt dextrae coniungere dextram
inmanemque ferum multa tellure iacentem
mirantes spectant neque adhuc contingere tutum
esse putant, sed tela tamen sua quisque cruentat.
Ipse pede inposito caput exitiabile pressit
atque ita 'sume mei spolium, Nonacria, iuris,'
dixit 'et in partem veniat mea gloria tecum.'
protinus exuvias rigidis horrentia saetis
terga dat et magnis insignia dentibus ora.
illi laetitiae est cum munere muneris auctor;
invidere alii, totoque erat agmine murmur.
e quibus ingenti tendentes bracchia voce
'pone age nec titulos intercipe, femina, nostros,'
Thestiadae clamant, 'nec te fiducia formae
decipiat, ne sit longe tibi captus amore
auctor,' et huic adimunt munus, ius muneris illi.
non tulit et tumida frendens Mavortius ira
'discite, raptores alieni' dixit 'honoris,
facta minis quantum distent,' hausitque nefando
pectora Plexippi nil tale timentia ferro.
Toxea, quid faciat, dubium pariterque volentem
ulcisci fratrem fraternaque fata timentem

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one and, where the path to death is nearest, drove his twin tusks into the top of his groin. Ancaeus fell and his coiled intestines slipped out, bathed in much blood. The earth was soaked with gore.

Pirithous, offspring of Ixion, was going toward the enemy foe, shaking his hunting spears in strong hand. To him the son of Aegeus said: "Stay, far off, O you who are dearer to me than myself, part of my soul! The brave may be at a distance. Rash courage harmed Ancaeus." He spoke and hurled the heavy cornel with bronze point, well balanced and capable of achieving his prayer - but a leafy branch from an oak tree blocked the way.

The son of Aeson also threw a javelin, which chance turned from him to the fate of an innocent barking dog and, hurled between the flanks, it was fixed through the flanks to the earth. But the hand of Oeneus' son varies: of two thrown, the first spear stood in the earth, the second in the middle of his back. And without delay, while he rages, while he turns his body in circles and pours out hissing foam with fresh blood, the author of the wound is present and provokes the enemy to anger and buries the shining hunting spear in his opposing shoulder.

His companions show their joy with approving shout and seek to join right hand to victorious right hand. They gaze marveling at the huge beast lying over much earth, and still they don't think it safe to touch him, but nevertheless each one stains his own weapon with blood.

The Gift and the Murder

He himself, placing his foot on the deadly head, said: "Take the spoil of my right, Nonacrian woman, and let my glory come into part with you." Immediately he gave the hide bristling with stiff bristles and the jaws distinguished with great tusks. She has joy both in the gift and the giver of the gift. The others envied, and there was a murmur through the whole band. From them the sons of Thestius, stretching out their arms with loud voice, shout: "Come, put them down, woman, and don't intercept our honors, and don't let confidence in your beauty deceive you, lest the author captivated by love be far from you," and they take away the gift from her, the right of the gift from him.

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haud patitur dubitare diu calidumque priori
caede recalfecit consorti sanguine telum.
Dona deum templis nato victore ferebat,
cum videt exstinctos fratres Althaea referri.
quae plangore dato maestis clamoribus urbem
inplet et auratis mutavit vestibus atras;
at simul est auctor necis editus, excidit omnis
luctus et a lacrimis in poenae versus amorem est.
Stipes erat, quem, cum partus enixa iaceret
Thestias, in flammam triplices posuere sorores
staminaque inpresso fatalia pollice nentes
'tempora' dixerunt 'eadem lignoque tibique,
o modo nate, damus.' quo postquam carmine dicto
excessere deae, flagrantem mater ab igne
eripuit ramum sparsitque liquentibus undis.
ille diu fuerat penetralibus abditus imis
servatusque tuos, iuvenis, servaverat annos.
protulit hunc genetrix taedasque et fragmina poni
imperat et positis inimicos admovet ignes.
tum conata quater flammis inponere ramum
coepta quater tenuit: pugnat materque sororque,
et diversa trahunt unum duo nomina pectus.
saepe metu sceleris pallebant ora futuri,
saepe suum fervens oculis dabat ira ruborem,
et modo nescio quid similis crudele minanti
vultus erat, modo quem misereri credere posses;
cumque ferus lacrimas animi siccaverat ardor,
inveniebantur lacrimae tamen, utque carina,
quam ventus ventoque rapit contrarius aestus,
vim geminam sentit paretque incerta duobus,
Thestias haud aliter dubiis affectibus errat
inque vices ponit positamque resuscitat iram.
incipit esse tamen melior germana parente
et consanguineas ut sanguine leniat umbras,
inpietate pia est. nam postquam pestifer ignis
convaluit, 'rogus iste cremet mea viscera' dixit,
utque manu dira lignum fatale tenebat,
ante sepulcrales infelix adstitit aras
'poenarum' que 'deae triplices, furialibus,' inquit
'Eumenides, sacris vultus advertite vestros!

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Mavortius didn't endure it and, gnashing with swollen anger, said: "Learn, robbers of another's honor, how much deeds differ from threats," and he drained the chest of Plexippus, fearing no such thing, with wicked sword. Toxeus, doubtful what to do, and at once wanting to avenge his brother and fearing his brother's fate, he doesn't let him doubt for long and reheated the blade, warm from the earlier slaughter, with his partner's blood.

Althaea's Revenge

Althaea was bringing gifts to the temples for her victorious son when she sees her dead brothers carried back. She fills the city with lamentations and mournful shouts and changed her golden clothes for black. But as soon as the author of the death was announced, all grief fell away and was turned from tears to love of punishment.

There was a log which, when Thestian woman lay in childbirth, the three sisters placed in the flame and, spinning the fateful threads with pressed thumb, said: "We give the same time to this wood and to you, O just now born." After the goddesses departed with this song spoken, the mother snatched the burning branch from the fire and sprinkled it with flowing waters. That had long been hidden in the innermost recesses and, kept safe, had kept safe your years, young man. The mother brought it out and orders torches and kindling to be placed, and when placed, she brings hostile fires near. Then four times she tried to place the branch on the flames, four times she held back from what she'd begun. Mother and sister fight, and two names pull one heart in different ways. Often her face grew pale with fear of the future crime, often her fierce anger gave redness to her eyes, and now her expression was somehow cruel and threatening, now one you could believe felt pity. And when fierce passion of her spirit had dried her tears, tears were found nevertheless.

Just as a ship which wind and current contrary to the wind seize feels double force and, uncertain, obeys both, so Thestias wavers with doubtful feelings and in turns lays aside and revives her laid-aside anger. Yet she begins to be better as sister than as parent, and so that she may soothe the bloodied shades with

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ulciscor facioque nefas; mors morte pianda est,
in scelus addendum scelus est, in funera funus:
per coacervatos pereat domus inpia luctus!
an felix Oeneus nato victore fruetur,
Thestius orbus erit? melius lugebitis ambo.
vos modo, fraterni manes animaeque recentes,
officium sentite meum magnoque paratas
accipite inferias, uteri mala pignora nostri!
ei mihi! quo rapior? fratres, ignoscite matri!
deficiunt ad coepta manus: meruisse fatemur
illum, cur pereat; mortis mihi displicet auctor.
ergo inpune feret vivusque et victor et ipso
successu tumidus regnum Calydonis habebit,
vos cinis exiguus gelidaeque iacebitis umbrae?
haud equidem patiar: pereat sceleratus et ille
spemque patris regnumque trahat patriaeque ruinam!
mens ubi materna est? ubi sunt pia iura parentum
et quos sustinui bis mensum quinque labores?
o utinam primis arsisses ignibus infans,
idque ego passa forem! vixisti munere nostro;
nunc merito moriere tuo! cape praemia facti
bisque datam, primum partu, mox stipite rapto,
redde animam vel me fraternis adde sepulcris!
et cupio et nequeo. quid agam? modo vulnera fratrum
ante oculos mihi sunt et tantae caedis imago,
nunc animum pietas maternaque nomina frangunt.
me miseram! male vincetis, sed vincite, fratres,
dummodo, quae dedero vobis, solacia vosque
ipsa sequar!' dixit dextraque aversa trementi
funereum torrem medios coniecit in ignes:
aut dedit aut visus gemitus est ipse dedisse
stipes, ut invitis conreptus ab ignibus arsit.
Inscius atque absens flamma Meleagros ab illa
uritur et caecis torreri viscera sentit
ignibus ac magnos superat virtute dolores.
quod tamen ignavo cadat et sine sanguine leto,
maeret et Ancaei felicia vulnera dicit
grandaevumque patrem fratresque piasque sorores
cum gemitu sociamque tori vocat ore supremo,
forsitan et matrem. crescunt ignisque dolorque

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blood, she's pious in impiety. For after the pestilent fire grew strong, she said: "Let this pyre burn my own flesh." And as with dire hand she held the fateful wood, the unhappy woman stood before the funeral altars and said: "Triple goddesses of punishments, Eumenides, turn your faces to these Fury-rites! I avenge and commit wrong. Death must be atoned by death, crime must be added to crime, funeral to funeral. Let the impious house perish through heaped griefs! Or shall happy Oeneus enjoy his victorious son, and Thestius be childless? Better you both will grieve. You only, brotherly shades and fresh souls, feel my duty and accept the offerings prepared for you at great cost, evil pledges of our womb! Alas, where am I carried? Brothers, forgive a mother! My hands fail at what they've begun. I confess he deserved why he should die. The author of death displeases me.

"So shall he go unpunished and alive and victorious and swollen with success itself will hold the kingdom of Calydon, while you lie as scanty ash and cold shades? I certainly won't endure it. Let the criminal perish, and let him drag down his father's hope and kingdom and his homeland's ruin! Where is a mother's mind? Where are the dutiful rights of parents and the labors I endured for twice five months? O would that you had burned in those first fires as an infant, and I had allowed it! You lived by my gift. Now you'll die by your own desert. Take the reward of your deed, and give back the life given twice, first at birth, then when the log was seized, or add me to my brothers' tombs! I both desire and cannot. What shall I do? Now the wounds of my brothers are before my eyes and the image of such great slaughter, now piety and a mother's names break my spirit. Woe is me! You'll badly win, but win, brothers - provided that I follow you, having given you the solace I'll give!"

She spoke and with averted hand, trembling, she threw the deadly brand into the middle of the fires. The log either gave or seemed to give groans as it was seized and burned by unwilling flames.

Meleager's Death

Unaware and absent, Meleager is burned by that flame and feels his entrails scorched by unseen fires, and he overcomes great pains with courage. Yet that he falls by an inglorious death without blood, he

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languescuntque iterum; simul est exstinctus uterque,
inque leves abiit paulatim spiritus auras
paulatim cana prunam velante favilla.
Alta iacet Calydon: lugent iuvenesque senesque,
vulgusque proceresque gemunt, scissaeque capillos
planguntur matres Calydonides Eueninae;
pulvere canitiem genitor vultusque seniles
foedat humi fusus spatiosumque increpat aevum.
nam de matre manus diri sibi conscia facti
exegit poenas acto per viscera ferro.
non mihi si centum deus ora sonantia linguis
ingeniumque capax totumque Helicona dedisset,
tristia persequerer miserarum fata sororum.
inmemores decoris liventia pectora tundunt,
dumque manet corpus, corpus refoventque foventque,
oscula dant ipsi, posito dant oscula lecto.
post cinerem cineres haustos ad pectora pressant
adfusaeque iacent tumulo signataque saxo
nomina conplexae lacrimas in nomina fundunt.
quas Parthaoniae tandem Latonia clade
exsatiata domus praeter Gorgenque nurumque
nobilis Alcmenae natis in corpore pennis
adlevat et longas per bracchia porrigit alas
corneaque ora facit versasque per aera mittit.
Interea Theseus sociati parte laboris
functus Erectheas Tritonidos ibat ad arces.
clausit iter fecitque moras Achelous eunti
imbre tumens: 'succede meis,' ait 'inclite, tectis,
Cecropide, nec te committe rapacibus undis:
ferre trabes solidas obliquaque volvere magno
murmure saxa solent. vidi contermina ripae
cum gregibus stabula alta trahi; nec fortibus illic
profuit armentis nec equis velocibus esse.
multa quoque hic torrens nivibus de monte solutis
corpora turbineo iuvenalia vertice mersit.
tutior est requies, solito dum flumina currant
limite, dum tenues capiat suus alveus undas.'
adnuit Aegides 'utar,' que 'Acheloe, domoque
consilioque tuo' respondit; et usus utroque est.
pumice multicavo nec levibus atria tophis

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grieves, and calls Ancaeus' wounds happy, and with groaning calls on his aged father and brothers and dutiful sisters and his marriage partner with dying voice - perhaps his mother too. The fire and pain increase and languish again. Both are extinguished at once, and gradually his spirit passed into light airs as gradually gray ash covered the coals.

Tall Calydon lies low. Young and old lament, common folk and nobles groan, and the Calydonian mothers of Evenus, hair torn, beat their breasts. His father fouls his gray hair and aged face with dust, stretched on the ground, and reproaches his long age. For the mother, her hand conscious of the dire deed, exacted punishment on herself with blade driven through her vitals. Not if a god gave me a hundred sounding mouths with tongues and all capacity and all Helicon, could I pursue the sad fates of the wretched sisters. Unmindful of decorum, they beat their bruised breasts, and while the body remains, they warm and cherish the body again and again. They give kisses to him himself, give kisses to the bed where he's laid. After the ashes, they press the gathered ashes to their breasts and lie poured over the tomb and, embracing the name marked on stone, pour tears on the name.

These, finally - when Latona was sated with the destruction of Parthaon's house, except Gorge and the wife of noble Alcmena - she raises on wings placed on their bodies and stretches long pinions through their arms and makes their mouths horny and sends them changed through the air.

Theseus at Achelous' Palace

Meanwhile Theseus, having performed his part of the shared labor, was going to the Tritonian citadel of Erechtheus. Achelous blocked his way and made delays for the traveler, swollen with rain: "Come under my roof, famous son of Cecrops," he said, "and don't entrust yourself to the greedy waves. They're accustomed to carry solid beams and roll stones obliquely with great roar. I've seen tall stables near the bank dragged away with flocks. Neither strength helped the herds there, nor speed the horses. This torrent has also drowned many youthful bodies in its swirling eddy when the snows melted from the mountain. Rest is safer until the rivers run in their usual channel, until their own channel holds the

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structa subit: molli tellus erat umida musco,
summa lacunabant alterno murice conchae.
iamque duas lucis partes Hyperione menso
discubuere toris Theseus comitesque laborum,
hac Ixionides, illa Troezenius heros
parte Lelex, raris iam sparsus tempora canis,
quosque alios parili fuerat dignatus honore
Amnis Acarnanum, laetissimus hospite tanto.
protinus adpositas nudae vestigia nymphae
instruxere epulis mensas dapibusque remotis
in gemma posuere merum. tum maximus heros,
aequora prospiciens oculis subiecta, 'quis' inquit
'ille locus?' (digitoque ostendit) 'et insula nomen
quod gerit illa, doce, quamquam non una videtur!'
Amnis ad haec 'non est' inquit 'quod cernitis unum:
quinque iacent terrae; spatium discrimina fallit.
quoque minus spretae factum mirere Dianae,
naides hae fuerant, quae cum bis quinque iuvencos
mactassent rurisque deos ad sacra vocassent,
inmemores nostri festas duxere choreas.
intumui, quantusque feror, cum plurimus umquam,
tantus eram, pariterque animis inmanis et undis
a silvis silvas et ab arvis arva revelli
cumque loco nymphas, memores tum denique nostri,
in freta provolvi. fluctus nosterque marisque
continuam diduxit humum partesque resolvit
in totidem, mediis quot cernis Echinadas undis.
ut tamen ipse vides, procul, en procul una recessit
insula, grata mihi; Perimelen navita dicit:
huic ego virgineum dilectae nomen ademi;
quod pater Hippodamas aegre tulit inque profundum
propulit e scopulo periturae corpora natae.
excepi nantemque ferens "o proxima mundi
regna vagae" dixi "sortite, Tridentifer, undae,
adfer opem, mersaeque, precor, feritate paterna
da, Neptune, locum, vel sit locus ipsa licebit!"
dum loquor, amplexa est artus nova terra natantes
et gravis increvit mutatis insula membris.'
Amnis ab his tacuit. factum mirabile cunctos
moverat: inridet credentes, utque deorum

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slender waves."

The son of Aegeus nodded: "I'll use both your house and advice, Achelous," he replied - and he used both. He enters the hall built of porous pumice and rough tufa. The ground was damp with soft moss. The uppermost ceiling was coffered with alternating murex-shell and conch.

And now when Hyperion had measured two parts of daylight, Theseus and his companions in labors reclined on couches - on this side the son of Ixion, on that side the Troezenian hero, and Lelex, his temples now sprinkled with scattered gray hairs, and others whom the river of Acarnanians had honored with equal honor, most joyful at such a great guest. Immediately bare-footed nymphs set tables and furnished them with feasts, and with dishes removed, placed wine in a gem-studded cup.

The Story of the Echinades

Then the greatest hero, looking with his eyes at the waters below, said: "What is that place?" (and he pointed with his finger) "And teach me what name that island bears - though it doesn't seem to be just one!" The river said to these words: "What you see is not one thing. Five lands lie there - distance deceives discrimination. And so you may less wonder at the deed done when Diana was scorned, these were Naiads who, when they had sacrificed twice ten bullocks and called the rural gods to the rites, drew festive dances, forgetful of me. I swelled, as great as I'm ever carried when most full, and huge equally in spirit and waters, I tore forests from forests and fields from fields and rolled the nymphs with their place - mindful of me then at last - into the straits. My wave and the sea's divided the continuous land and broke it into as many parts as you see Echinades in the middle waves.

"But as you yourself see, look - far off, far off, one island withdrew, dear to me. Sailors call her Perimele. Her I took away her virgin name, having loved her, which her father Hippodamas bore badly and thrust the body of his daughter about to die from a cliff into the deep. I caught her as she swam and bearing her said: 'O you who are allotted the realms nearest the world, Trident-bearer, of the wandering wave, bring help and - I pray - give place to one drowned by a father's savagery, Neptune, or let her be a place

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spretor erat mentisque ferox, Ixione natus
'ficta refers nimiumque putas, Acheloe, potentes
esse deos,' dixit 'si dant adimuntque figuras.'
obstipuere omnes nec talia dicta probarunt,
ante omnesque Lelex animo maturus et aevo,
sic ait: 'inmensa est finemque potentia caeli
non habet, et quicquid superi voluere, peractum est,
quoque minus dubites, tiliae contermina quercus
collibus est Phrygiis modico circumdata muro;
ipse locum vidi; nam me Pelopeia Pittheus
misit in arva suo quondam regnata parenti.
haud procul hinc stagnum est, tellus habitabilis olim,
nunc celebres mergis fulicisque palustribus undae;
Iuppiter huc specie mortali cumque parente
venit Atlantiades positis caducifer alis.
mille domos adiere locum requiemque petentes,
mille domos clausere serae; tamen una recepit,
parva quidem, stipulis et canna tecta palustri,
sed pia Baucis anus parilique aetate Philemon
illa sunt annis iuncti iuvenalibus, illa
consenuere casa paupertatemque fatendo
effecere levem nec iniqua mente ferendo;
nec refert, dominos illic famulosne requiras:
tota domus duo sunt, idem parentque iubentque.
ergo ubi caelicolae parvos tetigere penates
summissoque humiles intrarunt vertice postes,
membra senex posito iussit relevare sedili;
cui superiniecit textum rude sedula Baucis
inque foco tepidum cinerem dimovit et ignes
suscitat hesternos foliisque et cortice sicco
nutrit et ad flammas anima producit anili
multifidasque faces ramaliaque arida tecto
detulit et minuit parvoque admovit aeno,
quodque suus coniunx riguo conlegerat horto,
truncat holus foliis; furca levat ille bicorni
sordida terga suis nigro pendentia tigno
servatoque diu resecat de tergore partem
exiguam sectamque domat ferventibus undis.
interea medias fallunt sermonibus horas
concutiuntque torum de molli fluminis ulva

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herself!' While I speak, new land embraced her swimming limbs and the island grew heavy with changed members."

The river fell silent from these words. The wonderful deed had moved everyone. He laughs at those who believe, and as he was a scorner of gods and fierce in mind, the son of Ixion said: "You tell fictions and think the gods too powerful, Achelous, if they give and take away forms."

All were astonished and didn't approve such words, and before all Lelex, mature in mind and years, spoke thus: "Immense is heaven's power and has no limit, and whatever the gods above have willed is accomplished.

Philemon and Baucis

"And so you may doubt less: there's an oak neighboring a linden on Phrygian hills, surrounded by a modest wall. I myself saw the place, for Pittheus sent me to the fields once ruled by his father Pelops. Not far from here is a pool, once habitable land, now waters frequented by mergansers and marsh coots. Jupiter came here in mortal form, and with his parent came the Atlantiad, bearer of the caduceus, wings laid aside. They approached a thousand houses seeking rest and a place to stay. A thousand houses were closed by bars. Yet one received them, small indeed, roofed with thatch and marsh reed, but dutiful Baucis and Philemon of equal age were joined in that cottage in youthful years. They grew old in that cottage and made poverty light by confessing it and bearing it with a not-complaining mind. Nor does it matter whether you seek masters or servants there: the whole house is two people - the same ones obey and command.

"So when the heaven-dwellers touched the humble household gods and entered the low doorpost with lowered head, the old man ordered them to rest their limbs on a seat placed out, over which busy Baucis threw a rough cloth. She stirred the warm ash on the hearth and revived yesterday's fires and nourished them with leaves and dry bark and brought them to flame with an old woman's breath, and she brought down split kindling and dry twigs from the roof and broke them small and brought them near the small

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inpositum lecto sponda pedibusque salignis.
vestibus hunc velant, quas non nisi tempore festo
sternere consuerant, sed et haec vilisque vetusque
vestis erat, lecto non indignanda saligno.
adcubuere dei. mensam succincta tremensque
ponit anus, mensae sed erat pes tertius inpar:
testa parem fecit; quae postquam subdita clivum
sustulit, aequatam mentae tersere virentes.
ponitur hic bicolor sincerae baca Minervae
conditaque in liquida corna autumnalia faece
intibaque et radix et lactis massa coacti
ovaque non acri leviter versata favilla,
omnia fictilibus. post haec caelatus eodem
sistitur argento crater fabricataque fago
pocula, qua cava sunt, flaventibus inlita ceris;
parva mora est, epulasque foci misere calentes,
nec longae rursus referuntur vina senectae
dantque locum mensis paulum seducta secundis:
hic nux, hic mixta est rugosis carica palmis
prunaque et in patulis redolentia mala canistris
et de purpureis conlectae vitibus uvae,
candidus in medio favus est; super omnia vultus
accessere boni nec iners pauperque voluntas.
'Interea totiens haustum cratera repleri
sponte sua per seque vident succrescere vina:
attoniti novitate pavent manibusque supinis
concipiunt Baucisque preces timidusque Philemon
et veniam dapibus nullisque paratibus orant.
unicus anser erat, minimae custodia villae:
quem dis hospitibus domini mactare parabant;
ille celer penna tardos aetate fatigat
eluditque diu tandemque est visus ad ipsos
confugisse deos: superi vetuere necari
"di" que "sumus, meritasque luet vicinia poenas
inpia" dixerunt; "vobis inmunibus huius
esse mali dabitur; modo vestra relinquite tecta
ac nostros comitate gradus et in ardua montis
ite simul!" parent ambo baculisque levati
nituntur longo vestigia ponere clivo.
tantum aberant summo, quantum semel ire sagitta

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bronze pot, and she stripped the leaves from vegetables that her husband had gathered from the watered garden. He with two-pronged fork lifts down a dirty chine hanging from the black beam, long saved, and cut a small part from the chine and softened the cut piece in boiling waters.

"Meanwhile they beguile the middle hours with conversation and shake a mattress of soft river sedge placed on a couch with willow frame and feet. They cover this with fabrics they weren't accustomed to spread except at festival time - but even this was cheap and old cloth, not unworthy of the willow couch. The gods reclined. The old woman, girded and trembling, sets the table - but one leg of the table was unequal: a potsherd made it level. After this, placed beneath, lifted the slope, green mint wiped it level. Here are placed the two-colored berries of sincere Minerva and autumn cornels preserved in liquid lees and endive and radish and a mass of curdled milk and eggs lightly turned in gentle ash - all in clay dishes. After this a crater is set, engraved in the same silver, and cups made of beech, whose hollow parts are coated with yellow wax. A small delay, and the hearth sent hot food, and wine of no great age is brought back again and, moved a little aside, gives place to the second course. Here's a nut, here a fig mixed with wrinkled dates and plums and fragrant apples in wide baskets and grapes gathered from purple vines. In the middle is a white honeycomb. Above all, friendly faces joined them, and a spirit neither inactive nor poor.

The Miracle and Transformation

"Meanwhile they see the crater, as often as it's emptied, refill of its own accord and wine increase by itself. Astonished by the strangeness, they're afraid and with upturned hands, Baucis and timid Philemon conceive prayers and beg pardon for the meal and their lack of preparations. They had one goose, guardian of their tiny farm, which the masters were preparing to sacrifice for their divine guests. Swift on wing, it wearies them, slow with age, and eludes them for a long time and finally seems to have taken refuge with the gods themselves. The gods forbade it to be killed and said: 'We are gods, and the impious neighborhood will pay deserved punishment. It will be granted to you to be immune from this

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missa potest: flexere oculos et mersa palude
cetera prospiciunt, tantum sua tecta manere,
dumque ea mirantur, dum deflent fata suorum,
illa vetus dominis etiam casa parva duobus
vertitur in templum: furcas subiere columnae,
stramina flavescunt aurataque tecta videntur
caelataeque fores adopertaque marmore tellus.
talia tum placido Saturnius edidit ore:
"dicite, iuste senex et femina coniuge iusto
digna, quid optetis." cum Baucide pauca locutus
iudicium superis aperit commune Philemon:
"esse sacerdotes delubraque vestra tueri
poscimus, et quoniam concordes egimus annos,
auferat hora duos eadem, nec coniugis umquam
busta meae videam, neu sim tumulandus ab illa."
vota fides sequitur: templi tutela fuere,
donec vita data est; annis aevoque soluti
ante gradus sacros cum starent forte locique
narrarent casus, frondere Philemona Baucis,
Baucida conspexit senior frondere Philemon.
iamque super geminos crescente cacumine vultus
mutua, dum licuit, reddebant dicta "vale" que
"o coniunx" dixere simul, simul abdita texit
ora frutex: ostendit adhuc Thyneius illic
incola de gemino vicinos corpore truncos.
haec mihi non vani (neque erat, cur fallere vellent)
narravere senes; equidem pendentia vidi
serta super ramos ponensque recentia dixi
"cura deum di sint, et, qui coluere, colantur."'
Desierat, cunctosque et res et moverat auctor,
Thesea praecipue; quem facta audire volentem
mira deum innixus cubito Calydonius amnis
talibus adloquitur: 'sunt, o fortissime, quorum
forma semel mota est et in hoc renovamine mansit;
sunt, quibus in plures ius est transire figuras,
ut tibi, conplexi terram maris incola, Proteu.
nam modo te iuvenem, modo te videre leonem,
nunc violentus aper, nunc, quem tetigisse timerent,
anguis eras, modo te faciebant cornua taurum;
saepe lapis poteras, arbor quoque saepe videri,

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evil. Only leave your home and accompany our steps and go together into the mountain's heights!'

"Both obey and, supported by staffs, they struggle to place their steps on the long slope. They were as far from the summit as an arrow sent once can go. They bent their eyes and see the rest submerged in marsh, only their own house remaining. And while they marvel at this, while they weep the fates of their own people, that old cottage, small even for two masters, is turned into a temple: columns go under the forks, the thatch turns yellow and the roofs seem golden and engraved doors and the ground covered with marble.

"Then the Saturnian spoke with peaceful voice: 'Say, just old man and woman worthy of a just husband, what you wish.' After speaking a little with Baucis, Philemon reveals their common judgment to the gods above: 'We ask to be priests and guard your shrine, and since we've passed harmonious years, may the same hour take both, and may I never see my wife's tomb, nor be buried by her.'

"Faith followed their prayers. They were guardians of the temple as long as life was given. Released by years and age, when they chanced to stand before the sacred steps and were telling the story of the place, Baucis saw Philemon putting forth leaves, old Philemon saw Baucis putting forth leaves. And now as the treetop grew over twin faces, while they could, they gave back mutual words and said at the same time 'Farewell, O spouse,' and at the same time foliage covered their hidden faces. The Bithynian inhabitant there still shows neighboring trunks from the twin body. These things non-lying old men told me (nor was there reason they'd want to deceive). Indeed I saw garlands hanging from the branches and, placing fresh ones, I said: 'Let those cared for by gods be gods, and let those who worshiped be worshiped.'"

Achelous' Transformations

He had finished, and both the things and their author had moved everyone, Theseus especially. When he wanted to hear the marvelous deeds of gods, the Calydonian river, leaning on his elbow, addressed him with such words: "There are some, O bravest one, whose form was changed once and remained in this renewal. There are those who have the right to pass into many forms - like you, Proteus, inhabitant of

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interdum, faciem liquidarum imitatus aquarum,
flumen eras, interdum undis contrarius ignis.
'Nec minus Autolyci coniunx, Erysicthone nata,
iuris habet: pater huius erat, qui numina divum
sperneret et nullos aris adoleret odores;
ille etiam Cereale nemus violasse securi
dicitur et lucos ferro temerasse vetustos.
stabat in his ingens annoso robore quercus,
una nemus; vittae mediam memoresque tabellae
sertaque cingebant, voti argumenta potentum.
saepe sub hac dryades festas duxere choreas,
saepe etiam manibus nexis ex ordine trunci
circuiere modum, mensuraque roboris ulnas
quinque ter inplebat, nec non et cetera tantum
silva sub hac, silva quantum fuit herba sub omni.
non tamen idcirco ferrum Triopeius illa
abstinuit famulosque iubet succidere sacrum
robur, et ut iussos cunctari vidit, ab uno
edidit haec rapta sceleratus verba securi:
"non dilecta deae solum, sed et ipsa licebit
sit dea, iam tanget frondente cacumine terram."
dixit, et obliquos dum telum librat in ictus,
contremuit gemitumque dedit Deoia quercus,
et pariter frondes, pariter pallescere glandes
coepere ac longi pallorem ducere rami.
cuius ut in trunco fecit manus inpia vulnus,
haud aliter fluxit discusso cortice sanguis,
quam solet, ante aras ingens ubi victima taurus
concidit, abrupta cruor e cervice profundi.
obstipuere omnes, aliquisque ex omnibus audet
deterrere nefas saevamque inhibere bipennem:
aspicit hunc "mentis" que "piae cape praemia!" dixit
Thessalus inque virum convertit ab arbore ferrum
detruncatque caput repetitaque robora caedit,
redditus e medio sonus est cum robore talis:
"nympha sub hoc ego sum Cereri gratissima ligno,
quae tibi factorum poenas instare tuorum
vaticinor moriens, nostri solacia leti."
persequitur scelus ille suum, labefactaque tandem
ictibus innumeris adductaque funibus arbor

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the sea that embraces the earth. For now they saw you a youth, now a lion, now you were a violent boar, now a snake which they feared to touch, now horns made you a bull. Often you could be seen as a stone, often as a tree. Sometimes, imitating the appearance of liquid waters, you were a river, sometimes fire contrary to waters.

"No less right has the wife of Autolycus, daughter of Erysichthon. Her father was one who scorned the powers of gods and burned no incense on altars. They say he even violated Ceres' grove with ax and profaned ancient groves with iron. There stood in these an enormous oak with ancient timber, a grove by itself. Ribbons and memorial tablets and garlands girdled its middle, proofs of prayers granted. Often under this dryads drew festive dances. Often too, hands joined, they circled the trunk in order, and the measure of the oak filled fifteen arms, and the rest of the forest was as much below this as grass was below all the forest.

"Yet not for that reason did the Triopian refrain from iron there and ordered his servants to cut down the sacred oak, and when he saw them hesitating at orders, the scoundrel, seizing an ax from one of them, uttered these words: 'Not just beloved of the goddess, but even if it were the goddess herself, now it will touch the earth with leafy top.' He spoke, and while he balanced his weapon for slanting blows, the Deoian oak trembled and gave a groan, and at the same time the leaves, at the same time the acorns began to grow pale and the long branches draw pallor. When his impious hand made a wound in the trunk, blood flowed from the stripped bark no differently than it's accustomed when a huge bull as victim falls before the altars and gore pours from the broken neck.

"All were astonished, and one of all dares to prevent the sacrilege and restrain the savage ax. The Thessalian looks at him and says: 'Take the reward of a dutiful mind!' and turned the iron from the tree into the man and cut off his head and, resuming, cuts the oak. A sound such as this was given from the middle of the oak: 'I am a nymph most pleasing to Ceres under this wood, and dying I prophesy that punishments of your deeds are at hand, a solace of my death.' He pursues his crime, and at last the tree, weakened by countless blows and pulled by ropes, fell and laid low much forest with its weight.

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corruit et multam prostravit pondere silvam.
'Attonitae dryades damno nemorumque suoque,
omnes germanae, Cererem cum vestibus atris
maerentes adeunt poenamque Erysicthonis orant.
adnuit his capitisque sui pulcherrima motu
concussit gravidis oneratos messibus agros,
moliturque genus poenae miserabile, si non
ille suis esset nulli miserabilis actis,
pestifera lacerare Fame: quae quatenus ipsi
non adeunda deae est (neque enim Cereremque Famemque
fata coire sinunt), montani numinis unam
talibus agrestem conpellat oreada dictis:
"est locus extremis Scythiae glacialis in oris,
triste solum, sterilis, sine fruge, sine arbore tellus;
Frigus iners illic habitant Pallorque Tremorque
et ieiuna Fames: ea se in praecordia condat
sacrilegi scelerata, iube, nec copia rerum
vincat eam superetque meas certamine vires,
neve viae spatium te terreat, accipe currus,
accipe, quos frenis alte moderere, dracones!"
et dedit; illa dato subvecta per aera curru
devenit in Scythiam: rigidique cacumine montis
(Caucason appellant) serpentum colla levavit
quaesitamque Famem lapidoso vidit in agro
unguibus et raras vellentem dentibus herbas.
hirtus erat crinis, cava lumina, pallor in ore,
labra incana situ, scabrae rubigine fauces,
dura cutis, per quam spectari viscera possent;
ossa sub incurvis exstabant arida lumbis,
ventris erat pro ventre locus; pendere putares
pectus et a spinae tantummodo crate teneri.
auxerat articulos macies, genuumque tumebat
orbis, et inmodico prodibant tubere tali.
'Hanc procul ut vidit, (neque enim est accedere iuxta
ausa) refert mandata deae paulumque morata,
quamquam aberat longe, quamquam modo venerat illuc,
visa tamen sensisse famem est, retroque dracones
egit in Haemoniam versis sublimis habenis.
'Dicta Fames Cereris, quamvis contraria semper
illius est operi, peragit perque aera vento

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Erysichthon and Famine

"Stunned by the loss of the grove and their own, all the dryads, like sisters, go mourning in black garments to Ceres and pray for Erysichthon's punishment. She nodded to them and with the most beautiful movement of her head shook fields laden with heavy harvests, and she plans a type of punishment pitiable, if he weren't pitiable to none by his own deeds: to tear him with pestilent Famine. But since the goddess herself can't approach her (for the fates don't allow Ceres and Famine to come together), she addresses one rustic oread of the mountain divinity with such words:

"'There is a place in the farthest bounds of icy Scythia, sad soil, sterile earth without grain, without trees. Sluggish Cold dwells there and Pallor and Trembling and starving Famine. Order her to hide herself in the sacrilegious one's vitals, accursed one, and let no abundance of things conquer her and overcome my powers in contest. And lest the distance of the way frighten you, take my chariot, take the dragons you may guide from on high with reins!' And she gave them.

"She, conveyed through the air in the given chariot, came down to Scythia and on the peak of a rigid mountain (they call it Caucasus) took off the necks of the serpents and sought Famine and saw her in a stony field tearing sparse herbs with nails and teeth. Her hair was bristly, her eyes hollow, pallor in her face, lips gray with filth, throat rough with rust, hard skin through which the entrails could be seen. Dry bones stuck out under her bent loins. Where her belly was, there was a place for a belly. You'd think her chest hung and was held only by the cage of her spine. Leanness had enlarged her joints, and the orb of her knees was swollen, and her ankles protruded with excessive knob.

"When she saw her from far off (for she didn't dare approach near), she reports the goddess's commands and, delayed a little, though she was far away, though she'd just come there, she still seemed to have felt hunger, and she turned the dragons back sublimely with turned reins to Haemonia.

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ad iussam delata domum est, et protinus intrat
sacrilegi thalamos altoque sopore solutum
(noctis enim tempus) geminis amplectitur ulnis,
seque viro inspirat, faucesque et pectus et ora
adflat et in vacuis spargit ieiunia venis;
functaque mandato fecundum deserit orbem
inque domos inopes adsueta revertitur antra.
'Lenis adhuc Somnus placidis Erysicthona pennis
mulcebat: petit ille dapes sub imagine somni,
oraque vana movet dentemque in dente fatigat,
exercetque cibo delusum guttur inani
proque epulis tenues nequiquam devorat auras;
ut vero est expulsa quies, furit ardor edendi
perque avidas fauces incensaque viscera regnat.
nec mora; quod pontus, quod terra, quod educat aer,
poscit et adpositis queritur ieiunia mensis
inque epulis epulas quaerit; quodque urbibus esse,
quodque satis poterat populo, non sufficit uni,
plusque cupit, quo plura suam demittit in alvum.
utque fretum recipit de tota flumina terra
nec satiatur aquis peregrinosque ebibit amnes,
utque rapax ignis non umquam alimenta recusat
innumerasque trabes cremat et, quo copia maior
est data, plura petit turbaque voracior ipsa est:
sic epulas omnes Erysicthonis ora profani
accipiunt poscuntque simul. cibus omnis in illo
causa cibi est, semperque locus fit inanis edendo.
'Iamque fame patrias altique voragine ventris
attenuarat opes, sed inattenuata manebat
tum quoque dira fames, inplacataeque vigebat
flamma gulae. tandem, demisso in viscera censu,
filia restabat, non illo digna parente.
hanc quoque vendit inops: dominum generosa recusat
et vicina suas tendens super aequora palmas
"eripe me domino, qui raptae praemia nobis
virginitatis habes!" ait: haec Neptunus habebat;
qui prece non spreta, quamvis modo visa sequenti
esset ero, formamque novat vultumque virilem
induit et cultus piscem capientibus aptos.
hanc dominus spectans "o qui pendentia parvo

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"Famine performs Ceres' orders, though her work is always contrary to hers, and carried through air by wind to the ordered house, immediately she enters the sacrilegious one's bedchamber and, released in deep sleep (for it was nighttime), embraces him with twin arms and inspires herself into the man and breathes on his throat and chest and mouth and spreads starvation in his empty veins. Having performed the command, she deserts the fertile world and returns to her accustomed poor caves.

"Still gentle Sleep was soothing Erysichthon with peaceful wings. He seeks feasts under sleep's image and moves his empty mouth and wearies tooth on tooth and deceives his throat with empty food and devours thin air in vain instead of feasts. But when truly rest is expelled, a fire of eating rages and rules through greedy throat and inflamed vitals. Without delay, he demands whatever the sea, whatever land, whatever air produces, and complains of starvation at tables set, and in feasts seeks feasts. What could be enough for cities, what could suffice for a people doesn't suffice for one man, and the more he sends down into his stomach, the more he desires. Just as the strait receives rivers from all the earth and isn't satisfied with waters and drinks foreign streams, and as greedy fire never refuses fuel and burns countless beams and, the more abundance is given, seeks more and is more voracious from the supply itself: so the mouth of profane Erysichthon accepts and demands all feasts at once. All food in him is the cause of food, and always a place becomes empty by eating.

Mestra

"And now by hunger and the chasm of his deep belly he had diminished his paternal wealth, but undiminished still remained dire hunger then too, and the unplacated flame of his gullet flourished. Finally, with wealth sent down into his vitals, a daughter remained, unworthy of that parent. He, needy, sells her too. Noble, she refuses a master and, stretching her hands over the neighboring waters, says: 'Snatch me from a master, you who have the reward of my stolen virginity!' Neptune had this. He, not scorning the prayer, though she'd just been seen by the following master, changes her form and puts on a man's face and clothes suited to those catching fish.

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aera cibo celas, moderator harundinis," inquit
"sic mare conpositum, sic sit tibi piscis in unda
credulus et nullos, nisi fixus, sentiat hamos:
quae modo cum vili turbatis veste capillis
litore in hoc steterat (nam stantem in litore vidi),
dic, ubi sit: neque enim vestigia longius exstant."
illa dei munus bene cedere sensit et a se
se quaeri gaudens his est resecuta rogantem:
"quisquis es, ignoscas; in nullam lumina partem
gurgite ab hoc flexi studioque operatus inhaesi,
quoque minus dubites, sic has deus aequoris artes
adiuvet, ut nemo iamdudum litore in isto,
me tamen excepto, nec femina constitit ulla."
credidit et verso dominus pede pressit harenam
elususque abiit: illi sua reddita forma est.
ast ubi habere suam transformia corpora sensit,
saepe pater dominis Triopeida tradit, at illa
nunc equa, nunc ales, modo bos, modo cervus abibat
praebebatque avido non iusta alimenta parenti.
vis tamen illa mali postquam consumpserat omnem
materiam derantque gravi nova pabula morbo,
ipse suos artus lacerans divellere morsu
coepit et infelix minuendo corpus alebat. -
'Quid moror externis? etiam mihi nempe novandi est
corporis, o iuvenis, numero finita, potestas.
nam modo, qui nunc sum, videor, modo flector in anguem,
armenti modo dux vires in cornua sumo, -
cornua, dum potui. nunc pars caret altera telo
frontis, ut ipse vides.' gemitus sunt verba secuti.

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"Her master, looking at her, says: 'O you who conceal the small bronze hook with bait, controller of the reed, so may the sea be calm, so may fish in the wave be trusting and feel no hooks unless fixed: she who just now stood on this shore with disordered clothes and disordered hair (for I saw her standing on the shore) - tell me where she is. For footprints don't extend farther.'

"She sensed the god's gift was succeeding and, glad she was being sought from herself, replied to the one asking: 'Whoever you are, forgive me. I've bent my eyes toward no direction from this water and I've clung, engaged in my pursuit, and so you may doubt less, so may the god of the sea help these arts, that for a while now no one on this shore - except me, however - and no woman has stood.'

"Her master believed and, foot turned, walked on the sand and, deceived, departed. Her own form was returned to her. But when her father sensed his daughter had a body that could transform, often he handed over the Triopid to masters, but she would depart now as a mare, now as a bird, now as a cow, now as a deer, and provided not-just food for her greedy parent.

"Yet when the force of that evil had consumed all substance and new food was lacking for the grave disease, he himself began to tear and rend his own limbs with his bite and, unhappy, nourished his body by diminishing it.

Achelous' Lost Horn

"Why do I delay with external things? Even to me indeed there is power, young man, limited in number, to change my body. For now I seem as I am now, now I'm bent into a snake, now as leader of a herd I take strength into my horns - horns, while I could. Now one part lacks the weapon of my forehead, as you yourself see."

Groans followed his words.

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BOOK 9

Quae gemitus truncaeque deo Neptunius heros
causa rogat frontis; cui sic Calydonius amnis
coepit inornatos redimitus harundine crines:
'triste petis munus. quis enim sua proelia victus
commemorare velit? referam tamen ordine, nec tam
turpe fuit vinci, quam contendisse decorum est,
magnaque dat nobis tantus solacia victor.
nomine siqua suo fando pervenit ad aures
Deianira tuas, quondam pulcherrima virgo
multorumque fuit spes invidiosa procorum.
cum quibus ut soceri domus est intrata petiti,
"accipe me generum," dixi "Parthaone nate":
dixit et Alcides. alii cessere duobus.
ille Iovem socerum dare se, famamque laborum,
et superata suae referebat iussa novercae.
contra ego "turpe deum mortali cedere" dixi -
nondum erat ille deus - "dominum me cernis aquarum
cursibus obliquis inter tua regna fluentum.
nec gener externis hospes tibi missus ab oris,
sed popularis ero et rerum pars una tuarum.
tantum ne noceat, quod me nec regia Iuno
odit, et omnis abest iussorum poena laborum.
nam, quo te iactas, Alcmena nate, creatum,
Iuppiter aut falsus pater est, aut crimine verus.
matris adulterio patrem petis. elige, fictum
esse Iovem malis, an te per dedecus ortum."
talia dicentem iamdudum lumine torvo
spectat, et accensae non fortiter imperat irae,
verbaque tot reddit: "melior mihi dextera lingua.
dummodo pugnando superem, tu vince loquendo"
congrediturque ferox. puduit modo magna locutum
cedere: reieci viridem de corpore vestem,
bracchiaque opposui, tenuique a pectore varas
in statione manus et pugnae membra paravi.
ille cavis hausto spargit me pulvere palmis,
inque vicem fulvae tactu flavescit harenae.
et modo cervicem, modo crura, modo ilia captat,
aut captare putes, omnique a parte lacessit.
me mea defendit gravitas frustraque petebar;
haud secus ac moles, magno quam murmure fluctus

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Achelous and Hercules

Neptune's hero asks the god what caused his groans and his broken-off forehead. To him the Calydonian river, his unkempt hair bound with reed, began thus: "You ask a sad service. For who, conquered, would want to recount his own battles? Yet I'll tell it in order. Nor was it so shameful to be conquered as it was honorable to have contended, and so great a victor gives us great consolation.

"If by any chance the name of Deianira has reached your ears through report - once the most beautiful maiden and the envied hope of many suitors. When I entered the house of the father-in-law I sought along with them, I said: 'Accept me as son-in-law, son of Parthaon.' Alcides said the same. The others yielded to the two of us. He offered to give Jupiter as father-in-law and the fame of his labors, and he cited the commands of his stepmother overcome.

"Against this I said: 'It's shameful for a god to yield to a mortal' - he wasn't yet a god - 'you see me as master of waters flowing in winding courses through your realms. Nor will I be a son-in-law sent as a stranger from foreign shores, but a fellow citizen and one part of your affairs. Only let it not harm me that royal Juno doesn't hate me, and all punishment of commanded labors is absent. For you of whom you boast you were begotten, son of Alcmena - either Jupiter is a false father, or he's true through crime. You seek a father by your mother's adultery. Choose - would you prefer Jupiter to be fictitious, or that you were born through disgrace?'

"As I was saying such things, he'd been looking at me for a while with fierce eye, and he doesn't strongly control his kindled anger, and he gives back only these words: 'My right hand is better than my tongue. So long as I conquer in fighting, you win in speaking.' And he comes at me fiercely. I was ashamed to yield after speaking such grand words. I threw off my green garment from my body and positioned my arms and held my palms, hollowed, away from my chest in guard and prepared my limbs for battle.

"He sprinkles me with dust scooped in his hollow palms, and in turn he turns tawny from the touch of the golden sand. Now he grasps for my neck, now for my legs, now for my flanks - or you'd think he

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oppugnant; manet illa, suoque est pondere tuta.
digredimur paulum, rursusque ad bella coimus,
inque gradu stetimus, certi non cedere, eratque
cum pede pes iunctus, totoque ego pectore pronus
et digitos digitis et frontem fronte premebam.
non aliter vidi fortes concurrere tauros,
cum, pretium pugnae, toto nitidissima saltu
expetitur coniunx: spectant armenta paventque
nescia, quem maneat tanti victoria regni.
ter sine profectu voluit nitentia contra
reicere Alcides a se mea pectora; quarto
excutit amplexus, adductaque bracchia solvit,
inpulsumque manu - certum est mihi vera fateri -
protinus avertit, tergoque onerosus inhaesit.
siqua fides, - neque enim ficta mihi gloria voce
quaeritur - inposito pressus mihi monte videbar.
vix tamen inserui sudore fluentia multo
bracchia, vix solvi duros a corpore nexus.
instat anhelanti, prohibetque resumere vires,
et cervice mea potitur. tum denique tellus
pressa genu nostro est, et harenas ore momordi.
inferior virtute, meas devertor ad artes,
elaborque viro longum formatus in anguem.
qui postquam flexos sinuavi corpus in orbes,
cumque fero movi linguam stridore bisulcam,
risit, et inludens nostras Tirynthius artes
"cunarum labor est angues superare mearum,"
dixit "et ut vincas alios, Acheloe, dracones,
pars quota Lernaeae serpens eris unus echidnae?
vulneribus fecunda suis erat illa, nec ullum
de centum numero caput est inpune recisum,
quin gemino cervix herede valentior esset.
hanc ego ramosam natis e caede colubris
crescentemque malo domui, domitamque reclusi.
quid fore te credis, falsum qui versus in anguem
arma aliena moves, quem forma precaria celat?"
dixerat, et summo digitorum vincula collo
inicit: angebar, ceu guttura forcipe pressus,
pollicibusque meas pugnabam evellere fauces.
sic quoque devicto restabat tertia tauri

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grasps - and attacks from every part. My weight defends me and I'm sought in vain - not otherwise than a mass that waves assault with great roar: it stands, and is safe by its own weight. We draw apart a little, and again we come to battle, and we stood in our stance, determined not to yield, and foot was joined with foot, and I was leaning forward with all my chest and pressed fingers to fingers and forehead to forehead. Not otherwise have I seen strong bulls rush together when the most beautiful mate throughout the whole pasture is sought as the prize of battle. The herds watch and fear, not knowing whom the victory of such great kingdom awaits.

"Three times without success Alcides wanted to throw back my chest pressing against him. The fourth time he shakes off my embrace and loosens my drawn-in arms and, with a push of his hand - I'm resolved to confess the truth - immediately turns me away and clings on my back, burdensome. If there's any faith - for I don't seek glory fabricated by voice - I seemed pressed by a mountain placed on me. Yet with difficulty I inserted my arms flowing with much sweat, with difficulty I loosened the hard knots from my body. He presses on me as I gasp and prevents me from recovering strength, and gains possession of my neck. Then at last the earth was pressed by my knee, and I bit the sand with my mouth.

The Snake and the Bull

"Inferior in strength, I turn to my arts and slip away from the man, shaped as a long snake. After I coiled my body into twisted circles and moved my forked tongue with fierce hissing, the Tirynthian laughed and, mocking my arts, said: 'It's the labor of my cradle to overcome snakes, and though you may conquer other dragons, Achelous, what fraction will you, one snake, be of the Lernaean hydra? She was fertile by her wounds, and no head of the hundred in number was cut off unpunished without the neck being stronger with a double heir. Her I tamed, branching with serpents born from slaughter and growing from harm, and having tamed her I laid her open. What do you think will happen to you, false one who, changed into a snake, move alien weapons, whom a borrowed form conceals?' He spoke and applied bonds to the top of my neck with his fingers. I was choked as if my throat were pressed in a vise, and I fought to tear my jaws from his thumbs.

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forma trucis. tauro mutatus membra rebello.
induit ille toris a laeva parte lacertos,
admissumque trahens sequitur, depressaque dura
cornua figit humo, meque alta sternit harena.
nec satis hoc fuerat: rigidum fera dextera cornu
dum tenet, infregit, truncaque a fronte revellit.
naides hoc, pomis et odoro flore repletum,
sacrarunt; divesque meo Bona Copia cornu est.'
Dixerat: et nymphe ritu succincta Dianae,
una ministrarum, fusis utrimque capillis,
incessit totumque tulit praedivite cornu
autumnum et mensas, felicia poma, secundas.
lux subit; et primo feriente cacumina sole
discedunt iuvenes, neque enim dum flumina pacem
et placidos habeant lapsus totaeque residant
opperiuntur aquae. vultus Achelous agrestes
et lacerum cornu mediis caput abdidit undis.
Huic tamen ablati doluit iactura decoris,
cetera sospes habet. capitis quoque fronde saligna
aut superinposita celatur harundine damnum.
at te, Nesse ferox, eiusdem virginis ardor
perdiderat volucri traiectum terga sagitta.
namque nova repetens patrios cum coniuge muros
venerat Eueni rapidas Iove natus ad undas.
uberior solito, nimbis hiemalibus auctus,
verticibusque frequens erat atque inpervius amnis.
intrepidum pro se, curam de coniuge agentem
Nessus adit, membrisque valens scitusque vadorum,
'officio' que 'meo ripa sistetur in illa
haec,' ait 'Alcide. tu viribus utere nando!'
pallentemque metu, fluviumque ipsumque timentem
tradidit Aonius pavidam Calydonida Nesso.
mox, ut erat, pharetraque gravis spolioque leonis -
nam clavam et curvos trans ripam miserat arcus -
'quandoquidem coepi, superentur flumina' dixit,
nec dubitat nec, qua sit clementissimus amnis,
quaerit, et obsequio deferri spernit aquarum.
iamque tenens ripam, missos cum tolleret arcus,
coniugis agnovit vocem Nessoque paranti
fallere depositum 'quo te fiducia' clamat

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"Conquered in this way too, there remained a third form - the fierce bull. I resumed battle, my limbs changed to a bull. He threw his arms around my left side and, following as I charged on, dragged me and pressed my hard horns into the ground and laid me flat in the deep sand. Nor was this enough for him: while his savage right hand held my stiff horn, he broke it and tore it from my truncated forehead.

"The Naiads consecrated this, filled with fruits and fragrant flowers, and rich Plenty is wealthy from my horn."

The Horn of Plenty

He spoke, and a nymph, one of the attendants, girded in the manner of Diana, came in with streaming hair on both sides and brought the whole autumn in the very rich horn, and blessed apples as second course. Light comes, and at the first touch of sun on the peaks, the young men depart. Nor do they wait until the rivers have peace and calm flow and the waters entirely subside. Achelous hid his rustic face and head maimed of horn in the middle waters. Yet the loss of the removed adornment pained him. Otherwise he's sound. He conceals the loss of his head with willow frond or reed placed over it.

Nessus and Deianira

But you, fierce Nessus, passion for the same maiden destroyed you, pierced through the back by a swift arrow. For the son of Jove, returning with his new wife to his father's walls, had come to the rapid waters of Evenus. Fuller than usual, swollen with winter rains, and frequent with eddies, the river was impassable. As he stands fearless for himself but anxious with care for his wife, Nessus approaches, strong in limbs and knowing the fords, and says: 'She will be placed on that bank by my service, Alcides. You use your strength for swimming.'

"The Aonian hero handed over the pale Calydonian woman, frightened and fearing the river and him himself, to frightened Nessus. Soon, just as he was, heavy with quiver and spoil of the lion - for he had thrown his club and curved bow across the bank - he said: 'Since I've begun, let the rivers be overcome,' and he doesn't hesitate, nor does he seek where the river is most gentle, and he scorns to be carried

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'vana pedum, violente, rapit? tibi, Nesse biformis,
dicimus. exaudi, nec res intercipe nostras.
si te nulla mei reverentia movit, at orbes
concubitus vetitos poterant inhibere paterni.
haud tamen effugies, quamvis ope fidis equina;
vulnere, non pedibus te consequar.' ultima dicta
re probat, et missa fugientia terga sagitta
traicit. exstabat ferrum de pectore aduncum.
quod simul evulsum est, sanguis per utrumque foramen
emicuit mixtus Lernaei tabe veneni.
excipit hunc Nessus 'ne' que enim 'moriemur
inulti' secum ait, et calido velamina tincta cruore
dat munus raptae velut inritamen amoris.
Longa fuit medii mora temporis, actaque magni
Herculis inplerant terras odiumque novercae.
victor ab Oechalia Cenaeo sacra parabat
vota Iovi, cum Fama loquax praecessit ad aures,
Deianira, tuas, quae veris addere falsa
gaudet, et e minimo sua per mendacia crescit,
Amphitryoniaden Ioles ardore teneri.
credit amans, venerisque novae perterrita fama
indulsit primo lacrimis, flendoque dolorem
diffudit miseranda suum. mox deinde 'quid autem
flemus?' ait 'paelex lacrimis laetabitur istis.
quae quoniam adveniet, properandum aliquidque novandum est,
dum licet, et nondum thalamos tenet altera nostros.
conquerar, an sileam? repetam Calydona, morerne?
excedam tectis? an, si nihil amplius, obstem?
quid si me, Meleagre, tuam memor esse sororem
forte paro facinus, quantumque iniuria possit
femineusque dolor, iugulata paelice testor?'
in cursus animus varios abit. omnibus illis
praetulit inbutam Nesseo sanguine vestem
mittere, quae vires defecto reddat amori,
ignaroque Lichae, quid tradat, nescia, luctus
ipsa suos tradit blandisque miserrima verbis,
dona det illa viro, mandat. capit inscius heros,
induiturque umeris Lernaeae virus echidnae.
Tura dabat primis et verba precantia flammis,
vinaque marmoreas patera fundebat in aras:

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down by the water's compliance. And now holding the bank, as he was picking up the bow he'd thrown, he recognized his wife's voice and, to Nessus preparing to betray his trust, he shouts: 'Where does vain confidence in your feet carry you, violent one? To you, two-formed Nessus, I speak. Listen, and don't intercept my property. If no reverence for me moves you, at least your father's wheels could have restrained you from forbidden intercourse. Yet you won't escape, though you trust in horse's help. I'll pursue you with a wound, not with feet.'

"The final words he proves by deed, and he pierces the fleeing back with an arrow sent. The hooked iron stuck out from the chest. When this was torn out, blood leaped through both holes, mixed with the poison of the Lernaean beast. Nessus receives this and says to himself: 'Nor will I die unavenged,' and he gives clothing stained with his warm blood as a gift to the stolen woman, as an irritant of love.

Hercules' Death

A long time passed, and the deeds of great Hercules had filled the lands and the hatred of his stepmother. Victorious from Oechalia, he was preparing sacred vows to Cenaean Jove when chattering Rumor, who delights to add false to true and grows from tiny through her lies, preceded to your ears, Deianira, that the Amphitryon's descendant was held in passion for Iole. The lover believes, and terrified by news of new love, she first indulged in tears and, pitiable, poured out her grief by weeping. Soon after she says: 'But why do I weep? My rival will rejoice at these tears. Since she'll arrive, something must be hurried and something new tried while I can and the other doesn't yet hold my marriage chambers. Shall I complain or be silent? Shall I return to Calydon or stay? Shall I leave the house? Or, if nothing more, shall I obstruct? What if, mindful that I'm your sister, Meleager, I prepare some deed, and show how much injury can do and a woman's grief, by killing my rival?'

Her mind goes into various courses. Of all these, she preferred to send the garment stained with Nessus' blood, which would restore strength to failing love. Ignorant of what she's handing over, she herself unknowing hands over her own grief to unknowing Lichas, and most wretched with coaxing words, she commands that he give those gifts to her husband. The hero receives them unaware and puts on his

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incaluit vis illa mali, resolutaque flammis
Herculeos abiit late dilapsa per artus.
dum potuit, solita gemitum virtute repressit.
victa malis postquam est patientia, reppulit aras,
inplevitque suis nemorosam vocibus Oeten.
nec mora, letiferam conatur scindere vestem:
qua trahitur, trahit illa cutem, foedumque relatu,
aut haeret membris frustra temptata revelli,
aut laceros artus et grandia detegit ossa.
ipse cruor, gelido ceu quondam lammina candens
tincta lacu, stridit coquiturque ardente veneno.
nec modus est, sorbent avidae praecordia flammae,
caeruleusque fluit toto de corpore sudor,
ambustique sonant nervi, caecaque medullis
tabe liquefactis tollens ad sidera palmas
'cladibus,' exclamat 'Saturnia, pascere nostris:
pascere, et hanc pestem specta, crudelis, ab alto,
corque ferum satia. vel si miserandus et hosti,
hoc est, si tibi sum, diris cruciatibus aegram
invisamque animam natamque laboribus aufer.
mors mihi munus erit; decet haec dare dona novercam.
ergo ego foedantem peregrino templa cruore
Busirin domui? saevoque alimenta parentis
Antaeo eripui? nec me pastoris Hiberi
forma triplex, nec forma triplex tua, Cerbere, movit?
vosne, manus, validi pressistis cornua tauri?
vestrum opus Elis habet, vestrum Stymphalides undae,
Partheniumque nemus? vestra virtute relatus
Thermodontiaco caelatus balteus auro,
pomaque ab insomni concustodita dracone?
nec mihi centauri potuere resistere, nec mi
Arcadiae vastator aper? nec profuit hydrae
crescere per damnum geminasque resumere vires?
quid, cum Thracis equos humano sanguine pingues
plenaque corporibus laceris praesepia vidi,
visaque deieci, dominumque ipsosque peremi?
his elisa iacet moles Nemeaea lacertis:
hac caelum cervice tuli. defessa iubendo est
saeva Iovis coniunx: ego sum indefessus agendo.
sed nova pestis adest, cui nec virtute resisti

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shoulders the poison of the Lernaean hydra.

The Poison Takes Hold

He was giving incense to the first flames and words of prayer, and was pouring wine from a bowl onto marble altars. The power of that evil grew hot and, loosened by flames, spread wide, dissolved through Hercules' limbs. As long as he could, he repressed his groan with his accustomed courage. When patience was conquered by evils, he pushed away the altars and filled wooded Oeta with his cries. Without delay he tries to tear off the deadly garment: where it's pulled, it pulls skin. Foul to tell - either it clings to his limbs, tried in vain to be torn away, or it uncovers mangled limbs and huge bones. His very blood hissed and was cooked in the burning poison, just as a white-hot blade once dipped in cold pool. There's no limit: the greedy flames drink his vitals, and dark blue sweat flows from his whole body, and his sinews sound, burned, and with marrow liquefied by hidden corruption, lifting his hands to the stars, he cries out:

"Feed on my disasters, Saturnia! Feed, and watch this pestilence, cruel one, from on high, and satisfy your savage heart. Or if I'm pitiable even to an enemy - that is, if I am to you - take away my soul, sick with dire torments and hateful and born for labors. Death will be a gift to me. It's fitting that a stepmother give such gifts. So did I tame Busiris who fouled temples with foreign blood? Did I snatch food from his savage parent from Antaeus? Did the triple form of the Spanish shepherd move me, or your triple form, Cerberus? Did you, my hands, press the strong bull's horns? Elis has your work, the Stymphalian waters have it, the Parthenian grove? By your courage was brought back the belt engraved with Thermodontic gold, and the apples guarded by the sleepless dragon? Nor could the centaurs resist me, nor could the boar, devastator of Arcadia? Nor did it profit the hydra to grow through harm and resume double strength? What of when I saw the horses of the Thracian fat with human blood and their mangers full of mangled bodies - saw them and threw them down and killed both their master and them? By these arms the Nemean mass lies crushed. On this neck I bore the sky. The savage wife of Jove is weary of commanding: I'm unwearied in performing. But a new pestilence is here, which can't be

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nec telis armisque potest. pulmonibus errat
ignis edax imis, perque omnes pascitur artus.
at valet Eurystheus! et sunt, qui credere possint
esse deos?' dixit, perque altam saucius Oeten
haud aliter graditur, quam si venabula taurus
corpore fixa gerat, factique refugerit auctor.
saepe illum gemitus edentem, saepe frementem,
saepe retemptantem totas infringere vestes
sternentemque trabes irascentemque videres
montibus aut patrio tendentem bracchia caelo.
Ecce Lichan trepidum latitantem rupe cavata
aspicit, utque dolor rabiem conlegerat omnem,
'tune, Licha,' dixit 'feralia dona dedisti?
tune meae necis auctor eris?' tremit ille, pavetque
pallidus, et timide verba excusantia dicit.
dicentem genibusque manus adhibere parantem
corripit Alcides, et terque quaterque rotatum
mittit in Euboicas tormento fortius undas.
ille per aerias pendens induruit auras:
utque ferunt imbres gelidis concrescere ventis,
inde nives fieri, nivibus quoque molle rotatis
astringi et spissa glomerari grandine corpus,
sic illum validis iactum per inane lacertis
exsanguemque metu nec quicquam umoris habentem
in rigidos versum silices prior edidit aetas.
nunc quoque in Euboico scopulus brevis eminet alto
gurgite et humanae servat vestigia formae,
quem, quasi sensurum, nautae calcare verentur,
appellantque Lichan. at tu, Iovis inclita proles,
arboribus caesis, quas ardua gesserat Oete,
inque pyram structis arcum pharetramque capacem
regnaque visuras iterum Troiana sagittas
ferre iubes Poeante satum, quo flamma ministro
subdita. dumque avidis comprenditur ignibus agger,
congeriem silvae Nemeaeo vellere summam
sternis, et inposita clavae cervice recumbis,
haud alio vultu, quam si conviva iaceres
inter plena meri redimitus pocula sertis.
Iamque valens et in omne latus diffusa sonabat,
securosque artus contemptoremque petebat

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resisted by courage or weapons or arms. Devouring fire wanders in my deepest lungs and feeds through all my limbs. Yet Eurystheus thrives! And there are those who can believe gods exist?"

The Pyre on Oeta

He spoke, and wounded he walks through tall Oeta not otherwise than if a bull carried hunting spears fixed in his body, and the doer of the deed had fled. Often you'd see him groaning, often roaring, often trying to tear off all his clothes and overthrowing beams and raging at the mountains or stretching out his arms to his father's sky.

Look - he sees Lichas trembling, hiding in a hollow cliff, and as his pain had gathered all his rage: "Did you, Lichas," he said, "give the deadly gifts? Will you be the author of my death?" He trembles and grows pale with fear and says words of excuse timidly. As he's speaking and preparing to clasp his knees with hands, Alcides seized him and, having spun him three and four times, hurled him with more force than a catapult into the Euboean waves. He hardened as he hung in the airy breezes. Just as they say rains congeal with cold winds and then become snow, and snows too, spun softly, are compressed and a body is rounded in thick hail - so he, hurled through the void by strong arms and bloodless with fear and having no moisture, was turned into rigid flint, ancient tradition declares. Even now in the high Euboean deep a low crag stands out and preserves traces of human form, which sailors fear to tread, as if it could feel, and they call it Lichas.

But you, famous offspring of Jove, having cut trees that lofty Oeta bore and built them into a pyre, order the son of Poeas to carry your bow and spacious quiver and arrows that will see Troy's kingdom again - he by whose service as minister the flame is applied underneath. While the mound is seized by greedy fires, you spread Nemean hide over the heap of wood and recline with your head placed on your club, with no other expression than if you were lying as a guest among full cups of wine, crowned with garlands.

Hercules' Apotheosis

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flamma suum. timuere dei pro vindice terrae.
quos ita, sensit enim, laeto Saturnius ore
Iuppiter adloquitur: 'nostra est timor iste voluptas,
o superi, totoque libens mihi pectore grator,
quod memoris populi dicor rectorque paterque
et mea progenies vestro quoque tuta favore est.
nam quamquam ipsius datur hoc inmanibus actis,
obligor ipse tamen. sed enim nec pectora vano
fida metu paveant. Oetaeas spernite flammas!
omnia qui vicit, vincet, quos cernitis, ignes;
nec nisi materna Vulcanum parte potentem
sentiet. aeternum est a me quod traxit, et expers
atque inmune necis, nullaque domabile flamma.
idque ego defunctum terra caelestibus oris
accipiam, cunctisque meum laetabile factum
dis fore confido. siquis tamen Hercule, siquis
forte deo doliturus erit, data praemia nolet,
sed meruisse dari sciet, invitusque probabit.'
adsensere dei. coniunx quoque regia visa est
cetera non duro, duro tamen ultima vultu
dicta tulisse Iovis, seque indoluisse notatam.
interea quodcumque fuit populabile flammae,
Mulciber abstulerat, nec cognoscenda remansit
Herculis effigies, nec quicquam ab imagine ductum
matris habet, tantumque Iovis vestigia servat.
utque novus serpens posita cum pelle senecta
luxuriare solet, squamaque nitere recenti,
sic ubi mortales Tirynthius exuit artus,
parte sui meliore viget, maiorque videri
coepit et augusta fieri gravitate verendus.
quem pater omnipotens inter cava nubila raptum
quadriiugo curru radiantibus intulit astris.
Sensit Atlas pondus. neque adhuc Stheneleius iras
solverat Eurystheus, odiumque in prole paternum
exercebat atrox. at longis anxia curis
Argolis Alcmene, questus ubi ponat aniles,
cui referat nati testatos orbe labores,
cuive suos casus, Iolen habet. Herculis illam
imperiis thalamoque animoque receperat Hyllus,
inpleratque uterum generoso semine; cui sic

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And now strong and spread on every side, it sounded and sought his careless limbs and its scorner. The gods feared for earth's champion. Jupiter, sensing this - for he did sense it - addresses them with joyful face: "That fear is my pleasure, O gods above, and I gratefully rejoice with all my heart that I'm called ruler and father of a mindful people and that my offspring too is safe by your favor. For though this is granted to his own huge deeds, I myself am nevertheless obliged. But indeed let not faithful hearts tremble with empty fear! Scorn the Oetaean flames! He who conquered all will conquer the fires you see, and he'll feel Vulcan powerful only in his maternal part. What he drew from me is eternal and exempt and immune from death, and tameable by no flame. This, when it's done with earth, I'll receive on heavenly shores, and I'm confident that my deed will be joyful to all the gods. If anyone, however - if anyone perhaps will grieve that Hercules becomes a god - he won't want the reward given, but he'll know it deserved to be given, and though unwilling, he'll approve it."

The gods assented. The royal consort too seemed to bear the other words not with hard expression, but the last with hard face, and she grieves at being marked out. Meanwhile whatever was able to be destroyed by flame, Mulciber had carried off, and no recognizable image of Hercules remained, and it has nothing drawn from his mother's likeness - it preserves only traces of Jupiter. Just as a new snake is accustomed to luxuriate when it's shed its old skin and shine with fresh scale, so when the Tirynthian put off his mortal limbs, he thrives in his better part and begins to seem greater and to become revered with august majesty. The all-powerful father snatched him up in a four-horsed chariot among hollow clouds and placed him among the shining stars.

Atlas felt the weight. Nor yet had Sthenelus' Eurystheus resolved his anger, and the fierce one exercised his paternal hatred on the offspring.

Alcmena and Galanthis

But Argive Alcmena, anxious with long cares, has Iole - where she may set down her aged complaints, to whom she may recount her son's labors witnessed by the world, to whom her own troubles. Hyllus had received her at Hercules' commands, into his marriage chamber and spirit, and had filled her womb

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incipit Alcmene: 'faveant tibi numina saltem,
conripiantque moras tum cum matura vocabis
praepositam timidis parientibus Ilithyiam,
quam mihi difficilem Iunonis gratia fecit.
namque laboriferi cum iam natalis adesset
Herculis et decimum premeretur sidere signum,
tendebat gravitas uterum mihi, quodque ferebam,
tantum erat, ut posses auctorem dicere tecti
ponderis esse Iovem. nec iam tolerare labores
ulterius poteram. quin nunc quoque frigidus artus,
dum loquor, horror habet, parsque est meminisse doloris.
septem ego per noctes, totidem cruciata diebus,
fessa malis, tendensque ad caelum bracchia, magno
Lucinam Nixosque pares clamore vocabam.
illa quidem venit, sed praecorrupta, meumque
quae donare caput Iunoni vellet iniquae.
utque meos audit gemitus, subsedit in illa
ante fores ara, dextroque a poplite laevum
pressa genu et digitis inter se pectine iunctis
sustinuit partus. tacita quoque carmina voce
dixit, et inceptos tenuerunt carmina partus.
nitor, et ingrato facio convicia demens
vana Iovi, cupioque mori, moturaque duros
verba queror silices. matres Cadmeides adsunt,
votaque suscipiunt, exhortanturque dolentem.
una ministrarum, media de plebe, Galanthis,
flava comas, aderat, faciendis strenua iussis,
officiis dilecta suis. ea sensit iniqua
nescio quid Iunone geri, dumque exit et intrat
saepe fores, divam residentem vidit in ara
bracchiaque in genibus digitis conexa tenentem,
et "quaecumque es," ait "dominae gratare. levata est
Argolis Alcmene, potiturque puerpera voto."
exsiluit, iunctasque manus pavefacta remisit
diva potens uteri: vinclis levor ipsa remissis.
numine decepto risisse Galanthida fama est.
ridentem prensamque ipsis dea saeva capillis
traxit, et e terra corpus relevare volentem
arcuit, inque pedes mutavit bracchia primos.
strenuitas antiqua manet; nec terga colorem

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with noble seed. To her Alcmena begins thus: "May the gods at least favor you, and may they hasten the delays when, mature, you call on Ilithyia, set over fearful women giving birth, whom Juno's favor made difficult for me. For when the day of birth of labor-bringing Hercules was at hand and the tenth sign was pressed by his star, my weight stretched my womb, and what I carried was so great you could say Jupiter was the author of the burden I concealed. Nor could I endure the labors any further. Indeed even now as I speak, cold horror holds my limbs, and it's a part of pain to remember.

"For seven nights and as many days, worn out by evils, I called on Lucina and the equal Birth-goddesses with loud shout, stretching my arms to heaven. She indeed came, but already corrupted, and wanting to give my life to hostile Juno. When she hears my groans, she sat on that altar before the doors, and with left knee pressed from right leg and fingers joined together in a comb, she held back the birth. She also spoke spells in silent voice, and the spells held the begun birth. I strain, and in my madness I make vain reproaches to ungrateful Jove and desire to die, and I complain words that could move hard rocks. Cadmean mothers are present and take up vows and encourage the suffering woman.

"One of the attendants, from the middle of the common people, golden-haired Galanthis, was there, energetic in performing commands, beloved for her services. She sensed that something hostile was being done by Juno. While she goes out and enters the doors often, she saw the goddess sitting on the altar, holding her arms on her knees with fingers entwined, and she says: 'Whoever you are, congratulate my mistress. Argive Alcmena is delivered and has gained her wish as mother.'

"The goddess powerful over the womb leaped up and, terrified, released her joined hands. I'm freed by the bonds released. They say Galanthis laughed at the deceived divinity. As she laughs, the savage goddess seized her by the hair itself and dragged her, and when she wanted to lift her body from the ground, she prevented it and changed her front arms into feet. Her ancient energy remains, nor have her back parts lost their color - the form is different from before. Because she had helped the woman giving birth with lying mouth, she gives birth by mouth and frequents our house as before."

Dryope

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amisere suum: forma est diversa priori.
quae quia mendaci parientem iuverat ore,
ore parit nostrasque domos, ut et ante, frequentat.'
Dixit, et admonitu veteris commota ministrae
ingemuit. quam sic nurus est affata dolentem:
'te tamen, o genetrix, alienae sanguine nostro
rapta movet facies. quid si tibi mira sororis
fata meae referam? quamquam lacrimaeque dolorque
impediunt, prohibentque loqui. fuit unica matri -
me pater ex alia genuit - notissima forma
Oechalidum, Dryope. quam virginitate carentem
vimque dei passam Delphos Delonque tenentis
excipit Andraemon, et habetur coniuge felix.
est lacus, adclivis devexo margine formam
litoris efficiens, summum myrteta coronant.
venerat huc Dryope fatorum nescia, quoque
indignere magis, nymphis latura coronas,
inque sinu puerum, qui nondum impleverat annum,
dulce ferebat onus tepidique ope lactis alebat.
haut procul a stagno Tyrios imitata colores
in spem bacarum florebat aquatica lotos.
carpserat hinc Dryope, quos oblectamina nato
porrigeret, flores, et idem factura videbar -
namque aderam - vidi guttas e flore cruentas
decidere et tremulo ramos horrore moveri.
scilicet, ut referunt tardi nunc denique agrestes,
Lotis in hanc nymphe, fugiens obscena Priapi,
contulerat versos, servato nomine, vultus.
'Nescierat soror hoc. quae cum perterrita retro
ire et adoratis vellet discedere nymphis,
haeserunt radice pedes. convellere pugnat,
nec quicquam, nisi summa movet. subcrescit ab imo,
totaque paulatim lentus premit inguina cortex.
ut vidit, conata manu laniare capillos,
fronde manum implevit: frondes caput omne tenebant.
at puer Amphissos (namque hoc avus Eurytus illi
addiderat nomen) materna rigescere sentit
ubera; nec sequitur ducentem lacteus umor.
spectatrix aderam fati crudelis, opemque
non poteram tibi ferre, soror, quantumque valebam,

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She spoke and, moved by the reminder of her old attendant, groaned. To her grieving, her daughter-in-law thus spoke: "Yet you, mother, are moved by the stolen form of one not of our blood. What if I tell you the wonderful fates of my sister? Though tears and grief impede and prevent me from speaking. She was unique to her mother - my father begot me from another - most famous for beauty among the Oechalian women. After she lacked virginity and endured the force of Delphos' god, who also holds Delos, Andraemon receives her and is considered happy in his wife.

"There's a lake with sloping margin achieving the form of a shore. Myrtles crown the top. Dryope had come here, unaware of the fates, and - so you may be more indignant - bringing garlands for the nymphs. In her bosom she carried a boy who hadn't yet filled his year, a sweet burden, and she nourished him with the help of warm milk. Not far from the pool, a water lotus, imitating Tyrian colors, bloomed with promise of berries. From here Dryope had plucked flowers to hold out as delight to her child, and I seemed about to do the same - for I was there. I saw bloody drops fall from the flower and branches move with trembling horror.

"Clearly, as the slow country people now at last report, the nymph Lotis, fleeing Priapus' obscenity, had transferred herself into this form with changed face, the name preserved.

"My sister hadn't known this. When, terrified, she wanted to go back and depart after worshiping the nymphs, her feet stuck by the root. She fights to tear free and moves nothing except her top parts. Bark creeps up from below and gradually pliant wood presses all her groin. When she saw this, trying with her hand to tear her hair, her hand filled with leaves: leaves held her whole head. But the boy Amphissus (for his grandfather Eurytus had added this name to him) felt his mother's breasts growing stiff, and milky moisture doesn't follow when drawn. I was present watching your cruel fate, and I couldn't bring you help, sister. As much as I could, I delayed the growing trunk and branches by embracing them, and - I confess - I wanted to be hidden under the same bark.

"Look, her husband Andraemon and most wretched father arrive and seek Dryope. To those seeking Dryope I showed the lotus. They give kisses to the warm wood and, poured over it, cling to the roots of

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crescentem truncum ramosque amplexa morabar,
et, fateor, volui sub eodem cortice condi.
'Ecce vir Andraemon genitorque miserrimus adsunt,
et quaerunt Dryopen: Dryopen quaerentibus illis
ostendi loton. tepido dant oscula ligno,
adfusique suae radicibus arboris haerent.
nil nisi iam faciem, quod non foret arbor, habebat
cara soror: lacrimae misero de corpore factis
inrorant foliis, ac, dum licet, oraque praestant
vocis iter, tales effundit in aera questus:
"siqua fides miseris, hoc me per numina iuro
non meruisse nefas. patior sine crimine poenam.
viximus innocuae. si mentior, arida perdam
quas habeo frondes, et caesa securibus urar.
hunc tamen infantem maternis demite ramis,
et date nutrici, nostraque sub arbore saepe
lac facitote bibat, nostraque sub arbore ludat.
cumque loqui poterit, matrem facitote salutet,
et tristis dicat 'latet hoc in stipite mater.'
stagna tamen timeat, nec carpat ab arbore flores,
et frutices omnes corpus putet esse dearum.
care vale coniunx, et tu, germana, paterque!
qui, siqua est pietas, ab acutae vulnere falcis,
a pecoris morsu frondes defendite nostras.
et quoniam mihi fas ad vos incumbere non est,
erigite huc artus, et ad oscula nostra venite,
dum tangi possum, parvumque attollite natum!
plura loqui nequeo. nam iam per candida mollis
colla liber serpit, summoque cacumine condor.
ex oculis removete manus. sine munere vestro
contegat inductus morientia lumina cortex!"
desierant simul ora loqui, simul esse. diuque
corpore mutato rami caluere recentes.'
Dumque refert Iole factum mirabile, dumque
Eurytidos lacrimas admoto pollice siccat
Alcmene (flet et ipsa tamen) compescuit omnem
res nova tristitiam. nam limine constitit alto
paene puer dubiaque tegens lanugine malas,
ora reformatus primos Iolaus in annos.
hoc illi dederat Iunonia muneris Hebe,

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their tree. My dear sister had nothing now except her face that wasn't tree. Tears wet the leaves made from her pitiable body, and while her mouth allows a path for voice, she pours such complaints into the air:

"'If there's any faith for the wretched, I swear by these divine powers I haven't deserved wrong. I suffer punishment without crime. I've lived innocent. If I lie, may I lose the leaves I have and, cut by axes, be burned. Yet take this infant from his mother's branches and give him to a nurse, and under my tree often make him drink milk and play under my tree. And when he can speak, make him greet his mother and sadly say: "My mother lies hidden in this trunk." Yet let him fear pools and not pluck flowers from trees, and let him think all bushes are the bodies of goddesses. Farewell, dear husband, and you, sister, and father! If there's any piety, defend my leaves from the wound of the sharp sickle, from the bite of flocks. And since it's not permitted for me to bend down to you, raise yourselves here and come to my kisses while I can still be touched, and lift up my little child! I can speak no more, for now the pliant bark creeps over my white neck, and I'm buried in the highest crown. Remove hands from my eyes. Without your service let the advancing bark cover my dying eyes!'

"Her mouth ceased to speak and to be at the same time, and for a long time the branches grew warm from the changed body."

Iolaus Restored to Youth

While Iole relates this wonderful deed and while Alcmena dries Eurytus' daughter's tears with applied thumb (she herself weeps too), a strange event checked all the sadness. For there stood on the high threshold, almost a boy, covering his cheeks with doubtful down - Iolaus remade into his first years. Juno's Hebe had given him this gift, conquered by her husband's prayers. When she was preparing to swear she'd give such gifts to no one after this, Themis didn't allow it: "For now Discord is stirring wars in Thebes," she said, "and Capaneus can't be conquered except by Jupiter, and brothers will be made equal in wounding each other, and the prophet, still living, will see his own shade with earth withdrawn, and the son will be dutiful and criminal in the same deed - avenging a parent on a parent - and stunned

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victa viri precibus. quae cum iurare pararet,
dona tributuram post hunc se talia nulli,
non est passa Themis: 'nam iam discordia Thebae
bella movent,' dixit 'Capaneusque nisi ab Iove vinci
haud poterit, fientque pares in vulnere fratres,
subductaque suos manes tellure videbit
vivus adhuc vates; ultusque parente parentem
natus erit facto pius et sceleratus eodem
attonitusque malis, exul mentisque domusque,
vultibus Eumenidum matrisque agitabitur umbris,
donec eum coniunx fatale poposcerit aurum,
cognatumque latus Phegeius hauserit ensis.
tum demum magno petet hos Acheloia supplex
ab Iove Calliroe natis infantibus annos
addat, neve necem sinat esse ultoris inultam.
Iuppiter his motus privignae dona nurusque
praecipiet, facietque viros inpubibus annis.'
Haec ubi faticano venturi praescia dixit
ore Themis, vario superi sermone fremebant,
et, cur non aliis eadem dare dona liceret,
murmur erat. queritur veteres Pallantias annos
coniugis esse sui, queritur canescere mitis
Iasiona Ceres, repetitum Mulciber aevum
poscit Ericthonio, Venerem quoque cura futuri
tangit, et Anchisae renovare paciscitur annos.
cui studeat, deus omnis habet; crescitque favore
turbida seditio, donec sua Iuppiter ora
solvit, et 'o! nostri siqua est reverentia,' dixit
'quo ruitis? tantumne aliquis sibi posse videtur,
fata quoque ut superet? fatis Iolaus in annos,
quos egit, rediit. fatiiuvenescere debent
Calliroe geniti, non ambitione nec armis.
vos etiam, quoque hoc animo meliore feratis,
me quoque fata regunt. quae si mutare valerem,
nec nostrum seri curvarent Aeacon anni,
perpetuumque aevi florem Rhadamanthus haberet
cum Minoe meo, qui propter amara senectae
pondera despicitur, nec quo prius ordine regnat.'
Dicta Iovis movere deos; nec sustinet ullus,
cum videat fessos Rhadamanthon et Aeacon annis

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by evils, an exile from mind and home, he'll be driven by the faces of the Furies and his mother's shade, until his wife demands the fateful gold and Phegeus' sword drinks his kinsman's side. Then at last Calliroe, daughter of Achelous, will beg as great suppliant from Jupiter that he add years to her infant sons and not allow the avenger's death to remain unavenged. Jupiter, moved by these things, will anticipate the gifts of his stepdaughter and daughter-in-law and will make men in their unripe years."

The Gods Debate

After Themis, foreseeing the future, spoke these things with prophetic mouth, the gods above murmured with varied talk, and there was a murmur about why they couldn't give the same gifts to others. Pallas complains that her husband's years are old, mild Ceres complains that Iasion grows gray, Mulciber demands repeated age for Erichthonius, and care for the future touches Venus too, and she bargains to renew Anchises' years. Every god has someone to favor, and turbulent sedition grows from favor, until Jupiter opened his mouth and said: "O! If there's any reverence for me, where do you rush? Does anyone seem so able to himself that he even overcomes fate? By fates Iolaus returned to the years he lived. By fates Calliroe's sons born must grow young, not by ambition or arms. You too - so you may bear this with better spirit - I too am ruled by fates. If I could change them, our Aeacus wouldn't be bent by the years of old age, and Rhadamanthus would have perpetual bloom of life along with my Minos, who because of the bitter weights of old age is despised and doesn't rule in the order he did before."

Jupiter's words moved the gods. Nor does anyone maintain complaint when they see Rhadamanthus and Aeacus worn out with years and Minos, who, while he was whole in age, had terrified great nations by his very name too. Then he was weak and feared Miletus, son of Deion, proud in the strength of youth and in Phoebus as parent, and believing he was rising against his kingdoms, yet he didn't dare drive him from his ancestral household. You fled of your own will, Miletus, and in a swift ship you measured the Aegean waters and established walls in Asian land having the founder's name.

Byblis and Caunus

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et Minoa, queri. qui, dum fuit integer aevi,
terruerat magnas ipso quoque nomine gentes;
tunc erat invalidus, Deionidenque iuventae
robore Miletum Phoeboque parente superbum
pertimuit, credensque suis insurgere regnis,
haut tamen est patriis arcere penatibus ausus.
sponte fugis, Milete, tua, celerique carina
Aegaeas metiris aquas, et in Aside terra
moenia constituis positoris habentia nomen.
hic tibi, dum sequitur patriae curvamina ripae,
filia Maeandri totiens redeuntis eodem
cognita Cyanee, praestanti corpora forma,
Byblida cum Cauno, prolem est enixa gemellam.
Byblis in exemplo est, ut ament concessa puellae,
Byblis Apollinei correpta cupidine fratris;
non soror ut fratrem, nec qua debebat, amabat.
illa quidem primo nullos intellegit ignes,
nec peccare putat, quod saepius oscula iungat,
quod sua fraterno circumdet bracchia collo;
mendacique diu pietatis fallitur umbra.
paulatim declinat amor, visuraque fratrem
culta venit, nimiumque cupit formosa videri
et siqua est illic formosior, invidet illi.
sed nondum manifesta sibi est, nullumque sub illo
igne facit votum, verumtamen aestuat intus.
iam dominum appellat, iam nomina sanguinis odit,
Byblida iam mavult, quam se vocet ille sororem.
Spes tamen obscenas animo demittere non est
ausa suo vigilans; placida resoluta quiete
saepe videt quod amat: visa est quoque iungere fratri
corpus et erubuit, quamvis sopita iacebat.
somnus abit; silet illa diu repetitque quietis
ipsa suae speciem dubiaque ita mente profatur:
'me miseram! tacitae quid vult sibi noctis imago?
quam nolim rata sit! cur haec ego somnia vidi?
ille quidem est oculis quamvis formosus iniquis
et placet, et possim, si non sit frater, amare,
et me dignus erat. verum nocet esse sororem.
dummodo tale nihil vigilans committere temptem,
saepe licet simili redeat sub imagine somnus!

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Here, while she was following the bends of her father's bank, the daughter of Maeander, who returns so many times to the same place, known as Cyanee, outstanding in beauty of body, gave birth to twin offspring - Byblis and Caunus. Byblis is an example that girls should love what's allowed. Byblis, seized by desire for her Apollonian brother, didn't love him as a sister should, nor as she ought. At first indeed she understands no fires, nor thinks it sin that she joins kisses more often, that she places her arms around her brother's neck, and for a long time is deceived by the false shadow of pretended piety.

Gradually her love declines. She comes dressed to see her brother and desires too much to seem beautiful, and if any woman there is more beautiful, she envies her. But she's not yet manifest to herself, and she makes no prayer beneath that fire, yet still she burns within. Already she calls him master, already she hates the names of blood. Already she prefers that he call her Byblis rather than sister.

Yet she doesn't dare let obscene hopes down into her spirit while awake. Relaxed in peaceful quiet, she often sees what she loves. She even seemed to join her body to her brother and blushed, though she lay asleep. Sleep departs. She's silent for a long time and recalls the image of her own rest and speaks with doubtful mind:

Byblis' Internal Struggle

"Woe is me! What does this image of silent night mean to itself? How I wish it not be fulfilled! Why have I seen these dreams? He's beautiful, indeed, even to hostile eyes, and he pleases me, and I could love him if he weren't my brother, and he was worthy of me. But it harms me to be a sister. So long as I attempt nothing such while awake, often may sleep return under similar image! Sleep has no witness, and the imitated pleasure isn't absent. O Venus and tender Cupid, winged one with your mother, what joys I had! How manifest desire touched me! How I lay dissolved in all my marrow! How it delights to remember! Though that pleasure was brief and the night was headlong and hostile to my undertakings.

"O if I could be joined with name changed, how well, Caunus, I could be daughter-in-law to your parent! How well, Caunus, you could be son-in-law to my parent! Would that the gods made all things common

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testis abest somno, nec abest imitata voluptas.
pro Venus et tenera volucer cum matre Cupido,
gaudia quanta tuli! quam me manifesta libido
contigit! ut iacui totis resoluta medullis!
ut meminisse iuvat! quamvis brevis illa voluptas
noxque fuit praeceps et coeptis invida nostris.
'O ego, si liceat mutato nomine iungi,
quam bene, Caune, tuo poteram nurus esse parenti!
quam bene, Caune, meo poteras gener esse parenti!
omnia, di facerent, essent communia nobis,
praeter avos: tu me vellem generosior esses!
nescioquam facies igitur, pulcherrime, matrem;
at mihi, quae male sum, quos tu, sortita parentes,
nil nisi frater eris. quod obest, id habebimus unum.
quid mihi significant ergo mea visa? quod autem
somnia pondus habent? an habent et somnia pondus?
di melius! di nempe suas habuere sorores.
sic Saturnus Opem iunctam sibi sanguine duxit,
Oceanus Tethyn, Iunonem rector Olympi.
sunt superis sua iura! quid ad caelestia ritus
exigere humanos diversaque foedera tempto?
aut nostro vetitus de corde fugabitur ardor,
aut hoc si nequeo, peream, precor, ante toroque
mortua componar, positaeque det oscula frater.
et tamen arbitrium quaerit res ista duorum!
finge placere mihi: scelus esse videbitur illi.
'At non Aeolidae thalamos timuere sororum!
unde sed hos novi? cur haec exempla paravi?
quo feror? obscenae procul hinc discedite flammae
nec, nisi qua fas est germanae, frater ametur!
si tamen ipse mei captus prior esset amore,
forsitan illius possem indulgere furori.
ergo ego, quae fueram non reiectura petentem,
ipsa petam! poterisne loqui? poterisne fateri?
coget amor, potero! vel, si pudor ora tenebit,
littera celatos arcana fatebitur ignes.'
Hoc placet, haec dubiam vicit sententia mentem.
in latus erigitur cubitoque innixa sinistro
'viderit: insanos' inquit 'fateamur amores!
ei mihi, quo labor? quem mens mea concipit ignem?'

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to us, except our grandparents - I'd wish you more highborn! You'll make some woman a mother, I don't know whom, most beautiful one. But to me, who am badly situated, having obtained the same parents as you, you'll be nothing but brother. What hinders us we'll have as one thing. What do my visions mean to me then? Or do dreams have weight? Do they even have weight? May the gods forbid! The gods indeed had their own sisters. So Saturn took Ops joined to himself by blood, Oceanus took Tethys, the ruler of Olympus took Juno. The gods above have their own laws! Why do I try to measure human customs against heavenly rites and different covenants?

"Either the forbidden passion will be driven from my heart, or - if I can't do this - may I die, I pray, beforehand and be laid out dead on my couch, and may my brother give kisses to me laid out. And yet that affair requires the judgment of two! Suppose it pleases me: it will seem a crime to him.

"Yet the sons of Aeolus didn't fear their sisters' marriage chambers! But how did I know these? Why have I prepared these examples? Where am I carried? Depart far from here, obscene flames! Let my brother be loved only as is right for a sister! Yet if he himself were first captured by love of me, perhaps I could indulge his madness. So shall I, who wouldn't have rejected him seeking, myself seek? Can you speak? Can you confess? Love will compel me - I'll be able! Or if shame will hold my mouth, a letter will secretly confess hidden fires."

The Letter

This pleases her. This opinion conquered her doubtful mind. She raises herself on her side and leans on her left elbow. "Let him see," she says. "Let me confess my insane loves! Alas, to what labor? What fire does my mind conceive?" And with trembling hand she composes the words she'd meditated.

Her right hand holds the iron stylus, her left holds the empty wax. She begins and hesitates, writes and condemns the tablets, and marks and deletes, changes and blames and approves, and in turn puts down what she's taken up and takes up what she's put down. She doesn't know what she wants. Whatever she seems about to do displeases her. Boldness mixed with shame is in her face.

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et meditata manu componit verba trementi.
dextra tenet ferrum, vacuam tenet altera ceram.
incipit et dubitat, scribit damnatque tabellas,
et notat et delet, mutat culpatque probatque
inque vicem sumptas ponit positasque resumit.
quid velit ignorat; quicquid factura videtur,
displicet. in vultu est audacia mixta pudori.
scripta 'soror' fuerat; visum est delere sororem
verbaque correctis incidere talia ceris:
'quam, nisi tu dederis, non est habitura salutem,
hanc tibi mittit amans: pudet, a, pudet edere nomen,
et si quid cupiam quaeris, sine nomine vellem
posset agi mea causa meo, nec cognita Byblis
ante forem, quam spes votorum certa fuisset.
'Esse quidem laesi poterat tibi pectoris index
et color et macies et vultus et umida saepe
lumina nec causa suspiria mota patenti
et crebri amplexus, et quae, si forte notasti,
oscula sentiri non esse sororia possent.
ipsa tamen, quamvis animo grave vulnus habebam,
quamvis intus erat furor igneus, omnia feci
(sunt mihi di testes), ut tandem sanior essem,
pugnavique diu violenta Cupidinis arma
effugere infelix, et plus, quam ferre puellam
posse putes, ego dura tuli. superata fateri
cogor, opemque tuam timidis exposcere votis.
tu servare potes, tu perdere solus amantem:
elige, utrum facias. non hoc inimica precatur,
sed quae, cum tibi sit iunctissima, iunctior esse
expetit et vinclo tecum propiore ligari.
iura senes norint, et quid liceatque nefasque
fasque sit, inquirant, legumque examina servent.
conveniens Venus est annis temeraria nostris.
quid liceat, nescimus adhuc, et cuncta licere
credimus, et sequimur magnorum exempla deorum.
nec nos aut durus pater aut reverentia famae
aut timor impediet: tantum sit causa timendi,
dulcia fraterno sub nomina furta tegemus.
est mihi libertas tecum secreta loquendi,
et damus amplexus, et iungimus oscula coram.

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"Sister" had been written. It seemed good to delete "sister" and cut such words in the corrected wax: "She who, unless you give it, won't have health, sends this to you as lover. It shames me - ah, it shames me - to reveal my name! And if you ask what I desire, I'd wish my cause could be pleaded without name, and I not be known as Byblis before hope of my prayers was certain.

"Indeed the index of wounded heart could have been for you: color and leanness and expression and often moist eyes and sighs stirred by no clear cause and frequent embraces, and kisses - if perhaps you noticed - that could be felt to be not sisterly. Yet I myself, though I had a grave wound in my spirit, though inside was fiery madness, I did everything (the gods are my witnesses) that I might at last be saner, and I fought long to flee the violent weapons of Cupid, unhappy one, and I bore more than you'd think a girl could bear. I'm compelled to confess I'm overcome and to demand your help with timid prayers.

"You alone can save or destroy the lover. Choose which you do. No enemy prays this, but one who, though joined most closely to you, desires to be more closely joined and to be bound with you in a nearer bond. Let old men know the laws and inquire what's permitted and forbidden and right, and let them keep the examinations of laws. Rash Venus is fitting for our years. We don't yet know what's permitted, and we believe all is permitted, and we follow the examples of the great gods. Neither harsh father nor reverence for reputation nor fear will impede us. Only let there be a cause for fearing - we'll conceal sweet thefts under a brother's name. I have freedom to speak secretly with you, and we give embraces and join kisses openly. How much is lacking? Pity one confessing love, and one who wouldn't confess unless ultimate passion compelled her, and don't let me be written as the cause on my tomb."

The Rejection

When she'd vainly plowed through such words, the full wax left her hand, and the final line stuck to the margin. Immediately she seals her crimes with a pressed gem, which she moistened with tears (moisture had failed her tongue), and, ashamed, she called one of her servants and, having soothed the fearful one, said: "Carry these to our" - and she added after a long time - "brother."

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quantum est, quod desit? miserere fatentis amorem,
et non fassurae, nisi cogeret ultimus ardor,
neve merere meo subscribi causa sepulchro.'
Talia nequiquam perarantem plena reliquit
cera manum, summusque in margine versus adhaesit.
protinus inpressa signat sua crimina gemma,
quam tinxit lacrimis (linguam defecerat umor):
deque suis unum famulis pudibunda vocavit,
et pavidum blandita 'fer has, fidissime, nostro'
dixit, et adiecit longo post tempore 'fratri.'
cum daret, elapsae manibus cecidere tabellae.
omine turbata est, misit tamen. apta minister
tempora nactus adit traditque latentia verba.
attonitus subita iuvenis Maeandrius ira
proicit acceptas lecta sibi parte tabellas,
vixque manus retinens trepidantis ab ore ministri,
'dum licet, o vetitae scelerate libidinis auctor,
effuge!' ait 'qui, si nostrum tua fata pudorem
non traherent secum, poenas mihi morte dedisses.'
ille fugit pavidus, dominaeque ferocia Cauni
dicta refert. palles audita, Bybli, repulsa,
et pavet obsessum glaciali frigore corpus.
mens tamen ut rediit, pariter rediere furores,
linguaque vix tales icto dedit aere voces:
'et merito! quid enim temeraria vulneris huius
indicium feci? quid, quae celanda fuerunt,
tam cito commisi properatis verba tabellis?
ante erat ambiguis animi sententia dictis
praetemptanda mihi. ne non sequeretur euntem,
parte aliqua veli, qualis foret aura, notare
debueram, tutoque mari decurrere, quae nunc
non exploratis inplevi lintea ventis.
auferor in scopulos igitur, subversaque toto
obruor oceano, neque habent mea vela recursus.
'Quid quod et ominibus certis prohibebar amori
indulgere meo, tum cum mihi ferre iubenti
excidit et fecit spes nostras cera caducas?
nonne vel illa dies fuerat, vel tota voluntas,
sed potius mutanda dies? deus ipse monebat
signaque certa dabat, si non male sana fuissem.

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As she was giving them, the tablets slipped from her hands and fell. She's disturbed by the omen, yet she sent them. The attendant, having found a suitable time, approaches and hands over the hidden words. The Maeandrian youth, stunned with sudden anger, throws down the accepted tablets, having read a part for himself, and scarcely restraining his hands from the trembling attendant's mouth, says: "While you can, O scoundrel, author of forbidden lust, flee! Who, if your fate didn't drag my shame with it, would have given me punishment by death."

He flees in fear and reports fierce Caunus' words to his mistress. Byblis grows pale at the rejection heard and her body, seized by icy cold, trembles. Yet as her mind returned, at the same time her madness returned, and her tongue, scarcely striking the air, gave such words:

"And deservedly! For why, rash, did I make evidence of this wound? Why did I entrust to hasty tablets words that should have been hidden? First I should have tested my spirit's judgment with ambiguous words. To see whether he would follow as I went, I should have noticed with some part of sail what sort of breeze there was, and run across a safe sea - I who now filled my sails with winds not explored. Therefore I'm carried onto rocks and, overturned, I'm buried in the whole ocean, and my sails have no retreat.

Byblis Pursues

"What of the fact that I was forbidden by certain omens to indulge my love, when, as I was ordering them carried, the wax fell and made our hopes fall? Shouldn't either that day have been changed, or the whole intention - but rather the day should have been changed? The god himself was warning and gave certain signs if I hadn't been insane. And yet I myself should have spoken, and not entrusted myself to wax, and opened my madness in person. He would have seen tears, he would have seen the face of a lover. I could have said more than the tablets held. I could have placed arms around his unwilling neck, and if I were rejected, I could have seemed about to die and embraced his feet and, poured out, begged for life. I would have done everything. If singular things couldn't bend his hard mind, all things together could have.

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et tamen ipsa loqui, nec me committere cerae
debueram, praesensque meos aperire furores.
vidisset lacrimas, vultum vidisset amantis;
plura loqui poteram, quam quae cepere tabellae.
invito potui circumdare bracchia collo,
et, si reicerer, potui moritura videri
amplectique pedes, adfusaque poscere vitam.
omnia fecissem, quorum si singula duram
flectere non poterant, potuissent omnia, mentem.
forsitan et missi sit quaedam culpa ministri:
non adiit apte, nec legit idonea, credo,
tempora, nec petiit horamque animumque vacantem.
'Haec nocuere mihi. neque enim est de tigride natus
nec rigidas silices solidumve in pectore ferrum
aut adamanta gerit, nec lac bibit ille leaenae.
vincetur! repetendus erit, nec taedia coepti
ulla mei capiam, dum spiritus iste manebit.
nam primum, si facta mihi revocare liceret,
non coepisse fuit: coepta expugnare secundum est.
quippe nec ille potest, ut iam mea vota relinquam,
non tamen ausorum semper memor esse meorum.
et, quia desierim, leviter voluisse videbor,
aut etiam temptasse illum insidiisque petisse,
vel certe non hoc, qui plurimus urget et urit
pectora nostra, deo, sed victa libidine credar;
denique iam nequeo nil commisisse nefandum.
et scripsi et petii: reserata est nostra voluntas;
ut nihil adiciam, non possum innoxia dici.
quod superest, multum est in vota, in crimina parvum.'
dixit, et (incertae tanta est discordia mentis),
cum pigeat temptasse, libet temptare. modumque
exit et infelix committit saepe repelli.
mox ubi finis abest, patriam fugit ille nefasque,
inque peregrina ponit nova moenia terra.
Tum vero maestam tota Miletida mente
defecisse ferunt, tum vero a pectore vestem
diripuit planxitque suos furibunda lacertos;
iamque palam est demens, inconcessaeque fatetur
spem veneris, siquidem patriam invisosque penates
deserit, et profugi sequitur vestigia fratris.

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"Perhaps there was some fault of the attendant sent. He didn't approach suitably, nor - I believe - did he read suitable times, nor did he seek an hour and spirit free. These things harmed me. For he's not born of a tigress, nor does he have rigid flint or solid iron in his chest or adamant, nor did he drink the milk of a lioness. He'll be conquered! He must be tried again, nor will I take any weariness of what I've begun, as long as this breath remains. For first, if it were possible to call back what I've done, it was not to have begun: to storm what's begun is second. Indeed even if I leave off now, he can't always remember what I dared. And because I've stopped, I'll seem to have wanted lightly, or even to have tested him and attacked him with traps, or certainly not to be believed urged and burned by this god - who presses and burns my heart most - but to be overcome by lust. Finally now I can't have done no wrong. I've written and sought. My will is unsealed. Though I add nothing, I can't be called innocent. What remains is much for prayers, small for crimes."

She spoke, and (such is the discord of an uncertain mind) when it grieves her to have tried, it pleases her to try. She exceeds measure and unhappy one commits herself to be often rejected. Soon when there's no end, he flees his homeland and the wrong and establishes new walls in foreign land.

Byblis Transformed

Then truly they report the Miletid woman, grief-stricken in all her mind, failed. Then truly she tore her garment from her breast and beat her arms in fury. And now openly she's mad and confesses hope of forbidden love, since indeed she deserts her homeland and hateful household gods and follows the tracks of her fugitive brother. Just as your Bacchantes, moved by your thyrsus, offspring of Semele, celebrate the triennial rites of Ismarus, Byblis is seen to have wailed through the wide fields no otherwise by the Bubasis' daughters-in-law. Leaving them behind, she wanders through Caria and the armed Lelegians and Lycia. Now she had left behind Cragon and Limyre and Xanthus' waves, and the place where Chimaera, on her ridge, had fire in her middle parts, the breast and face of a lioness, a serpent's tail.

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utque tuo motae, proles Semeleia, thyrso
Ismariae celebrant repetita triennia bacchae,
Byblida non aliter latos ululasse per agros
Bubasides videre nurus. quibus illa relictis
Caras et armiferos Lelegas Lyciamque pererrat.
iam Cragon et Limyren Xanthique reliquerat undas,
quoque Chimaera iugo mediis in partibus ignem,
pectus et ora leae, caudam serpentis habebat.
deficiunt silvae, cum tu lassata sequendo
concidis, et dura positis tellure capillis,
Bybli, iaces, frondesque tuo premis ore caducas.
saepe illam nymphae teneris Lelegeides ulnis
tollere conantur, saepe, ut medeatur amori,
praecipiunt, surdaeque adhibent solacia menti.
muta iacet, viridesque suis tenet unguibus herbas
Byblis, et umectat lacrimarum gramina rivo.
naidas his venam, quae numquam arescere posset,
subposuisse ferunt. quid enim dare maius habebant?
protinus, ut secto piceae de cortice guttae,
utve tenax gravida manat tellure bitumen;
utve sub adventu spirantis lene favoni
sole remollescit quae frigore constitit unda;
sic lacrimis consumpta suis Phoebeia Byblis
vertitur in fontem, qui nunc quoque vallibus illis
nomen habet dominae, nigraque sub ilice manat.
Fama novi centum Cretaeas forsitan urbes
implesset monstri, si non miracula nuper
Iphide mutata Crete propiora tulisset.
proxima Cnosiaco nam quondam Phaestia regno
progenuit tellus ignotum nomine Ligdum,
ingenua de plebe virum, nec census in illo
nobilitate sua maior, sed vita fidesque
inculpata fuit. gravidae qui coniugis aures
vocibus his monuit, cum iam prope partus adesset.
'quae voveam, duo sunt: minimo ut relevere dolore,
utque marem parias. onerosior altera sors est,
et vires fortuna negat. quod abominor, ergo
edita forte tuo fuerit si femina partu, -
invitus mando; pietas, ignosce! - necetur.'
dixerat, et lacrimis vultum lavere profusis,

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The forests fail. When you, worn out with following, collapsed, Byblis, and lay on the hard earth with hair laid down, you press fallen leaves with your mouth. Often the Lelegeid nymphs try to lift her in tender arms, often they advise how to cure love and offer consolation to her deaf mind. Mute she lies and grasps green grass with her nails, Byblis, and wets the grass with a stream of tears. The Naiads are said to have placed beneath these a vein that could never dry. For what greater thing could they have to give? Immediately, just as drops from cut pitch bark, or as tenacious bitumen flows from pregnant earth, or as, at the approach of the gently breathing west wind, water that was frozen by cold softens in the sun - so Phoebean Byblis, consumed by her own tears, is turned into a spring that even now in those valleys has the name of its mistress and flows under a black oak.

Iphis and Ianthe

The fame of the strange marvel would perhaps have filled a hundred Cretan cities if Crete hadn't recently borne nearer miracles in Iphis changed. For once near the Cnosian kingdom, Phaestian land gave birth to Ligdus, unknown by name, a man from the freeborn common people, and his wealth no greater than his nobility, but his life and trust were blameless. He warned the ears of his pregnant wife with these words, when now the birth was near:

"Two things I pray for: that you be relieved with minimum pain, and that you bear a male. The other lot is more burdensome, and fortune denies the strength. Therefore - what I dread - if by chance a female will have been born from your delivery - unwilling I command; piety, forgive! - let it be killed."

He spoke, and tears washed the face of both him who commanded and her to whom commands were given. Yet still Telethusa begs her husband with empty prayers not to place hope in narrow bounds. Ligdus' judgment is certain. And now scarcely could she endure carrying the heavy womb with mature weight, when in the space of midnight, under sleep's image, the Inachian goddess stood - or seemed to stand - before the bed, accompanied by the pomp of sacred things. Lunar horns were on her forehead with ears of grain gleaming with bright gold and royal splendor. With her was barking Anubis and sacred Bubastis and Apis varied with colors, and he who presses voice and urges silence with finger, and

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tam qui mandabat, quam cui mandata dabantur.
sed tamen usque suum vanis Telethusa maritum
sollicitat precibus, ne spem sibi ponat in arto.
certa sua est Ligdo sententia. iamque ferendo
vix erat illa gravem maturo pondere ventrem,
cum medio noctis spatio sub imagine somni
Inachis ante torum, pompa comitata sacrorum,
aut stetit aut visa est. inerant lunaria fronti
cornua cum spicis nitido flaventibus auro
et regale decus; cum qua latrator Anubis,
sanctaque Bubastis, variusque coloribus Apis,
quique premit vocem digitoque silentia suadet;
sistraque erant, numquamque satis quaesitus Osiris,
plenaque somniferis serpens peregrina venenis.
tum velut excussam somno et manifesta videntem
sic adfata dea est: 'pars o Telethusa mearum,
pone graves curas, mandataque falle mariti.
nec dubita, cum te partu Lucina levarit,
tollere quicquid erit. dea sum auxiliaris opemque
exorata fero; nec te coluisse quereris
ingratum numen.' monuit, thalamoque recessit.
laeta toro surgit, purasque ad sidera supplex
Cressa manus tollens, rata sint sua visa, precatur.
Ut dolor increvit, seque ipsum pondus in auras
expulit, et nata est ignaro femina patre,
iussit ali mater puerum mentita. fidemque
res habuit, neque erat ficti nisi conscia nutrix.
vota pater solvit, nomenque inponit avitum:
Iphis avus fuerat. gavisa est nomine mater,
quod commune foret, nec quemquam falleret illo.
inde incepta pia mendacia fraude latebant.
cultus erat pueri; facies, quam sive puellae,
sive dares puero, fuerat formosus uterque.
Tertius interea decimo successerat annus:
cum pater, Iphi, tibi flavam despondet Ianthen,
inter Phaestiadas quae laudatissima formae
dote fuit virgo, Dictaeo nata Teleste.
par aetas, par forma fuit, primasque magistris
accepere artes, elementa aetatis, ab isdem.
hinc amor ambarum tetigit rude pectus, et aequum

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there were sistrums, and Osiris never sufficiently sought, and a foreign snake full of sleep-bringing poisons.

Then as if shaken from sleep and seeing clearly, the goddess addressed her thus: "O Telethusa, part of my worshipers, set down heavy cares and deceive your husband's commands. And don't hesitate, when Lucina relieves you in childbirth, to raise up whatever it will be. I'm a goddess who brings aid, and I bring help when entreated. Nor will you complain you worshiped an ungrateful divinity." She warned and withdrew from the chamber. Joyful, the Cretan woman rises from the bed and, suppliant, raising pure hands to the stars, prays that her visions be fulfilled.

Iphis Born

When pain increased and the weight itself thrust into the air, a girl was born to the unknowing father. The mother, lying, ordered her nourished as a boy. The affair had faith, and no one was aware of the pretense except the nurse. The father paid vows and gave an ancestral name. Iphis was the grandfather. The mother rejoiced at the name because it was common and wouldn't deceive anyone by it. From there the pious deception, begun with fraud, lay hidden. The clothing was a boy's. The face, whether you gave it to a girl or gave it to a boy - either one would have been beautiful.

The Problem

Meanwhile the thirteenth year had succeeded the tenth. When your father betroths to you, Iphis, golden Ianthe, who among the Phaestian women was most praised for beauty's dowry, a maiden born to Dictaean Telestes. Their age was equal, their beauty equal, and they received their first arts, the elements of life, from the same teachers. From this, love touched the untrained heart of both and gave an equal wound to each, but their confidence was unequal. Ianthe expects marriage and the times of the promised torch, and she whom she thinks is a man, she believes will be a man. Iphis loves one she despairs to be able to enjoy, and this very thing increases her flames, and virgin burns for virgin.

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vulnus utrique dedit, sed erat fiducia dispar:
coniugium pactaeque exspectat tempora taedae,
quamque virum putat esse, virum fore credit Ianthe;
Iphis amat, qua posse frui desperat, et auget
hoc ipsum flammas, ardetque in virgine virgo,
vixque tenens lacrimas 'quis me manet exitus,' inquit
'cognita quam nulli, quam prodigiosa novaeque
cura tenet Veneris? si di mihi parcere vellent,
parcere debuerant; si non, et perdere vellent,
naturale malum saltem et de more dedissent.
nec vaccam vaccae, nec equas amor urit equarum:
urit oves aries, sequitur sua femina cervum.
sic et aves coeunt, interque animalia cuncta
femina femineo conrepta cupidine nulla est.
vellem nulla forem! ne non tamen omnia Crete
monstra ferat, taurum dilexit filia Solis,
femina nempe marem. meus est furiosior illo,
si verum profitemur, amor. tamen illa secuta est
spem Veneris; tamen illa dolis et imagine vaccae
passa bovem est, et erat, qui deciperetur, adulter.
huc licet ex toto sollertia confluat orbe,
ipse licet revolet ceratis Daedalus alis,
quid faciet? num me puerum de virgine doctis
artibus efficiet? num te mutabit, Ianthe?
'Quin animum firmas, teque ipsa recolligis, Iphi,
consiliique inopes et stultos excutis ignes?
quid sis nata, vide, nisi te quoque decipis ipsam,
et pete quod fas est, et ama quod femina debes!
spes est, quae faciat, spes est, quae pascat amorem.
hanc tibi res adimit. non te custodia caro
arcet ab amplexu, nec cauti cura mariti,
non patris asperitas, non se negat ipsa roganti,
nec tamen est potiunda tibi, nec, ut omnia fiant,
esse potes felix, ut dique hominesque laborent.
nunc quoque votorum nulla est pars vana meorum,
dique mihi faciles, quicquid valuere, dederunt;
quodque ego, vult genitor, vult ipsa, socerque futurus.
at non vult natura, potentior omnibus istis,
quae mihi sola nocet. venit ecce optabile tempus,
luxque iugalis adest, et iam mea fiet Ianthe -

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Scarcely holding back tears, she says: "What end awaits me, held by a care known to none, how strange and new a care of Venus! If the gods wanted to spare me, they should have spared me. If not, and they wanted to destroy me, they should have given at least a natural evil and from custom. Nor does love for cow burn cow, nor for mares burn mares. The ram burns for ewes, the female follows her deer. So too birds mate, and among all animals, no female is seized by female desire. I wish I were none! Yet so Crete doesn't bear all monsters, the daughter of the Sun loved a bull - a female at least a male. My madness is more furious than that, if we confess truth. Yet she followed hope of Venus. Yet she by tricks and the image of a cow endured the bull, and there was one who was deceived - an adulterer.

"Though cleverness should flow together here from the whole world, though Daedalus himself should fly back on waxed wings, what will he do? Can he make me a boy from a girl with learned arts? Can he change you, Ianthe?

Iphis' Lament

"No, rather strengthen your spirit, Iphis, and collect yourself and shake off these foolish and hopeless fires! See what you were born, unless you deceive yourself too, and seek what's right, and love what a woman should! Hope is what makes, hope is what feeds love. Reality takes this from you. No guard keeps you from dear embrace, nor care of cautious husband, nor father's harshness, nor does she herself deny to you asking. Yet she can't be possessed by you, nor, though all things happen, can you be happy, though gods and men labor. Now too no part of my prayers is vain, and the gods who are easy to me have given whatever they could. What I want, my father wants, she herself wants, and her future father-in-law wants. But nature doesn't want it, more powerful than all those, which alone harms me. Look, the desirable time comes, and the wedding day is here, and now Ianthe will be mine - and I won't have her. We'll thirst in the middle of the waters. Why, Juno, patroness of marriage, why, Hymenaeus, do you come to these rites where he who leads is absent, where we're both being married?"

She suppressed her voice from these words. Nor does the other maiden burn less hotly, and she prays that you come quickly, Hymenaeus.

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nec mihi continget: mediis sitiemus in undis.
pronuba quid Iuno, quid ad haec, Hymenaee, venitis
sacra, quibus qui ducat abest, ubi nubimus ambae?'
pressit ab his vocem. nec lenius altera virgo
aestuat, utque celer venias, Hymenaee, precatur.
quae petit, haec Telethusa timens modo tempora differt,
nunc ficto languore moram trahit, omina saepe
visaque causatur. sed iam consumpserat omnem
materiam ficti, dilataque tempora taedae
institerant, unusque dies restabat. at illa
crinalem capiti vittam nataeque sibique
detrahit, et passis aram complexa capillis
'Isi, Paraetonium Mareoticaque arva Pharonque
quae colis, et septem digestum in cornua Nilum:
fer, precor,' inquit 'opem, nostroque medere timori!
te, dea, te quondam tuaque haec insignia vidi
cunctaque cognovi, sonitum comitantiaque aera
sistrorum, memorique animo tua iussa notavi.
quod videt haec lucem, quod non ego punior, ecce
consilium munusque tuum est. miserere duarum,
auxilioque iuva!' lacrimae sunt verba secutae.
visa dea est movisse suas (et moverat) aras,
et templi tremuere fores, imitataque lunam
cornua fulserunt, crepuitque sonabile sistrum.
non secura quidem, fausto tamen omine laeta
mater abit templo. sequitur comes Iphis euntem,
quam solita est, maiore gradu, nec candor in ore
permanet, et vires augentur, et acrior ipse est
vultus, et incomptis brevior mensura capillis,
plusque vigoris adest, habuit quam femina. nam quae
femina nuper eras, puer es! date munera templis,
nec timida gaudete fide! dant munera templis,
addunt et titulum: titulus breve carmen habebat:
dona : puer : solvit : quae : femina : voverat : iphis.
postera lux radiis latum patefecerat orbem,
cum Venus et Iuno sociosque Hymenaeus ad ignes
conveniunt, potiturque sua puer Iphis Ianthe.

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Telethusa's Prayer

What she seeks, Telethusa, fearing, now delays the times, now draws out delay with feigned languor, often she alleges omens and visions as causes. But now she had consumed all material for pretense, and the delayed times of the torch had pressed on, and one day remained. Then she removes the hair ribbon from her head and her daughter's head, and embracing the altar with streaming hair:

"Isis, who dwell in Paraetonium and Mareotic fields and Pharos and the Nile divided into seven horns: bring, I pray," she says, "help and heal our fear! You, goddess, you once and these your emblems I saw and recognized all - the sound and the accompanying bronze of sistrums - and I noted your commands in my remembering mind. That she sees light, that I'm not punished - look! - this is your counsel and gift. Pity us two and help with aid!" Tears followed her words.

The goddess seemed to have moved her altars (and she had moved them), and the temple's doors trembled, and the horns imitating the moon flashed, and the rattling sistrum clattered. Not secure indeed, yet joyful with the favorable omen, the mother leaves the temple. Iphis follows her as companion going, with greater stride than she was accustomed, and the whiteness doesn't remain in her face, and strength increases, and her very expression is sharper, and the measure of her unkempt hair is shorter, and more vigor is present than a woman had. For you who were a woman recently are a boy! Give gifts to the temples and rejoice with not timid faith! They give gifts to the temples and add an inscription too. The inscription had a brief song:

THE GIFTS A BOY IPHIS PAYS WHICH A GIRL IPHIS VOWED

The next daylight had opened the wide world with rays when Venus and Juno and companion Hymenaeus gather for the wedding fires, and the boy Iphis possesses his Ianthe.

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BOOK 10

Inde per inmensum croceo velatus amictu
aethera digreditur Ciconumque Hymenaeus ad oras
tendit et Orphea nequiquam voce vocatur.
adfuit ille quidem, sed nec sollemnia verba
nec laetos vultus nec felix attulit omen.
fax quoque, quam tenuit, lacrimoso stridula fumo
usque fuit nullosque invenit motibus ignes.
exitus auspicio gravior: nam nupta per herbas
dum nova Naiadum turba comitata vagatur,
occidit in talum serpentis dente recepto.
quam satis ad superas postquam Rhodopeius auras
deflevit vates, ne non temptaret et umbras,
ad Styga Taenaria est ausus descendere porta
perque leves populos simulacraque functa sepulcro
Persephonen adiit inamoenaque regna tenentem
umbrarum dominum pulsisque ad carmina nervis
sic ait: 'o positi sub terra numina mundi,
in quem reccidimus, quicquid mortale creamur,
si licet et falsi positis ambagibus oris
vera loqui sinitis, non huc, ut opaca viderem
Tartara, descendi, nec uti villosa colubris
terna Medusaei vincirem guttura monstri:
causa viae est coniunx, in quam calcata venenum
vipera diffudit crescentesque abstulit annos.
posse pati volui nec me temptasse negabo:
vicit Amor. supera deus hic bene notus in ora est;
an sit et hic, dubito: sed et hic tamen auguror esse,
famaque si veteris non est mentita rapinae,
vos quoque iunxit Amor. per ego haec loca plena timoris,
per Chaos hoc ingens vastique silentia regni,
Eurydices, oro, properata retexite fata.
omnia debemur vobis, paulumque morati
serius aut citius sedem properamus ad unam.
tendimus huc omnes, haec est domus ultima, vosque
humani generis longissima regna tenetis.
haec quoque, cum iustos matura peregerit annos,
iuris erit vestri: pro munere poscimus usum;
quodsi fata negant veniam pro coniuge, certum est
nolle redire mihi: leto gaudete duorum.'

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Orpheus and Eurydice

From there, wrapped in his saffron cloak, Hymenaeus flew through the vast sky toward the Ciconian shores. Orpheus called for him, but the god of marriage came reluctantly. He was there, yes, but he brought no sacred blessings, no words of joy, no lucky omens. Even the wedding torch he carried sputtered and smoked, stinging everyone's eyes, and refused to catch flame no matter how much he shook it. The outcome was worse than the omen. The new bride was wandering through the grass with a crowd of water nymphs when a serpent struck - its fangs sinking into her ankle. She fell dead.

The Thracian poet mourned her enough in the world above. But to leave nothing untried, he dared to descend through the Taenarian gate to the river Styx itself. He passed through the pale crowds of ghosts and the shades of the buried dead until he came before Persephone and the lord who rules these joyless realms. Then, striking his lyre strings to accompany his words, he sang:

"O gods of this underworld to which all of us mortals eventually fall - if I'm allowed to speak honestly, without polite evasions - I didn't come here to tour the depths of Tartarus or to chain up that three-headed monster with serpents bristling from its necks. I came for my wife. A viper bit her when she stepped on it, pumping venom into her veins and cutting short her years. I wanted to bear this loss - believe me, I tried. But Love won. You know that god well enough in the world above. I'd guess he's known down here too, and if the old story about your marriage is true, then Love brought you two together as well.

"By these frightening realms, by this vast Chaos, by the silence of your endless kingdom, I beg you: unspin the early death of Eurydice. Everything we are belongs to you eventually. We linger a little while, then sooner or later we all hurry to this one home. We're all headed here. This is our final house, and you hold the longest empire over humankind. She too, when she's lived her full measure of years, will fall under your law. I'm asking to borrow her - that's all. But if the Fates won't let you pardon my wife, then I'm sure of this: I won't go back either. You can celebrate two deaths instead of one."

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Talia dicentem nervosque ad verba moventem
exsangues flebant animae; nec Tantalus undam
captavit refugam, stupuitque Ixionis orbis,
nec carpsere iecur volucres, urnisque vacarunt
Belides, inque tuo sedisti, Sisyphe, saxo.
tunc primum lacrimis victarum carmine fama est
Eumenidum maduisse genas, nec regia coniunx
sustinet oranti nec, qui regit ima, negare,
Eurydicenque vocant: umbras erat illa recentes
inter et incessit passu de vulnere tardo.
hanc simul et legem Rhodopeius accipit heros,
ne flectat retro sua lumina, donec Avernas
exierit valles; aut inrita dona futura.
carpitur adclivis per muta silentia trames,
arduus, obscurus, caligine densus opaca,
nec procul afuerunt telluris margine summae:
hic, ne deficeret, metuens avidusque videndi
flexit amans oculos, et protinus illa relapsa est,
bracchiaque intendens prendique et prendere certans
nil nisi cedentes infelix arripit auras.
iamque iterum moriens non est de coniuge quicquam
questa suo (quid enim nisi se quereretur amatam?)
supremumque 'vale,' quod iam vix auribus ille
acciperet, dixit revolutaque rursus eodem est.
Non aliter stupuit gemina nece coniugis Orpheus,
quam tria qui timidus, medio portante catenas,
colla canis vidit, quem non pavor ante reliquit,
quam natura prior saxo per corpus oborto,
quique in se crimen traxit voluitque videri
Olenos esse nocens, tuque, o confisa figurae,
infelix Lethaea, tuae, iunctissima quondam
pectora, nunc lapides, quos umida sustinet Ide.
orantem frustraque iterum transire volentem
portitor arcuerat: septem tamen ille diebus
squalidus in ripa Cereris sine munere sedit;
cura dolorque animi lacrimaeque alimenta fuere.
esse deos Erebi crudeles questus, in altam
se recipit Rhodopen pulsumque aquilonibus Haemum.
Tertius aequoreis inclusum Piscibus annum

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As he sang these words to the music of his strings, the bloodless spirits wept. Tantalus stopped reaching for the water that always fled his lips. Ixion's wheel stopped turning. The vultures left off tearing at the liver. The daughters of Danaus abandoned their water jars. And you, Sisyphus - you sat down on your rock. Then, people say, for the first time ever the Furies' cheeks were wet with tears, conquered by his song. Neither the queen of the underworld nor her lord who rules the dead could bear to refuse him. They called for Eurydice. She was among the recent arrivals, walking slowly because of her wound.

Orpheus received her back - but with one condition. He must not look back at her until they'd left the valleys of the underworld, or the gift would be revoked. They took the climbing path through utter silence - steep, dark, thick with black fog. They were almost at the border of the upper world when he, afraid she might be failing, desperate to see her, turned and looked back. Instantly she slipped away. She stretched out her arms, struggling to hold him and be held, but all she grasped was yielding air.

Dying for the second time, she made no complaint against her husband. What could she complain about, except that she was loved? She whispered a final "farewell" that barely reached his ears, then fell back again to the place she'd come from.

Orpheus' Grief

Orpheus was stunned by losing his wife a second time - as stunned as that fearful man who saw the three-headed watchdog in chains and couldn't shake his terror until his very nature changed, stone creeping through his body. Or like Olenos, who took the blame on himself and chose to seem guilty. Or like you, unlucky Lethaea, so confident in your beauty - you two were once hearts completely joined, now you're just stones that rainy Mount Ida holds up.

The ferryman refused Orpheus when he begged to cross the river again. Still, for seven days he sat filthy on the bank, eating nothing. Worry, heartache, and tears were his only food. He cursed the cruelty of the gods of the underworld, then withdrew to the heights of Mount Rhodope and wind-beaten Haemus.

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finierat Titan, omnemque refugerat Orpheus
femineam Venerem, seu quod male cesserat illi,
sive fidem dederat; multas tamen ardor habebat
iungere se vati, multae doluere repulsae.
ille etiam Thracum populis fuit auctor amorem
in teneros transferre mares citraque iuventam
aetatis breve ver et primos carpere flores.
Collis erat collemque super planissima campi
area, quam viridem faciebant graminis herbae:
umbra loco deerat; qua postquam parte resedit
dis genitus vates et fila sonantia movit,
umbra loco venit: non Chaonis afuit arbor,
non nemus Heliadum, non frondibus aesculus altis,
nec tiliae molles, nec fagus et innuba laurus,
et coryli fragiles et fraxinus utilis hastis
enodisque abies curvataque glandibus ilex
et platanus genialis acerque coloribus inpar
amnicolaeque simul salices et aquatica lotos
perpetuoque virens buxum tenuesque myricae
et bicolor myrtus et bacis caerula tinus.
vos quoque, flexipedes hederae, venistis et una
pampineae vites et amictae vitibus ulmi
ornique et piceae pomoque onerata rubenti
arbutus et lentae, victoris praemia, palmae
et succincta comas hirsutaque vertice pinus,
grata deum matri, siquidem Cybeleius Attis
exuit hac hominem truncoque induruit illo.
Adfuit huic turbae metas imitata cupressus,
nunc arbor, puer ante deo dilectus ab illo,
qui citharam nervis et nervis temperat arcum.
namque sacer nymphis Carthaea tenentibus arva
ingens cervus erat, lateque patentibus altas
ipse suo capiti praebebat cornibus umbras.
cornua fulgebant auro, demissaque in armos
pendebant tereti gemmata monilia collo.
bulla super frontem parvis argentea loris
vincta movebatur; parilesque ex aere nitebant
auribus e geminis circum cava tempora bacae;
isque metu vacuus naturalique pavore

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Three times the sun had completed its yearly course through watery Pisces. Orpheus had avoided all love with women - whether because things had ended so badly for him, or because he'd sworn off love entirely. Yet many women burned with desire to marry the poet. Many grieved when he rejected them. Orpheus was the first to teach the Thracian people to turn their love toward young men instead, enjoying the brief springtime and early flowers of boyhood.

Orpheus' Song: The Grove Gathers

There was a hill, and on the hill a wide flat field made green by grass. The place had no shade. But when the god-descended bard sat there and struck his ringing strings, shade came. The oak of Chaonia came. The grove of poplar trees that were once the Heliades came. The high-leafed oak came, and soft lindens, and beech, and virgin laurel, and fragile hazels, and the ash tree good for spear-shafts, and the smooth fir, and the holm oak bending under its acorns. The festive plane tree came, and the many-colored maple, and river-willows, and water-loving lotus, and evergreen boxwood, and slender tamarisk, and two-toned myrtle, and viburnum heavy with dark blue berries. You came too, twining ivy, and with you came the vine tendrils and vine-clad elms, and mountain ash and pine trees, and the strawberry tree loaded with red fruit, and supple palms - the prize of victory - and the pine with its bunched needles and shaggy crown, beloved by the Mother of the Gods, since her Attis shed his humanity for this tree and stiffened into its trunk.

To this crowd came the cypress, cone-shaped like a turning post in the arena - now a tree, but once a boy loved by the god who masters both the lyre-strings and the bow-strings.

Cyparissus and the Stag

There was a huge stag, sacred to the nymphs who lived in the fields of Carthaean Ceos. His antlers spread so wide they cast shade over his own head. Those antlers gleamed with gold, and jeweled collars hung from his sleek neck down to his shoulders. A silver charm dangled on his forehead, fastened with delicate straps, and bronze ornaments shone from both ears beside his temples. With all natural shyness

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deposito celebrare domos mulcendaque colla
quamlibet ignotis manibus praebere solebat.
sed tamen ante alios, Ceae pulcherrime gentis,
gratus erat, Cyparisse, tibi: tu pabula cervum
ad nova, tu liquidi ducebas fontis ad undam,
tu modo texebas varios per cornua flores,
nunc eques in tergo residens huc laetus et illuc
mollia purpureis frenabas ora capistris.
Aestus erat mediusque dies, solisque vapore
concava litorei fervebant bracchia Cancri:
fessus in herbosa posuit sua corpora terra
cervus et arborea frigus ducebat ab umbra.
hunc puer inprudens iaculo Cyparissus acuto
fixit et, ut saevo morientem vulnere vidit,
velle mori statuit. quae non solacia Phoebus
dixit et, ut leviter pro materiaque doleret,
admonuit! gemit ille tamen munusque supremum
hoc petit a superis, ut tempore lugeat omni.
iamque per inmensos egesto sanguine fletus
in viridem verti coeperunt membra colorem,
et, modo qui nivea pendebant fronte capilli,
horrida caesaries fieri sumptoque rigore
sidereum gracili spectare cacumine caelum.
ingemuit tristisque deus 'lugebere nobis
lugebisque alios aderisque dolentibus' inquit.
Tale nemus vates attraxerat inque ferarum
concilio, medius turbae, volucrumque sedebat.
ut satis inpulsas temptavit pollice chordas
et sensit varios, quamvis diversa sonarent,
concordare modos, hoc vocem carmine movit:
'ab Iove, Musa parens, (cedunt Iovis omnia regno)
carmina nostra move! Iovis est mihi saepe potestas
dicta prius: cecini plectro graviore Gigantas
sparsaque Phlegraeis victricia fulmina campis.
nunc opus est leviore lyra, puerosque canamus
dilectos superis inconcessisque puellas
ignibus attonitas meruisse libidine poenam.
'Rex superum Phrygii quondam Ganymedis amore
arsit, et inventum est aliquid, quod Iuppiter esse,

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gone, free from fear, he would visit people's homes and offer his neck to be petted even by strangers' hands. But of everyone, he was dearest to you, Cyparissus, most beautiful boy of the Cean people. You led him to fresh pastures and to clear spring waters. You wove bright flowers through his antlers. Sometimes you rode on his back, joyfully guiding him this way and that with purple reins between his soft lips.

It was noon on a summer day. The sun's heat scorched the shore, making the curved arms of the Crab constellation burn. The weary stag lay down on the grass and drew in the coolness of a tree's shade. There, young Cyparissus accidentally pierced him with a sharp javelin. When he saw the stag dying from the brutal wound, the boy decided he wanted to die too. Phoebus spoke every consolation he could think of, warning him to grieve moderately, in proportion to the loss. But Cyparissus only groaned and begged this as a final gift from the gods above: let him mourn forever. And now, through endless weeping, as his blood drained away, his limbs began turning green. The hair that had hung from his snowy forehead became rough bristles, then stiffened into a slender peak pointing toward the starry sky. The god groaned sadly and said: "I will mourn you, and you will mourn for others. You will stand with those who grieve."

Orpheus' Song Begins

This was the grove the bard had drawn to himself. He sat surrounded by an assembly of wild beasts and a crowd of birds. After he'd tested the strings enough with his thumb and heard that the different notes, though distinct, harmonized, he lifted his voice in this song:

"Begin with Jove, mother Muse - for all things yield to Jupiter's rule. I've often sung of Jove's power before. I sang of the Giants in a graver key, of the conquering thunderbolts hurled across the Phlegraean plains. But now I need a lighter touch on the lyre. Let me sing of boys beloved by the gods, and of girls struck by forbidden passions who earned punishment for their lust.

Ganymede

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quam quod erat, mallet. nulla tamen alite verti
dignatur, nisi quae posset sua fulmina ferre.
nec mora, percusso mendacibus aere pennis
abripit Iliaden; qui nunc quoque pocula miscet
invitaque Iovi nectar Iunone ministrat.
'Te quoque, Amyclide, posuisset in aethere Phoebus,
tristia si spatium ponendi fata dedissent.
qua licet, aeternus tamen es, quotiensque repellit
ver hiemem, Piscique Aries succedit aquoso,
tu totiens oreris viridique in caespite flores.
te meus ante omnes genitor dilexit, et orbe
in medio positi caruerunt praeside Delphi,
dum deus Eurotan inmunitamque frequentat
Sparten, nec citharae nec sunt in honore sagittae:
inmemor ipse sui non retia ferre recusat,
non tenuisse canes, non per iuga montis iniqui
ire comes, longaque alit adsuetudine flammas.
iamque fere medius Titan venientis et actae
noctis erat spatioque pari distabat utrimque,
corpora veste levant et suco pinguis olivi
splendescunt latique ineunt certamina disci.
quem prius aerias libratum Phoebus in auras
misit et oppositas disiecit pondere nubes;
reccidit in solidam longo post tempore terram
pondus et exhibuit iunctam cum viribus artem.
protinus inprudens actusque cupidine lusus
tollere Taenarides orbem properabat, at illum
dura repercusso subiecit verbere tellus
in vultus, Hyacinthe, tuos. expalluit aeque
quam puer ipse deus conlapsosque excipit artus,
et modo te refovet, modo tristia vulnera siccat,
nunc animam admotis fugientem sustinet herbis.
nil prosunt artes: erat inmedicabile vulnus.
ut, siquis violas rigidumve papaver in horto
liliaque infringat fulvis horrentia linguis,
marcida demittant subito caput illa vietum
nec se sustineant spectentque cacumine terram:
sic vultus moriens iacet et defecta vigore
ipsa sibi est oneri cervix umeroque recumbit.

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"The king of the gods once burned with love for Phrygian Ganymede. For once, Jupiter found something he'd rather be than himself. Yet he wouldn't stoop to become just any bird - only the one that could carry his thunderbolts. Without hesitation, beating the air with borrowed wings, he snatched up the Trojan boy. Even now Ganymede mixes the wine and serves nectar to Jove, much to Juno's fury.

Hyacinthus

"You too, boy of Amyclae - Phoebus would have set you in the heavens if the grim Fates had given him time. But you're immortal in the way that's allowed. As often as spring drives winter away, as often as Aries follows watery Pisces, that's how often you rise and bloom again on the green grass. My father Apollo loved you above all others. Delphi, set at the center of the world, went without its guardian god while Apollo haunted the Eurotas river and unwalled Sparta. He cared nothing for his lyre or his arrows. Forgetting himself, he didn't refuse to carry the hunting nets or hold the dogs or climb the ridges of rugged mountains as your companion. Long association fed his flames.

"Now the sun stood nearly midway between the night just past and the night to come, equidistant from each. They stripped off their clothes and oiled their bodies until they gleamed, then began their contest with the broad discus. Phoebus went first, balancing it carefully, then sent it flying through the air. Its weight scattered the clouds in its path. After a long time the heavy disc fell back to the solid earth, displaying both skill and strength. Immediately, heedless and eager for the game, the young man from Sparta rushed to pick up the disc. But the hard ground threw it back with a brutal rebound - straight into your face, Hyacinthus. The god turned as pale as the boy. He caught the collapsing body in his arms. Now he tries to warm you, now he wipes the terrible wound, now he applies herbs to hold back your fleeing spirit. But no skill could help. The wound was beyond healing.

"Like flowers in a garden - violets or poppies or lilies bristling with tawny stamens - when someone breaks their stems, they droop and suddenly let their weakened heads fall, unable to hold themselves up, gazing at the ground. That's how the dying boy's face hung, and his neck, strength failing, became a

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"laberis, Oebalide, prima fraudate iuventa,"
Phoebus ait "videoque tuum, mea crimina, vulnus.
tu dolor es facinusque meum: mea dextera leto
inscribenda tuo est. ego sum tibi funeris auctor.
quae mea culpa tamen, nisi si lusisse vocari
culpa potest, nisi culpa potest et amasse vocari?
atque utinam tecumque mori vitamque liceret
reddere! quod quoniam fatali lege tenemur,
semper eris mecum memorique haerebis in ore.
te lyra pulsa manu, te carmina nostra sonabunt,
flosque novus scripto gemitus imitabere nostros.
tempus et illud erit, quo se fortissimus heros
addat in hunc florem folioque legatur eodem."
talia dum vero memorantur Apollinis ore,
ecce cruor, qui fusus humo signaverat herbas,
desinit esse cruor, Tyrioque nitentior ostro
flos oritur formamque capit, quam lilia, si non
purpureus color his, argenteus esset in illis.
non satis hoc Phoebo est (is enim fuit auctor honoris):
ipse suos gemitus foliis inscribit, et AI AI
flos habet inscriptum, funestaque littera ducta est.
nec genuisse pudet Sparten Hyacinthon: honorque
durat in hoc aevi, celebrandaque more priorum
annua praelata redeunt Hyacinthia pompa.
'At si forte roges fecundam Amathunta metallis,
an genuisse velit Propoetidas, abnuat aeque
atque illos, gemino quondam quibus aspera cornu
frons erat, unde etiam nomen traxere Cerastae.
ante fores horum stabat Iovis Hospitis ara;
ignarus sceleris quam siquis sanguine tinctam
advena vidisset, mactatos crederet illic
lactantes vitulos Amathusiacasque bidentes:
hospes erat caesus! sacris offensa nefandis
ipsa suas urbes Ophiusiaque arva parabat
deserere alma Venus. "sed quid loca grata, quid urbes
peccavere meae? quod" dixit "crimen in illis?
exilio poenam potius gens inpia pendat
vel nece vel siquid medium est mortisque fugaeque.
idque quid esse potest, nisi versae poena figurae?"

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burden to itself and sank onto his shoulder.

"'You're slipping away, son of Oebalus, robbed of your youth,' Phoebus said. 'I see your wound - my crime. You are my grief and my doing. My hand must be named the cause of your death. I am the author of your funeral. But what's my fault? Can playing a game be called a fault? Can loving be called a fault? If only I could die with you or give my life for yours! But since fate's laws hold us apart, you'll always be with me, clinging to my lips that remember you. You'll sound from the lyre my hand strikes. You'll sound in my songs. And as a new flower, you'll display our sorrow in your markings. The time will also come when the bravest of heroes will be added to this flower and be read on the same petals.'

"Even while Apollo's truthful mouth was speaking these words - look! The blood that had poured out on the ground and stained the grass ceased to be blood. A flower sprang up, brighter than Tyrian purple, shaped like a lily except for color - purple instead of silver. But this wasn't enough for Phoebus. He himself (for he created this honor) inscribed his grief on the petals. AI AI is written on the flower, the mournful letters drawn there. Sparta feels no shame at having produced Hyacinthus. The honor endures to this day, and every year the Hyacinthia returns, celebrated in the ancient way with solemn procession.

The Cerastae and Propoetides

"But if you asked Amathus, rich in metals, whether it wished it had given birth to the Propoetides, it would say no - just as it would refuse the Cerastae, those men who once had rough foreheads sprouting double horns, which gave them their name. An altar to Jupiter the Host stood before their doors. If any stranger who didn't know their crimes had seen it stained with blood, he would have thought they were sacrificing calves or Cyprian sheep there. But it was guests they killed! Venus was so offended by these wicked rites that she prepared to abandon her own cities and the Ophiusian fields. 'But what have my beloved places done wrong? What crime have my cities committed?' she asked herself. 'Better to let this godless people pay the penalty through exile or death - or something between death and exile. What could that be but transformation?'

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dum dubitat, quo mutet eos, ad cornua vultum
flexit et admonita est haec illis posse relinqui
grandiaque in torvos transformat membra iuvencos.
'Sunt tamen obscenae Venerem Propoetides ausae
esse negare deam; pro quo sua numinis ira
corpora cum fama primae vulgasse feruntur,
utque pudor cessit, sanguisque induruit oris,
in rigidum parvo silicem discrimine versae.
'Quas quia Pygmalion aevum per crimen agentis
viderat, offensus vitiis, quae plurima menti
femineae natura dedit, sine coniuge caelebs
vivebat thalamique diu consorte carebat.
interea niveum mira feliciter arte
sculpsit ebur formamque dedit, qua femina nasci
nulla potest, operisque sui concepit amorem.
virginis est verae facies, quam vivere credas,
et, si non obstet reverentia, velle moveri:
ars adeo latet arte sua. miratur et haurit
pectore Pygmalion simulati corporis ignes.
saepe manus operi temptantes admovet, an sit
corpus an illud ebur, nec adhuc ebur esse fatetur.
oscula dat reddique putat loquiturque tenetque
et credit tactis digitos insidere membris
et metuit, pressos veniat ne livor in artus,
et modo blanditias adhibet, modo grata puellis
munera fert illi conchas teretesque lapillos
et parvas volucres et flores mille colorum
liliaque pictasque pilas et ab arbore lapsas
Heliadum lacrimas; ornat quoque vestibus artus,
dat digitis gemmas, dat longa monilia collo,
aure leves bacae, redimicula pectore pendent:
cuncta decent; nec nuda minus formosa videtur.
conlocat hanc stratis concha Sidonide tinctis
adpellatque tori sociam adclinataque colla
mollibus in plumis, tamquam sensura, reponit.
'Festa dies Veneris tota celeberrima Cypro
venerat, et pandis inductae cornibus aurum
conciderant ictae nivea cervice iuvencae,
turaque fumabant, cum munere functus ad aras

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"While she wondered what to transform them into, her gaze fell on their horns. She realized those could stay. So she changed their massive bodies into savage bulls.

"But the vile Propoetides dared to deny that Venus was a goddess. For this, through the goddess's wrath, they became the first to sell their bodies and their reputations together. As shame left them and the blood hardened in their cheeks, they turned into rigid flint - hardly different from what they'd become already.

Pygmalion

"Pygmalion had watched these women living lives of vice. Disgusted by the flaws that nature lavished so generously on the female mind, he lived unmarried, without a wife, his bed long without a partner. Meanwhile, with marvelous skill, he carved a figure from snow-white ivory, giving it a beauty no real woman could be born with. And he fell in love with his own creation.

"It had the face of a real girl. You'd believe she was alive and, if modesty didn't restrain her, wanted to move. His art concealed itself so perfectly. Pygmalion gazed in wonder, his heart kindling with fire for this imitation body. He kept reaching out to test whether it was flesh or ivory, and still wouldn't admit it was ivory. He kissed it and imagined the kisses returned. He spoke to it and embraced it, believing his fingers sank into the flesh he touched, afraid he might bruise the limbs where he pressed.

"He whispered endearments to her. He brought her gifts that please girls - seashells and smooth stones, little birds and flowers in a thousand colors, lilies and painted balls and amber teardrops fallen from trees. He dressed her body in fine clothes, placed gems on her fingers, hung long necklaces around her neck. Delicate pearls dangled from her ears, ribbons across her breast. Everything suited her, but she seemed no less beautiful naked. He laid her on coverlets dyed with Phoenician purple and called her his bed-partner, resting her neck on soft pillows as if she could feel them.

The Prayer Answered

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constitit et timide "si, di, dare cuncta potestis,
sit coniunx, opto," non ausus "eburnea virgo"
dicere, Pygmalion "similis mea" dixit "eburnae."
sensit, ut ipsa suis aderat Venus aurea festis,
vota quid illa velint et, amici numinis omen,
flamma ter accensa est apicemque per aera duxit.
ut rediit, simulacra suae petit ille puellae
incumbensque toro dedit oscula: visa tepere est;
admovet os iterum, manibus quoque pectora temptat:
temptatum mollescit ebur positoque rigore
subsidit digitis ceditque, ut Hymettia sole
cera remollescit tractataque pollice multas
flectitur in facies ipsoque fit utilis usu.
dum stupet et dubie gaudet fallique veretur,
rursus amans rursusque manu sua vota retractat.
corpus erat! saliunt temptatae pollice venae.
tum vero Paphius plenissima concipit heros
verba, quibus Veneri grates agat, oraque tandem
ore suo non falsa premit, dataque oscula virgo
sensit et erubuit timidumque ad lumina lumen
attollens pariter cum caelo vidit amantem.
coniugio, quod fecit, adest dea, iamque coactis
cornibus in plenum noviens lunaribus orbem
illa Paphon genuit, de qua tenet insula nomen.
'Editus hac ille est, qui si sine prole fuisset,
inter felices Cinyras potuisset haberi.
dira canam; procul hinc natae, procul este parente
aut, mea si vestras mulcebunt carmina mentes,
desit in hac mihi parte fides, nec credite factum,
vel, si credetis, facti quoque credite poenam.
si tamen admissum sinit hoc natura videri,
[gentibus Ismariis et nostro gratulor orbi,]
gratulor huic terrae, quod abest regionibus illis,
quae tantum genuere nefas: sit dives amomo
cinnamaque costumque suum sudataque ligno
tura ferat floresque alios Panchaia tellus,
dum ferat et murram: tanti nova non fuit arbor.
ipse negat nocuisse tibi sua tela Cupido,
Myrrha, facesque suas a crimine vindicat isto;

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"Venus's feast day had come, the most celebrated holiday across all Cyprus. Heifers with gilded horns and snow-white necks had fallen at the altar, and incense smoke filled the air. After Pygmalion had made his offering, he stood before the altar and said timidly: 'If you gods can grant anything, let my wife be - ' He didn't dare say 'my ivory girl,' so he said instead, 'one like my ivory girl.'

"Golden Venus, present at her own festival, understood what the prayer really asked. As a sign of her friendly power, the flame leaped up three times, drawing its tip through the air. When Pygmalion returned home, he went to his ivory girl and, bending over the couch, kissed her. She seemed warm. He kissed her again and touched her breasts with his hands. The ivory, under his touch, softened. The stiffness yielded to his fingers and gave way, just as beeswax from Mount Hymettus softens in the sun and, worked by the thumb, bends into many shapes and becomes useful through use itself.

"He stood stunned, half-rejoicing, half-fearing he was wrong. Again, like a lover, and again with his hand, he touched what he'd prayed for. It was flesh! Veins pulsed beneath his thumb. Then the man from Paphos found the fullest words to thank Venus. At last he pressed his lips to lips that were real. The girl felt the kisses and blushed. Raising her shy eyes to the light, she saw both the sky and her lover at the same moment. The goddess attended the wedding she'd created, and when the moon had rounded out its horns nine times to full, the girl gave birth to Paphos, who gave the island its name.

Myrrha

"Paphos's son was Cinyras, who could have been counted among the fortunate - if only he'd had no children. I'm going to sing of terrible things. Daughters, stay far away. Parents, stay far away. Or if my songs will charm your minds, don't believe this part - don't believe it happened. Or if you do believe it, believe the punishment that followed too. Still, if nature permits such a crime even to be witnessed, I congratulate our land for being far from those regions that produced such horror. Let the Panchaean land be rich in balsam and cinnamon and cassia and frankincense dripping from trees, let it produce incense and every other rare plant - as long as it produces myrrh too. The new tree wasn't worth such a

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stipite te Stygio tumidisque adflavit echidnis
e tribus una soror: scelus est odisse parentem,
hic amor est odio maius scelus. - undique lecti
te cupiunt proceres, totoque Oriente iuventus
ad thalami certamen adest: ex omnibus unum
elige, Myrrha, virum, dum ne sit in omnibus unus.
illa quidem sentit foedoque repugnat amori
et secum "quo mente feror? quid molior?" inquit
"di, precor, et pietas sacrataque iura parentum,
hoc prohibete nefas scelerique resistite nostro,
si tamen hoc scelus est. sed enim damnare negatur
hanc Venerem pietas: coeunt animalia nullo
cetera dilectu, nec habetur turpe iuvencae
ferre patrem tergo, fit equo sua filia coniunx,
quasque creavit init pecudes caper, ipsaque, cuius
semine concepta est, ex illo concipit ales.
felices, quibus ista licent! humana malignas
cura dedit leges, et quod natura remittit,
invida iura negant. gentes tamen esse feruntur,
in quibus et nato genetrix et nata parenti
iungitur, et pietas geminato crescit amore.
me miseram, quod non nasci mihi contigit illic,
fortunaque loci laedor! - quid in ista revolvor?
spes interdictae, discedite! dignus amari
ille, sed ut pater, est. - ergo, si filia magni
non essem Cinyrae, Cinyrae concumbere possem:
nunc, quia iam meus est, non est meus, ipsaque damno
est mihi proximitas: aliena potentior essem.
ire libet procul hinc patriaeque relinquere fines,
dum scelus effugiam; retinet malus ardor euntem,
ut praesens spectem Cinyran tangamque loquarque
osculaque admoveam, si nil conceditur ultra.
ultra autem spectare aliquid potes, inpia virgo?
et quot confundas et iura et nomina, sentis?
tune eris et matris paelex et adultera patris?
tune soror nati genetrixque vocabere fratris?
nec metues atro crinitas angue sorores,
quas facibus saevis oculos atque ora petentes
noxia corda vident? at tu, dum corpore non es

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price.

"Cupid himself swears he never wounded you with his weapons, Myrrha. He clears his torches of this crime. One of the three Furies breathed on you with her hellish torch and venomous snakes. To hate a parent is a crime - but this love is a crime worse than any hatred. Princes from everywhere want you. All the young men of the East have come to compete for your hand in marriage. Choose one from all of them, Myrrha - as long as one man isn't among them all.

"She knew it and fought against this vile love, saying to herself: 'Where is my mind taking me? What am I planning? Gods, I beg you - and sacred duty, and the holy rights of parents - stop this wrong, resist my crime! If it is a crime. But maybe piety doesn't condemn this kind of love. After all, animals mate without discrimination. It's not considered shameful for a heifer to bear her father on her back. A horse mates with his daughter. The goat enters the flock he sired. Birds conceive from the same seed that conceived them. Lucky creatures, allowed such freedoms! Human civilization has imposed spiteful laws. What nature permits, our jealous rules forbid. But they say there are peoples where mother joins with son and daughter with father, and family devotion grows through this doubled love. Poor me - that I wasn't born there! I'm injured by an accident of geography. Why do I keep circling back to this?

"'Forbidden desires, get out! He deserves to be loved - but as a father. So if I weren't the daughter of great Cinyras, I could sleep with Cinyras. Now, because he's already mine, he can't be mine. Our very closeness hurts me. I'd have more claim on him as a stranger. I should leave, travel far from my homeland, as long as I can flee this crime. But wicked passion keeps me here, so I can see Cinyras in the flesh, touch him, speak to him, kiss him - if nothing more is granted. But wait - are you looking for more, you godless girl? Do you realize how many sacred bonds and names you'd destroy? Will you become your mother's rival? Your father's mistress? Will you be called your son's sister? Your brother's mother? Don't you fear those sisters crowned with black serpents, the ones that guilty souls see, stabbing at their eyes and faces with savage torches? No - while your body hasn't yet sinned, don't let your mind conceive it. Don't violate nature's law with forbidden sex. Even if you wanted it, the thing itself forbids it. He's a

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passa nefas, animo ne concipe neve potentis
concubitu vetito naturae pollue foedus!
velle puta: res ipsa vetat; pius ille memorque est
moris - et o vellem similis furor esset in illo!"
'Dixerat, at Cinyras, quem copia digna procorum,
quid faciat, dubitare facit, scitatur ab ipsa,
nominibus dictis, cuius velit esse mariti;
illa silet primo patriisque in vultibus haerens
aestuat et tepido suffundit lumina rore.
virginei Cinyras haec credens esse timoris,
flere vetat siccatque genas atque oscula iungit;
Myrrha datis nimium gaudet consultaque, qualem
optet habere virum, "similem tibi" dixit; at ille
non intellectam vocem conlaudat et "esto
tam pia semper" ait. pietatis nomine dicto
demisit vultus sceleris sibi conscia virgo.
'Noctis erat medium, curasque et corpora somnus
solverat; at virgo Cinyreia pervigil igni
carpitur indomito furiosaque vota retractat
et modo desperat, modo vult temptare, pudetque
et cupit, et, quid agat, non invenit, utque securi
saucia trabs ingens, ubi plaga novissima restat,
quo cadat, in dubio est omnique a parte timetur,
sic animus vario labefactus vulnere nutat
huc levis atque illuc momentaque sumit utroque,
nec modus et requies, nisi mors, reperitur amoris.
mors placet. erigitur laqueoque innectere fauces
destinat et zona summo de poste revincta
"care, vale, Cinyra, causamque intellege mortis!"
dixit et aptabat pallenti vincula collo.
'Murmura verborum fidas nutricis ad aures
pervenisse ferunt limen servantis alumnae.
surgit anus reseratque fores mortisque paratae
instrumenta videns spatio conclamat eodem
seque ferit scinditque sinus ereptaque collo
vincula dilaniat; tum denique flere vacavit,
tum dare conplexus laqueique requirere causam.
muta silet virgo terramque inmota tuetur
et deprensa dolet tardae conamina mortis.

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good man, mindful of what's right. Oh, if only the same madness burned in him!'

Cinyras Deceived

"She'd spoken. But Cinyras, overwhelmed by the crowd of worthy suitors and unsure what to do, consulted her directly. He listed their names and asked whose husband she wanted to be. At first she was silent, staring at her father's face, burning inside, her eyes brimming with tears. Cinyras thought this was just a virgin's fear. He told her not to cry, dried her cheeks, and kissed her. Myrrha took too much joy from that kiss. When he asked what sort of man she wanted, she said, 'Someone like you.' Not understanding what she meant, he praised her answer. 'Always be such a dutiful daughter,' he said. At the word 'dutiful,' the girl lowered her face, aware of her own guilt.

"It was midnight. Sleep had released everyone else from their cares, but Cinyras's daughter lay sleepless, consumed by wild fire. She rehearsed her mad desires. Now she despaired, now she wanted to try. She felt shame and desire both, and couldn't decide what to do. Like a great tree wounded by the axe - when only the final blow remains - uncertain which way it will fall, feared from every direction, her mind, weakened by blow after blow, wavered this way and that, pulled in both directions. She could find no end, no rest from this love except in death.

"Death seemed good to her. She stood up, determined to hang herself. She fastened a belt to the high doorpost. 'Farewell, beloved Cinyras. Understand why I'm dying,' she said, and fitted the noose around her pale neck.

The Nurse's Discovery

"They say the murmur of her words reached her devoted nurse's ears as she kept watch outside her charge's door. The old woman jumped up, opened the door, and saw the instruments of death. She screamed and beat her breast, tore at her clothes, then snatched the noose from Myrrha's neck and ripped it apart. Only then did she have time to weep, to embrace the girl, to demand why she'd tried to

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instat anus canosque suos et inania nudans
ubera per cunas alimentaque prima precatur,
ut sibi committat, quicquid dolet. illa rogantem
aversata gemit; certa est exquirere nutrix
nec solam spondere fidem. "dic" inquit "opemque
me sine ferre tibi: non est mea pigra senectus.
seu furor est, habeo, quae carmine sanet et herbis;
sive aliquis nocuit, magico lustrabere ritu;
ira deum sive est, sacris placabilis ira.
quid rear ulterius? certe fortuna domusque
sospes et in cursu est: vivunt genetrixque paterque."
Myrrha patre audito suspiria duxit ab imo
pectore; nec nutrix etiamnum concipit ullum
mente nefas aliquemque tamen praesentit amorem;
propositique tenax, quodcumque est, orat, ut ipsi
indicet, et gremio lacrimantem tollit anili
atque ita conplectens infirmis membra lacertis
"sensimus," inquit "amas! et in hoc mea (pone timorem)
sedulitas erit apta tibi, nec sentiet umquam
hoc pater." exiluit gremio furibunda torumque
ore premens "discede, precor, miseroque pudori
parce!" ait; instanti "discede, aut desine" dixit
"quaerere, quid doleam! scelus est, quod scire laboras."
horret anus tremulasque manus annisque metuque
tendit et ante pedes supplex procumbit alumnae
et modo blanditur, modo, si non conscia fiat,
terret et indicium laquei coeptaeque minatur
mortis et officium commisso spondet amori.
extulit illa caput lacrimisque inplevit obortis
pectora nutricis conataque saepe fateri
saepe tenet vocem pudibundaque vestibus ora
texit et "o" dixit "felicem coniuge matrem!"
hactenus, et gemuit. gelidus nutricis in artus
ossaque (sensit enim) penetrat tremor, albaque toto
vertice canities rigidis stetit hirta capillis,
multaque, ut excuteret diros, si posset, amores,
addidit. at virgo scit se non falsa moneri;
certa mori tamen est, si non potiatur amore.
"vive," ait haec, "potiere tuo" - et, non ausa "parente"

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hang herself. Myrrha stayed silent and still, staring at the ground, grief-stricken at being caught before she could complete her slow death.

"The old woman wouldn't give up. She bared her gray hair and her sagging breasts and begged by the cradle she'd rocked, by the milk she'd given - tell me what's wrong. The girl turned away with a groan. The nurse was determined to find out. She promised not just secrecy but help. 'Tell me,' she said, 'and let me help you. Old age isn't useless. If it's madness, I can cure you with spells and herbs. If someone has cursed you, we'll purify you with rituals. If it's divine anger, the gods' wrath can be appeased with sacrifice. What else could it be? Your family's fortune is secure and thriving. Both your mother and father are alive.'

"At the word 'father,' Myrrha drew a sigh from deep in her heart. Even then the nurse didn't grasp the horror, though she sensed it was some kind of love. Stubborn in her purpose, she begged Myrrha to reveal everything. She lifted the weeping girl onto her old lap, cradled her in weak arms, and said: 'I understand - you're in love! Don't be afraid. I'll help you with this. And your father will never know.'

"Myrrha leaped from her lap in a fury, threw herself face-down on the bed. 'Leave me alone, I'm begging you! Spare me my wretched shame!' When the nurse insisted, Myrrha said: 'Go away! Or stop asking why I'm suffering. What you're trying to learn is a crime.'

"The old woman shuddered. Her hands trembled - with age and with fear. She fell on her knees before her nursling and begged. She coaxed, then threatened - if Myrrha wouldn't tell, she'd report the noose and the attempted suicide. But if Myrrha would confess her love, the nurse promised to help.

"Myrrha raised her head, soaked her nurse's chest with streaming tears, and tried again and again to confess, again and again choked back the words. Ashamed, she covered her face with her dress and said only: 'Oh, how lucky my mother is in her husband!' Then groaned. An icy shudder ran through the nurse's limbs and bones - she'd understood. Her white hair stood up stiff all over her head. She said everything she could to try to shake loose this terrible love. But the girl knew the warnings were true,

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dicere, conticuit promissaque numine firmat.
'Festa piae Cereris celebrabant annua matres
illa, quibus nivea velatae corpora veste
primitias frugum dant spicea serta suarum
perque novem noctes venerem tactusque viriles
in vetitis numerant: turba Cenchreis in illa
regis adest coniunx arcanaque sacra frequentat.
ergo legitima vacuus dum coniuge lectus,
nacta gravem vino Cinyran male sedula nutrix,
nomine mentito veros exponit amores
et faciem laudat; quaesitis virginis annis
"par" ait "est Myrrhae." quam postquam adducere iussa est
utque domum rediit, "gaude, mea" dixit "alumna:
vicimus!" infelix non toto pectore sentit
laetitiam virgo, praesagaque pectora maerent,
sed tamen et gaudet: tanta est discordia mentis.
'Tempus erat, quo cuncta silent, interque triones
flexerat obliquo plaustrum temone Bootes:
ad facinus venit illa suum; fugit aurea caelo
luna, tegunt nigrae latitantia sidera nubes;
nox caret igne suo; primus tegis, Icare, vultus,
Erigoneque pio sacrata parentis amore.
ter pedis offensi signo est revocata, ter omen
funereus bubo letali carmine fecit:
it tamen, et tenebrae minuunt noxque atra pudorem;
nutricisque manum laeva tenet, altera motu
caecum iter explorat. thalami iam limina tangit,
iamque fores aperit, iam ducitur intus: at illi
poplite succiduo genua intremuere, fugitque
et color et sanguis, animusque relinquit euntem.
quoque suo propior sceleri est, magis horret, et ausi
paenitet, et vellet non cognita posse reverti.
cunctantem longaeva manu deducit et alto
admotam lecto cum traderet "accipe," dixit,
"ista tua est, Cinyra" devotaque corpora iunxit.
accipit obsceno genitor sua viscera lecto
virgineosque metus levat hortaturque timentem.
forsitan aetatis quoque nomine "filia" dixit,
dixit et illa "pater," sceleri ne nomina desint.

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and still she was determined to die if she couldn't have her love. 'Live,' the nurse said, 'and you'll have your - ' She couldn't say 'father,' so she fell silent and nodded to confirm her promise.

The Festival Night

"The pious mothers were celebrating Ceres' annual festival. Dressed in white robes, they offered garlands of wheat as first fruits of the harvest. For nine nights, they counted love and a man's touch among forbidden things. The queen, Cenchreis, was among them, attending the secret rites. So while the lawful bed was empty, the nurse - terribly diligent - found Cinyras drunk with wine. She told him about a girl who truly loved him, though she gave a false name. She praised the girl's beauty. When he asked her age, the nurse said, 'The same as Myrrha.' When he told her to bring the girl, the nurse returned home and said, 'Celebrate, my child - we've won!'

"The doomed girl felt no complete joy in her heart. Her foreboding heart grieved. Yet part of her did rejoice - such was the discord in her mind.

"It was the hour when all things fall silent. Between the two Bears, Boötes had wheeled his wagon with its slanting pole. She went to her crime. The golden moon fled from the sky. Black clouds hid the stars. The night had lost its fires. You, Icarus, first covered your face. And you, Erigone, made sacred by dutiful love of your father. Three times an omen called her back - she stumbled. Three times the death-owl sang its deadly prophecy. But still she went. The darkness and deep night lessened her shame. She held the nurse's hand with her left, with her right she groped along the blind path. Now she touched the bedroom threshold. Now she opened the door. Now she was led inside. But her knees buckled, her legs gave way. All color and blood drained from her. Her courage left her as she walked. The nearer she came to her crime, the more she trembled. She regretted her daring and wished she could turn back unrecognized.

"As she hesitated, the old woman took her hand and led her to the high bed. When she handed her over, she said, 'She's yours, Cinyras. Take her.' And she joined their cursed bodies together. The father took his own daughter into his incestuous bed. He soothed her virgin fears. He encouraged her terror.

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'Plena patris thalamis excedit et inpia diro
semina fert utero conceptaque crimina portat.
postera nox facinus geminat, nec finis in illa est,
cum tandem Cinyras, avidus cognoscere amantem
post tot concubitus, inlato lumine vidit
et scelus et natam verbisque dolore retentis
pendenti nitidum vagina deripit ensem;
Myrrha fugit: tenebrisque et caecae munere noctis
intercepta neci est latosque vagata per agros
palmiferos Arabas Panchaeaque rura relinquit
perque novem erravit redeuntis cornua lunae,
cum tandem terra requievit fessa Sabaea;
vixque uteri portabat onus. tum nescia voti
atque inter mortisque metus et taedia vitae
est tales conplexa preces: "o siqua patetis
numina confessis, merui nec triste recuso
supplicium, sed ne violem vivosque superstes
mortuaque exstinctos, ambobus pellite regnis
mutataeque mihi vitamque necemque negate!"
numen confessis aliquod patet: ultima certe
vota suos habuere deos. nam crura loquentis
terra supervenit, ruptosque obliqua per ungues
porrigitur radix, longi firmamina trunci,
ossaque robur agunt, mediaque manente medulla
sanguis it in sucos, in magnos bracchia ramos,
in parvos digiti, duratur cortice pellis.
iamque gravem crescens uterum perstrinxerat arbor
pectoraque obruerat collumque operire parabat:
non tulit illa moram venientique obvia ligno
subsedit mersitque suos in cortice vultus.
quae quamquam amisit veteres cum corpore sensus,
flet tamen, et tepidae manant ex arbore guttae.
est honor et lacrimis, stillataque cortice murra
nomen erile tenet nulloque tacebitur aevo.
'At male conceptus sub robore creverat infans
quaerebatque viam, qua se genetrice relicta
exsereret; media gravidus tumet arbore venter.
tendit onus matrem; neque habent sua verba dolores,
nec Lucina potest parientis voce vocari.

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Perhaps, because of her age, he even called her 'daughter.' Perhaps she called him 'father' - so no name would be missing from the crime.

The Incest and Discovery

"She left her father's bedroom full of him, carrying his cursed seed in her womb - the crime conceived. The next night the deed was repeated. And there was no end until finally Cinyras, after so many meetings, wanted to know his lover. He brought in a lamp. He saw both the crime and his daughter. Grief choked back his words. He grabbed his gleaming sword from its sheath. Myrrha fled. By the blessing of darkness and blind night, she escaped death. She wandered through vast fields, leaving behind the palm groves of Arabia and the Panchaean land. For nine months she roamed, until exhausted, she finally came to rest in the Sabaean land. She could barely bear the weight of her womb.

"Then, torn between fear of death and weariness of life, unsure what to pray for, she spoke this prayer: 'O gods, if any divine powers are open to those who confess - I've earned my punishment. I don't refuse a harsh penalty. But so I won't defile the living if I live, or the dead if I die, drive me from both realms. Deny me both life and death. Change me.'

"Some divinity is indeed open to those who confess. Her final prayer found gods to answer it. Earth covered her legs as she spoke. A root burst through her split toenails and stretched out, anchoring a massive trunk. Her bones hardened. Marrow stayed in the center, but blood turned to sap. Arms became large branches, fingers small ones. Her skin turned to bark. And now the growing tree had squeezed her pregnant belly, buried her breasts, and was about to cover her neck. She couldn't bear the delay. She sank toward the rising wood and plunged her face into the bark.

"Though she lost her old senses with her body, still she weeps. Warm drops flow from the tree. Even her tears carry honor. The myrrh that drips from the bark preserves its mistress's name and will be spoken of through every age.

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nitenti tamen est similis curvataque crebros
dat gemitus arbor lacrimisque cadentibus umet.
constitit ad ramos mitis Lucina dolentes
admovitque manus et verba puerpera dixit:
arbor agit rimas et fissa cortice vivum
reddit onus, vagitque puer; quem mollibus herbis
naides inpositum lacrimis unxere parentis.
laudaret faciem Livor quoque; qualia namque
corpora nudorum tabula pinguntur Amorum,
talis erat, sed, ne faciat discrimina cultus,
aut huic adde leves, aut illis deme pharetras.
'Labitur occulte fallitque volatilis aetas,
et nihil est annis velocius: ille sorore
natus avoque suo, qui conditus arbore nuper,
nuper erat genitus, modo formosissimus infans,
iam iuvenis, iam vir, iam se formosior ipso est,
iam placet et Veneri matrisque ulciscitur ignes.
namque pharetratus dum dat puer oscula matri,
inscius exstanti destrinxit harundine pectus;
laesa manu natum dea reppulit: altius actum
vulnus erat specie primoque fefellerat ipsam.
capta viri forma non iam Cythereia curat
litora, non alto repetit Paphon aequore cinctam
piscosamque Cnidon gravidamve Amathunta metallis;
abstinet et caelo: caelo praefertur Adonis.
hunc tenet, huic comes est adsuetaque semper in umbra
indulgere sibi formamque augere colendo
per iuga, per silvas dumosaque saxa vagatur
fine genus vestem ritu succincta Dianae
hortaturque canes tutaeque animalia praedae,
aut pronos lepores aut celsum in cornua cervum
aut agitat dammas; a fortibus abstinet apris
raptoresque lupos armatosque unguibus ursos
vitat et armenti saturatos caede leones.
te quoque, ut hos timeas, siquid prodesse monendo
possit, Adoni, monet, "fortis" que "fugacibus esto"
inquit; "in audaces non est audacia tuta.
parce meo, iuvenis, temerarius esse periclo,
neve feras, quibus arma dedit natura, lacesse,

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Adonis Born

"But the child, conceived in sin, had grown inside the tree. He was looking for a way to thrust himself out and leave his mother's body. The middle of the tree swelled, pregnant with its burden. The weight stretched the wood, but the tree had no words for its pain. It couldn't call on Lucina with a laboring woman's voice. Yet the tree seemed to be in labor. It groaned again and again and grew wet with falling tears. Gentle Lucina stood beside the suffering trunk. She laid on her hands and spoke the words of childbirth. The tree split open. The bark cracked apart and released its living burden. The baby boy cried. The water nymphs laid him on soft grass and anointed him with his mother's tears. Even Envy herself would have praised his beauty. He looked just like those naked Cupids painted in pictures - though to make no distinction between them, you'd either need to give him a little quiver or take the quivers away from them.

Venus and Adonis

"Time slips away in secret. The years flow past and deceive us. Nothing moves faster than time. This boy, born from his sister and his grandfather, recently hidden in a tree, recently born - just now a beautiful infant, now a young man, now a man grown - now even more beautiful than before. Now he catches even Venus's eye. He avenges his mother's passion. For while Cupid was giving his mother a kiss, he accidentally grazed her breast with an arrow jutting from his quiver. The goddess pushed her son away. But the wound had gone deeper than it seemed. At first, it fooled even her.

"Captivated by Adonis's beauty, Venus stopped caring about Cythera's shores. She didn't return to Paphos surrounded by deep sea, or to fish-rich Cnidos, or to Amathus heavy with ore. She even stayed away from heaven - Adonis was better than heaven. She clung to him, became his constant companion. Though she usually lounged in the shade, cultivating her beauty, now she roamed the mountain ridges, through forests and rocky thickets, her dress hiked up to her knee like Diana. She urged on the hounds and chased safe game - swift hares, or high-antlered stags, or does. She stayed away from fierce boars

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stet mihi ne magno tua gloria. non movet aetas
nec facies nec quae Venerem movere, leones
saetigerosque sues oculosque animosque ferarum.
fulmen habent acres in aduncis dentibus apri,
impetus est fulvis et vasta leonibus ira,
invisumque mihi genus est." quae causa, roganti
"dicam," ait "et veteris monstrum mirabere culpae.
sed labor insolitus iam me lassavit, et, ecce,
opportuna sua blanditur populus umbra,
datque torum caespes: libet hac requiescere tecum"
(et requievit) "humo" pressitque et gramen et ipsum
inque sinu iuvenis posita cervice reclinis
sic ait ac mediis interserit oscula verbis:
'"Forsitan audieris aliquam certamine cursus
veloces superasse viros: non fabula rumor
ille fuit; superabat enim. nec dicere posses,
laude pedum formaene bono praestantior esset.
scitanti deus huic de coniuge 'coniuge' dixit
'nil opus est, Atalanta, tibi: fuge coniugis usum.
nec tamen effugies teque ipsa viva carebis.'
territa sorte dei per opacas innuba silvas
vivit et instantem turbam violenta procorum
condicione fugat, 'nec sum potiunda, nisi' inquit
'victa prius cursu. pedibus contendite mecum:
praemia veloci coniunx thalamique dabuntur,
mors pretium tardis: ea lex certaminis esto.'
illa quidem inmitis, sed (tanta potentia formae est)
venit ad hanc legem temeraria turba procorum.
sederat Hippomenes cursus spectator iniqui
et 'petitur cuiquam per tanta pericula coniunx?'
dixerat ac nimios iuvenum damnarat amores;
ut faciem et posito corpus velamine vidit,
quale meum, vel quale tuum, si femina fias,
obstipuit tollensque manus 'ignoscite,' dixit
'quos modo culpavi! nondum mihi praemia nota,
quae peteretis, erant.' laudando concipit ignes
et, ne quis iuvenum currat velocius, optat
invidiaque timet. 'sed cur certaminis huius
intemptata mihi fortuna relinquitur?' inquit

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and savage wolves, from bears armed with claws, from lions gorged on slaughtered cattle.

"She also warned you, Adonis - if only warnings could have helped! 'Be brave against those who run away,' she said, 'but courage isn't safe against the courageous. Don't be reckless, my darling, for my sake. Don't provoke the beasts that nature armed with weapons, or your glory will cost me too dearly. Youth, beauty, the charms that moved Venus - none of these move lions, bristling boars, or the eyes and hearts of wild beasts. Boars carry lightning in their curved tusks. Tawny lions have boundless strength and rage. I hate the whole species.' When he asked why, she said, 'I'll tell you. You'll be amazed by this strange story of an ancient crime. But this unaccustomed exercise has tired me out. Look - a poplar invites us just in time with its shade, offering a couch of grass. I'd like to rest here on the ground with you.'

"And she did rest, pressing down both the grass and him. Reclining with her head in the young man's lap, she spoke, scattering kisses through her words:

Atalanta and Hippomenes

"'You may have heard that a woman once outran the swiftest men in a footrace. That wasn't just a rumor - she really did it. You couldn't say whether she was more remarkable for her speed or her beauty. When she consulted an oracle about marriage, the god said, "Atalanta, you have no need for a husband. Avoid marriage. Yet you won't escape it. You'll live, but you'll lose yourself."

"'Terrified by the oracle, she lived unmarried in the dark forests. She drove away the mob of insistent suitors with a brutal condition: "No one can have me unless he beats me in a footrace. Race against me. The winner gets a wife and a wedding. The loser gets death. Those are the rules of the contest." She was merciless. But such is the power of beauty - a reckless crowd of suitors agreed to her terms.

"'Hippomenes sat watching this cruel contest. "Would anyone risk his life for a wife?" he said, condemning the young men's excessive passion. But then he saw her face and her body when she

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'audentes deus ipse iuvat!' dum talia secum
exigit Hippomenes, passu volat alite virgo.
quae quamquam Scythica non setius ire sagitta
Aonio visa est iuveni, tamen ille decorem
miratur magis: et cursus facit ipse decorem.
aura refert ablata citis talaria plantis,
tergaque iactantur crines per eburnea, quaeque
poplitibus suberant picto genualia limbo;
inque puellari corpus candore ruborem
traxerat, haud aliter, quam cum super atria velum
candida purpureum simulatas inficit umbras.
dum notat haec hospes, decursa novissima meta est,
et tegitur festa victrix Atalanta corona.
dant gemitum victi penduntque ex foedere poenas.
'"Non tamen eventu iuvenis deterritus horum
constitit in medio vultuque in virgine fixo
'quid facilem titulum superando quaeris inertes?
mecum confer' ait. 'seu me fortuna potentem
fecerit, a tanto non indignabere vinci:
namque mihi genitor Megareus Onchestius, illi
est Neptunus avus, pronepos ego regis aquarum,
nec virtus citra genus est; seu vincar, habebis
Hippomene victo magnum et memorabile nomen.'
talia dicentem molli Schoeneia vultu
aspicit et dubitat, superari an vincere malit,
atque ita 'quis deus hunc formosis' inquit 'iniquus
perdere vult caraeque iubet discrimine vitae
coniugium petere hoc? non sum, me iudice, tanti.
nec forma tangor, (poteram tamen hac quoque tangi)
sed quod adhuc puer est; non me movet ipse, sed aetas.
quid, quod inest virtus et mens interrita leti?
quid, quod ab aequorea numeratur origine quartus?
quid, quod amat tantique putat conubia nostra,
ut pereat, si me fors illi dura negarit?
dum licet, hospes, abi thalamosque relinque cruentos.
coniugium crudele meum est, tibi nubere nulla
nolet, et optari potes a sapiente puella. -
cur tamen est mihi cura tui tot iam ante peremptis?
viderit! intereat, quoniam tot caede procorum

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stripped for the race - a body like mine, or like yours would be if you were female. He was thunderstruck. Raising his hands, he said, "Forgive me, all you men I just criticized! I didn't know what prize you were competing for." As he praised her, he caught fire himself. He hoped none of the young men would run faster than she did - and feared, enviously, that one might. "But why haven't I tried my luck in this contest?" he asked himself. "The gods themselves help the daring!"

"'While Hippomenes turned this over in his mind, the girl flew past on winged feet. Though she seemed to the young man from Boeotia to move no slower than a Scythian arrow, he marveled even more at her beauty. And running made her more beautiful still. The breeze caught the ribbons streaming from her swift feet. Her hair tossed across her ivory back. The embroidered knee-bands fluttered. A rosy flush spread across her pale young body, the way a purple awning casts colored shadows over white marble halls. While the stranger noticed all this, the race was over. Victorious Atalanta was crowned with the winner's garland. The losers groaned and paid the agreed-upon penalty.

"'But the young man, undeterred by what had happened to the others, stepped forward and fixed his eyes on her. "Why do you want easy glory from beating slowpokes? Race against me. If luck makes me the winner, you won't be shamed to lose to someone like me. My father is Megareus of Onchestus. His grandfather is Neptune. I'm the great-grandson of the king of the seas. My courage matches my bloodline. And if I lose, you'll win great and lasting fame - Hippomenes defeated."

"'As he spoke, Atalanta looked at him with softening eyes. She wasn't sure whether she wanted to win or lose. She thought: "What god, hating beauty, wants to destroy this man? What god orders him to seek marriage at the risk of his precious life? I'm not worth that much, in my own judgment. It's not his beauty that moves me - though it could. It's that he's still almost a boy. It's not him but his youth that touches me. And what about his courage, his fearless spirit? What about the fact that he's descended from the sea-god himself, four generations back? What about the fact that he loves me so much he'd die if cruel fate denied him my hand? Stranger, while you can, get away from this bloody wedding. Marrying me is death. No woman would refuse you. Some wise girl could want you for herself.

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admonitus non est agiturque in taedia vitae. -
occidet hic igitur, voluit quia vivere mecum,
indignamque necem pretium patietur amoris?
non erit invidiae victoria nostra ferendae.
sed non culpa mea est! utinam desistere velles,
aut, quoniam es demens, utinam velocior esses!
at quam virgineus puerili vultus in ore est!
a! miser Hippomene, nollem tibi visa fuissem!
vivere dignus eras. quodsi felicior essem,
nec mihi coniugium fata inportuna negarent,
unus eras, cum quo sociare cubilia vellem.'
dixerat, utque rudis primoque cupidine tacta,
quod facit, ignorans amat et non sentit amorem.
'"Iam solitos poscunt cursus populusque paterque,
cum me sollicita proles Neptunia voce
invocat Hippomenes 'Cytherea,' que 'conprecor, ausis
adsit' ait 'nostris et quos dedit, adiuvet ignes.'
detulit aura preces ad me non invida blandas:
motaque sum, fateor, nec opis mora longa dabatur.
est ager, indigenae Tamasenum nomine dicunt,
telluris Cypriae pars optima, quem mihi prisci
sacravere senes templisque accedere dotem
hanc iussere meis; medio nitet arbor in arvo,
fulva comas, fulvo ramis crepitantibus auro:
hinc tria forte mea veniens decerpta ferebam
aurea poma manu nullique videnda nisi ipsi
Hippomenen adii docuique, quis usus in illis.
signa tubae dederant, cum carcere pronus uterque
emicat et summam celeri pede libat harenam:
posse putes illos sicco freta radere passu
et segetis canae stantes percurrere aristas.
adiciunt animos iuveni clamorque favorque
verbaque dicentum 'nunc, nunc incumbere tempus!
Hippomene, propera! nunc viribus utere totis!
pelle moram: vinces!' dubium, Megareius heros
gaudeat an virgo magis his Schoeneia dictis.
o quotiens, cum iam posset transire, morata est
spectatosque diu vultus invita reliquit!
aridus e lasso veniebat anhelitus ore,

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"'But why should I care about him when so many others have already died? Let him watch out for himself! Let him die, if the slaughter of all those suitors hasn't warned him off, if he's so sick of living. So he'll die because he wanted to live with me. He'll pay an unjust price - death for love. I won't be able to bear the envy my victory brings. But it's not my fault! I wish you'd just give up. Or, since you're crazy, I wish you were faster! But he has such a girl's face on his boy's body! Oh poor Hippomenes, I wish you'd never seen me! You deserved to live. If I'd been luckier, if cruel fate hadn't forbidden me marriage, you're the one I'd want to share my bed with.'

"'She spoke. And though untrained, struck by first love, not even knowing what she was doing, she loved without realizing it.

"'Now the crowd and her father were demanding the traditional race. Neptune's descendant Hippomenes called on me in an anxious voice: "Cytherea, I pray you! Be with me in this daring. Help the fire you lit in me." A friendly breeze carried his flattering prayer to me. I was moved, I admit, and I didn't have much time to help. There's a field - the locals call it Tamasus - the finest part of Cyprus. The ancients long ago dedicated it to me and ordered it added as an endowment for my temples. A tree gleams in the middle of this field, with golden leaves and branches that rattle with golden fruit. I happened to be coming from there, carrying three golden apples I'd picked. I made myself visible to Hippomenes alone, approached him, and showed him how to use them.

"'The trumpets sounded. Each racer burst from the starting line, crouched low, and skimmed across the sand with flying feet. You'd think they could run across the ocean without breaking the surface, or race across a wheat field without bending the standing grain. Shouts and cheers and voices yelling "Now! This is the moment! Push harder, Hippomenes! Use all your strength! Don't hesitate - you're winning!" gave courage to the young man. Hard to say whether Hippomenes or Atalanta was happier to hear those words.

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metaque erat longe: tum denique de tribus unum
fetibus arboreis proles Neptunia misit.
obstipuit virgo nitidique cupidine pomi
declinat cursus aurumque volubile tollit;
praeterit Hippomenes: resonant spectacula plausu.
illa moram celeri cessataque tempora cursu
corrigit atque iterum iuvenem post terga relinquit:
et rursus pomi iactu remorata secundi
consequitur transitque virum. pars ultima cursus
restabat; 'nunc' inquit 'ades, dea muneris auctor!'
inque latus campi, quo tardius illa rediret,
iecit ab obliquo nitidum iuvenaliter aurum.
an peteret, virgo visa est dubitare: coegi
tollere et adieci sublato pondera malo
inpediique oneris pariter gravitate moraque,
neve meus sermo cursu sit tardior ipso,
praeterita est virgo: duxit sua praemia victor.
'"Dignane, cui grates ageret, cui turis honorem
ferret, Adoni, fui? nec grates inmemor egit,
nec mihi tura dedit. subitam convertor in iram,
contemptuque dolens, ne sim spernenda futuris,
exemplo caveo meque ipsa exhortor in ambos:
templa, deum Matri quae quondam clarus Echion
fecerat ex voto, nemorosis abdita silvis,
transibant, et iter longum requiescere suasit;
illic concubitus intempestiva cupido
occupat Hippomenen a numine concita nostro.
luminis exigui fuerat prope templa recessus,
speluncae similis, nativo pumice tectus,
religione sacer prisca, quo multa sacerdos
lignea contulerat veterum simulacra deorum;
hunc init et vetito temerat sacraria probro.
sacra retorserunt oculos, turritaque Mater
an Stygia sontes dubitavit mergeret unda:
poena levis visa est; ergo modo levia fulvae
colla iubae velant, digiti curvantur in ungues,
ex umeris armi fiunt, in pectora totum
pondus abit, summae cauda verruntur harenae;
iram vultus habet, pro verbis murmura reddunt,

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"'Oh, how many times she could have passed him but held back instead, gazing at his face, reluctant to leave him behind! His mouth went dry, breath rasping from his tired throat. The finish line was still far off. Then finally Neptune's descendant threw one of the three apples from the tree. The girl was stunned. Craving the gleaming fruit, she turned from her course and snatched up the rolling gold. Hippomenes passed her. The crowd roared with applause. She made up for the delay and lost time with a burst of speed and left the young man behind again. Delayed a second time by the second apple, she caught up and passed him.

"'The final stretch of the race remained. "Now," I said, "be with me, goddess whose gift this is!" I threw the shining gold toward the side of the field, far off course, so she'd take longer to get back. The girl seemed to hesitate - should she go for it? I made her pick it up and added weight to the fruit she'd grabbed, slowing her down with both the burden and the detour. And so my story doesn't take longer than the race itself - the girl was overtaken. The victor claimed his prize.

The Punishment

"'Did I deserve thanks, Adonis? Did I deserve an offering of incense? He gave no thanks. Ungrateful, he didn't bring me incense. I flared up in sudden rage. Hurt by this contempt, determined not to be scorned again in the future, I made an example of them both to protect my honor. They were passing a temple that the famous hero Echion had once built to fulfill a vow, hidden deep in the woods. The long journey made them want to rest. There, an untimely urge for sex seized Hippomenes - aroused by my divine power. Near the temple was a dim alcove like a cave, roofed with natural stone, sacred since ancient times, where a priest had collected many wooden statues of the old gods. Hippomenes entered this place and desecrated the holy shrine with forbidden lust. The sacred images turned their eyes away. The tower-crowned Mother of the Gods considered plunging the guilty pair into the rivers of the Styx. The punishment seemed too light. So instead, tawny manes now cover their smooth necks. Their fingers curve into claws. Their arms become forelegs. All their weight settles into their chests. Their tails sweep the sand. Rage fills their faces. They give growls instead of speech. They haunt the forests instead of

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pro thalamis celebrant silvas aliisque timendi
dente premunt domito Cybeleia frena leones.
hos tu, care mihi, cumque his genus omne ferarum,
quod non terga fugae, sed pugnae pectora praebet,
effuge, ne virtus tua sit damnosa duobus!"
'Illa quidem monuit iunctisque per aera cycnis
carpit iter, sed stat monitis contraria virtus.
forte suem latebris vestigia certa secuti
excivere canes, silvisque exire parantem
fixerat obliquo iuvenis Cinyreius ictu:
protinus excussit pando venabula rostro
sanguine tincta suo trepidumque et tuta petentem
trux aper insequitur totosque sub inguine dentes
abdidit et fulva moribundum stravit harena.
vecta levi curru medias Cytherea per auras
Cypron olorinis nondum pervenerat alis:
agnovit longe gemitum morientis et albas
flexit aves illuc, utque aethere vidit ab alto
exanimem inque suo iactantem sanguine corpus,
desiluit pariterque sinum pariterque capillos
rupit et indignis percussit pectora palmis
questaque cum fatis "at non tamen omnia vestri
iuris erunt" dixit. "luctus monimenta manebunt
semper, Adoni, mei, repetitaque mortis imago
annua plangoris peraget simulamina nostri;
at cruor in florem mutabitur. an tibi quondam
femineos artus in olentes vertere mentas,
Persephone, licuit: nobis Cinyreius heros
invidiae mutatus erit?" sic fata cruorem
nectare odorato sparsit, qui tinctus ab illo
intumuit sic, ut fulvo perlucida caeno
surgere bulla solet, nec plena longior hora
facta mora est, cum flos de sanguine concolor ortus,
qualem, quae lento celant sub cortice granum,
punica ferre solent; brevis est tamen usus in illo;
namque male haerentem et nimia levitate caducum
excutiunt idem, qui praestant nomina, venti.'

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bedrooms. And feared by all others, they pull Cybele's chariot as lions, pressing the bit with tamed teeth.

"'These creatures, my darling, and all the other beasts that don't offer their backs in flight but turn their chests to fight - avoid them! Or your courage will destroy us both!'

"She did warn him. Then, yoked to her swans, she drove her chariot through the sky. But courage defies warnings. By chance, his dogs following a scent trail roused a boar from its den. As the beast prepared to leave the forest, Myrrha's son struck it with a glancing blow. Instantly the savage boar shook the spear from its bleeding snout, and chased the terrified young man as he scrambled for safety. The boar sank all its tusks into his groin and laid him dying on the golden sand.

Venus' Grief and the Anemone

"Venus, riding in her light chariot through the sky behind her swans, hadn't yet reached Cyprus when she heard his dying groan from far away. She turned her white birds back. And when she saw from high in the air his lifeless body lying in its own blood, she leaped down, tore her dress and her hair at once, and beat her breast with hands that should never know such grief. She complained to the Fates: 'But you won't control everything,' she said. 'Adonis, a memorial of my sorrow will last forever. The scene of your death will be reenacted every year, an imitation of my grief. But your blood will turn into a flower. Persephone, you were once allowed to change a woman's body into fragrant mint - will I be begrudged transforming my hero?' With these words, she sprinkled his blood with sweet-smelling nectar. Touched by it, the blood swelled up the way clear bubbles rise in yellow mud. Within an hour a flower sprang from the blood, the same color as pomegranates that hide their seeds under supple skin. But its bloom is brief. The same winds that give it its name - anemone - shake it loose. It clings weakly and falls, too delicate to last."

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BOOK 11

Carmine dum tali silvas animosque ferarum
Threicius vates et saxa sequentia ducit,
ecce nurus Ciconum tectae lymphata ferinis
pectora velleribus tumuli de vertice cernunt
Orphea percussis sociantem carmina nervis.
e quibus una leves iactato crine per auras,
'en,' ait 'en, hic est nostri contemptor!' et hastam
vatis Apollinei vocalia misit in ora,
quae foliis praesuta notam sine vulnere fecit;
alterius telum lapis est, qui missus in ipso
aere concentu victus vocisque lyraeque est
ac veluti supplex pro tam furialibus ausis
ante pedes iacuit. sed enim temeraria crescunt
bella modusque abiit insanaque regnat Erinys;
cunctaque tela forent cantu mollita, sed ingens
clamor et infracto Berecyntia tibia cornu
tympanaque et plausus et Bacchei ululatus
obstrepuere sono citharae, tum denique saxa
non exauditi rubuerunt sanguine vatis.
ac primum attonitas etiamnum voce canentis
innumeras volucres anguesque agmenque ferarum
maenades Orphei titulum rapuere triumphi;
inde cruentatis vertuntur in Orphea dextris
et coeunt ut aves, si quando luce vagantem
noctis avem cernunt, structoque utrimque theatro
ceu matutina cervus periturus harena
praeda canum est, vatemque petunt et fronde virentes
coniciunt thyrsos non haec in munera factos.
hae glaebas, illae direptos arbore ramos,
pars torquent silices; neu desint tela furori,
forte boves presso subigebant vomere terram,
nec procul hinc multo fructum sudore parantes
dura lacertosi fodiebant arva coloni,
agmine qui viso fugiunt operisque relinquunt
arma sui, vacuosque iacent dispersa per agros
sarculaque rastrique graves longique ligones;
quae postquam rapuere ferae cornuque minaces
divulsere boves, ad vatis fata recurrunt
tendentemque manus et in illo tempore primum
inrita dicentem nec quicquam voce moventem

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The Death of Orpheus

While the Thracian bard was singing such songs, drawing to himself the trees, the spirits of wild beasts, and the very rocks - look! The Ciconian women, crazed with wine, their breasts draped in animal skins, spotted Orpheus from a hilltop as he sang to his lyre. One of them, her hair streaming in the breeze, cried out: "Look! There's the man who scorns us!" She hurled her spear at the mouth of Apollo's poet. But leafy with ivy, it left only a mark, no wound. Another woman's weapon was a stone. Thrown through the air, it was defeated by the harmony of voice and lyre and fell at his feet, as if begging forgiveness for such mad violence.

But the reckless assault intensified. All restraint vanished. Insane Fury took command. The music would have softened every weapon, but the massive noise - the Phrygian flute shrieking from its curved horn, drums pounding, hands clapping, Bacchic howling - drowned out the lyre. Then at last, unable to hear him, the stones turned red with the poet's blood. First the maenads seized the countless birds, snakes, and wild creatures still mesmerized by the singer's voice - Orpheus's trophies. Then they turned their bloody hands on Orpheus himself. They swarmed like birds mobbing an owl caught abroad in daylight, or like the way a doomed stag in the morning arena becomes prey for the hounds while the theater crowds watch from both sides. The women rushed the poet, hurling their ivy-wrapped wands, never meant for such use. Some threw clods of earth. Some threw branches ripped from trees. Others threw stones. And so their fury wouldn't lack for weapons, it happened that oxen nearby were plowing under the yoke, and not far off muscular farmers were digging the hard soil, laboring to bring forth crops. When they saw the mob, they ran, leaving their tools behind. Across the empty fields lay scattered hoes, heavy rakes, long mattocks. The frenzied women grabbed these, tore apart the threatening oxen, then rushed back to attack the poet. As he stretched out his hands - for the first time speaking words that had no effect, for the first time failing to move anyone with his voice - the godless women killed him. And through that mouth, Jupiter! - that mouth heard by rocks, understood by the senses of beasts - his spirit left his body and melted into the air.

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sacrilegae perimunt, perque os, pro Iuppiter! illud
auditum saxis intellectumque ferarum
sensibus in ventos anima exhalata recessit.
Te maestae volucres, Orpheu, te turba ferarum,
te rigidi silices, te carmina saepe secutae
fleverunt silvae, positis te frondibus arbor
tonsa comas luxit; lacrimis quoque flumina dicunt
increvisse suis, obstrusaque carbasa pullo
naides et dryades passosque habuere capillos.
membra iacent diversa locis, caput, Hebre, lyramque
excipis: et (mirum!) medio dum labitur amne,
flebile nescio quid queritur lyra, flebile lingua
murmurat exanimis, respondent flebile ripae.
iamque mare invectae flumen populare relinquunt
et Methymnaeae potiuntur litore Lesbi:
hic ferus expositum peregrinis anguis harenis
os petit et sparsos stillanti rore capillos.
tandem Phoebus adest morsusque inferre parantem
arcet et in lapidem rictus serpentis apertos
congelat et patulos, ut erant, indurat hiatus.
Umbra subit terras, et quae loca viderat ante,
cuncta recognoscit quaerensque per arva piorum
invenit Eurydicen cupidisque amplectitur ulnis;
hic modo coniunctis spatiantur passibus ambo,
nunc praecedentem sequitur, nunc praevius anteit
Eurydicenque suam iam tuto respicit Orpheus.
Non inpune tamen scelus hoc sinit esse Lyaeus
amissoque dolens sacrorum vate suorum
protinus in silvis matres Edonidas omnes,
quae videre nefas, torta radice ligavit;
quippe pedum digitos via, quam tum est quaeque secuta,
traxit et in solidam detrusit acumina terram,
utque suum laqueis, quos callidus abdidit auceps,
crus ubi commisit volucris sensitque teneri,
plangitur ac trepidans adstringit vincula motu:
sic, ut quaeque solo defixa cohaeserat harum,
exsternata fugam frustra temptabat, at illam
lenta tenet radix exsultantemque coercet,
dumque ubi sint digiti, dum pes ubi, quaerit, et ungues,
aspicit in teretes lignum succedere suras

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For you, Orpheus, the grieving birds mourned. For you the wild animals mourned. The hard rocks mourned. The forests that so often followed your songs mourned. Trees dropped their leaves in grief, as if tearing their hair. They say the rivers swelled with their own tears, and the naiads and dryads wore dark mourning veils, their hair streaming loose.

His limbs lay scattered. But you, river Hebrus, received his head and his lyre. And - wonder of wonders! - as they floated midstream, the lyre gave out mournful notes. The lifeless tongue murmured something mournful. The riverbanks echoed back in mourning. Then, carried out to sea, they left their native river and reached the shore of Lesbos, near Methymna. There, on that foreign sand, a savage serpent attacked the head as it lay exposed, hair still dripping with sea spray. But at last Phoebus appeared. He drove off the snake just as it was about to strike and froze its open jaws to stone, petrifying the gaping mouth exactly as it was.

Orpheus in the Underworld

His shade descended under the earth. It recognized all the places it had seen before. Searching through the fields of the blessed, it found Eurydice and clasped her in eager arms. Now they walk side by side. Now he follows where she leads. Now he goes ahead, leading her. And now Orpheus can look back at his Eurydice - safely.

Bacchus Punishes the Maenads

But Bacchus wouldn't let this crime go unpunished. Grieving for the loss of the poet of his sacred rites, he immediately bound all the Thracian women who'd witnessed the murder - every one of them - to the forest with twisted roots. He stretched out each woman's toes from the foot that had chased Orpheus and drove them down into the hard earth. Like a bird that has stepped into snares a cunning fowler has hidden - when it realizes it's caught and beats its wings in panic, only tightening the trap with its frantic movement - that's how each woman, stuck fast to the ground, tried in terror to run but couldn't. The supple root held her tight and restrained her as she struggled. When she looked for her toes, her foot, her nails, she saw bark creeping up her smooth legs. She tried to slap her thigh with a grief-stricken

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et conata femur maerenti plangere dextra
robora percussit, pectus quoque robora fiunt,
robora sunt umeri; nodosaque bracchia veros
esse putes ramos, et non fallare putando.
Nec satis hoc Baccho est, ipsos quoque deserit agros
cumque choro meliore sui vineta Timoli
Pactolonque petit, quamvis non aureus illo
tempore nec caris erat invidiosus harenis.
hunc adsueta cohors, satyri bacchaeque, frequentant,
at Silenus abest: titubantem annisque meroque
ruricolae cepere Phryges vinctumque coronis
ad regem duxere Midan, cui Thracius Orpheus
orgia tradiderat cum Cecropio Eumolpo.
qui simul agnovit socium comitemque sacrorum,
hospitis adventu festum genialiter egit
per bis quinque dies et iunctas ordine noctes,
et iam stellarum sublime coegerat agmen
Lucifer undecimus, Lydos cum laetus in agros
rex venit et iuveni Silenum reddit alumno.
Huic deus optandi gratum, sed inutile, fecit
muneris arbitrium gaudens altore recepto.
ille male usurus donis ait 'effice, quicquid
corpore contigero, fulvum vertatur in aurum.'
adnuit optatis nocituraque munera solvit
Liber et indoluit, quod non meliora petisset.
laetus abit gaudetque malo Berecyntius heros
pollicitique fidem tangendo singula temptat
vixque sibi credens, non alta fronde virentem
ilice detraxit virgam: virga aurea facta est;
tollit humo saxum: saxum quoque palluit auro;
contigit et glaebam: contactu glaeba potenti
massa fit; arentis Cereris decerpsit aristas:
aurea messis erat; demptum tenet arbore pomum:
Hesperidas donasse putes; si postibus altis
admovit digitos, postes radiare videntur;
ille etiam liquidis palmas ubi laverat undis,
unda fluens palmis Danaen eludere posset;
vix spes ipse suas animo capit aurea fingens
omnia. gaudenti mensas posuere ministri
exstructas dapibus nec tostae frugis egentes:

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hand - and struck oak. Her chest turned to oak too. Her shoulders became oak. You'd have thought her outstretched arms were real branches, and you wouldn't have been wrong.

Bacchus Goes to Tmolus; Midas

But this wasn't enough for Bacchus. He abandoned those very fields and, with a worthier company, headed for his vineyards on Mount Tmolus and along the Pactolus river - though the Pactolus wasn't golden yet back then, not yet envied for its precious sands. His usual crowd - satyrs and bacchantes - thronged around him, but Silenus was missing. Phrygian peasants had found him stumbling drunk, old and wine-soaked. They'd wreathed him with garlands and led him to King Midas. Thracian Orpheus had taught Midas the sacred mysteries, along with Eumolpus from Athens. When Midas recognized his fellow initiate and companion in the rites, he threw a generous feast to celebrate the arrival of his guest - ten days and ten nights in a row. And on the eleventh dawn, when the Morning Star had marshaled the high host of stars, the king came joyfully to the Lydian fields and returned Silenus to his young foster-son, Bacchus.

The god, delighted to have his foster-father back, gave Midas a grateful but dangerous choice - he could choose any gift he wished. Midas, who was about to make terrible use of this gift, said, "Make it so that whatever my body touches turns to golden gold." Bacchus nodded approval of his wish and granted the gift that would bring harm, sad that Midas hadn't asked for something better. The Phrygian hero left delighted, celebrating his own ruin. He tested whether the promise was real by touching things. Barely believing it himself, he plucked a twig from a green oak with tall leaves - the twig turned to gold. He picked up a stone from the ground - the stone too turned pale gold. He touched a clod of earth - under his powerful touch, the clod became a mass of gold. He picked dry ears of wheat - the harvest turned to gold. He held an apple he'd picked from a tree - you'd think the Hesperides had given it to him. When he placed his fingers against tall doorposts, the posts seemed to gleam. Even when he washed his hands in water, the water streaming from his palms could have fooled Danae. He could barely wrap his mind around his own dreams come true - turning everything to gold.

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tum vero, sive ille sua Cerealia dextra
munera contigerat, Cerealia dona rigebant,
sive dapes avido convellere dente parabat,
lammina fulva dapes admoto dente premebat;
miscuerat puris auctorem muneris undis:
fusile per rictus aurum fluitare videres.
Attonitus novitate mali divesque miserque
effugere optat opes et quae modo voverat, odit.
copia nulla famem relevat; sitis arida guttur
urit, et inviso meritus torquetur ab auro
ad caelumque manus et splendida bracchia tollens
'da veniam, Lenaee pater! peccavimus' inquit,
'sed miserere, precor, speciosoque eripe damno!'
mite deum numen: Bacchus peccasse fatentem
restituit pactique fide data munera solvit
'ne' ve 'male optato maneas circumlitus auro,
vade' ait 'ad magnis vicinum Sardibus amnem
perque iugum nitens labentibus obvius undis
carpe viam, donec venias ad fluminis ortus,
spumigeroque tuum fonti, qua plurimus exit,
subde caput corpusque simul, simul elue crimen.'
rex iussae succedit aquae: vis aurea tinxit
flumen et humano de corpore cessit in amnem;
nunc quoque iam veteris percepto semine venae
arva rigent auro madidis pallentia glaebis.
Ille perosus opes silvas et rura colebat
Panaque montanis habitantem semper in antris,
pingue sed ingenium mansit, nocituraque, ut ante,
rursus erant domino stultae praecordia mentis.
nam freta prospiciens late riget arduus alto
Tmolus in ascensu clivoque extensus utroque
Sardibus hinc, illinc parvis finitur Hypaepis.
Pan ibi dum teneris iactat sua sibila nymphis
et leve cerata modulatur harundine carmen
ausus Apollineos prae se contemnere cantus,
iudice sub Tmolo certamen venit ad inpar.
Monte suo senior iudex consedit et aures
liberat arboribus: quercu coma caerula tantum
cingitur, et pendent circum cava tempora glandes.
isque deum pecoris spectans 'in iudice' dixit

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While he was celebrating, servants brought out tables heaped with food and piled with roasted grain. But then - disaster. Whether he touched bread with his hand, the bread went rigid. Whether he tried to tear into meat with eager teeth, a golden sheet covered the food where his teeth touched it. He mixed wine - the gift from the god who'd given him this power - with pure water. You could see molten gold flowing through his jaws.

Midas' Prayer

Stunned by this strange disaster, rich and miserable at once, he wanted to escape his wealth. He hated what moments before he'd prayed for. No amount of abundance could relieve his hunger. Dry thirst scorched his throat. He was tortured by the hateful gold he deserved. Lifting his hands and glittering arms to heaven, he said, "Forgive me, Father Bacchus! I've sinned, but pity me, I'm begging you. Save me from this shining curse!"

The power of the gods is kind. Bacchus, when Midas confessed his fault, restored him and released him from the gift granted in good faith. "And so you don't stay smeared with your ill-chosen gold, go," he said, "to the river near great Sardis. Follow the mountain ridge upstream against the flowing current until you reach the river's source. Where the spring foams out most abundantly, plunge your head and body together under the water and wash away your crime."

The king went to the water he'd been told to find. The golden power stained the river and passed from his human body into the stream. Even now, having absorbed the seeds of that ancient vein, the fields beside the river grow hard with gold, their soil yellowed by the moisture.

Apollo and Pan

Now, hating wealth, Midas took to the woods and fields, worshiping Pan, who always lives in mountain caves. But his thick skull remained, and just as before, his stupid mind's ideas were going to harm their owner. Mount Tmolus rises steep from its high ridge, commanding a wide view over the sea. Extending down slopes on either side, it's bounded by Sardis on one side and little Hypaepa on the other.

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'nulla mora est.' calamis agrestibus insonat ille
barbaricoque Midan (aderat nam forte canenti)
carmine delenit; post hunc sacer ora retorsit
Tmolus ad os Phoebi: vultum sua silva secuta est.
ille caput flavum lauro Parnaside vinctus
verrit humum Tyrio saturata murice palla
instructamque fidem gemmis et dentibus Indis
sustinet a laeva, tenuit manus altera plectrum;
artificis status ipse fuit. tum stamina docto
pollice sollicitat, quorum dulcedine captus
Pana iubet Tmolus citharae submittere cannas.
Iudicium sanctique placet sententia montis
omnibus, arguitur tamen atque iniusta vocatur
unius sermone Midae; nec Delius aures
humanam stolidas patitur retinere figuram,
sed trahit in spatium villisque albentibus inplet
instabilesque imas facit et dat posse moveri:
cetera sunt hominis, partem damnatur in unam
induiturque aures lente gradientis aselli.
ille quidem celare cupit turpique pudore
tempora purpureis temptat relevare tiaris;
sed solitus longos ferro resecare capillos
viderat hoc famulus, qui cum nec prodere visum
dedecus auderet, cupiens efferre sub auras,
nec posset reticere tamen, secedit humumque
effodit et, domini quales adspexerit aures,
voce refert parva terraeque inmurmurat haustae
indiciumque suae vocis tellure regesta
obruit et scrobibus tacitus discedit opertis.
creber harundinibus tremulis ibi surgere lucus
coepit et, ut primum pleno maturuit anno,
prodidit agricolam: leni nam motus ab austro
obruta verba refert dominique coarguit aures.
Ultus abit Tmolo liquidumque per aera vectus
angustum citra pontum Nepheleidos Helles
Laomedonteis Latoius adstitit arvis.
dextera Sigei, Rhoetei laeva profundi
ara Panomphaeo vetus est sacrata Tonanti:
inde novae primum moliri moenia Troiae
Laomedonta videt susceptaque magna labore

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Pan was there, showing off his piping to the delicate nymphs, playing light tunes on his wax-joined reeds. He dared to mock Apollo's music compared to his own and came to an unequal contest with Tmolus as judge. The ancient judge sat on his own mountain and shook his ears free of trees. Only dark green oak leaves crowned his head, and acorns dangled around his hollow temples. Looking at the god of flocks, he said, "The judge is ready."

Pan played his rustic pipes. His wild music charmed Midas, who happened to be there listening. After Pan finished, holy Tmolus turned his face toward Phoebus. His forest turned to follow his gaze. Apollo, his golden hair bound with laurel from Parnassus, swept the ground with his robe dyed in Tyrian purple. In his left hand he held a lyre decorated with gems and Indian ivory. His right hand held the plectrum. His very posture was that of an artist. Then he plucked the strings with a skilled thumb. Enchanted by the sweetness, Tmolus ordered Pan to yield his pipes to the lyre.

The sacred mountain's judgment and verdict pleased everyone - except Midas. He alone challenged it, calling it unfair. The god of Delos wouldn't let those ears keep their dull human shape. He stretched them out long, filled them with gray bristles, made them flexible at the base, and gave them the power to swivel. The rest stayed human. He was punished in one part only - he took on the ears of a plodding donkey.

He desperately wanted to hide them. Ashamed, he tried to cover his temples with purple turbans. But the servant who usually cut his long hair had seen them. The man didn't dare expose what he'd witnessed - such a shameful thing - but he longed to let it out into the open air and simply couldn't keep quiet. So he crept away, dug a hole in the ground, and in a quiet voice reported what kind of ears he'd seen on his master. He whispered to the hole he'd dug, then piled the dirt back in, burying the evidence of his words, and left the spot in silence. A thick grove of whispering reeds began to grow there. When a full year had passed and they'd matured, they betrayed the digger. Swayed by the gentle south wind, they repeated the buried words and revealed the master's ears.

Laomedon's Walls

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crescere difficili nec opes exposcere parvas
cumque tridentigero tumidi genitore profundi
mortalem induitur formam Phrygiaeque tyranno
aedificat muros pactus pro moenibus aurum.
stabat opus: pretium rex infitiatur et addit,
perfidiae cumulum, falsis periuria verbis.
'non inpune feres' rector maris inquit, et omnes
inclinavit aquas ad avarae litora Troiae
inque freti formam terras conplevit opesque
abstulit agricolis et fluctibus obruit agros.
poena neque haec satis est: regis quoque filia monstro
poscitur aequoreo, quam dura ad saxa revinctam
vindicat Alcides promissaque munera dictos
poscit equos tantique operis mercede negata
bis periura capit superatae moenia Troiae.
nec, pars militiae, Telamon sine honore recessit
Hesioneque data potitur. nam coniuge Peleus
clarus erat diva nec avi magis ille superbus
nomine quam soceri, siquidem Iovis esse nepoti
contigit haut uni, coniunx dea contigit uni.
Namque senex Thetidi Proteus 'dea' dixerat 'undae,
concipe: mater eris iuvenis, qui fortibus annis
acta patris vincet maiorque vocabitur illo.'
ergo, ne quicquam mundus Iove maius haberet,
quamvis haut tepidos sub pectore senserat ignes,
Iuppiter aequoreae Thetidis conubia fugit,
in suaque Aeaciden succedere vota nepotem
iussit et amplexus in virginis ire marinae.
Est sinus Haemoniae curvos falcatus in arcus,
bracchia procurrunt: ubi, si foret altior unda,
portus erat; summis inductum est aequor harenis;
litus habet solidum, quod nec vestigia servet
nec remoretur iter nec opertum pendeat alga;
myrtea silva subest bicoloribus obsita bacis.
est specus in medio, natura factus an arte,
ambiguum, magis arte tamen: quo saepe venire
frenato delphine sedens, Theti, nuda solebas.
illic te Peleus, ut somno vincta iacebas,
occupat, et quoniam precibus temptata repugnas,
vim parat, innectens ambobus colla lacertis;

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His revenge complete, Apollo left Mount Tmolus. Carried through the flowing air, he landed in Laomedon's realm beyond the narrow channel named for Helle, daughter of Nephele. To the right of the Sigean strait, to the left of Rhoeteum, an ancient altar stood consecrated to Jupiter, who speaks through oracles. From there Apollo saw Laomedon beginning to build walls for the new city of Troy. He watched the massive project rising through grueling labor - work that demanded enormous resources. Along with Neptune, the trident-bearer and mighty lord of the sea, Apollo took on mortal form. For agreed-upon gold, they built walls for the Phrygian king.

The work was finished. The king refused payment. He added the ultimate treachery on top - he swore falsely that he owed them nothing. "You won't get away with this," said the ruler of the sea. He tilted all his waters toward the shores of greedy Troy and transformed the land into the likeness of a sea channel. He stripped the farmers of their wealth and buried their fields under waves. But even this punishment wasn't enough. The king's daughter was demanded as sacrifice to a sea monster. Bound to the hard rocks, she was rescued by Hercules, who then demanded his promised reward - the horses that had been promised. When payment for such great service was denied, Hercules captured the twice-perjured walls of conquered Troy. Telamon, who'd joined the expedition, didn't leave without honor either - he won possession of Hesione. Peleus became famous for having a goddess as his wife. He wasn't prouder of being Jupiter's grandson (that distinction he shared with others) than of having a god for a father-in-law - that honor was his alone.

Peleus and Thetis

Old Proteus had prophesied to Thetis: "Goddess of the waves, bear a child. You'll be mother to a young man who in his prime will surpass his father's achievements and be called greater than his father." So Jupiter, to prevent the world from holding anything greater than himself - though he'd felt warm passion for her in his heart - avoided marriage with sea-born Thetis. He ordered his grandson, the descendant of Aeacus, to take his place in her bed and enter the sea-nymph's embrace.

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quod nisi venisses variatis saepe figuris
ad solitas artes, auso foret ille potitus;
sed modo tu volucris: volucrem tamen ille tenebat;
nunc gravis arbor eras: haerebat in arbore Peleus;
tertia forma fuit maculosae tigridis: illa
territus Aeacides a corpore bracchia solvit.
inde deos pelagi vino super aequora fuso
et pecoris fibris et fumo turis adorat,
donec Carpathius medio de gurgite vates
'Aeacide,' dixit 'thalamis potiere petitis,
tu modo, cum rigido sopita quiescet in antro,
ignaram laqueis vincloque innecte tenaci.
nec te decipiat centum mentita figuras,
sed preme, quicquid erit, dum, quod fuit ante, reformet.'
dixerat haec Proteus et condidit aequore vultum
admisitque suos in verba novissima fluctus.
Pronus erat Titan inclinatoque tenebat
Hesperium temone fretum, cum pulchra relicto
Nereis ingreditur consueta cubilia ponto;
vix bene virgineos Peleus invaserat artus:
illa novat formas, donec sua membra teneri
sentit et in partes diversas bracchia tendi.
tum denum ingemuit, 'ne' que ait 'sine numine vincis'
exhibita estque Thetis: confessam amplectitur heros
et potitur votis ingentique inplet Achille.
Felix et nato, felix et coniuge Peleus,
et cui, si demas iugulati crimina Phoci,
omnia contigerant: fraterno sanguine sontem
expulsumque domo patria Trachinia tellus
accipit. hic regnum sine vi, sine caede gerebat
Lucifero genitore satus patriumque nitorem
ore ferens Ceyx, illo qui tempore maestus
dissimilisque sui fratrem lugebat ademptum.
quo postquam Aeacides fessus curaque viaque
venit et intravit paucis comitantibus urbem,
quosque greges pecorum, quae secum armenta trahebat,
haut procul a muris sub opaca valle reliquit;
copia cum facta est adeundi prima tyranni,
velamenta manu praetendens supplice, qui sit
quoque satus, memorat, tantum sua crimina celat

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In Thessaly there's a bay curved like a sickle. Arms of land reach out. If the water were deeper, it would make a harbor. The sea just skims the surface of the sand. The shore is firm - it doesn't hold footprints, doesn't slow your passage, and isn't draped with seaweed. Nearby stands a myrtle grove covered with two-colored berries. In the middle is a cave, whether shaped by nature or by art it's hard to say - though more likely by art. Here you, Thetis, often came, naked, riding a bridled dolphin. Peleus seized you there as you lay sleeping. When prayers didn't work and you fought back, he resorted to force, throwing his arms around your neck. If you hadn't turned to your well-practiced arts and shifted through varied shapes, he would have succeeded in his bold attempt. But first you became a bird - and he held onto the bird. Then you became a massive tree - Peleus clung to the tree. Your third form was a spotted tiger. Terrified, the son of Aeacus let go.

Then he worshiped the gods of the sea, pouring wine over the waves, burning sheep entrails and incense smoke, until the prophet of Carpathos spoke from the depths of the sea: "Son of Aeacus, you'll win the wedding bed you're after. But when she's sleeping in her rocky cave, catch her unaware and bind her with strong rope. Don't let her fool you by lying in a hundred shapes. Keep holding on, whatever she becomes, until she changes back to what she was before."

Proteus spoke and plunged his face back into the sea, letting the waves close over his last words.

The sun was sinking low, his slanting chariot heading toward the western sea, when the beautiful daughter of Nereus left the ocean and entered her familiar cave. Peleus had barely gotten a good grip on the girl's body when she started shifting forms again - until she realized her limbs were held fast, her arms stretched out in opposite directions. Then at last she groaned and said, "You're not winning without divine help." And she revealed herself as Thetis. The hero embraced her as she confessed defeat, won what he'd prayed for, and filled her with great Achilles.

Peleus and Ceyx

Peleus was happy in his son, happy in his wife. If you left out the crime of murdering Phocus, everything had gone well for him. But guilty of his brother's blood, driven from his father's house, he was received in the land of Trachis. Here King Ceyx ruled - son of Lucifer the Morning Star, bearing his father's

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mentiturque fugae causam; petit, urbe vel agro
se iuvet. hunc contra placido Trachinius ore
talibus adloquitur: 'mediae quoque commoda plebi
nostra patent, Peleu, nec inhospita regna tenemus;
adicis huic animo momenta potentia, clarum
nomen avumque Iovem; ne tempora perde precando!
quod petis, omne feres tuaque haec pro parte vocato,
qualiacumque vides! utinam meliora videres!'
et flebat: moveat tantos quae causa dolores,
Peleusque comitesque rogant; quibus ille profatur:
'forsitan hanc volucrem, rapto quae vivit et omnes
terret aves, semper pennas habuisse putetis:
vir fuit (et - tanta est animi constantia - iam tum
acer erat belloque ferox ad vimque paratus)
nomine Daedalion. illo genitore creatis,
qui vocat Auroram caeloque novissimus exit,
culta mihi pax est, pacis mihi cura tenendae
coniugiique fuit, fratri fera bella placebant:
illius virtus reges gentesque subegit,
quae nunc Thisbaeas agitat mutata columbas.
nata erat huic Chione, quae dotatissima forma
mille procos habuit, bis septem nubilis annis.
forte revertentes Phoebus Maiaque creatus,
ille suis Delphis, hic vertice Cyllenaeo,
videre hanc pariter, pariter traxere colorem.
spem veneris differt in tempora noctis Apollo;
non fert ille moras virgaque movente soporem
virginis os tangit: tactu iacet illa potenti
vimque dei patitur; nox caelum sparserat astris:
Phoebus anum simulat praereptaque gaudia sumit.
ut sua maturus conplevit tempora venter,
alipedis de stirpe dei versuta propago
nascitur Autolycus furtum ingeniosus ad omne,
candida de nigris et de candentibus atra
qui facere adsuerat, patriae non degener artis;
nascitur e Phoebo (namque est enixa gemellos)
carmine vocali clarus citharaque Philammon.
quid peperisse duos et dis placuisse duobus
et forti genitore et progenitore nitenti
esse satam prodest? an obest quoque gloria multis?

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radiance in his face - a kingdom without violence or bloodshed. But at that time Ceyx was grieving, unlike himself, mourning a lost brother.

When the son of Aeacus arrived, exhausted by worry and the journey, he entered the city with a few companions. Not far from the walls, in a shaded valley, he left the herds of sheep and cattle he'd brought with him. When he first got the chance to approach the king, he held out a suppliant's olive branch and told who he was and whom he was descended from - hiding only his crime, lying about his reason for fleeing. He asked the king to help him, whether in the city or the countryside. To this the king of Trachis responded with a peaceful expression:

"Our benefits are open even to common people, Peleus. We don't rule an unwelcoming kingdom. You bring to this generous spirit powerful claims - a famous name, Jupiter for a grandfather. Don't waste time in prayers. Whatever you're asking for, you'll get it all. Consider what you see here as your share. I only wish you saw better things!" And he wept. Peleus and his companions asked what cause stirred such deep grief. To them he explained:

Daedalion and Chione

"You might think this bird, which lives by hunting and terrifies all other birds, always had wings. He was a man once. And true to character, even then he was fierce, violent in war, quick to use force. His name was Daedalion. We were born from the same father - the one who summons the Dawn and appears last to leave the sky. I cultivated peace. My concern was preserving peace and my marriage. My brother loved savage wars. His courage conquered kings and nations - the same man who now, transformed, harasses the doves of Thisbe.

"He had a daughter, Chione, blessed with extraordinary beauty. By her fourteenth year, when she was ready for marriage, she had a thousand suitors. It happened that Phoebus and Mercury - the son of Maia - saw her at the same moment as they were traveling, Apollo returning from Delphi, Mercury from Mount Cyllene's peak. They both fell in love at the same time. Apollo postponed his hopes for love until nightfall. Mercury couldn't wait. He touched her face with the sleep-bringing wand. She collapsed under its power and submitted to the god's assault. Night had scattered its stars across the sky. Then Phoebus

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obfuit huic certe! quae se praeferre Dianae
sustinuit faciemque deae culpavit, at illi
ira ferox mota est "factis" que "placebimus" inquit.
nec mora, curvavit cornu nervoque sagittam
inpulit et meritam traiecit harundine linguam.
lingua tacet, nec vox temptataque verba sequuntur,
conantemque loqui cum sanguine vita reliquit;
quam miser amplexans ego tum patriumque dolorem
corde tuli fratrique pio solacia dixi,
quae pater haut aliter quam cautes murmura ponti
accipit et natam delamentatur ademptam;
ut vero ardentem vidit, quater impetus illi
in medios fuit ire rogos, quater inde repulsus
concita membra fugae mandat similisque iuvenco
spicula crabronum pressa cervice gerenti,
qua via nulla, ruit. iam tum mihi currere visus
plus homine est, alasque pedes sumpsisse putares.
effugit ergo omnes veloxque cupidine leti
vertice Parnasi potitur; miseratus Apollo,
cum se Daedalion saxo misisset ab alto,
fecit avem et subitis pendentem sustulit alis
oraque adunca dedit, curvos dedit unguibus hamos,
virtutem antiquam, maiores corpore vires,
et nunc accipiter, nulli satis aequus, in omnes
saevit aves aliisque dolens fit causa dolendi.'
Quae dum Lucifero genitus miracula narrat
de consorte suo, cursu festinus anhelo
advolat armenti custos Phoceus Onetor
et 'Peleu, Peleu! magnae tibi nuntius adsum
cladis' ait. quodcumque ferat, iubet edere Peleus,
pendet et ipse metu trepidi Trachinius oris;
ille refert 'fessos ad litora curva iuvencos
adpuleram, medio cum Sol altissimus orbe
tantum respiceret, quantum superesse videret,
parsque boum fulvis genua inclinarat harenis
latarumque iacens campos spectabat aquarum,
pars gradibus tardis illuc errabat et illuc;
nant alii celsoque exstant super aequora collo.
templa mari subsunt nec marmore clara neque auro,
sed trabibus densis lucoque umbrosa vetusto:

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disguised himself as an old woman and took the pleasures already stolen.

"When her womb had carried its burden to term, she gave birth to Autolycus from Mercury's seed - a crafty child skilled in every kind of theft, accustomed to turning white things black and black things white, living up to his father's talents. From Phoebus (for she bore twins), Philammon was born, famous for his voice in song and his mastery of the lyre. But what good did it do her to bear two sons, to have pleased two gods, to be daughter of a mighty father and granddaughter of a radiant grandfather? Does glory harm many people? It certainly harmed Chione. She dared to claim she was more beautiful than Diana and criticized the goddess's looks. Diana's fierce anger flared. 'I'll please you with actions, not words,' she said. Without hesitation she bent her bow, drew the string, and shot an arrow that pierced Chione's insolent tongue. Her tongue fell silent. No voice could follow her attempted words. Life and blood both left her as she tried to speak.

"How miserable I was, holding her then, carrying a father's grief in my heart. I spoke consolations to my devoted brother, but the father absorbed them no better than rocks absorb the sea's murmuring - he just kept lamenting his stolen daughter. But when he saw her on the funeral pyre, he tried four times to throw himself into the flames. Four times driven back, he turned his tormented body to flight. Like a bull stung by hornets on the back of his neck, he rushed where no path led. Even then he seemed to me to run faster than humanly possible. You'd have thought his feet had grown wings. He fled from everyone, desperate for death, and reached the summit of Parnassus. When Daedalion hurled himself from the towering cliff, Apollo took pity. He turned him into a bird and held him aloft on sudden wings. He gave him a hooked beak, gave him curved talons like hooks, his old courage, and strength greater than his body ever had. Now he's a hawk, kind to no one. He rages against all birds and, still grieving, becomes a source of grief to others."

The Wolf

While the Morning Star's son was telling these wonders about his kinsman, Onetor the Phocian - Phocus's guardian - came running up breathless and panting: "Peleus! Peleus! I bring news of terrible disaster!" Peleus told him to report whatever he'd brought. The king of Trachis too waited in fear, his

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Nereides Nereusque tenent (hos navita ponti
edidit esse deos, dum retia litore siccat);
iuncta palus huic est densis obsessa salictis,
quam restagnantis fecit maris unda paludem:
inde fragore gravi strepitans loca proxima terret,
belua vasta, lupus iuncisque palustribus exit,
oblitus et spumis et sparsus sanguine rictus
fulmineos, rubra suffusus lumina flamma.
qui quamquam saevit pariter rabieque fameque,
acrior est rabie: neque enim ieiunia curat
caede boum diramque famem finire, sed omne
vulnerat armentum sternitque hostiliter omne.
pars quoque de nobis funesto saucia morsu,
dum defensamus, leto est data; sanguine litus
undaque prima rubet demugitaeque paludes.
sed mora damnosa est, nec res dubitare remittit:
dum superest aliquid, cuncti coeamus et arma,
arma capessamus coniunctaque tela feramus!'
dixerat agrestis: nec Pelea damna movebant,
sed memor admissi Nereida conligit orbam
damna sua inferias exstincto mittere Phoco.
induere arma viros violentaque sumere tela
rex iubet Oetaeus; cum quis simul ipse parabat
ire, sed Alcyone coniunx excita tumultu
prosilit et nondum totos ornata capillos
disicit hos ipsos colloque infusa mariti,
mittat ut auxilium sine se, verbisque precatur
et lacrimis, animasque duas ut servet in una.
Aeacides illi: 'pulchros, regina, piosque
pone metus! plena est promissi gratia vestri.
non placet arma mihi contra nova monstra moveri;
numen adorandum pelagi est!' erat ardua turris,
arce focus summa, fessis nota grata carinis:
ascendunt illuc stratosque in litore tauros
cum gemitu adspiciunt vastatoremque cruento
ore ferum, longos infectum sanguine villos.
inde manus tendens in aperti litora ponti
caeruleam Peleus Psamathen, ut finiat iram,
orat, opemque ferat; nec vocibus illa rogantis
flectitur Aeacidae, Thetis hanc pro coniuge supplex

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face trembling.

The man reported: "I'd driven the exhausted cattle to the curved shore when the sun at its highest point looked back on what remained of the day. Some of the oxen had bent their knees on the golden sand and were lying there, gazing out at the wide expanse of water. Some wandered here and there with slow steps. Others were swimming, their necks raised above the sea.

"Near the ocean stands a temple - not gleaming with marble or gold, but built with thick beams, shadowy with ancient trees. Nereids and Nereus own it, a sailor told me as he dried his nets on the shore. Next to it lies a marsh thick with willows, made swampy by stagnant seawater. From there, with a tremendous crash, came a huge beast - a wolf - roaring, terrorizing the whole area, bursting out from the marshy reeds. Its jaws were smeared and splattered with foam and blood. Its eyes blazed, flooded with red fire. Though it raged equally with rabies and hunger, it was more savage in its rabies. It didn't bother satisfying its hunger and terrible fast with slaughtering cattle - instead it wounded the whole herd, laying them all low with murderous intent. Some of us too, wounded by deadly bites as we tried to defend the animals, were killed. The shore and the first waves turned red with blood. The marshes echoed with bellowing.

"But there's no time to waste. The situation won't allow hesitation. While anything remains, we should all gather together and take up arms - take up arms and come with weapons together!" The farmhand spoke. But the losses didn't move Peleus. Mindful of his crime, he concluded that the grieving sea-nymph was offering his losses as funeral gifts to dead Phocus.

The Wolf Turned to Stone

The king of Trachis ordered his men to put on armor and take up weapons. He was about to go with them himself when his wife Alcyone, roused by the commotion, rushed out. Her hair wasn't fully done - she scattered it loose, threw herself around her husband's neck, and begged with words and tears that he send help without going himself, saving two lives in one.

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accepit veniam. sed enim revocatus ab acri
caede lupus perstat, dulcedine sanguinis asper,
donec inhaerentem lacerae cervice iuvencae
marmore mutavit: corpus praeterque colorem
omnia servavit, lapidis color indicat illum
iam non esse lupum, iam non debere timeri.
nec tamen hac profugum consistere Pelea terra
fata sinunt, Magnetas adit vagus exul et illic
sumit ab Haemonio purgamina caedis Acasto.
Interea fratrisque sui fratremque secutis
anxia prodigiis turbatus pectora Ceyx,
consulat ut sacras, hominum oblectamina, sortes,
ad Clarium parat ire deum; nam templa profanus
invia cum Phlegyis faciebat Delphica Phorbas.
consilii tamen ante sui, fidissima, certam
te facit, Alcyone; cui protinus intima frigus
ossa receperunt, buxoque simillimus ora
pallor obit, lacrimisque genae maduere profusis.
ter conata loqui, ter fletibus ora rigavit
singultuque pias interrumpente querellas
'quae mea culpa tuam,' dixit 'carissime, mentem
vertit? ubi est quae cura mei prior esse solebat?
iam potes Alcyone securus abesse relicta?
iam via longa placet? iam sum tibi carior absens?
at, puto, per terras iter est, tantumque dolebo,
non etiam metuam, curaeque timore carebunt.
aequora me terrent et ponti tristis imago:
et laceras nuper tabulas in litore vidi
et saepe in tumulis sine corpore nomina legi.
neve tuum fallax animum fiducia tangat,
quod socer Hippotades tibi sit, qui carcere fortes
contineat ventos, et, cum velit, aequora placet.
cum semel emissi tenuerunt aequora venti,
nil illis vetitum est: incommendataque tellus
omnis et omne fretum est, caeli quoque nubila vexant
excutiuntque feris rutilos concursibus ignes.
quo magis hos novi (nam novi et saepe paterna
parva domo vidi), magis hoc reor esse timendos.
quod tua si flecti precibus sententia nullis,
care, potest, coniunx, nimiumque es certus eundi,

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The son of Aeacus said to her, "Set aside your kind and dutiful fears, my queen. Your offer fills me with gratitude. But I don't want to take up arms against some unknown monster. The sea divinity must be appeased." There was a tall tower, a lighthouse on top of the citadel, familiar and welcome to exhausted ships. They climbed it and groaned to see the slaughtered cattle scattered on the shore and the ravager with its bloody mouth - savage, its long fur matted with blood. From there, stretching his hands toward the shores of the open sea, Peleus prayed that sea-blue Psamathe would end her anger and bring help. The prayers of Peleus didn't bend her. But Thetis, pleading for her husband, won this pardon. Even so, called back from its savage slaughter, the wolf kept going, drunk on the sweetness of blood - until, clinging to a heifer's torn throat, it was changed to marble. Its body and everything except its color were preserved. The stone's color proved it was no longer a wolf, no longer something to fear.

Still, the fates wouldn't let fugitive Peleus settle in this land. He traveled as a wandering exile to the Magnetans. There he received purification for the murder from Acastus of Thessaly.

Ceyx Prepares to Consult the Oracle

Meanwhile, troubled by his brother's dark omens and the things that had followed, Ceyx's heart was disturbed. He wanted to consult the sacred oracle, humanity's comfort. He prepared to visit the god of Claros, since the villain Phorbas and his Phlegyan gang had made the Delphic shrine inaccessible. But first he informed you of his plan, most faithful Alcyone. Immediately a deep chill seized her bones. Pallor like boxwood spread across her face. Her cheeks grew wet with streaming tears. Three times she tried to speak. Three times tears soaked her face. With sobs breaking up her loving protests, she said:

"What wrong of mine, dearest husband, has changed your heart? Where is that concern for me that used to come first? Can you now leave secure, with Alcyone left behind? Does a long journey now appeal to you? Am I now dearer to you absent than present? But I assume the journey's by land. Then I'll only grieve, not also fear. My worries won't include terror. It's the sea that terrifies me - the grim face of the ocean. I recently saw shattered planks on the shore. I've often read names on tombstones that have no bodies beneath them. Don't let false confidence enter your mind just because your father-in-law is Aeolus, who locks up the powerful winds in his prison and calms the seas whenever he wants. Once the

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me quoque tolle simul! certe iactabimur una,
nec nisi quae patiar, metuam, pariterque feremus,
quicquid erit, pariter super aequora lata feremur.'
Talibus Aeolidis dictis lacrimisque movetur
sidereus coniunx: neque enim minor ignis in ipso est;
sed neque propositos pelagi dimittere cursus,
nec vult Alcyonen in partem adhibere pericli
multaque respondit timidum solantia pectus.
non tamen idcirco causam probat; addidit illis
hoc quoque lenimen, quo solo flexit amantem:
'longa quidem est nobis omnis mora, sed tibi iuro
per patrios ignes, si me modo fata remittant,
ante reversurum, quam luna bis inpleat orbem.'
his ubi promissis spes est admota recursus,
protinus eductam navalibus aequore tingui
aptarique suis pinum iubet armamentis;
qua rursus visa veluti praesaga futuri
horruit Alcyone lacrimasque emisit obortas
amplexusque dedit tristique miserrima tandem
ore 'vale' dixit conlapsaque corpore toto est;
ast iuvenes quaerente moras Ceyce reducunt
ordinibus geminis ad fortia pectora remos
aequalique ictu scindunt freta: sustulit illa
umentes oculos stantemque in puppe recurva
concussaque manu dantem sibi signa maritum
prona videt redditque notas; ubi terra recessit
longius, atque oculi nequeunt cognoscere vultus,
dum licet, insequitur fugientem lumine pinum;
haec quoque ut haut poterat spatio submota videri,
vela tamen spectat summo fluitantia malo;
ut nec vela videt, vacuum petit anxia lectum
seque toro ponit: renovat lectusque torusque
Alcyonae lacrimas et quae pars admonet absit.
Portibus exierant, et moverat aura rudentes:
obvertit lateri pendentes navita remos
cornuaque in summa locat arbore totaque malo
carbasa deducit venientesque accipit auras.
aut minus, aut certe medium non amplius aequor
puppe secabatur, longeque erat utraque tellus,
cum mare sub noctem tumidis albescere coepit

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winds are released and have taken hold of the ocean, nothing's forbidden to them. Uncontrolled, they command every land, every sea. They harass even the clouds of heaven and strike out crimson lightning through violent collisions. The more I know them (and I do know them - I often saw them when I was a little girl in my father's house), the more I think they should be feared.

"But if no prayers can change your mind, dear husband, if you're too determined to go, then take me with you! At least we'll be tossed about together. I won't fear anything except what I'm actually suffering. We'll endure together whatever comes. Together we'll be carried across the vast ocean."

Ceyx Departs

Her husband, descended from the stars, was moved by the words and tears of his Aeolian wife. The fire in him burned no less hot. But he didn't want to abandon the planned sea voyage, nor did he want to share the danger with Alcyone. He spoke many soothing words to calm her frightened heart. But those didn't win her over. So he added this final consolation, which alone swayed his beloved:

"Any delay seems long to me, it's true. But I swear by my father's flames - if only the Fates allow me to return - I'll be back before the moon has filled her circle twice."

When this promise stirred hope of his return, he immediately ordered a ship to be pulled from the shipyard, launched into the sea, and fitted with all its gear. When Alcyone saw this again - as if foreseeing the future - she shuddered. Tears poured out. She embraced him and at last, utterly wretched, said "Farewell" with her grief-stricken mouth, then collapsed completely. The young crewmen (while Ceyx tried to delay) brought the oars back in double rows to their strong benches and began cutting through the water with rhythmic strokes. She lifted her tear-filled eyes and saw him standing on the curved stern, waving his hand to signal her. She waved back. As the land receded farther and her eyes could no longer make out faces, she followed the fleeing ship with her gaze as long as she could. When even that became invisible with distance, she still watched the sails floating from the top of the mast. When she couldn't see the sails either, anxious, she went back to their empty bedroom and lay down on the couch. The bed, the couch - everything renewed Alcyone's tears. Every part of it reminded her that he was gone.

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fluctibus et praeceps spirare valentius eurus.
'ardua iamdudum demittite cornua' rector
clamat 'et antemnis totum subnectite velum.'
hic iubet; inpediunt adversae iussa procellae,
nec sinit audiri vocem fragor aequoris ullam:
sponte tamen properant alii subducere remos,
pars munire latus, pars ventis vela negare;
egerit hic fluctus aequorque refundit in aequor,
hic rapit antemnas; quae dum sine lege geruntur,
aspera crescit hiems, omnique e parte feroces
bella gerunt venti fretaque indignantia miscent.
ipse pavet nec se, qui sit status, ipse fatetur
scire ratis rector, nec quid iubeatve vetetve:
tanta mali moles tantoque potentior arte est.
quippe sonant clamore viri, stridore rudentes,
undarum incursu gravis unda, tonitribus aether.
fluctibus erigitur caelumque aequare videtur
pontus et inductas aspergine tangere nubes;
et modo, cum fulvas ex imo vertit harenas,
concolor est illis, Stygia modo nigrior unda,
sternitur interdum spumisque sonantibus albet.
ipsa quoque his agitur vicibus Trachinia puppis
et nunc sublimis veluti de vertice montis
despicere in valles imumque Acheronta videtur,
nunc, ubi demissam curvum circumstetit aequor,
suspicere inferno summum de gurgite caelum.
saepe dat ingentem fluctu latus icta fragorem
nec levius pulsata sonat, quam ferreus olim
cum laceras aries balistave concutit arces,
utque solent sumptis incursu viribus ire
pectore in arma feri protentaque tela leones,
sic, ubi se ventis admiserat unda coortis,
ibat in alta ratis multoque erat altior illis;
iamque labant cunei, spoliataque tegmine cerae
rima patet praebetque viam letalibus undis.
ecce cadunt largi resolutis nubibus imbres,
inque fretum credas totum descendere caelum,
inque plagas caeli tumefactum ascendere pontum.
vela madent nimbis, et cum caelestibus undis
aequoreae miscentur aquae; caret ignibus aether,

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The Storm

They'd left the harbor behind. A breeze filled the ropes. The sailors shipped the hanging oars to the sides, set the yardarms on the top mast, and unfurled all the canvas to catch the favorable winds. They'd sailed less than halfway across - or at most halfway - and both shores were far behind when the sea began to whiten with swelling waves under the night sky and the violent east wind began to blow harder.

"Lower the tall yardarms now!" the captain shouted. "Furl all the canvas on the yards!" Those were his orders. But opposing gales made the commands impossible to follow. The crash of the sea drowned out every voice. Still, on their own initiative, some rushed to pull in the oars. Others worked to reinforce the sides. Others tried to take down the sails and deny them to the winds. One man bailed out seawater and poured it back into the sea. Another hauled down the yardarms. While all this was done in chaos, the brutal storm intensified. From every direction, savage winds waged war and whipped the angry sea into chaos.

Even the captain was terrified. He admitted he didn't know the ship's condition or what to order or forbid. The sheer scale of the disaster overpowered all skill. There was noise everywhere - men shouting, ropes creaking, waves crashing, seas surging, thunder booming from the sky. The ocean rose up in waves that seemed to match the height of heaven, touching the storm clouds with spray. Now, when it churned up golden sands from the depths, it took on their color. Now it turned blacker than the rivers of the Styx. Sometimes it spread out flat and whitened with roaring foam.

The ship from Trachis was tossed by these changing moods. Now, high as if on a mountain peak, it seemed to look down into valleys and to Acheron's deepest pit. Now, when the curved sea towered around it, it seemed to gaze up at the highest heaven from the infernal depths. Often the hull, struck by a wave, gave an enormous crash - no quieter than when an iron battering ram or catapult smashes besieged walls. Like lions that gather momentum and hurl themselves chest-first into spears and weapons, that's how the waves, whipped up by the winds, hurled themselves against the tall ship - and rose far higher still. Now the wedges began to fail. The seams, stripped of their wax coating, gaped open and offered a path for the deadly waves.

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caecaque nox premitur tenebris hiemisque suisque.
discutiunt tamen has praebentque micantia lumen
fulmina: fulmineis ardescunt ignibus imbres.
dat quoque iam saltus intra cava texta carinae
fluctus; et ut miles, numero praestantior omni,
cum saepe adsiluit defensae moenibus urbis,
spe potitur tandem laudisque accensus amore
inter mille viros murum tamen occupat unus,
sic ubi pulsarunt noviens latera ardua fluctus,
vastius insurgens decimae ruit impetus undae
nec prius absistit fessam oppugnare carinam,
quam velut in captae descendat moenia navis.
pars igitur temptabat adhuc invadere pinum,
pars maris intus erat: trepidant haud setius omnes,
quam solet urbs aliis murum fodientibus extra
atque aliis murum trepidare tenentibus intus.
deficit ars, animique cadunt, totidemque videntur,
quot veniunt fluctus, ruere atque inrumpere mortes.
non tenet hic lacrimas, stupet hic, vocat ille beatos,
funera quos maneant, hic votis numen adorat
bracchiaque ad caelum, quod non videt, inrita tollens
poscit opem; subeunt illi fraterque parensque,
huic cum pignoribus domus et quodcunque relictum est;
Alcyone Ceyca movet, Ceycis in ore
nulla nisi Alcyone est et, cum desideret unam,
gaudet abesse tamen; patriae quoque vellet ad oras
respicere inque domum supremos vertere vultus,
verum, ubi sit, nescit: tanta vertigine pontus
fervet, et inducta piceis e nubibus umbra
omne latet caelum, duplicataque noctis imago est.
frangitur incursu nimbosi turbinis arbor,
frangitur et regimen, spoliisque animosa superstes
unda, velut victrix, sinuataque despicit undas;
nec levius, quam siquis Athon Pindumve revulsos
sede sua totos in apertum everterit aequor,
praecipitata cadit pariterque et pondere et ictu
mergit in ima ratem; cum qua pars magna virorum
gurgite pressa gravi neque in aera reddita fato
functa suo est, alii partes et membra carinae
trunca tenent: tenet ipse manu, qua sceptra solebat,

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Look - torrential rains fell from bursting clouds. You'd think the entire sky was descending into the sea and the swollen ocean was climbing into the regions of heaven. The sails were drenched with rain. Seawater mixed with water from the sky. The heavens lost their stars. Blind night pressed down, weighed by its own darkness and the storm's. But lightning scattered this and provided flickering illumination. The rain blazed in the lightning's fires. And now the waves were leaping inside the hollow timbers of the hull. Like a soldier who stands out above all others - when he's leaped up repeatedly at a fortified city's walls and at last achieves his ambition, fired by love of glory, and among a thousand men seizes the wall alone - that's how it was when nine waves had battered the high sides. Then a tenth wave, rising more massively, rushed forward with violence and didn't stop assaulting the exhausted hull until it descended like an invader into the walls of a captured city.

The Ship Sinks

So part of the sea was still trying to invade the ship, while part had already broken through. Everyone trembled - no different than a city trembles when some attackers dig at the wall from outside while others defend it from inside. Skill failed. Courage failed. As many deaths seemed to rush in and overwhelm them as the number of waves that came. One man couldn't hold back his tears. Another stood frozen. This one called blessed those who had funerals waiting for them. That one prayed to the gods, raising his arms to a heaven he couldn't see, uselessly begging for help. One man thought of his brother and parents. Another thought of his home, his loved ones, everything he'd left behind. Alcyone filled Ceyx's mind. Only Alcyone was on Ceyx's lips. Though he longed for her alone, he was glad she was absent. He would have liked to turn his gaze toward his homeland's shores, to cast a final look toward home. But he didn't know where it was. The sea churned in such swirling chaos, and the whole sky was hidden by shadows drawn from pitch-black clouds. The darkness of night was doubled.

The mast snapped under the assault of the hurricane. The rudder broke. One triumphant wave, like a victor, rose up and gazed down on all the rolling waves below. No lighter than if someone had torn Mount Athos or Pindus from their foundations and hurled them whole into the open sea - the wave fell headlong and with its weight and impact drove the ship down into the depths at once. Most of the men

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fragmina navigii Ceyx socerumque patremque
invocat heu! frustra, sed plurima nantis in ore
Alcyone coniunx: illam meminitque refertque,
illius ante oculos ut agant sua corpora fluctus
optat et exanimis manibus tumuletur amicis.
dum natat, absentem, quotiens sinit hiscere fluctus,
nominat Alcyonen ipsisque inmurmurat undis.
ecce super medios fluctus niger arcus aquarum
frangitur et rupta mersum caput obruit unda.
Lucifer obscurus nec quem cognoscere posses
illa luce fuit, quoniamque excedere caelo
non licuit, densis texit sua nubibus ora.
Aeolis interea, tantorum ignara malorum,
dinumerat noctes et iam, quas induat ille,
festinat vestes, iam quas, ubi venerit ille,
ipsa gerat, reditusque sibi promittit inanes.
omnibus illa quidem superis pia tura ferebat,
ante tamen cunctos Iunonis templa colebat
proque viro, qui nullus erat, veniebat ad aras
utque foret sospes coniunx suus utque rediret,
optabat, nullamque sibi praeferret; at illi
hoc de tot votis poterat contingere solum.
At dea non ultra pro functo morte rogari
sustinet utque manus funestas arceat aris,
'Iri, meae' dixit 'fidissima nuntia vocis,
vise soporiferam Somni velociter aulam
exstinctique iube Ceycis imagine mittat
somnia ad Alcyonen veros narrantia casus.'
dixerat: induitur velamina mille colorum
Iris et arquato caelum curvamine signans
tecta petit iussi sub nube latentia regis.
Est prope Cimmerios longo spelunca recessu,
mons cavus, ignavi domus et penetralia Somni,
quo numquam radiis oriens mediusve cadensve
Phoebus adire potest: nebulae caligine mixtae
exhalantur humo dubiaeque crepuscula lucis.
non vigil ales ibi cristati cantibus oris
evocat Auroram, nec voce silentia rumpunt
sollicitive canes canibusve sagacior anser;
non fera, non pecudes, non moti flamine rami

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went with it, pressed down by the massive surge, never returning to the air, meeting their fates. Others clung to pieces and shattered planks from the hull. Ceyx himself, with the hand that used to hold his scepter, gripped fragments of the wreck. He called out - in vain! - to his father-in-law, to his father. But most often on the swimmer's lips was his wife, Alcyone. He remembered her. He repeated her name. He prayed that the waves would carry his body to her eyes, that even lifeless he might be buried by loving hands. As he swam, whenever the waves let him open his mouth, he spoke Alcyone's name. He murmured it to the very waters.

Look - a black wall of water broke over the surging waves and buried his sinking head in its collapsing crest. The Morning Star was so dim that night you couldn't recognize him. And since he wasn't allowed to leave the sky, he veiled his face with thick clouds.

Alcyone's Grief

Meanwhile, unaware of this terrible disaster, Alcyone counted the nights. She hurried to finish clothes for him to wear when he returned, and clothes for herself to wear when he came home. She promised herself his imagined homecoming. She brought dutiful incense offerings to all the gods, but above all she visited Juno's temples. She came to the altars for a husband who no longer existed. She prayed that he would be safe, that he would return, that he would love no woman more than her. Of all these prayers, only the last could possibly come true.

But the goddess could no longer bear being prayed to on behalf of a dead man. To ward off these death-polluted hands from her altars, she said, "Iris, most faithful messenger of my commands, go swiftly to the drowsy hall of Sleep. Order him to send a dream in the image of dead Ceyx to Alcyone, revealing what truly happened."

She spoke. Iris put on her robes of a thousand colors and, tracing an arched curve across the sky, sought out the palace hidden beneath clouds where the commanded king dwelled.

The Cave of Sleep

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humanaeve sonum reddunt convicia linguae.
muta quies habitat; saxo tamen exit ab imo
rivus aquae Lethes, per quem cum murmure labens
invitat somnos crepitantibus unda lapillis.
ante fores antri fecunda papavera florent
innumeraeque herbae, quarum de lacte soporem
Nox legit et spargit per opacas umida terras.
ianua, ne verso stridores cardine reddat,
nulla domo tota est, custos in limine nullus;
at medio torus est ebeno sublimis in antro,
plumeus, atricolor, pullo velamine tectus,
quo cubat ipse deus membris languore solutis.
hunc circa passim varias imitantia formas
Somnia vana iacent totidem, quot messis aristas,
silva gerit frondes, eiectas litus harenas.
Quo simul intravit manibusque obstantia virgo
Somnia dimovit, vestis fulgore reluxit
sacra domus, tardaque deus gravitate iacentes
vix oculos tollens iterumque iterumque relabens
summaque percutiens nutanti pectora mento
excussit tandem sibi se cubitoque levatus,
quid veniat, (cognovit enim) scitatur, at illa:
'Somne, quies rerum, placidissime, Somne, deorum,
pax animi, quem cura fugit, qui corpora duris
fessa ministeriis mulces reparasque labori,
Somnia, quae veras aequent imitamine formas,
Herculea Trachine iube sub imagine regis
Alcyonen adeant simulacraque naufraga fingant.
imperat hoc Iuno.' postquam mandata peregit,
Iris abit: neque enim ulterius tolerare soporis
vim poterat, labique ut somnum sensit in artus,
effugit et remeat per quos modo venerat arcus.
At pater e populo natorum mille suorum
excitat artificem simulatoremque figurae
Morphea: non illo quisquam sollertius alter
exprimit incessus vultumque sonumque loquendi;
adicit et vestes et consuetissima cuique
verba; sed hic solos homines imitatur, at alter
fit fera, fit volucris, fit longo corpore serpens:
hunc Icelon superi, mortale Phobetora vulgus

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Near the land of the Cimmerians lies a cave, a deep hollow in a mountain - the home and private chamber of lazy Sleep. Phoebus can never reach this place with his rays, whether rising, at noon, or setting. Mists mingled with gloom breathe up from the earth, creating the uncertain light of twilight. No wakeful bird with crested head calls to the Dawn with its songs. No watchful dog, no goose - shrewder than any dog - breaks the silence with its voice. No wild beast, no livestock, no branch stirred by a breeze makes a sound. No human voice creates a clamor. Mute silence dwells here. Yet from the deepest rock flows a stream of Lethe's waters. As it glides with a murmur, the wave rattling over pebbles invites sleep.

Before the cave's entrance, fertile poppies bloom, along with countless other herbs. From their sap, Night harvests sleep and sprinkles it, still moist, across the darkening earth. There's no door in the entire dwelling - no hinges to give a creak when turned. No guard watches the threshold. But in the cave's center stands a couch of ebony, raised high, cushioned and dark, draped with a black coverlet. There the god himself lies, his body dissolved in languor. All around him lie empty Dreams in imitation of countless forms - as many as ears of grain in a harvest, leaves in a forest, grains of sand cast up on the shore.

As soon as the maiden entered and pushed aside the Dreams crowding her path, the sacred dwelling gleamed with the radiance of her robes. The god lifted his eyes, heavy with sluggish drowsiness - barely, repeatedly falling shut again, his nodding head tapping his chest. At last he shook himself free, propped himself up on an elbow, and asked why she'd come. He recognized her. She answered:

"Sleep, peace of all things, gentlest Sleep among the gods, rest for the spirit - you whom care flees, who soothe bodies exhausted by hard labor and restore them for toil - command your Dreams, who imitate reality with perfect mimicry, to go to Hercules's city of Trachis. Tell them to take the king's form and appear to Alcyone, showing her visions of the shipwreck. Juno commands this."

After Iris had delivered her orders, she left. She couldn't endure the power of sleep any longer. As she felt drowsiness creeping into her limbs, she fled and traveled back along the rainbow arc by which she'd come.

Morpheus Appears to Alcyone

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nominat; est etiam diversae tertius artis
Phantasos: ille in humum saxumque undamque trabemque,
quaeque vacant anima, fallaciter omnia transit;
regibus hi ducibusque suos ostendere vultus
nocte solent, populos alii plebemque pererrant.
praeterit hos senior cunctisque e fratribus unum
Morphea, qui peragat Thaumantidos edita, Somnus
eligit et rursus molli languore solutus
deposuitque caput stratoque recondidit alto.
Ille volat nullos strepitus facientibus alis
per tenebras intraque morae breve tempus in urbem
pervenit Haemoniam, positisque e corpore pennis
in faciem Ceycis abit sumptaque figura
luridus, exanimi similis, sine vestibus ullis,
coniugis ante torum miserae stetit: uda videtur
barba viri, madidisque gravis fluere unda capillis.
tum lecto incumbens fletu super ora profuso
haec ait: 'agnoscis Ceyca, miserrima coniunx,
an mea mutata est facies nece? respice: nosces
inveniesque tuo pro coniuge coniugis umbram!
nil opis, Alcyone, nobis tua vota tulerunt!
occidimus! falso tibi me promittere noli!
nubilus Aegaeo deprendit in aequore navem
auster et ingenti iactatam flamine solvit,
oraque nostra tuum frustra clamantia nomen
inplerunt fluctus. - non haec tibi nuntiat auctor
ambiguus, non ista vagis rumoribus audis:
ipse ego fata tibi praesens mea naufragus edo.
surge, age, da lacrimas lugubriaque indue nec me
indeploratum sub inania Tartara mitte!'
adicit his vocem Morpheus, quam coniugis illa
crederet esse sui (fletus quoque fundere veros
visus erat), gestumque manus Ceycis habebat.
ingemit Alcyone lacrimans, motatque lacertos
per somnum corpusque petens amplectitur auras
exclamatque: 'mane! quo te rapis? ibimus una.'
voce sua specieque viri turbata soporem
excutit et primo, si sit, circumspicit, illic,
qui modo visus erat; nam moti voce ministri
intulerant lumen. postquam non invenit usquam,

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But the father, from his population of a thousand sons, roused Morpheus - master craftsman and imitator of forms. No one expressed more skillfully the walk, the face, the sound of speech. He added clothing too, and the words each person typically used. But he only imitated humans. Another son became beasts, birds, long-bodied serpents. The gods called him Icelos, but mortals named him Phobetor. There was a third with different skills, Phantasos. He deceptively became earth, rock, wave, timber - anything without a soul. These typically showed their faces to kings and leaders by night. The others wandered among common people and ordinary folk.

The elder Sleep passed over these and from all his brothers chose Morpheus alone to perform what Thaumas's daughter had commanded. Then Sleep, relaxing again into soft languor, laid down his head and buried it in the deep couch.

Morpheus flew on silent wings through the darkness. In moments he reached the city of Thessaly. Setting aside his wings, he took on Ceyx's face. Assuming the form - deathly pale, corpse-like, naked - he stood before his wretched wife's bed. His beard seemed wet. Heavy water appeared to flow from his soaked hair. Then, leaning over the bed, his face streaming with tears, he spoke:

"Do you recognize your Ceyx, dearest wife? Or has death changed my face? Look closely - you'll know me and find your husband's ghost instead of your husband. Your prayers, Alcyone, didn't help me. I'm dead. Don't delude yourself with false hopes. The stormy south wind caught our ship in the Aegean Sea. Tossed by violent gales, it broke apart. My mouth, calling your name in vain, filled with waves. No unreliable messenger brings you this news. You're not hearing wandering rumors. I myself, shipwrecked, present as I am, tell you my own fate. Get up, come, weep for me and put on mourning clothes. Don't send me unwept to the hollow underworld!"

To these words Morpheus added a voice she would believe was her husband's. He even seemed to shed real tears. He had Ceyx's hand gestures.

Alcyone groaned and wept in her sleep. She moved her arms, reaching for his body, but embraced only air. She cried out, "Wait! Where are you going? We'll go together!"

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percutit ora manu laniatque a pectore vestes
pectoraque ipsa ferit nec crines solvere curat:
scindit et altrici, quae luctus causa, roganti
'nulla est Alcyone, nulla est' ait. 'occidit una
cum Ceyce suo. solantia tollite verba!
naufragus interiit: vidi agnovique manusque
ad discedentem cupiens retinere tetendi.
umbra fuit, sed et umbra tamen manifesta virique
vera mei. non ille quidem, si quaeris, habebat
adsuetos vultus nec quo prius, ore nitebat:
pallentem nudumque et adhuc umente capillo
infelix vidi. stetit hoc miserabilis ipso
ecce loco'; et quaerit, vestigia siqua supersint.
'hoc erat, hoc, animo quod divinante timebam,
et ne me fugiens ventos sequerere rogabam.
at certe vellem, quoniam periturus abibas,
me quoque duxisses: multum fuit utile tecum
ire mihi; neque enim de vitae tempore quicquam
non simul egissem, nec mors discreta fuisset.
nunc absens perii, iactor quoque fluctibus absens,
et sine me me pontus habet. crudelior ipso
sit mihi mens pelago, si vitam ducere nitar
longius et tanto pugnem superesse dolori!
sed neque pugnabo nec te, miserande, relinquam
et tibi nunc saltem veniam comes, inque sepulcro
si non urna, tamen iunget nos littera: si non
ossibus ossa meis, at nomen nomine tangam.'
plura dolor prohibet, verboque intervenit omni
plangor, et attonito gemitus a corde trahuntur.
Mane erat: egreditur tectis ad litus et illum
maesta locum repetit, de quo spectarat euntem,
dumque moratur ibi dumque 'hic retinacula solvit,
hoc mihi discedens dedit oscula litore' dicit
dumque notata locis reminiscitur acta fretumque
prospicit, in liquida, spatio distante, tuetur
nescio quid quasi corpus aqua, primoque, quid illud
esset, erat dubium; postquam paulum adpulit unda,
et, quamvis aberat, corpus tamen esse liquebat,
qui foret, ignorans, quia naufragus, omine mota est
et, tamquam ignoto lacrimam daret, 'heu! miser,' inquit

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Startled by her own voice and her husband's image, she jolted awake. She looked around first to see if the man she'd just seen was still there. Her servants, roused by her cry, had brought in lamps. When she couldn't find him anywhere, she struck her face with her hands, tore the clothes from her chest, and beat her breasts. She didn't bother to loosen her hair - she ripped it out. When her nurse asked what caused such grief, she said, "Alcyone is gone, gone! She died with her Ceyx. Spare me your consoling words! He died in a shipwreck. I saw him. I recognized him. I reached out my hands to him as he left, trying to hold him. He was a ghost - but still a ghost, clear and true, of my husband. He didn't have his usual appearance, if you ask. His face didn't shine as it used to. Pale, naked, his hair still dripping wet - that's how I saw him, poor man. He stood right here, in this very spot."

She looked to see if any footprints remained. "This is it - what I feared with my prophetic mind, what I begged you not to do when you were leaving - don't follow the winds! But I wish now, since you were going to die, that you'd taken me with you. It would have been so much better for me to go with you! Then I wouldn't have spent any time alive without you. Death wouldn't have separated us. Now, though absent, I've died too. I'm tossed by waves though absent. The sea holds me without holding me. My heart would be crueler than the sea itself if I tried to prolong my life and struggled to survive such overwhelming grief. But I won't struggle. I won't abandon you, poor man. Now at least I'll come to you as your companion. If not in a shared urn, an inscription will join us in the tomb. If our bones can't touch, at least our names will touch."

Grief cut off more words. Sobs broke up everything she said. Groans were wrenched from her shattered heart.

Alcyone Transformed

Morning came. She left the house for the shore and sadly returned to the spot where she'd watched him leave. "He cast off the cables here," she said. "He kissed me goodbye on this shore." As she remembered these acts tied to specific places and gazed out at the water, she saw something in the distance that looked like a body. At first she couldn't tell what it was. But after the waves pushed it closer - though it was still far off - it was clearly a body. She didn't know whose, but because it was shipwrecked, she felt

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'quisquis es, et siqua est coniunx tibi!' fluctibus actum
fit propius corpus: quod quo magis illa tuetur,
hoc minus et minus est mentis, vae! iamque propinquae
admotum terrae, iam quod cognoscere posset,
cernit: erat coniunx! 'ille est!' exclamat et una
ora, comas, vestem lacerat tendensque trementes
ad Ceyca manus 'sic, o carissime coniunx,
sic ad me, miserande, redis?' ait. adiacet undis
facta manu moles, quae primas aequoris iras
frangit et incursus quae praedelassat aquarum.
insilit huc, mirumque fuit potuisse: volabat
percutiensque levem modo natis aera pennis
stringebat summas ales miserabilis undas,
dumque volat, maesto similem plenumque querellae
ora dedere sonum tenui crepitantia rostro.
ut vero tetigit mutum et sine sanguine corpus,
dilectos artus amplexa recentibus alis
frigida nequiquam duro dedit oscula rostro.
senserit hoc Ceyx, an vultum motibus undae
tollere sit visus, populus dubitabat, at ille
senserat: et tandem, superis miserantibus, ambo
alite mutantur; fatis obnoxius isdem
tunc quoque mansit amor nec coniugiale solutum
foedus in alitibus: coeunt fiuntque parentes,
perque dies placidos hiberno tempore septem
incubat Alcyone pendentibus aequore nidis.
tunc iacet unda maris: ventos custodit et arcet
Aeolus egressu praestatque nepotibus aequor.
Hos aliquis senior iunctim freta lata volantes
spectat et ad finem servatos laudat amores:
proximus, aut idem, si fors tulit, 'hic quoque,' dixit
'quem mare carpentem substrictaque crura gerentem
aspicis,' (ostendens spatiosum in guttura mergum)
'regia progenies, et si descendere ad ipsum
ordine perpetuo quaeris, sunt huius origo
Ilus et Assaracus raptusque Iovi Ganymedes
Laomedonque senex Priamusque novissima Troiae
tempora sortitus; frater fuit Hectoris iste:
qui nisi sensisset prima nova fata iuventa,
forsitan inferius non Hectore nomen haberet,

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moved by the omen. As if shedding a tear for a stranger, she said, "Poor man, whoever you are, and if you have a wife somewhere!" The waves drove the body nearer. The more she stared at it, the more her mind reeled. Oh god! And now, washed close to shore, now close enough to recognize - she saw: it was her husband! "It's him!" she screamed. She tore at her face, her hair, her clothes. Stretching out her trembling hands toward Ceyx, she cried, "Is this how you return to me, dearest husband? Is this how, you poor man?"

A breakwater lay beside the waves, built by hand, which broke the sea's first fury and absorbed the assault of the waters. She leaped onto it. It was miraculous that she could - she was flying! Beating the light air with newborn wings, she skimmed across the surface of the waves, a pitiful bird. As she flew, her throat, rattling through her slender beak, made sounds like someone filled with grief and lamentation. But when she touched his silent, bloodless body, she embraced his beloved limbs with her new wings and tried in vain to kiss him with her hard beak.

People wondered whether Ceyx felt this or only seemed to lift his face from the motion of the waves. But he had felt it. At last, with the gods taking pity, both were transformed into birds. Bound by the same fate, their love endured. Their marriage bond wasn't broken by their transformation. They mate and raise young. For seven peaceful days in winter, Alcyone broods over her nest suspended above the sea. Then the ocean's waves lie calm. Aeolus keeps the winds locked up and bars their escape, giving his grandchildren a tranquil sea.

Aesacus

An old man, watching these birds flying together over the vast straits, praised their love preserved to the very end. Someone nearby - or maybe the same man, if that's how it happened - said, "That bird you see skimming the sea with his legs tucked up" (he pointed to the long-necked diver) "he's of royal blood too. If you want to trace his lineage back in unbroken succession, he descends from Ilus, Assaracus, Ganymede who was snatched up to Jove, old Laomedon, and Priam who witnessed Troy's final days. He was Hector's brother. If he hadn't met a strange fate in his youth, he might have won a name as great as Hector's. Though Hector was born to Hecuba, Dymas's daughter, they say Aesacus was born in secret to

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quamvis est illum proles enixa Dymantis,
Aesacon umbrosa furtim peperisse sub Ida
fertur Alexiroe, Granico nata bicorni.
oderat hic urbes nitidaque remotus ab aula
secretos montes et inambitiosa colebat
rura nec Iliacos coetus nisi rarus adibat.
non agreste tamen nec inexpugnabile amori
pectus habens silvas captatam saepe per omnes
aspicit Hesperien patria Cebrenida ripa
iniectos umeris siccantem sole capillos.
visa fugit nymphe, veluti perterrita fulvum
cerva lupum longeque lacu deprensa relicto
accipitrem fluvialis anas; quam Troius heros
insequitur celeremque metu celer urget amore.
ecce latens herba coluber fugientis adunco
dente pedem strinxit virusque in corpore liquit;
cum vita suppressa fuga est: amplectitur amens
exanimem clamatque "piget, piget esse secutum!
sed non hoc timui, neque erat mihi vincere tanti.
perdidimus miseram nos te duo: vulnus ab angue,
a me causa data est! ego sim sceleratior illo,
ni tibi morte mea mortis solacia mittam."
dixit et e scopulo, quem rauca subederat unda,
se dedit in pontum. Tethys miserata cadentem
molliter excepit nantemque per aequora pennis
texit, et optatae non est data copia mortis.
indignatur amans, invitum vivere cogi
obstarique animae misera de sede volenti
exire, utque novas umeris adsumpserat alas,
subvolat atque iterum corpus super aequora mittit.
pluma levat casus: furit Aesacos inque profundum
pronus abit letique viam sine fine retemptat.
fecit amor maciem: longa internodia crurum,
longa manet cervix, caput est a corpore longe;
aequora amat nomenque tenet, quia mergitur illo.'

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Alexiroe beneath shady Mount Ida - Alexiroe, daughter of the two-horned river god Granicus.

"He hated cities. Far from the gleaming palace, he haunted hidden mountains and the humble countryside. He rarely visited Troy's gatherings. But he didn't have a rustic heart that couldn't be conquered by love. He was often hunting through the forests when he saw Hesperia, daughter of the river Cebren, drying her hair in the sun on her father's bank, her hair spread across her shoulders. When the nymph saw him, she fled - like a tawny deer startled by a wolf, or like a river duck caught far from the safety of the lake fleeing a hawk. The Trojan prince pursued her. Fear made her swift, but love made him swifter.

"Then - a snake hiding in the grass grazed her foot with its curved fangs as she ran and pumped venom into her body. Her flight stopped with her life. Beside himself, he embraced her lifeless body and cried, 'I'm so sorry, so sorry I chased you! I didn't fear this. Winning you wasn't worth this price. Two of us have destroyed you, poor girl. The snake gave the wound, but I gave the cause. I'd be more guilty than the snake unless I offer you the consolation of my own death.'

"He spoke, then threw himself from a cliff that the pounding waves had hollowed out beneath. Tethys took pity on him as he fell. She caught him gently and covered him with feathers as he swam across the sea. She wouldn't grant him the death he craved. The lover was furious that he was forced to live against his will, that his soul, desperate to leave its wretched home, was blocked from escaping. Once he'd grown new wings on his shoulders, he flew up and hurled himself down at the sea again. His feathers softened the fall. Aesacus raged. He plunged headlong into the depths, trying again and again to find the path to death. Love made him thin. His leg joints stayed long, his neck stayed long, his head stayed far from his body. He loves the sea and takes his name from diving into it."

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BOOK 12

Nescius adsumptis Priamus pater Aesacon alis
vivere lugebat: tumulo quoque nomen habenti
inferias dederat cum fratribus Hector inanes;
defuit officio Paridis praesentia tristi,
postmodo qui rapta longum cum coniuge bellum
attulit in patriam: coniurataeque sequuntur
mille rates gentisque simul commune Pelasgae;
nec dilata foret vindicta, nisi aequora saevi
invia fecissent venti, Boeotaque tellus
Aulide piscosa puppes tenuisset ituras.
hic patrio de more Iovi cum sacra parassent,
ut vetus accensis incanduit ignibus ara,
serpere caeruleum Danai videre draconem
in platanum, coeptis quae stabat proxima sacris.
nidus erat volucrum bis quattuor arbore summa:
quas simul et matrem circum sua damna volantem
corripuit serpens avidoque recondidit ore,
obstipuere omnes, at veri providus augur
Thestorides 'vincemus'; ait, 'gaudete, Pelasgi!
Troia cadet, sed erit nostri mora longa laboris,'
atque novem volucres in belli digerit annos.
ille, ut erat virides amplexus in arbore ramos,
fit lapis et signat serpentis imagine saxum.
Permanet Aoniis Boreas violentus in undis
bellaque non transfert, et sunt, qui parcere Troiae
Neptunum credant, quia moenia fecerat urbi;
at non Thestorides: nec enim nescitve tacetve
sanguine virgineo placandam virginis iram
esse deae. postquam pietatem publica causa
rexque patrem vicit, castumque datura cruorem
flentibus ante aram stetit Iphigenia ministris,
victa dea est nubemque oculis obiecit et inter
officium turbamque sacri vocesque precantum
supposita fertur mutasse Mycenida cerva.
ergo ubi, qua decuit, lenita est caede Diana,
et pariter Phoebes, pariter maris ira recessit,
accipiunt ventos a tergo mille carinae
multaque perpessae Phrygia potiuntur harena.
Orbe locus medio est inter terrasque fretumque
caelestesque plagas, triplicis confinia mundi;

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Priam Mourns Aesacus

Not knowing that Aesacus had gained wings, his father Priam mourned him as dead. At a tomb that bore his name, Hector and his brothers had made empty funeral offerings. Paris wasn't there for that sad ceremony. Later, he would bring long war to his homeland with the wife he'd stolen. A thousand ships sworn together followed, carrying the united Greek forces. Vengeance wouldn't have been delayed except that savage winds made the seas impassable, and the Boeotian land at fish-rich Aulis held back the ships ready to sail.

The Sacrifice at Aulis

There, following ancestral custom, they'd prepared sacrifice to Jupiter. When the ancient altar blazed with kindled fires, the Greeks saw a dark blue serpent gliding up a plane tree that stood near the sacred rites. At the top of the tree was a nest with eight baby birds. The serpent seized them all, along with their mother flying frantically around her loss, and swallowed them in its greedy jaws.

Everyone was stunned. But Calchas, prophet who sees the truth, son of Thestor, said, "We'll win! Rejoice, Greeks! Troy will fall - but our labor will take a long time." And he divided the nine birds into the nine years of war. The serpent, still wrapped around the green branches in the tree, turned to stone, its form preserving the image of a snake.

Fierce north winds kept blowing across the Boeotian waters, preventing the fleet from sailing. Some believed Neptune was sparing Troy because he'd built the city's walls. But not Calchas. He knew - and didn't hide the truth - that the virgin goddess's anger must be appeased with virgin blood. Once duty to the public cause prevailed and the king conquered the father in him, Iphigenia stood before the altar, ready to give her chaste blood while the attendants wept. But the goddess was moved. She threw a cloud before their eyes, and amid the ceremony's confusion, the sacred ritual, the chanting prayers, they say she replaced the girl from Mycenae with a deer.

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unde quod est usquam, quamvis regionibus absit,
inspicitur, penetratque cavas vox omnis ad aures:
Fama tenet summaque domum sibi legit in arce,
innumerosque aditus ac mille foramina tectis
addidit et nullis inclusit limina portis;
nocte dieque patet: tota est ex aere sonanti,
tota fremit vocesque refert iteratque quod audit;
nulla quies intus nullaque silentia parte,
nec tamen est clamor, sed parvae murmura vocis,
qualia de pelagi, siquis procul audiat, undis
esse solent, qualemve sonum, cum Iuppiter atras
increpuit nubes, extrema tonitrua reddunt.
atria turba tenet: veniunt, leve vulgus, euntque
mixtaque cum veris passim commenta vagantur
milia rumorum confusaque verba volutant;
e quibus hi vacuas inplent sermonibus aures,
hi narrata ferunt alio, mensuraque ficti
crescit, et auditis aliquid novus adicit auctor.
illic Credulitas, illic temerarius Error
vanaque Laetitia est consternatique Timores
Seditioque repens dubioque auctore Susurri;
ipsa, quid in caelo rerum pelagoque geratur
et tellure, videt totumque inquirit in orbem.
Fecerat haec notum, Graias cum milite forti
adventare rates, neque inexspectatus in armis
hostis adest: prohibent aditus litusque tuentur
Troes, et Hectorea primus fataliter hasta,
Protesilae, cadis, commissaque proelia magno
stant Danais, fortisque animae nece cognitus Hector.
nec Phryges exiguo, quid Achaica dextera posset,
sanguine senserunt, et iam Sigea rubebant
litora, iam leto proles Neptunia, Cycnus,
mille viros dederat, iam curru instabat Achilles
totaque Peliacae sternebat cuspidis ictu
agmina perque acies aut Cycnum aut Hectora quaerens
congreditur Cycno (decimum dilatus in annum
Hector erat): tum colla iugo candentia pressos
exhortatus equos currum derexit in hostem
concutiensque suis vibrantia tela lacertis
'quisquis es, o iuvenis,' dixit 'solamen habeto

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So when Diana was appeased with a killing befitting her, and the fury of Phoebe and the sea's fury both subsided, the thousand ships caught favorable winds at their backs. After enduring much, they landed on the Trojan shore.

The House of Fame

At the center of the world lies a place between land, sea, and sky - the boundary of the threefold universe. From here, everything that exists anywhere, however distant, can be observed. Every voice penetrates to its hollow ears. Fame holds this spot. She chose her home on the highest peak. She added countless entrances and a thousand openings to the building and installed no doors at the thresholds. It stands open night and day. The whole structure is made of echoing bronze. The whole place hums and repeats voices, echoing back whatever it hears. There's no quiet inside, no silence in any part. Yet there's no shouting either, just the murmur of low voices - like the sound of ocean waves if you listen from far off, or like the rumble distant thunder makes when Jupiter has crashed dark clouds together.

Crowds fill the halls. A fickle mob comes and goes. Thousands of rumors mixed with truth wander everywhere, rolling confused words around. Some fill idle ears with talk. Others carry stories elsewhere. The measure of fiction grows, and each new teller adds something to what they've heard. Here dwells Credulity, here reckless Error, groundless Joy, panicked Fears, sudden Sedition, and Whispers from dubious sources. Fame herself watches what happens in heaven, on the sea, and on the earth. She investigates the entire world.

The War Begins

Fame had made it known that the Greeks were approaching with a strong fighting force. The enemy wasn't unexpected - they arrived armed. The Trojans defended the shores and guarded the access points. And you, Protesilaus, were the first to fall - fated to die by Hector's spear. The early battles cost the Greeks dearly. They learned what Hector's fierce spirit could do. The Trojans, too, discovered at no small cost what Greek fighting hands could achieve. Already the Sigean shores ran red with blood. Already Neptune's son Cycnus had killed a thousand men. Already Achilles was pressing forward in his

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mortis, ab Haemonio quod sis iugulatus Achille!'
hactenus Aeacides: vocem gravis hasta secuta est,
sed quamquam certa nullus fuit error in hasta,
nil tamen emissi profecit acumine ferri
utque hebeti pectus tantummodo contudit ictu.
'nate dea, nam te fama praenovimus,' inquit
ille 'quid a nobis vulnus miraris abesse?'
(mirabatur enim.) 'non haec, quam cernis, equinis
fulva iubis cassis neque onus, cava parma, sinistrae
auxilio mihi sunt: decor est quaesitus ab istis;
Mars quoque ob hoc capere arma solet! removebitur huius
tegminis officium: tamen indestrictus abibo;
est aliquid non esse satum Nereide, sed qui
Nereaque et natas et totum temperat aequor.'
dixit et haesurum clipei curvamine telum
misit in Aeaciden, quod et aes et proxima rupit
terga novena boum, decimo tamen orbe moratum est.
excutit hoc heros rursusque trementia forti
tela manu torsit: rursus sine vulnere corpus
sincerumque fuit; nec tertia cuspis apertum
et se praebentem valuit destringere Cycnum.
haut secus exarsit, quam circo taurus aperto,
cum sua terribili petit inritamina cornu,
poeniceas vestes, elusaque vulnera sentit;
num tamen exciderit ferrum considerat hastae:
haerebat ligno. 'manus est mea debilis ergo,
quasque' ait 'ante habuit vires, effudit in uno?
nam certe valuit, vel cum Lyrnesia primus
moenia deieci, vel cum Tenedonque suoque
Eetioneas inplevi sanguine Thebas,
vel cum purpureus populari caede Caicus
fluxit, opusque meae bis sensit Telephus hastae.
hic quoque tot caesis, quorum per litus acervos
et feci et video, valuit mea dextra valetque.'
dixit et, ante actis veluti male crederet, hastam
misit in adversum Lycia de plebe Menoeten
loricamque simul subiectaque pectora rupit.
quo plangente gravem moribundo vertice terram
extrahit illud idem calido de vulnere telum
atque ait: 'haec manus est, haec, qua modo vicimus, hasta:

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chariot, mowing down whole battalions with strikes from his Pelian ash spear. Searching through the ranks for either Cycnus or Hector, he encountered Cycnus. Hector's fate was delayed for ten years.

Then, urging on his white-necked horses straining at the yoke, Achilles steered his chariot toward the enemy. Shaking his quivering spear with powerful arms, he said, "Whoever you are, young man, take comfort in your death - you were killed by Achilles from Thessaly!" That was all the son of Aeacus said. His heavy spear followed his words. Though the spear flew true with no error in its aim, the sharp iron point accomplished nothing. It barely bruised Cycnus's chest with a blunt impact.

"Son of a goddess - for your reputation reached us first," Cycnus said, "why are you surprised I have no wound?" (Achilles was indeed surprised.) "This helmet you see with its tawny horsehair crest, this curved shield my left arm carries - these aren't what protect me. They're just for decoration. That's why Mars wears armor too! Even if this protection were stripped away, I'd still leave without a scratch. It means something to be born not from some sea-nymph but from the god who rules Nereus, his daughters, and the entire ocean."

With that, he hurled a spear that would stick in Achilles' curved shield. It pierced the bronze and the nine layers of oxhide beneath, but stopped at the tenth layer. The hero shook it off and hurled his quivering weapon again with his strong hand. Again Cycnus's body remained unharmed and whole. A third spear couldn't wound Cycnus either, though he stood exposed and offered himself as a target.

Achilles blazed up like a bull in an open arena when it charges the crimson cloaks with its terrible horns - and realizes its attacks are being evaded. He checked to see if the iron point had fallen from the spear shaft. It was still attached to the wood. "Is my hand weak, then?" he said. "Has the strength it had before drained away on this one enemy? It certainly had strength when I was first to storm the walls of Lyrnessus, when I filled Tenedos and Eetion's Thebes with their own blood, when the Caicus river ran purple with slaughter of its people, when Telephus felt my spear's work twice. Here too, among the piles of dead I've made and can see scattered along the shore, my right hand has been powerful and remains so."

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utar in hoc isdem; sit in hoc, precor, exitus idem!'
sic fatus Cycnum repetit, nec fraxinus errat
inque umero sonuit non evitata sinistro,
inde velut muro solidaque a caute repulsa est;
qua tamen ictus erat, signatum sanguine Cycnum
viderat et frustra fuerat gavisus Achilles:
vulnus erat nullum, sanguis fuit ille Menoetae!
tum vero praeceps curru fremebundus ab alto
desilit et nitido securum comminus hostem
ense petens parmam gladio galeamque cavari
cernit, at in duro laedi quoque corpore ferrum.
haut tulit ulterius clipeoque adversa reducto
ter quater ora viri, capulo et cava tempora pulsat
cedentique sequens instat turbatque ruitque
attonitoque negat requiem: pavor occupat illum,
ante oculosque natant tenebrae retroque ferenti
aversos passus medio lapis obstitit arvo;
quem super inpulsum resupino corpore Cycnum
vi multa vertit terraeque adflixit Achilles.
tum clipeo genibusque premens praecordia duris
vincla trahit galeae, quae presso subdita mento
elidunt fauces et respiramen iterque
eripiunt animae. victum spoliare parabat:
arma relicta videt; corpus deus aequoris albam
contulit in volucrem, cuius modo nomen habebat.
Hic labor, haec requiem multorum pugna dierum
attulit et positis pars utraque substitit armis.
dumque vigil Phrygios servat custodia muros,
et vigil Argolicas servat custodia fossas,
festa dies aderat, qua Cycni victor Achilles
Pallada mactatae placabat sanguine vaccae;
cuius ut inposuit prosecta calentibus aris,
et dis acceptus penetravit in aethera nidor,
sacra tulere suam, pars est data cetera mensis.
discubuere toris proceres et corpora tosta
carne replent vinoque levant curasque sitimque.
non illos citharae, non illos carmina vocum
longave multifori delectat tibia buxi,
sed noctem sermone trahunt, virtusque loquendi
materia est: pugnas referunt hostisque suasque,

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He spoke as if doubting his earlier deeds. Then he hurled his spear at Menoetes, a man from the Lycian ranks. It broke through his breastplate and the chest beneath. As Menoetes beat his dying head against the hard ground, Achilles pulled the weapon from the warm wound and said, "This is the hand, this is the spear with which I just won! I'll use the same against him. May the outcome be the same, I pray!" He spoke and aimed at Cycnus again. The ash shaft flew true and rang against his left shoulder - couldn't be dodged. But it bounced back as if from a wall or solid cliff. Yet where Cycnus had been struck, Achilles saw him marked with blood. His joy was premature - there was no wound. The blood belonged to Menoetes!

Then Achilles truly raged. He leaped headlong from his high chariot, roaring, and attacked his unworried enemy close up with his gleaming sword. He saw the sword carve through the shield and helmet, but even the hard blade was damaged against Cycnus's tough body. He couldn't bear it any longer. Shield-boss facing forward, he battered Cycnus's face three, four times with the sword's hilt and hollow temples. He pressed forward as Cycnus gave ground, pursuing him, confusing him, overwhelming him, allowing the dazed man no rest. Terror seized Cycnus. Darkness swam before his eyes. As he staggered backward, a stone in the middle of the field blocked his retreating steps. Achilles threw his weight against it, toppling Cycnus's body backward, then slammed him violently to the ground.

Pressing hard on Cycnus's chest with shield and ruthless knees, Achilles yanked at the helmet straps. Fastened under the chin, they crushed Cycnus's throat, cutting off breath, blocking the passage of life. Achilles prepared to strip his defeated enemy - but found only abandoned armor. The god of the sea had transformed the body into the white bird whose name Cycnus had just borne.

The Feast and Stories

This battle, this fight over many days, brought rest to both sides. Each army laid down its arms. While vigilant guards watched the Trojan walls and vigilant guards watched the Greek trenches, a feast day arrived. Achilles, victor over Cycnus, was appeasing Pallas with the blood of a slaughtered cow. When

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inque vices adita atque exhausta pericula saepe
commemorare iuvat; quid enim loqueretur Achilles,
aut quid apud magnum potius loquerentur Achillem?
proxima praecipue domito victoria Cycno
in sermone fuit: visum mirabile cunctis,
quod iuveni corpus nullo penetrabile telo
invictumque a vulnere erat ferrumque terebat.
hoc ipse Aeacides, hoc mirabantur Achivi,
cum sic Nestor ait: 'vestro fuit unicus aevo
contemptor ferri nulloque forabilis ictu
Cycnus. at ipse olim patientem vulnera mille
corpore non laeso Perrhaebum Caenea vidi,
Caenea Perrhaebum, qui factis inclitus Othryn
incoluit, quoque id mirum magis esset in illo,
femina natus erat.' monstri novitate moventur
quisquis adest, narretque rogant: quos inter Achilles:
'dic age! nam cunctis eadem est audire voluntas,
o facunde senex, aevi prudentia nostri,
quis fuerit Caeneus, cur in contraria versus,
qua tibi militia, cuius certamine pugnae
cognitus, a quo sit victus, si victus ab ullo est.'
tum senior: 'quamvis obstet mihi tarda vetustas,
multaque me fugiant primis spectata sub annis,
plura tamen memini. nec quae magis haereat ulla
pectore res nostro est inter bellique domique
acta tot, ac si quem potuit spatiosa senectus
spectatorem operum multorum reddere, vixi
annos bis centum; nunc tertia vivitur aetas.
'Clara decore fuit proles Elateia Caenis,
Thessalidum virgo pulcherrima, perque propinquas
perque tuas urbes (tibi enim popularis, Achille),
multorum frustra votis optata procorum.
temptasset Peleus thalamos quoque forsitan illos:
sed iam aut contigerant illi conubia matris
aut fuerant promissa tuae, nec Caenis in ullos
denupsit thalamos secretaque litora carpens
aequorei vim passa dei est (ita fama ferebat),
utque novae Veneris Neptunus gaudia cepit,
"sint tua vota licet" dixit "secura repulsae:
elige, quid voveas!" (eadem hoc quoque fama ferebat)

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he'd placed the entrails on the heated altars and the fragrance pleasing to the gods rose into the air, the sacred rites took their portion. The rest was set out for the feast. The leaders reclined on couches, satisfying their bodies with roasted meat and washing away their cares and thirst with wine.

No lyres entertained them, no songs, no long flute of boxwood with many holes. Instead, they drew out the night with conversation. Courage was their topic. They recounted battles - the enemy's and their own. Again and again they took turns recalling the dangers they'd faced and escaped. What else would Achilles talk about? What else would others talk about in great Achilles' presence?

The recent victory over conquered Cycnus dominated the conversation. Everyone thought it remarkable that the young man's body couldn't be penetrated by any weapon, was invincible against wounds, and blunted iron. Achilles himself and all the Greeks marveled at this.

Then Nestor spoke: "In your generation, Cycnus alone scorned iron and couldn't be pierced by any blow. But I myself once saw a man who endured a thousand wounds with his body unharmed - Caeneus of Thessaly. Caeneus of Thessaly, famous for his deeds, who lived on Mount Othrys. What made this even more remarkable - he'd been born a woman."

The strangeness of this marvel stirred everyone present. They asked him to tell the story. Among them, Achilles said, "Please, speak! We all want to hear this. O eloquent old man, wisdom of our age - who was Caeneus? Why was he changed into the opposite sex? In what campaign, in what battle did you meet him? Who defeated him, if anyone defeated him?"

The old man replied: "Though slow old age obstructs me, and many things I witnessed in my early years escape me, I still remember much. Nothing sticks more firmly in my mind among all the events of war and peace. And if long life can make someone a witness to many deeds, I've lived two hundred years. Now I'm living my third century.

Nestor's Tale: Caenis Becomes Caeneus

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"magnum" Caenis ait "facit haec iniuria votum,
tale pati iam posse nihil; da, femina ne sim:
omnia praestiteris." graviore novissima dixit
verba sono poteratque viri vox illa videri,
sicut erat; nam iam voto deus aequoris alti
adnuerat dederatque super, nec saucius ullis
vulneribus fieri ferrove occumbere posset.
munere laetus abit studiisque virilibus aevum
exigit Atracides Peneiaque arva pererrat.
'Duxerat Hippodamen audaci Ixione natus
nubigenasque feros positis ex ordine mensis
arboribus tecto discumbere iusserat antro.
Haemonii proceres aderant, aderamus et ipsi,
festaque confusa resonabat regia turba.
ecce canunt Hymenaeon, et ignibus atria fumant,
cinctaque adest virgo matrum nuruumque caterva,
praesignis facie; felicem diximus illa
coniuge Pirithoum, quod paene fefellimus omen.
nam tibi, saevorum saevissime Centaurorum,
Euryte, quam vino pectus, tam virgine visa
ardet, et ebrietas geminata libidine regnat.
protinus eversae turbant convivia mensae,
raptaturque comis per vim nova nupta prehensis.
Eurytus Hippodamen, alii, quam quisque probabant
aut poterant, rapiunt, captaeque erat urbis imago.
femineo clamore sonat domus: ocius omnes
surgimus, et primus "quae te vecordia," Theseus
"Euryte, pulsat," ait, "qui me vivente lacessas
Pirithoum violesque duos ignarus in uno?"
[neve ea magnanimus frustra memoraverit ore,
submovet instantes raptamque furentibus aufert.]
ille nihil contra, (neque enim defendere verbis
talia facta potest) sed vindicis ora protervis
insequitur manibus generosaque pectora pulsat.
forte fuit iuxta signis exstantibus asper
antiquus crater; quem vastum vastior ipse
sustulit Aegides adversaque misit in ora:
sanguinis ille globos pariter cerebrumque merumque
vulnere et ore vomens madida resupinus harena
calcitrat. ardescunt germani caede bimembres

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"Caenis, daughter of Elatus, was renowned for her beauty - the most beautiful virgin in Thessaly. Throughout the nearby cities and throughout yours too, Achilles (for she was your countrywoman), many suitors hoped for her hand in vain. Peleus might have tried to win her too, but by then he'd either already married your mother or been promised to her. Caenis married no one. She was walking along a deserted beach when she suffered the violence of the sea god - or so the story went. After Neptune took pleasure in this new love, he said, 'Your wishes won't fear rejection. Choose what you want!' - the same story reported this too.

"Caenis answered, 'This injury I've suffered makes me ask a great favor - that I never be able to suffer such a thing again. Make me not a woman, and you'll have given me everything.' She spoke the last words in a deeper voice. Her voice could have seemed a man's - and indeed it was. For already the god of the deep sea had granted her wish and given something more besides: she couldn't be wounded by any blow or fall by the sword. Delighted with the gift, Caeneus, child of Atrax, lived out his years in manly pursuits and wandered through the Penean plains.

The Wedding of Pirithous and Hippodame

"Ixion's bold son had married Hippodame. He'd invited the cloud-born Centaurs to recline at tables arranged in order in a leafy cave beneath the trees. The Thessalian chiefs were there. We were there too. The festive palace rang with the joyful commotion. Look - they were singing the wedding hymn! The halls smoked with fires. The bride arrived, surrounded by a crowd of matrons and young wives, remarkable for her beauty. We declared Pirithous lucky in his bride - which nearly made our blessing a curse.

"For you, Eurytus, most savage of savage Centaurs - your chest was inflamed as much by wine as by the sight of the virgin. Drunkenness doubled by lust took command. Immediately the tables were overturned, throwing the feast into chaos. The new bride was seized by the hair and dragged away by force. Eurytus grabbed Hippodame. The others seized whichever woman each desired or could grab. It looked like a captured city. The house echoed with women's screams. Immediately we all jumped up.

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certatimque omnes uno ore "arma, arma" loquuntur.
vina dabant animos, et prima pocula pugna
missa volant fragilesque cadi curvique lebetes,
res epulis quondam, tum bello et caedibus aptae.
'Primus Ophionides Amycus penetralia donis
haut timuit spoliare suis et primus ab aede
lampadibus densum rapuit funale coruscis
elatumque alte, veluti qui candida tauri
rumpere sacrifica molitur colla securi,
inlisit fronti Lapithae Celadontis et ossa
non cognoscendo confusa relinquit in ore.
exsiluere oculi, disiectisque ossibus oris
acta retro naris medioque est fixa palato.
hunc pede convulso mensae Pellaeus acernae
stravit humi Pelates deiecto in pectora mento
cumque atro mixtos sputantem sanguine dentes
vulnere Tartareas geminato mittit ad umbras.
'Proximus ut steterat spectans altaria vultu
fumida terribili "cur non" ait "utimur istis?"
cumque suis Gryneus inmanem sustulit aram
ignibus et medium Lapitharum iecit in agmen
depressitque duos, Brotean et Orion: Orio
mater erat Mycale, quam deduxisse canendo
saepe reluctanti constabat cornua lunae.
"non impune feres, teli modo copia detur!"
dixerat Exadius telique habet instar, in alta
quae fuerant pinu votivi cornua cervi.
figitur hinc duplici Gryneus in lumina ramo
eruiturque oculos, quorum pars cornibus haeret,
pars fluit in barbam concretaque sanguine pendet.
'Ecce rapit mediis flagrantem Rhoetus ab aris
pruniceum torrem dextraque a parte Charaxi
tempora perfringit fulvo protecta capillo.
correpti rapida, veluti seges arida, flamma
arserunt crines, et vulnere sanguis inustus
terribilem stridore sonum dedit, ut dare ferrum
igne rubens plerumque solet, quod forcipe curva
cum faber eduxit, lacubus demittit: at illud
stridet et in trepida submersum sibilat unda.
saucius hirsutis avidum de crinibus ignem

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"Theseus was first: 'What madness drives you, Eurytus,' he said, 'that you provoke Pirithous while I'm alive? Don't you know that in attacking him, you attack two men in one?' The great-hearted hero didn't speak in vain. He pushed back those pressing forward and tore the bride away from the frenzied Centaurs.

"Eurytus said nothing in reply - such deeds can't be defended with words - but attacked his accuser's face with insolent fists and beat his noble chest. An ancient mixing bowl happened to be nearby, rough with raised designs. Huge as it was, the even huger son of Aegeus lifted it and hurled it straight into Eurytus's face. He vomited clots of blood mixed with brains and wine through both his wound and his mouth, then kicked and thrashed on his back in the wet sand. His two-formed brothers burned with rage at his death. All together they shouted with one voice: 'Weapons! Weapons!'

"Wine gave them courage. In the first assault flew wine cups, fragile mixing bowls, and curved serving dishes - things once for feasting, now fit for war and slaughter.

The Battle Begins

"Amycus, son of Ophion, was first to plunder the inner shrine of its decorations. First from the sanctuary he grabbed a chandelier thick with blazing lamps. Lifting it high, like someone about to split a white bull's neck with the sacrificial axe, he smashed it into the forehead of the Lapith Celadon, leaving the bones of his face crushed beyond recognition. His eyes burst from their sockets. The bones of his face were shattered. His nose was driven backward and stuck to the center of his palate.

"But Pelates from Pella knocked him to the ground with the leg torn from a maple table - drove his chin down into his chest - and as Amycus spat teeth mixed with dark blood, sent him with a second blow to the shades of Tartarus.

"Gryneus stood next, staring at the smoking altar with a terrifying expression. 'Why not use these?' he said. He lifted up the massive altar with its fires and hurled it into the middle of the Lapith ranks, crushing two men - Broteas and Orion. Orion's mother was Mycale, known for successfully chanting down the unwilling moon's horns with her spells.

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excutit inque umeros limen tellure revulsum
tollit, onus plaustri, quod ne permittat in hostem,
ipsa facit gravitas: socium quoque saxea moles
oppressit spatio stantem propiore Cometen.
gaudia nec retinet Rhoetus: "sic, conprecor," inquit
"cetera sit fortis castrorum turba tuorum!"
semicremoque novat repetitum stipite vulnus
terque quaterque gravi iuncturas verticis ictu
rupit, et in liquido sederunt ossa cerebro.
'Victor ad Euagrum Corythumque Dryantaque transit;
e quibus ut prima tectus lanugine malas
procubuit Corythus, "puero quae gloria fuso
parta tibi est?" Euagrus ait, nec dicere Rhoetus
plura sinit rutilasque ferox in aperta loquentis
condidit ora viri perque os in pectora flammas.
te quoque, saeve Drya, circum caput igne rotato
insequitur, sed non in te quoque constitit idem
exitus: adsiduae successu caedis ovantem,
qua iuncta est umero cervix, sude figis obusta.
ingemuit duroque sudem vix osse revulsit
Rhoetus et ipse suo madefactus sanguine fugit.
fugit et Orneus Lycabasque et saucius armo
dexteriore Medon et cum Pisenore Thaumas,
quique pedum nuper certamine vicerat omnes
Mermeros, accepto tum vulnere tardius ibat;
et Pholus et Melaneus et Abas praedator aprorum,
quique suis frustra bellum dissuaserat augur
Asbolus: ille etiam metuenti vulnera Nesso
"ne fuge! ad Herculeos" inquit "servaberis arcus."
at non Eurynomus Lycidasque et Areos et Imbreus
effugere necem; quos omnes dextra Dryantis
perculit adversos. adversum tu quoque, quamvis
terga fugae dederas, vulnus, Crenaee, tulisti:
nam grave respiciens inter duo lumina ferrum,
qua naris fronti committitur, accipis, imae.
'In tanto fremitu cunctis sine fine iacebat
sopitus venis et inexperrectus Aphidas
languentique manu carchesia mixta tenebat,
fusus in Ossaeae villosis pellibus ursae;
quem procul ut vidit frustra nulla arma moventem,

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"'You won't get away with this if I can find a weapon!' shouted Exadius. He found one - a stag's antlers that had been hung on a tall pine as a votive offering. He drove the double-pronged branch into Gryneus's eyes, gouging them out. Part of the eyes stuck to the horns. Part flowed down into his beard and hung there, thick with blood.

"Look - Rhoetus grabbed a blazing torch of holm oak from the center of the altars and smashed it into Charaxus's right temple, protected though it was by tawny hair. The hair caught fire like dry grain and burned up in quick flames. The blood in his wound, seared by the heat, made a terrible hissing sound - like iron red-hot in the fire often does when a blacksmith pulls it out with curved tongs and plunges it into water, and it hisses and sputters in the nervous pool.

"Wounded, Charaxus shook the greedy flame from his singed hair, lifted up a threshold stone torn from the ground - a wagon's load - and hoisted it onto his shoulders. But its very weight kept him from hurling it at his enemy. The rocky mass crushed Cometes, who was standing close beside him.

"Rhoetus couldn't contain his joy. 'I hope the rest of your brave troop fights like that!' he said, and with the half-burned log renewed his attack on Charaxus's head, beating it again and again with heavy blows. He smashed through the joints of his skull until the bones sank into the liquid brain.

"Victorious, he moved on to Euagrus, Corythus, and Dryas. When Corythus fell - his cheeks covered with their first down - Euagrus said, 'What glory do you win killing a boy?' Rhoetus wouldn't let him say more. Savage, he drove the blazing torch deep into Euagrus's open, speaking mouth and through the mouth into his chest in flames. You too, cruel Dryas - Rhoetus went after you, whirling the fire around your head. But the outcome wasn't the same for you. As he was gloating in his continuous slaughter, you stabbed him where neck joins shoulder with a fire-hardened stake. Rhoetus groaned and barely pulled the stake from the hard bone, then ran off soaked in his own blood.

"Orneus fled too, and Lycabas, and Medon wounded in the right shoulder, and Thaumas, and Pisenor, and Mermeros - who'd recently beaten everyone in a footrace but now walked slower because of his wound. Pholus fled, and Melaneus, and Abas the boar-hunter, and the augur Asbolus who'd vainly

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inserit amento digitos "miscenda" que dixit
"cum Styge vina bibes" Phorbas; nec plura moratus
in iuvenem torsit iaculum, ferrataque collo
fraxinus, ut casu iacuit resupinus, adacta est.
mors caruit sensu, plenoque e gutture fluxit
inque toros inque ipsa niger carchesia sanguis.
'Vidi ego Petraeum conantem tollere terra
glandiferam quercum; quam dum conplexibus ambit
et quatit huc illuc labefactaque robora iactat,
lancea Pirithoi costis inmissa Petraei
pectora cum duro luctantia robore fixit.
Pirithoi virtute Lycum cecidisse ferebant,
Pirithoi virtute Chromin, sed uterque minorem
victori titulum quam Dictys Helopsque dederunt,
fixus Helops iaculo, quod pervia tempora fecit
et missum a dextra laevam penetravit ad aurem,
Dictys ab ancipiti delapsus acumine montis,
dum fugit instantem trepidans Ixione natum,
decidit in praeceps et pondere corporis ornum
ingentem fregit suaque induit ilia fractae.
'Ultor adest Aphareus saxumque e monte revulsum
mittere conatur; conantem stipite querno
occupat Aegides cubitique ingentia frangit
ossa nec ulterius dare corpus inutile leto
aut vacat aut curat tergoque Bienoris alti
insilit, haut solito quemquam portare nisi ipsum,
opposuitque genu costis prensamque sinistra
caesariem retinens vultum minitantiaque ora
robore nodoso praeduraque tempora fregit.
robore Nedymnum iaculatoremque Lycopen
sternit et inmissa protectum pectora barba
Hippason et summis exstantem Riphea silvis
Thereaque, Haemoniis qui prensos montibus ursos
ferre domum vivos indignantesque solebat.
haut tulit utentem pugnae successibus ultra
Thesea Demoleon: solidoque revellere trunco
annosam pinum magno molimine temptat;
quod quia non potuit, praefractam misit in hostem,
sed procul a telo Theseus veniente recessit
Pallados admonitu: credi sic ipse volebat.

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warned his comrades against this war. He even said to the fearful Nessus, 'Don't run! You'll be saved for Hercules's arrows.'

"But Eurynomus, Lycidas, Areos, and Imbreus didn't escape death. Dryas's right hand struck them all as they faced him head-on. You too, Crenaeus, took a frontal wound though you'd turned your back in flight. Looking backward, you took heavy iron right between your eyes, where nose joins forehead.

More Warriors Fall

"Amid all this uproar, Aphidas lay sleeping endlessly, sunk in slumber, veins heavy with wine, never waking. He was sprawled on a shaggy bearskin from Mount Ossa, holding a mixing cup in his limp hand, serving no purpose in the fight. When Phorbas saw him from a distance moving no weapon, he wound his fingers into the throwing strap and said, 'You'll mix your wine with the river Styx instead!' Without further delay he hurled the javelin at the young man. The iron-tipped ash shaft pierced his neck as he lay on his back. Death came without sensation. Black blood poured from his full throat onto the couches and into the cups themselves.

"I saw Petraeus trying to uproot an oak heavy with acorns from the earth. While he wrapped his arms around it, shaking it this way and that, hurling the loosened timber, Pirithous's spear, sent into Petraeus's ribs, pinned his chest to the hard oak as it struggled. Lycus was said to have fallen by Pirithous's courage, Chromis too by Pirithous's courage, but each brought their victor less glory than Dictys and Helops did. Helops was pierced by a javelin that went through his temples - sent from the right side, it penetrated to the left ear. Dictys, fleeing in panic from Ixion's attacking son, slipped on the steep slope of a two-edged mountain, fell headlong, and broke a huge ash tree with the weight of his body, impaling his guts on the shattered branches.

"Aphareus came as avenger and tried to hurl a rock torn from the mountain. As he struggled, the son of Aegeus struck him with an oaken club and shattered the huge bones of his elbow. No time or need to finish off his useless body for death - Theseus leaped onto the back of tall Bienor, who was used to carrying no one but himself. He pressed a knee into his ribs, grabbed his hair in his left hand, and with a

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non tamen arbor iners cecidit; nam Crantoris alti
abscidit iugulo pectusque umerumque sinistrum:
armiger ille tui fuerat genitoris, Achille,
quem Dolopum rector, bello superatus, Amyntor
Aeacidae dederat pacis pignusque fidemque.
Hunc procul ut foedo disiectum vulnere Peleus
vidit, "at inferias, iuvenum gratissime Crantor,
accipe" ait validoque in Demoleonta lacerto
fraxineam misit contentis viribus hastam,
quae laterum cratem praerupit et ossibus haerens
intremuit: trahit ille manu sine cuspide lignum
(id quoque vix sequitur), cuspis pulmone retenta est;
ipse dolor vires animo dabat: aeger in hostem
erigitur pedibusque virum proculcat equinis.
excipit ille ictus galea clipeoque sonantes
defensatque umeros praetentaque sustinet arma
perque armos uno duo pectora perforat ictu.
ante tamen leto dederat Phlegraeon et Hylen
eminus, Iphinoum conlato Marte Claninque;
additur his Dorylas, qui tempora tecta gerebat
pelle lupi saevique vicem praestantia teli
cornua vara boum multo rubefacta cruore.
'Huic ego (nam viris animus dabat) "aspice," dixi
"quantum concedant nostro tua cornua ferro"
et iaculum torsi: quod cum vitare nequiret,
opposuit dextram passurae vulnera fronti:
adfixa est cum fronte manus; fit clamor, at illum
haerentem Peleus et acerbo vulnere victum
(stabat enim propior) mediam ferit ense sub alvum.
prosiluit terraque ferox sua viscera traxit
tractaque calcavit calcataque rupit et illis
crura quoque inpediit et inani concidit alvo.
'Nec te pugnantem tua, Cyllare, forma redemit,
si modo naturae formam concedimus illi.
barba erat incipiens, barbae color aureus, aurea
ex umeris medios coma dependebat in armos.
gratus in ore vigor; cervix umerique manusque
pectoraque artificum laudatis proxima signis,
et quacumque vir est; nec equi mendosa sub illo
deteriorque viro facies; da colla caputque,

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knotted club smashed his threatening face and hard temples.

"With that club he laid low Nedymnus, the javelin-thrower Lycopes, Hippason whose chest was protected by a flowing beard, Ripheus who towered above the highest forests, and Thereus, who used to capture bears on Thessalian mountains and bring them home alive and raging.

"Demoleon couldn't bear to see Theseus succeeding in battle any longer. He tried with great effort to pull up an ancient pine from its solid trunk. When he couldn't, he broke it off and hurled it at his enemy. But Theseus stepped back from the coming missile, warned by Pallas - or so he wanted people to believe. Yet the tree didn't fall uselessly. It severed the neck, chest, and left shoulder of tall Crantor. He'd been the armor-bearer of your father, Achilles - Amyntor, king of the Dolopians, conquered in war, had given him to Aeacus as a pledge and proof of peace.

"When Peleus saw Crantor from a distance, mangled by the terrible wound, he said, 'At least accept funeral offerings, dearest of young men!' With his powerful arm he hurled his ash spear with all his strength at Demoleon. It broke through the ribcage and stuck quivering in the bones. Demoleon pulled out the shaft with his hand - even that barely came free. The spearhead stayed lodged in his lung. Pain itself gave strength to his spirit. Wounded, he reared up against his enemy and trampled the man beneath his horse hooves.

"Peleus received the blows clanging on helmet and shield. He protected his shoulders and held his outstretched weapons firm, then with a single thrust drove his weapon through both shoulders, piercing two chests. But earlier, from a distance, he'd already sent Phlegreas and Hyles to their deaths, and in close combat Iphinous and Clanis. To these he added Dorylas, who wore a wolf's hide on his temples, and instead of a cruel weapon carried the curving horns of an ox, red with much blood.

"I said to him - for courage gave me strength - 'See how much your horns yield to my iron!' And I hurled my javelin. Since he couldn't dodge it, he raised his right hand to protect his forehead from the wound. His hand was pinned to his forehead. A shout went up. But Peleus, who was standing closer, struck him in the middle of the belly with his sword while he stood there frozen by the brutal wound. He leaped

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Castore dignus erit: sic tergum sessile, sic sunt
pectora celsa toris. totus pice nigrior atra,
candida cauda tamen; color est quoque cruribus albus.
multae illum petiere sua de gente, sed una
abstulit Hylonome, qua nulla decentior inter
semiferos altis habitavit femina silvis;
haec et blanditiis et amando et amare fatendo
Cyllaron una tenet, cultu quoque, quantus in illis
esse potest membris, ut sit coma pectine levis,
ut modo rore maris, modo se violave rosave
inplicet, interdum candentia lilia gestet,
bisque die lapsis Pagasaeae vertice silvae
fontibus ora lavet, bis flumine corpora tinguat,
nec nisi quae deceant electarumque ferarum
aut umero aut lateri praetendat vellera laevo.
par amor est illis: errant in montibus una,
antra simul subeunt; et tum Lapitheia tecta
intrarant pariter, pariter fera bella gerebant:
(auctor in incerto est) iaculum de parte sinistra
venit et inferius quam collo pectora subsunt,
Cyllare, te fixit; parvo cor vulnere laesum
corpore cum toto post tela educta refrixit.
protinus Hylonome morientes excipit artus
inpositaque manu vulnus fovet oraque ad ora
admovet atque animae fugienti obsistere temptat;
ut videt exstinctum, dictis, quae clamor ad aures
arcuit ire meas, telo, quod inhaeserat illi,
incubuit moriensque suum conplexa maritum est.
'Ante oculos stat et ille meos, qui sena leonum
vinxerat inter se conexis vellera nodis,
Phaeocomes, hominemque simul protectus equumque;
caudice qui misso, quem vix iuga bina moverent,
Tectaphon Oleniden a summo vertice fregit;
[fracta volubilitas capitis latissima, perque os
perque cavas nares oculosque auresque cerebrum
molle fluit, veluti concretum vimine querno
lac solet utve liquor rari sub pondere cribri
manat et exprimitur per densa foramina spissus.]
ast ego, dum parat hic armis nudare iacentem,
(scit tuus hoc genitor) gladium spoliantis in ima

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forward savagely and dragged his own guts along the ground. He walked on the dragged entrails and crushed them underfoot, and with his belly emptied, he collapsed. His entangled legs tripped him up.

The Death of Cyllarus and Hylonome

"Your beauty didn't save you in battle, Cyllarus - if we grant that such a creature has beauty. His beard was just beginning to grow. The beard's color was golden. Golden hair hung from his shoulders to the middle of his back. An attractive vigor showed in his face. His neck, shoulders, hands, and chest looked as fine as sculptures praised by artists - and whatever was man in him. The horse-half beneath wasn't inferior to the man - no flaw there. Give him neck and head, and he'd be worthy of Castor. His back was perfect for a rider. His chest was high and muscular. All of him was blacker than black pitch, except his tail and legs, which were white.

"Many females of his race wanted him, but Hylonome alone won him - the most beautiful woman living among the half-wild creatures in the deep forests. She alone held Cyllarus with endearments, with loving and admitting love, and with grooming too - as much as those limbs allowed - so her hair was smooth from the comb, so she sometimes wove sea-rosemary or violets or roses into it, sometimes wore white lilies. Twice a day she washed her face in the springs that flow down from Pagasae's wooded height. Twice a day she bathed her body in the river. She draped only the finest pelts of choice wild beasts over her left shoulder or side. Their love was equal. Together they wandered the mountains. Together they entered caves. They'd entered the Lapith dwelling together and were fighting the savage battle together now.

"A javelin - from which direction, unknown - came from the left and struck you, Cyllarus, where chest extends below neck. The heart, barely wounded, went cold when the weapon was pulled from the body. Immediately Hylonome caught his dying limbs in her arms, pressed her hand to the wound, put her mouth to his mouth, tried to block his fleeing spirit. When she saw he was dead - her words were kept from my ears by the shouting - she fell on the weapon that had stuck in him and, dying, embraced her husband.

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ilia demisi. Cthonius quoque Teleboasque
ense iacent nostro: ramum prior ille bifurcum
gesserat, hic iaculum; iaculo mihi vulnera fecit:
signa vides! adparet adhuc vetus inde cicatrix.
tunc ego debueram capienda ad Pergama mitti;
tum poteram magni, si non superare, morari
Hectoris arma meis! illo sed tempore nullus,
aut puer, Hector erat, nunc me mea deficit aetas.
quid tibi victorem gemini Periphanta Pyraethi,
Ampyca quid referam, qui quadrupedantis Echecli
fixit in adverso cornum sine cuspide vultu?
vecte Pelethronium Macareus in pectus adacto
stravit Erigdupum; memini et venabula condi
inguine Nesseis manibus coniecta Cymeli.
nec tu credideris tantum cecinisse futura
Ampyciden Mopsum: Mopso iaculante biformis
occubuit frustraque loqui temptavit Hodites
ad mentum lingua mentoque ad guttura fixo.
'Quinque neci Caeneus dederat Styphelumque Bromumque
Antimachumque Elymumque securiferumque Pyracmon:
vulnera non memini, numerum nomenque notavi.
provolat Emathii spoliis armatus Halesi,
quem dederat leto, membris et corpore Latreus
maximus: huic aetas inter iuvenemque senemque,
vis iuvenalis erat, variabant tempora cani.
qui clipeo galeaque Macedoniaque sarisa
conspicuus faciemque obversus in agmen utrumque
armaque concussit certumque equitavit in orbem
verbaque tot fudit vacuas animosus in auras:
"et te, Caeni, feram? nam tu mihi femina semper,
tu mihi Caenis eris. nec te natalis origo
commonuit, mentemque subit, quo praemia facto
quaque viri falsam speciem mercede pararis?
quid sis nata, vide, vel quid sis passa, columque,
i, cape cum calathis et stamina pollice torque;
bella relinque viris." iactanti talia Caeneus
extentum cursu missa latus eruit hasta,
qua vir equo commissus erat. furit ille dolore
nudaque Phyllei iuvenis ferit ora sarisa:
non secus haec resilit, quam tecti a culmine grando,

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Caeneus Fights On

"There's still before my eyes the one who'd bound together six lion hides with knotted fastenings - Phaeocomes - protecting both man and horse. He hurled a log that would barely move two yoke of oxen and crushed Tectaphus, son of Olenus, from the top of his head downward. The wide curve of his skull was shattered. Through mouth, through hollow nostrils, through eyes and ears, the soft brain flowed out - like milk thickened in woven oak-wood baskets usually does, or like liquid oozing from holes of a loose sieve, pressed out thick through the dense openings.

"But as he prepared to strip the fallen man's armor - your father knows this, Achilles - I drove my sword deep into the despoiler's groin. Cthonius and Teleboas fell by my sword too. One had carried a forked branch, the other a javelin. The javelin gave me a wound - you can see the mark. An old scar still shows there. Back then I should have been sent to capture Troy! Back then I could have held - if not defeated - great Hector's forces with mine. But at that time either Hector didn't exist yet, or he was still a boy. Now my years have failed me.

"Why should I tell you about Periphantes, victor over double-formed Pyraethus? Or Ampyx, who drove a spear - though it had no point - into the face of four-legged Eche clus? Macareus from Pelethroni um laid low Erigdupus, driving a crowbar into his chest. I remember too that hunting spears thrown by Nessus's hand buried themselves in Cymelus's groin. Don't think Ampycides Mopsus only prophesied the future. It was Mopsus's javelin that brought down the two-formed Hodites, who tried in vain to speak - his tongue was pinned to his chin, his chin to his throat.

"Caeneus had sent five to death - Styphelus, Bromus, Antimachus, Elymus, and Pyracmon who carried an axe. I don't remember their wounds, only noted their number and names. Latreus charged forward, armed with spoils from Emathian Halesus whom he'd killed - huge in limb and body. His age was between young man and old man, but he had a young man's strength. Gray hair streaked his temples. Conspicuous with shield, helmet, and Macedonian pike, he faced both battle lines, clashed his weapons, rode in a set circle, and boldly poured these empty words into the air:

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aut siquis parvo feriat cava tympana saxo.
comminus adgreditur laterique recondere duro
luctatur gladium: gladio loca pervia non sunt.
"haut tamen effugies! medio iugulaberis ense,
quandoquidem mucro est hebes" inquit et in latus ensem
obliquat longaque amplectitur ilia dextra.
plaga facit gemitus ut corpore marmoris icto,
fractaque dissiluit percusso lammina callo.
ut satis inlaesos miranti praebuit artus,
"nunc age" ait Caeneus "nostro tua corpora ferro
temptemus!" capuloque tenus demisit in armos
ensem fatiferum caecamque in viscera movit
versavitque manum vulnusque in vulnere fecit.
ecce ruunt vasto rabidi clamore bimembres
telaque in hunc omnes unum mittuntque feruntque.
tela retusa cadunt: manet inperfossus ab omni
inque cruentatus Caeneus Elateius ictu.
fecerat attonitos nova res. "heu dedecus ingens!"
Monychus exclamat. "populus superamur ab uno
vixque viro; quamquam ille vir est, nos segnibus actis,
quod fuit ille, sumus. quid membra inmania prosunt?
quid geminae vires et quod fortissima rerum
in nobis natura duplex animalia iunxit?
nec nos matre dea, nec nos Ixione natos
esse reor, qui tantus erat, Iunonis ut altae
spem caperet: nos semimari superamur ab hoste!
saxa trabesque super totosque involvite montes
vivacemque animam missis elidite silvis!
massa premat fauces, et erit pro vulnere pondus."
dixit et insanis deiectam viribus austri
forte trabem nactus validum coniecit in hostem
exemplumque fuit, parvoque in tempore nudus
arboris Othrys erat, nec habebat Pelion umbras.
obrutus inmani cumulo sub pondere Caeneus
aestuat arboreo congestaque robora duris
fert umeris, sed enim postquam super ora caputque
crevit onus neque habet, quas ducat, spiritus auras,
deficit interdum, modo se super aera frustra
tollere conatur iactasque evolvere silvas
interdumque movet, veluti, quam cernimus, ecce,

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"'Must I endure you too, Caenis? You'll always be a woman to me. You'll always be Caenis to me. Doesn't your birth remind you? Do you remember what deed you did, what reward you got for taking on a man's false appearance? Consider what you were born, consider what you suffered! Go, take your basket and spinning wool, twist the thread with your thumb. Leave war to men!'

"As he was boasting like this, Caeneus with hurled spear gashed his extended flank as he galloped past, where man joined to horse. Mad with pain, Latreus struck Caeneus's bare face with his pike. It bounced back like hail from a rooftop, or like hitting hollow drums with a small stone. He closed in and tried to drive his sword deep into Caeneus's hard flank. The sword found no opening. 'But you won't escape anyway!' he said. 'You'll die by the sword's edge, since the point is blunt.' And he turned the blade sideways and reached around with his long right hand to embrace Caeneus's sides. The blow made a sound like striking a marble body. The blade shattered, broken on the hardened flesh.

"When Caeneus had shown his unhurt limbs long enough to the amazed Latreus, he said, 'Now let's test your body against my steel!' He buried his death-dealing sword up to the hilt in Latreus's shoulder and moved his hand around blindly in his guts, twisting, making wound within wound.

"Look - the two-formed creatures rushed at him with huge roar, raging. They all hurled weapons at this one man alone. The weapons fell back blunted. Caeneus, son of Elatus, remained unpierced by any blow, unbloodied. The strange sight stunned them. 'Oh, what disgrace!' Monychus cried out. 'A whole race beaten by one man - barely a man! Though he's the man, and we with our sluggish deeds are what he used to be. What good are our massive limbs? What good are our double strengths, that the mightiest of creatures - two animals - were joined in us? We weren't born from a goddess. We weren't fathered by Ixion, who was so great he could hope for high Juno herself. We're beaten by an enemy who's half man! Heap rocks and trees on him! Roll whole mountains over him! Crush his stubborn life with the forests you hurl! Let the mass choke his throat. Weight will serve instead of wounds.'

"He spoke, and by chance finding a beam thrown down by the violent south wind's force, he hurled it at his strong enemy - setting an example. In a short time Mount Othrys stood bare of trees, and Pelion had no shade. Buried under the immense pile, Caeneus struggled beneath the weight. He bore the heaped

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ardua si terrae quatiatur motibus Ide.
exitus in dubio est: alii sub inania corpus
Tartara detrusum silvarum mole ferebant;
abnuit Ampycides medioque ex aggere fulvis
vidit avem pennis liquidas exire sub auras,
quae mihi tum primum, tunc est conspecta supremum.
hanc ubi lustrantem leni sua castra volatu
Mopsus et ingenti circum clangore sonantem
adspexit pariterque animis oculisque secutus
"o salve," dixit "Lapithaeae gloria gentis,
maxime vir quondam, sed nunc avis unica, Caencu!"
credita res auctore suo est: dolor addidit iram,
oppressumque aegre tulimus tot ab hostibus unum;
nec prius abstitimus ferro exercere dolorem,
quam data pars leto, partem fuga noxque removit.'
Haec inter Lapithas et semihomines Centauros
proelia Tlepolemus Pylio referente dolorem
praeteriti Alcidae tacito non pertulit ore
atque ait: 'Herculeae mirum est oblivia laudis
acta tibi, senior; certe mihi saepe referre
nubigenas domitos a se pater esse solebat.'
tristis ad haec Pylius: 'quid me meminisse malorum
cogis et obductos annis rescindere luctus
inque tuum genitorem odium offensasque fateri?
ille quidem maiora fide, di! gessit et orbem
inplevit meritis, quod mallem posse negare;
sed neque Deiphobum nec Pulydamanta nec ipsum
Hectora laudamus: quis enim laudaverit hostem?
ille tuus genitor Messenia moenia quondam
stravit et inmeritas urbes Elinque Pylonque
diruit inque meos ferrum flammamque penatis
inpulit, utque alios taceam, quos ille peremit,
bis sex Nelidae fuimus, conspecta iuventus,
bis sex Herculeis ceciderunt me minus uno
viribus; atque alios vinci potuisse ferendum est:
mira Periclymeni mors est, cui posse figuras
sumere, quas vellet, rursusque reponere sumptas
Neptunus dederat, Nelei sanguinis auctor.
hic ubi nequiquam est formas variatus in omnes,
vertitur in faciem volucris, quae fulmina curvis

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timber on his hard shoulders. But when the load rose above his head and mouth and he had no air to draw breath, he sometimes weakened. Sometimes he tried in vain to push himself up through the air and shake off the hurled forest. Sometimes he moved - like if we were to see lofty Mount Ida shaken by earthquakes.

"His end is uncertain. Some said his body was thrust down under the pile of trees to the empty halls of Tartarus. Mopsus disagreed. From the middle of the heap he saw a bird with golden wings rising into the clear air. I saw it then for the first time and last time. When Mopsus saw it circling the camp with easy flight, sounding with a great cry, he followed it with his eyes and spirit together and said, 'Hail to you, glory of the Lapith race! Once the greatest of men, now the only bird of your kind - Caeneus!' The story was believed because of its teller. Grief added to our anger. We could hardly bear that one man was overwhelmed by so many enemies. We didn't stop working our grief with the sword until either part was given to death or part was removed by flight and night.'

Tlepolemus Interrupts

"As Nestor of Pylos recounted these battles between Lapiths and half-men Centaurs, Tlepolemus couldn't bear in silent patience the omission of Hercules's praise and said, 'Old man, it's strange you've forgotten Hercules's glory. My father often used to tell me about the cloud-born ones he'd defeated.'

"Sadly the Pylian replied, 'Why do you force me to remember evils and reopen griefs buried by the years, and to confess hatred and offenses against your father? By the gods, he achieved greater things than belief allows! He filled the world with his merits - which I wish I could deny. But we don't praise Deiphobus or Polydamas or Hector himself. Who praises an enemy? That father of yours once destroyed Messenia's walls. He razed the innocent cities of Elis and Pylos. He brought sword and flame against my own home. To say nothing of others he killed, we twelve sons of Neleus were a remarkable group of young men. Twelve sons of Neleus fell to Hercules's strength - all but me. The others could be endured as conquered. But Periclymenus's death was strange. Neptune, source of Neleus's blood, had given him the power to take whatever forms he wished and to put them off again once taken.

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ferre solet pedibus divum gratissima regi;
viribus usus avis pennis rostroque redunco
hamatisque viri laniaverat unguibus ora.
tendit in hanc nimium certos Tirynthius arcus
atque inter nubes sublimia membra ferentem
pendentemque ferit, lateri qua iungitur ala;
nec grave vulnus erat, sed rupti vulnere nervi
deficiunt motumque negant viresque volandi.
decidit in terram, non concipientibus auras
infirmis pennis, et qua levis haeserat alae
corporis adflicti pressa est gravitate sagitta
perque latus summum iugulo est exacta sinistro.
nunc videor debere tui praeconia rebus
Herculis, o Rhodiae ductor pulcherrime classis?
nec tamen ulterius, quam fortia facta silendo
ulciscor fratres: solida est mihi gratia tecum.'
Haec postquam dulci Neleius edidit ore,
a sermone senis repetito munere Bacchi
surrexere toris: nox est data cetera somno.
At deus, aequoreas qui cuspide temperat undas,
in volucrem corpus nati Phaethontida versum
mente dolet patria saevumque perosus Achillem
exercet memores plus quam civiliter iras.
iamque fere tracto duo per quinquennia bello
talibus intonsum conpellat Sminthea dictis:
'o mihi de fratris longe gratissime natis,
inrita qui mecum posuisti moenia Troiae,
ecquid, ubi has iamiam casuras adspicis arces,
ingemis? aut ecquid tot defendentia muros
milia caesa doles? ecquid, ne persequar omnes,
Hectoris umbra subit circum sua Pergama tracti?
cum tamen ille ferox belloque cruentior ipso
vivit adhuc, operis nostri populator, Achilles.
det mihi se: faxo, triplici quid cuspide possim,
sentiat; at quoniam concurrere comminus hosti
non datur, occulta necopinum perde sagitta!'
adnuit atque animo pariter patruique suoque
Delius indulgens nebula velatus in agmen
pervenit Iliacum mediaque in caede virorum
rara per ignotos spargentem cernit Achivos

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"When he'd tried every form in vain, he changed into the appearance of the bird that holds thunderbolts in its curved talons - the king of gods' favorite. Using the bird's strength, with wings, hooked beak, and curving talons, he tore at the hero's face. But the man from Tiryns aimed his too-sure bow at him and, as Periclymenus was carrying his high limbs through the clouds, suspended there, struck him where wing joins side. The wound wasn't severe, but the sinews ruptured by the wound failed and denied movement and power of flight. He fell to earth, his weak wings not catching the air. Where the arrow had lightly stuck in his wing, pressed by the weight of his falling body it was driven through his side and came out through the top left side of his throat.

"Now, does it seem I should sing praise for Hercules's deeds, O most handsome leader of the Rhodian fleet? Still, I take no further vengeance for my brothers than by keeping silent about his brave acts. My friendship with you remains solid.'

The Death of Achilles

"After Nestor finished this speech with his sweet eloquence, they took up the gift of Bacchus again, rose from the couches, and gave the rest of the night to sleep.

"But the god who rules the ocean waves with his trident grieved with a father's heart for his son transformed into the bird that bears Phaethon's name. Hating cruel Achilles, he nursed vengeful anger beyond what was civil. Now, with the war dragged on for nearly two five-year periods, he addressed long-haired Apollo with these words:

"'O far dearest to me of my brother's sons, who with me built Troy's walls - now futile - when you see these citadels about to fall, do you groan at all? Do you mourn at all for the thousands slaughtered defending the walls? To pass over all the rest, does the shade of Hector, dragged around his own Troy, come to mind? Yet that savage one, more brutal than war itself - Achilles, destroyer of our work - still lives. Let him come to me! I'll make him feel what my three-pronged spear can do. But since fighting my enemy hand-to-hand isn't granted, kill him unexpectedly with your hidden arrow!'

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tela Parin fassusque deum, 'quid spicula perdis
sanguine plebis?' ait. 'siqua est tibi cura tuorum,
vertere in Aeaciden caesosque ulciscere fratres!'
dixit et ostendens sternentem Troica ferro
corpora Peliden, arcus obvertit in illum
certaque letifera derexit spicula dextra.
quod Priamus gaudere senex post Hectora posset,
hoc fuit; ille igitur tantorum victor, Achille,
victus es a timido Graiae raptore maritae!
at si femineo fuerat tibi Marte cadendum,
Thermodontiaca malles cecidisse bipenni.
Iam timor ille Phrygum, decus et tutela Pelasgi
nominis, Aeacides, caput insuperabile bello,
arserat: armarat deus idem idemque cremarat;
iam cinis est, et de tam magno restat Achille
nescio quid parvum, quod non bene conpleat urnam,
at vivit totum quae gloria conpleat orbem.
haec illi mensura viro respondet, et hac est
par sibi Pelides nec inania Tartara sentit.
ipse etiam, ut, cuius fuerit, cognoscere posses,
bella movet clipeus, deque armis arma feruntur.
non ea Tydides, non audet Oileos Aiax,
non minor Atrides, non bello maior et aevo
poscere, non alii: solis Telamone creatis
Laertaque fuit tantae fiducia laudis.
a se Tantalides onus invidiamque removit
Argolicosque duces mediis considere castris
iussit et arbitrium litis traiecit in omnes.

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"Apollo nodded, indulging both his uncle's wish and his own. Veiled in mist, he came among the Trojan army and, amid the slaughter of men, saw Paris shooting scattered arrows at unknown Greeks. Revealing himself as a god, Apollo said, 'Why waste your arrows on common blood? If you care for your people at all, turn against Achilles and avenge your slaughtered brothers!' He spoke, and showing him the son of Peleus laying low Trojan bodies with his sword, he turned Paris's bow toward him and guided the fatal arrow with unerring hand.

"This was what old Priam could rejoice in after Hector's death. So you, Achilles, victor over so many great men, were conquered by the coward who stole a Greek wife! If you had to fall by a woman's warfare, you would have preferred to die by the Thermodontian two-edged axe.

"Now that terror of the Trojans, glory and guardian of the Greek name, the son of Aeacus, unconquerable head in war, had burned. The same god had armed him and now cremated him. Now he's ashes. Of so great an Achilles there remains some trivial thing that barely fills an urn. But his glory lives on - enough to fill the whole world. This is the measure that suits the man. In this Achilles equals himself and doesn't sense the empty void of Tartarus.

"Even his shield, so you can know whose it was, stirs up warfare. Weapons are fought over for weapons. Tydeus's son doesn't dare claim them. Ajax, son of Oileus, doesn't dare. Neither of the sons of Atreus - the younger or the older and greater in war - dares claim them. No others. Only the two sons of Telamon and Laertes had confidence in such great glory.

"The son of Tantalus removed the burden and envy from himself. He ordered the Greek leaders to sit in the middle of the camp and referred the judgment of the dispute to them all.

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BOOK 13

Consedere duces et vulgi stante corona
surgit ad hos clipei dominus septemplicis Aiax,
utque erat inpatiens irae, Sigeia torvo
litora respexit classemque in litore vultu
intendensque manus 'agimus, pro Iuppiter!' inquit
'ante rates causam, et mecum confertur Ulixes!
at non Hectoreis dubitavit cedere flammis,
quas ego sustinui, quas hac a classe fugavi.
tutius est igitur fictis contendere verbis,
quam pugnare manu, sed nec mihi dicere promptum,
nec facere est isti: quantumque ego Marte feroci
inque acie valeo, tantum valet iste loquendo.
nec memoranda tamen vobis mea facta, Pelasgi,
esse reor: vidistis enim; sua narret Ulixes,
quae sine teste gerit, quorum nox conscia sola est!
praemia magna peti fateor; sed demit honorem
aemulus: Aiaci non est tenuisse superbum,
sit licet hoc ingens, quicquid speravit Ulixes;
iste tulit pretium iam nunc temptaminis huius,
quod, cum victus erit, mecum certasse feretur.
'Atque ego, si virtus in me dubitabilis esset,
nobilitate potens essem, Telamone creatus,
moenia qui forti Troiana sub Hercule cepit
litoraque intravit Pagasaea Colcha carina;
Aeacus huic pater est, qui iura silentibus illic
reddit, ubi Aeoliden saxum grave Sisyphon urget;
Aeacon agnoscit summus prolemque fatetur
Iuppiter esse suam: sic a Iove tertius Aiax.
nec tamen haec series in causam prosit, Achivi,
si mihi cum magno non est communis Achille:
frater erat, fraterna peto! quid sanguine cretus
Sisyphio furtisque et fraude simillimus illi
inseris Aeacidis alienae nomina gentis?
'An quod in arma prior nulloque sub indice veni,
arma neganda mihi, potiorque videbitur ille,
ultima qui cepit detractavitque furore
militiam ficto, donec sollertior isto
sed sibi inutilior timidi commenta retexit
Naupliades animi vitataque traxit ad arma?

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The Judgment of Arms: Ajax vs. Odysseus

The commanders sat down, surrounded by a standing crowd of troops. Ajax, lord of the sevenfold shield, rose before them. Impatient with rage as always, he glared toward the Trojan shore and the fleet lined up on the beach, and stretching out his hands he said: "For the love of Jupiter! We're pleading our case here in front of the ships - and my rival is Odysseus! But he had no problem running from Hector's flames, which I faced down and drove away from this very fleet. It's safer, apparently, to fight with clever words than with your fists. But I'm no good at speaking, just as he's no good at action. I'm as strong in savage war and on the battlefield as he is at talking.

"I don't think I need to list my deeds for you, Greeks - you saw them yourselves. Let Odysseus tell his own stories, the ones he does without witnesses, known only to the night! I admit the prize we're seeking is great, but my rival takes away its honor. Ajax shouldn't be proud of winning something, however grand, that Odysseus hoped for. He's already won his reward from this contest - when he's defeated, he'll be known as the man who competed with me.

"Even if my courage were in doubt, I'd still have power through nobility. I'm the son of Telamon, who with mighty Hercules captured Troy's walls and sailed to Colchis in the ship from Pagasae. His father is Aeacus, who dispenses justice among the silent dead, where the heavy stone presses down on Sisyphus, son of Aeolus. Highest Jupiter acknowledges Aeacus as his son and claims him as his own offspring. So Ajax is third from Jupiter. But Greeks, this lineage wouldn't help my case unless I shared it with great Achilles. He was my brother - I'm asking for a brother's arms! Why are you, Odysseus, born of Sisyphus's blood and so much like him in theft and trickery, trying to insert your alien family name among the descendants of Aeacus?

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optima num sumat, quia sumere noluit ulla:
nos inhonorati et donis patruelibus orbi,
obtulimus quia nos ad prima pericula, simus?
'Atque utinam aut verus furor ille, aut creditus esset,
nec comes hic Phrygias umquam venisset ad arces
hortator scelerum! non te, Poeantia proles,
expositum Lemnos nostro cum crimine haberet!
qui nunc, ut memorant, silvestribus abditus antris
saxa moves gemitu Laertiadaeque precaris,
quae meruit, quae, si di sunt, non vana precaris.
et nunc ille eadem nobis iuratus in arma,
heu! pars una ducum, quo successore sagittae
Herculis utuntur, fractus morboque fameque
velaturque aliturque avibus, volucresque petendo
debita Troianis exercet spicula fatis.
ille tamen vivit, quia non comitavit Ulixem;
mallet et infelix Palamedes esse relictus,
[viveret aut certe letum sine crimine haberet]
quem male convicti nimium memor iste furoris
prodere rem Danaam finxit fictumque probavit
crimen et ostendit, quod iam praefoderat, aurum.
ergo aut exilio vires subduxit Achivis,
aut nece: sic pugnat, sic est metuendus Ulixes!
'Qui licet eloquio fidum quoque Nestora vincat,
haut tamen efficiet, desertum ut Nestora crimen
esse rear nullum; qui cum inploraret Ulixem
vulnere tardus equi fessusque senilibus annis,
proditus a socio est; non haec mihi crimina fingi
scit bene Tydides, qui nomine saepe vocatum
corripuit trepidoque fugam exprobravit amico.
aspiciunt oculis superi mortalia iustis!
en eget auxilio, qui non tulit, utque reliquit,
sic linquendus erat: legem sibi dixerat ipse.
conclamat socios: adsum videoque trementem
pallentemque metu et trepidantem morte futura;
opposui molem clipei texique iacentem
servavique animam (minimum est hoc laudis) inertem.
si perstas certare, locum redeamus in illum:
redde hostem vulnusque tuum solitumque timorem

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"Should I be denied these arms just because I came to war first, without being forced, while that man seems more deserving because he came last and tried to dodge military service with fake madness - until someone cleverer than him but more useless to himself, Palamedes son of Nauplius, exposed his cowardly pretense and dragged him to the war he was trying to avoid? Should he get the best weapons because he didn't want to take up any? Should I go unhonored and robbed of my cousin's gift because I offered myself for the first dangers?

"I wish his madness had been real, or believed to be real, and this instigator of crimes had never come with us to Troy's citadel! Then you, son of Poeas, wouldn't be abandoned on Lemnos to our shame. They say you're now hiding in forest caves, making the rocks echo with your groans, calling down on Odysseus, son of Laertes, the curses he deserves - curses that, if there are gods, won't be in vain. And now that man, who swore the same oath to fight alongside us - he was one of our leaders! - the man who now wields Hercules's arrows, is broken by disease and hunger, clothes and feeds himself on birds, and spends the arrows meant for Troy's fate on hunting flying prey. Still, at least he's alive, because he didn't go with Odysseus! Poor Palamedes might have preferred to be abandoned too - he'd be alive, or at least he'd have died without being disgraced. That man over there, remembering all too well that Palamedes had exposed his fake madness, made up a charge that he was betraying the Greeks, then 'proved' his false accusation by showing gold he'd already planted himself. So by exile or death he's stripped the Greeks of strength. That's how Odysseus fights - that's what makes him so fearsome!

"Even if his eloquence could outdo faithful Nestor himself, he'll never convince me that deserting Nestor was no crime. When Nestor called to Odysseus for help, slowed by his wounded horse and exhausted by old age, he was betrayed by his comrade. Diomedes knows well that I'm not making this up - he repeatedly called Odysseus by name, shouted at him, and condemned his trembling friend for running away. The gods watch human affairs with just eyes! Look - the man who didn't help needs help himself, and just as he abandoned others, so he deserved to be abandoned. He'd set the rules for himself. He calls

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post clipeumque late et mecum contende sub illo!
at postquam eripui, cui standi vulnera vires
non dederant, nullo tardatus vulnere fugit.
'Hector adest secumque deos in proelia ducit,
quaque ruit, non tu tantum terreris, Ulixe,
sed fortes etiam: tantum trahit ille timoris.
hunc ego sanguineae successu caedis ovantem
eminus ingenti resupinum pondere fudi,
hunc ego poscentem, cum quo concurreret, unus
sustinui: sortemque meam vovistis, Achivi,
et vestrae valuere preces. si quaeritis huius
fortunam pugnae, non sum superatus ab illo.
ecce ferunt Troes ferrumque ignesque Iovemque
in Danaas classes: ubi nunc facundus Ulixes?
nempe ego mille meo protexi pectore puppes,
spem vestri reditus: date pro tot navibus arma.
'Quodsi vera licet mihi dicere, quaeritur istis
quam mihi maior honos, coniunctaque gloria nostra est,
atque Aiax armis, non Aiaci arma petuntur.
conferat his Ithacus Rhesum inbellemque Dolona
Priamidenque Helenum rapta cum Pallade captum:
luce nihil gestum, nihil est Diomede remoto;
si semel ista datis meritis tam vilibus arma,
dividite, et pars sit maior Diomedis in illis.
'Quo tamen haec Ithaco, qui clam, qui semper inermis
rem gerit et furtis incautum decipit hostem?
ipse nitor galeae claro radiantis ab auro
insidias prodet manifestabitque latentem;
sed neque Dulichius sub Achillis casside vertex
pondera tanta feret, nec non onerosa gravisque
Pelias hasta potest inbellibus esse lacertis,
nec clipeus vasti caelatus imagine mundi
conveniet timidae nataeque ad furta sinistrae:
debilitaturum quid te petis, inprobe, munus,
quod tibi si populi donaverit error Achivi,
cur spolieris, erit, non, cur metuaris ab hoste,
et fuga, qua sola cunctos, timidissime, vincis,
tarda futura tibi est gestamina tanta trahenti?
adde quod iste tuus, tam raro proelia passus,

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to his comrades: I show up and see him trembling, pale with fear, panicking about his coming death. I put my shield's huge mass in front of him, covered him where he lay, and saved his life - hardly anything to brag about when the life was so cowardly. If you insist on continuing this contest, let's go back to that place. Bring back the enemy, your wound, your usual fear, hide behind my shield, and compete with me there! But as soon as I rescued him, this man who couldn't even stand because of his wounds ran away with no wound slowing him down.

"Hector comes, bringing the gods with him into battle, and wherever he charges, not just you, Odysseus, are terrified - brave men too, that's how much terror he brings. But while he was celebrating his bloody slaughter, I knocked him flat from a distance with a massive stone. When he demanded someone to fight him one-on-one, I was the only one who stood up to him. You prayed for my lot to be chosen, Greeks, and your prayers were answered. If you ask how that fight turned out - I wasn't beaten by him. Look, the Trojans bring iron, fire, and Jupiter himself against the Greek fleet. Where's eloquent Odysseus now? I, with my own chest, protected a thousand ships - your hope of return. Give me the armor in exchange for all those ships!

"If I'm allowed to speak the truth, those arms seek more honor for themselves than for me. Our glory is linked together, and it's Ajax who's asking for the arms, not the arms asking for Ajax. Let the man from Ithaca compare this to his exploits: killing Rhesus, cowardly Dolon, capturing Helenus son of Priam along with the stolen Palladium. He did nothing in daylight, nothing without Diomedes. If you're going to give those arms once for such trivial merits, divide them - the larger share should go to Diomedes!

"Besides, why does the Ithacan need these - a man who always works in secret, always unarmed, who relies on tricks to deceive the unwary enemy? The very gleam of the helmet shining with bright gold will give away his hiding places and reveal where he's lurking. That Dulichian head couldn't bear the weight under Achilles's helmet anyway, and Peleus's heavy, massive spear would be a burden to his unwarlike arms. The shield engraved with the image of the vast universe won't suit his timid left hand, made for

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integer est clipeus; nostro, qui tela ferendo
mille patet plagis, novus est successor habendus.
'Denique (quid verbis opus est?) spectemur agendo!
arma viri fortis medios mittantur in hostes:
inde iubete peti et referentem ornate relatis.'
Finierat Telamone satus, vulgique secutum
ultima murmur erat, donec Laertius heros
adstitit atque oculos paulum tellure moratos
sustulit ad proceres exspectatoque resolvit
ora sono, neque abest facundis gratia dictis.
'Si mea cum vestris valuissent vota, Pelasgi,
non foret ambiguus tanti certaminis heres,
tuque tuis armis, nos te poteremur, Achille,
quem quoniam non aequa mihi vobisque negarunt
fata,' (manuque simul veluti lacrimantia tersit
lumina) 'quis magno melius succedat Achilli,
quam per quem magnus Danais successit Achilles?
huic modo ne prosit, quod, uti est, hebes esse videtur,
neve mihi noceat, quod vobis semper, Achivi,
profuit ingenium, meaque haec facundia, siqua est,
quae nunc pro domino, pro vobis saepe locuta est,
invidia careat, bona nec sua quisque recuset.
'Nam genus et proavos et quae non fecimus ipsi,
vix ea nostra voco, sed enim, quia rettulit Aiax
esse Iovis pronepos, nostri quoque sanguinis auctor
Iuppiter est, totidemque gradus distamus ab illo:
nam mihi Laertes pater est, Arcesius illi,
Iuppiter huic, neque in his quisquam damnatus et exul;
est quoque per matrem Cyllenius addita nobis
altera nobilitas: deus est in utroque parente.
sed neque materno quod sum generosior ortu,
nec mihi quod pater est fraterni sanguinis insons,
proposita arma peto: meritis expendite causam,
dummodo, quod fratres Telamon Peleusque fuerunt,
Aiacis meritum non sit nec sanguinis ordo,
sed virtutis honor spoliis quaeratur in istis!
aut si proximitas primusque requiritur heres,
est genitor Peleus, est Pyrrhus filius illi:
quis locus Aiaci? Pthiam haec Scyrumve ferantur!

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stealing. Why do you seek this gift, you scoundrel, when it will only weaken you? If the Greek people make the mistake of giving it to you, you'll be stripped of it, not feared by the enemy. And your specialty - fleeing, which is how you alone beat everyone, you coward - will be slowed down when you're dragging such heavy equipment. Plus, that shield of yours, which so rarely sees battle, is still intact. Mine, which has taken a thousand blows defending against weapons, needs a new replacement.

"Finally - why do we need words? Let's be judged by actions! Send the brave man's armor into the thick of the enemy. Then order them retrieved and honor whoever brings them back."

The son of Telamon finished. A murmur from the crowd followed his last words. Then the hero, son of Laertes, stood. He kept his eyes lowered to the ground for a moment, then raised them to the chiefs and opened his mouth with the eloquence they'd been waiting for - and his words had charm to them.

"If my prayers and yours had been answered, Greeks, there'd be no question about who inherits this great contest. You'd have your armor, Achilles, and we'd have you. But since unjust fate has denied him to me and to you" - here he wiped his eyes as if brushing away tears - "who could better succeed great Achilles than the man through whom great Achilles joined the Greeks? Just don't let it help him that he seems slow-witted - because he is - and don't let it hurt me that my intelligence, Greeks, has always helped you. Don't let my eloquence, whatever it is, which has often spoken for you and now speaks for its master, face your resentment. No one should reject their own gifts.

"As for ancestry and forefathers and things we didn't do ourselves, I barely call those ours. But since Ajax mentioned being Jupiter's great-grandson, Jupiter is the founder of my bloodline too, and I'm the same number of generations from him. Laertes is my father, Arcesius was his father, Jupiter was his - and none of them was condemned or exiled. Through my mother, I also have Mercury of Cyllene as a second source of nobility - there's a god on both sides of my family. But I'm not asking for these arms because I'm nobler through my mother's line or because my father is innocent of his brother's blood.

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nec minus est isto Teucer patruelis Achilli:
num petit ille tamen? num, si petat, auferat illa?
ergo, operum quoniam nudum certamen habetur,
plura quidem feci, quam quae conprendere dictis
in promptu mihi sit, rerum tamen ordine ducar.
'Praescia venturi genetrix Nereia leti
dissimulat cultu natum, et deceperat omnes,
in quibus Aiacem, sumptae fallacia vestis:
arma ego femineis animum motura virilem
mercibus inserui, neque adhuc proiecerat heros
virgineos habitus, cum parmam hastamque tenenti
"nate dea," dixi "tibi se peritura reservant
Pergama! quid dubitas ingentem evertere Troiam?"
iniecique manum fortemque ad fortia misi.
ergo opera illius mea sunt: ego Telephon hasta
pugnantem domui, victum orantemque refeci;
quod Thebae cecidere, meum est; me credite Lesbon,
me Tenedon Chrysenque et Cillan, Apollinis urbes,
et Scyrum cepisse; mea concussa putate
procubuisse solo Lyrnesia moenia dextra,
utque alios taceam, qui saevum perdere posset
Hectora, nempe dedi: per me iacet inclitus Hector!
illis haec armis, quibus est inventus Achilles,
arma peto: vivo dederam, post fata reposco.
'Ut dolor unius Danaos pervenit ad omnes,
Aulidaque Euboicam conplerunt mille carinae,
exspectata diu, nulla aut contraria classi
flamina erant, duraeque iubent Agamemnona sortes
inmeritam saevae natam mactare Dianae.
denegat hoc genitor divisque irascitur ipsis
atque in rege tamen pater est, ego mite parentis
ingenium verbis ad publica commoda verti:
hanc equidem (fateor, fassoque ignoscat Atrides)
difficilem tenui sub iniquo iudice causam.
hunc tamen utilitas populi fraterque datique
summa movet sceptri, laudem ut cum sanguine penset;
mittor et ad matrem, quae non hortanda, sed astu
decipienda fuit, quo si Telamonius isset,
orba suis essent etiam nunc lintea ventis.

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Judge the case on merit. Only make sure that Telamon and Peleus being brothers doesn't count as Ajax's merit, and that kinship doesn't matter - let the honor of these spoils be sought through courage! Or if you're looking for the closest relative and first heir, there's Peleus, Achilles's father, and there's Pyrrhus, his son. What claim does Ajax have? Let these arms be taken to Phthia or Scyros! Teucer is just as much Achilles's cousin. Does he ask for them? If he asked, would he get them? So since this is purely a contest of deeds, I've done more than I could easily sum up in words, but I'll go through them in order.

"Achilles's mother Thetis, foreseeing his death, disguised her son in women's clothing and fooled everyone - including Ajax. I placed weapons among the feminine wares, things that would stir a manly spirit. The hero hadn't yet dropped his girl's outfit when, as he gripped the shield and spear, I said: 'Son of a goddess, Troy is destined to fall to you! Why hesitate to overthrow mighty Troy?' I grabbed his hand and sent the brave man to brave deeds. So his achievements are mine. I'm the one who conquered Telephus with the spear, then healed him when he begged as my defeated enemy. Believe me, it's because of me that Thebes fell. Credit me with capturing Lesbos, Tenedos, Chryse, Cilla - Apollo's cities - and Scyros. Imagine my right hand knocked down Lyrnessus's walls to the ground. And to skip the others, I'm the one who gave you the man who could kill savage Hector. Through me, famous Hector lies dead! I ask for the armor that revealed where Achilles was. I gave them when he was alive; now that he's dead, I ask for them back.

"When one man's grief reached all the Greeks and a thousand ships filled Aulis on the Euboean coast, the winds were long awaited and either contrary to our fleet or absent. Harsh oracles ordered Agamemnon to sacrifice his innocent daughter to cruel Diana. The father refused, got angry even at the gods, and though he was a king, he was still a father. I used words to turn his gentle paternal nature toward the public good. I admit - and I hope Agamemnon will forgive me for admitting it - I had a difficult case to argue before a hostile judge. But the public welfare, his brother's cause, and the supreme power of the scepter he'd been given moved him to weigh glory against blood. Then I was sent to the

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'Mittor et Iliacas audax orator ad arces,
visaque et intrata est altae mihi curia Troiae,
plenaque adhuc erat illa viris; interritus egi
quam mihi mandarat communem Graecia causam
accusoque Parin praedamque Helenamque reposco
et moveo Priamum Priamoque Antenora iunctum;
at Paris et fratres et qui rapuere sub illo,
vix tenuere manus (scis hoc, Menelae) nefandas,
primaque lux nostri tecum fuit illa pericli.
'Longa referre mora est, quae consilioque manuque
utiliter feci spatiosi tempore belli.
post acies primas urbis se moenibus hostes
continuere diu, nec aperti copia Martis
ulla fuit; decimo demum pugnavimus anno:
quid facis interea, qui nil nisi proelia nosti?
quis tuus usus erat? nam si mea facta requiris,
hostibus insidior, fossa munimina cingo,
consolor socios, ut longi taedia belli
mente ferant placida, doceo, quo simus alendi
armandique modo, mittor, quo postulat usus.
'Ecce Iovis monitu deceptus imagine somni
rex iubet incepti curam dimittere belli;
ille potest auctore suam defendere vocem:
non sinat hoc Aiax delendaque Pergama poscat,
quodque potest, pugnet! cur non remoratur ituros?
cur non arma capit, dat, quod vaga turba sequatur?
non erat hoc nimium numquam nisi magna loquenti.
quid, quod et ipse fugit? vidi, puduitque videre,
cum tu terga dares inhonestaque vela parares;
nec mora, "quid facitis? quae vos dementia" dixi
"concitat, o socii, captam dimittere Troiam,
quidque domum fertis decimo, nisi dedecus, anno?"
talibus atque aliis, in quae dolor ipse disertum
fecerat, aversos profuga de classe reduxi.
convocat Atrides socios terrore paventes:
nec Telamoniades etiamnunc hiscere quicquam
audet, at ausus erat reges incessere dictis
Thersites etiam, per me haut inpune protervis!
erigor et trepidos cives exhortor in hostem

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mother, who needed not persuasion but cunning deception. If Ajax, son of Telamon, had gone, our sails would still be waiting for the winds.

"I was also sent as a bold ambassador to the citadels of Troy. I saw and entered the high court of Troy when it was still full of warriors. Undaunted, I argued the case that all of Greece had charged me with. I accused Paris, demanded the return of Helen and the stolen treasure, and moved Priam and Antenor, who was allied with him. But Paris and his brothers and those who'd helped him steal Helen could barely hold back their wicked hands - you know this, Menelaus. That was the first day you and I faced danger together.

"It would take too long to recount everything I've done that was useful, in counsel and in action, throughout the long war. After the first battles, the enemy kept themselves behind the city walls for a long time, and there was no chance for open warfare. We finally fought in the tenth year. What were you doing meanwhile, you who know nothing but battle? What use were you? Because if you ask about my deeds: I set traps for the enemy, I fortify our defenses with trenches, I comfort our allies so they endure the tedium of long war with calm minds, I teach them how we should feed and arm ourselves, I'm sent wherever necessity demands.

"Look - the king, deceived by a false dream sent by Jupiter's command, orders us to abandon our plan for war. He can defend his decision on Jupiter's authority. Why doesn't Ajax stop this? Why doesn't he demand that Troy be destroyed? Why doesn't he fight, since he can? Why doesn't he hold back those who want to leave? Why doesn't he take up arms and give them something the wandering mob can follow? That wouldn't have been too much for someone who only talks big. But what happened - he ran away himself! I saw it, and I was ashamed to see it, when you turned your back and prepared those disgraceful sails. Right away I said: 'What are you doing? What madness drives you, comrades, to abandon Troy when it's captured? What are you bringing home in the tenth year except disgrace?' With these words and others - grief itself had made me eloquent - I brought them back from their fleeing

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amissamque mea virtutem voce repono.
tempore ab hoc, quodcumque potest fecisse videri
fortiter iste, meum est, qui dantem terga retraxi.
'Denique de Danais quis te laudatve petitve?
at sua Tydides mecum communicat acta,
me probat et socio semper confidit Ulixe.
est aliquid, de tot Graiorum milibus unum
a Diomede legi! nec me sors ire iubebat:
sic tamen et spreto noctisque hostisque periclo
ausum eadem, quae nos, Phrygia de gente Dolona
interimo, non ante tamen, quam cuncta coegi
prodere et edidici, quid perfida Troia pararet.
omnia cognoram nec, quod specularer, habebam
et iam promissa poteram cum laude reverti:
haut contentus eo petii tentoria Rhesi
inque suis ipsum castris comitesque peremi
atque ita captivo, victor votisque potitus,
ingredior curru laetos imitante triumphos;
cuius equos pretium pro nocte poposcerat hostis,
arma negate mihi, fueritque benignior Aiax.
quid Lycii referam Sarpedonis agmina ferro
devastata meo? cum multo sanguine fudi
Coeranon Iphitiden et Alastoraque Chromiumque
Alcandrumque Haliumque Noemonaque Prytaninque
exitioque dedi cum Chersidamante Thoona
et Charopem fatisque inmitibus Ennomon actum
quique minus celebres nostra sub moenibus urbis
procubuere manu. sunt et mihi vulnera, cives,
ipso pulchra loco; nec vanis credite verbis,
aspicite! en' vestemque manu diduxit et 'haec sunt
pectora semper' ait 'vestris exercita rebus!
at nihil inpendit per tot Telamonius annos
sanguinis in socios et habet sine vulnere corpus!
'Quid tamen hoc refert, si se pro classe Pelasga
arma tulisse refert contra Troasque Iovemque?
confiteorque, tulit (neque enim benefacta maligne
detractare meum est), sed ne communia solus
occupet atque aliquem vobis quoque reddat honorem,
reppulit Actorides sub imagine tutus Achillis

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ships. Agamemnon called together the allies, terrified as they were. Even then Ajax, son of Telamon, didn't dare open his mouth. But Thersites dared to attack the kings with words - and he didn't get away with his insolence, thanks to me! I stood up and encouraged the frightened soldiers to face the enemy, and with my voice I restored the courage they'd lost. From that time on, whatever this man seems to have done bravely is mine - I'm the one who brought back the man who was running away.

"Finally, which of the Greeks praises you or seeks you out? But Diomedes shares his actions with me, approves of me, and always trusts in Odysseus as his companion. It means something to be chosen as the one man out of thousands of Greeks by Diomedes! The lot didn't order me to go - yet even so, despite the danger of night and the enemy, I killed Dolon, a Trojan who'd dared the same mission we were on. But not before I forced him to reveal everything and learned what treacherous Troy was planning. I'd learned everything and had no reason left to spy, and I could have returned then with the praise I'd been promised. But I wasn't satisfied with that. I attacked Rhesus's tent, killed him and his companions right in their own camp, and then, victorious and with my prayers answered, I rode in on the captured chariot like a happy triumphal procession. The enemy had demanded Rhesus's horses as payment for that night - so deny me the armor and let Ajax be more generous! Why should I mention the ranks of Lycian Sarpedon that I devastated with my sword? I killed Coeranus son of Iphitus, Alastor, Chromius, Alcander, Halius, Noemon, Prytanis, wiped out Thoon and Chersidamas, and Charops and Ennomus driven by harsh fate, and others less famous who fell by my hand beneath the city walls. I have wounds too, citizens, beautiful in their location - don't just trust empty words, look!" Here he pulled aside his garment. "Look, this is a chest that's always been engaged in your affairs! But Ajax, son of Telamon, has spent all these years without shedding a drop of blood for his comrades and has a body without wounds!

"What does it matter, though, if he says he raised arms to protect the Greek fleet against the Trojans and Jupiter? I admit he did - I'm not someone who tries to diminish good deeds maliciously. But he shouldn't claim as his alone what's shared with others, and he should give some honor back to you.

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Troas ab arsuris cum defensore carinis.
ausum etiam Hectoreis solum concurrere telis
se putat, oblitus regisque ducumque meique,
nonus in officio et praelatus munere sortis.
sed tamen eventus vestrae, fortissime, pugnae
quis fuit? Hector abit violatus vulnere nullo!
'Me miserum, quanto cogor meminisse dolore
temporis illius, quo, Graium murus, Achilles
procubuit! nec me lacrimae luctusque timorque
tardarunt, quin corpus humo sublime referrem:
his umeris, his inquam, umeris ego corpus Achillis
et simul arma tuli, quae nunc quoque ferre laboro.
sunt mihi, quae valeant in talia pondera, vires,
est animus certe vestros sensurus honores:
scilicet idcirco pro nato caerula mater
ambitiosa suo fuit, ut caelestia dona,
artis opus tantae, rudis et sine pectore miles
indueret? neque enim clipei caelamina novit,
Oceanum et terras cumque alto sidera caelo
Pleiadasque Hyadasque inmunemque aequoris Arcton
diversosque orbes nitidumque Orionis ensem.
[postulat, ut capiat, quae non intellegit, arma!]
'Quid, quod me duri fugientem munera belli
arguit incepto serum accessisse labori
nec se magnanimo maledicere sentit Achilli?
si simulasse vocas crimen, simulavimus ambo;
si mora pro culpa est, ego sum maturior illo.
me pia detinuit coniunx, pia mater Achillem,
primaque sunt illis data tempora, cetera vobis:
haut timeo, si iam nequeam defendere, crimen
cum tanto commune viro: deprensus Ulixis
ingenio tamen ille, at non Aiacis Ulixes.
'Neve in me stolidae convicia fundere linguae
admiremur eum, vobis quoque digna pudore
obicit. an falso Palameden crimine turpe
accusasse mihi, vobis damnasse decorum est?
sed neque Naupliades facinus defendere tantum
tamque patens valuit, nec vos audistis in illo
crimina: vidistis, pretioque obiecta patebant.

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Patroclus, protected by Achilles's appearance, drove the Trojans away from the ships that were about to burn and the defender they lacked. He even thinks he alone dared face Hector's weapons, forgetting the king, the commanders, and me. He was the ninth to volunteer and was chosen only by the luck of the lottery. But what was the outcome of your fight, bravest one? Hector walked away without a scratch!

"How painful it is for me to remember that time when Achilles, the wall of the Greeks, fell! Not even tears, grief, or fear stopped me from lifting his body from the ground. On these shoulders - these shoulders, I tell you - I carried the body of Achilles and his armor too, the armor I'm now struggling to carry again. I have the strength for such a heavy burden, and I certainly have a heart that will appreciate your honor. Did his sea-blue mother's ambition for her son come to this - that a crude, mindless soldier would wear the gifts of heaven, the work of such great art? He doesn't even know what's carved on the shield - the Ocean and lands and stars in the high sky, the Pleiades, the Hyades, the Bear that never touches the sea, the different constellations, and shining Orion's sword.

"What about the fact that he accuses me of fleeing the duties of harsh war and joining the effort late, yet doesn't realize he's insulting great-hearted Achilles too? If you call pretense a crime, we both pretended. If delay is a fault, I was quicker to join than he was. A devoted wife kept me, a devoted mother kept Achilles. Our first days were given to them, the rest to you. I'm not afraid of a charge I can't defend, since I share it with such a great man. Still, it was Odysseus's cleverness that caught him, but Ajax's cleverness didn't catch Odysseus.

"Don't be surprised that he pours out stupid abuse against me when he makes accusations against you too that deserve shame. If it was shameful for me to accuse Palamedes with a false charge, was it honorable for you to condemn him? But Palamedes couldn't defend such a great and obvious crime - you didn't just hear the charge, you saw it, and the evidence was revealed by the bribe.

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'Nec, Poeantiaden quod habet Vulcania Lemnos,
esse reus merui (factum defendite vestrum!
consensistis enim), nec me suasisse negabo,
ut se subtraheret bellique viaeque labori
temptaretque feros requie lenire dolores.
paruit - et vivit! non haec sententia tantum
fida, sed et felix, cum sit satis esse fidelem.
quem quoniam vates delenda ad Pergama poscunt,
ne mandate mihi! melius Telamonius ibit
eloquioque virum morbis iraque furentem
molliet aut aliqua producet callidus arte!
ante retro Simois fluet et sine frondibus Ide
stabit, et auxilium promittet Achaia Troiae,
quam, cessante meo pro vestris pectore rebus,
Aiacis stolidi Danais sollertia prosit.
sis licet infestus sociis regique mihique
dure Philoctete, licet exsecrere meumque
devoveas sine fine caput cupiasque dolenti
me tibi forte dari nostrumque haurire cruorem,
utque tui mihi sit, fiat tibi copia nostri:
te tamen adgrediar mecumque reducere nitar
tamque tuis potiar (faveat Fortuna) sagittis,
quam sum Dardanio, quem cepi, vate potitus,
quam responsa deum Troianaque fata retexi,
quam rapui Phrygiae signum penetrale Minervae
hostibus e mediis. et se mihi conferat Aiax?
nempe capi Troiam prohibebant fata sine illo:
fortis ubi est Aiax? ubi sunt ingentia magni
verba viri? cur hic metuis? cur audet Ulixes
ire per excubias et se committere nocti
perque feros enses non tantum moenia Troum,
verum etiam summas arces intrare suaque
eripere aede deam raptamque adferre per hostes?
quae nisi fecissem, frustra Telamone creatus
gestasset laeva taurorum tergora septem.
illa nocte mihi Troiae victoria parta est:
Pergama tunc vici, cum vinci posse coegi.
'Desine Tydiden vultuque et murmure nobis
ostentare meum: pars est sua laudis in illo!

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"It's not my fault that Vulcan's island Lemnos holds the son of Poeas - defend your own decision! You all agreed. And I won't deny I advised him to withdraw from the hardships of war and travel and to try to soothe his savage pain with rest. He obeyed - and he's alive! That advice was not only faithful but fortunate - as long as being faithful is enough. But since the prophets demand him for Troy's destruction, don't assign this to me! Ajax, son of Telamon, will go better. He'll soften with eloquence a man raging with disease and anger, or he'll bring him by some clever trick! Sooner will the Simois flow backward, Mount Ida stand leafless, and Greece promise aid to Troy than, when my mind stops caring for your interests, stupid Ajax's cleverness will help the Greeks. However hostile you are to your allies, the king, and me, harsh Philoctetes, however much you curse and endlessly condemn my head and wish you could get your hands on me in your suffering and drink my blood, and just as you've had the chance with me, may I have the chance with you - I'll still approach you and try to bring you back with me. And if Fortune favors me, I'll take possession of your arrows just as I gained the Trojan prophet I captured, just as I revealed the oracles of the gods and Troy's fate, just as I stole Phrygian Minerva's sacred statue from the midst of the enemy. And Ajax compares himself to me? Troy's fate forbade its capture without that statue. Where's brave Ajax now? Where are the great man's huge words? Why are you afraid here? Why does Odysseus dare to go through the guards and trust himself to the night, to pass through fierce swords, not just to enter Troy's walls but even its highest citadel, to snatch the goddess from her temple and carry her off through the enemy? If I hadn't done this, the son of Telamon would have worn those seven bull hides on his left arm in vain. I won the victory for Troy that night. I conquered Troy when I made it possible to conquer.

"Stop pointing at Diomedes with your expression and muttering - he has his share of the credit! You weren't alone either when you held your shield to protect the fleet - you had a crowd with you. I had only one companion. And if he didn't know that a warrior is less important than someone wise, and that prizes aren't owed to the unconquered right hand alone, he'd be asking for these arms himself. So would

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nec tu, cum socia clipeum pro classe tenebas,
solus eras: tibi turba comes, mihi contigit unus.
qui nisi pugnacem sciret sapiente minorem
esse nec indomitae deberi praemia dextrae,
ipse quoque haec peteret; peteret moderatior Aiax
Eurypylusque ferox claroque Andraemone natus
nec minus Idomeneus patriaque creatus eadem
Meriones, peteret maioris frater Atridae:
quippe manu fortes nec sunt mihi Marte secundi,
consiliis cessere meis. tibi dextera bello
utilis, ingenium est, quod eget moderamine nostro;
tu vires sine mente geris, mihi cura futuri;
tu pugnare potes, pugnandi tempora mecum
eligit Atrides; tu tantum corpore prodes,
nos animo; quantoque ratem qui temperat, anteit
remigis officium, quanto dux milite maior,
tantum ego te supero. nec non in corpore nostro
pectora sunt potiora manu: vigor omnis in illis.
'At vos, o proceres, vigili date praemia vestro,
proque tot annorum cura, quibus anxius egi,
hunc titulum meritis pensandum reddite nostris:
iam labor in fine est; obstantia fata removi
altaque posse capi faciendo Pergama, cepi.
per spes nunc socias casuraque moenia Troum
perque deos oro, quos hosti nuper ademi,
per siquid superest, quod sit sapienter agendum,
siquid adhuc audax ex praecipitique petendum est,
[si Troiae fatis aliquid restare putatis,]
este mei memores! aut si mihi non datis arma,
huic date!' et ostendit signum fatale Minervae.
Mota manus procerum est, et quid facundia posset,
re patuit, fortisque viri tulit arma disertus.
Hectora qui solus, qui ferrum ignesque Iovemque
sustinuit totiens, unam non sustinet iram,
invictumque virum vicit dolor: arripit ensem
et 'meus hic certe est! an et hunc sibi poscit Ulixes?
hoc' ait 'utendum est in me mihi, quique cruore
saepe Phrygum maduit, domini nunc caede madebit,
ne quisquam Aiacem possit superare nisi Aiax.'

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the more moderate Ajax, fierce Eurypylus, the son of famous Andraemon, Idomeneus, Meriones born in his same homeland, and the brother of great Agamemnon. These men are brave in battle and second to me in warfare, but they yield to my counsel. Your right hand is useful in war, but you have a mind that needs my management. You have strength without intelligence; my concern is for the future. You can fight; Agamemnon chooses the times for fighting with me. You're useful only with your body, I with my mind. By as much as the captain who steers the ship surpasses the rower's duty, by as much as a commander is greater than a soldier, that's how much I surpass you. In our body too, the heart is more important than the hand - all our vital force is there.

"But you, leaders, give rewards to your watchful guardian. For so many years of care, through which I've acted with anxiety, grant this distinction as payment for my merits. My labor is at its end. I've removed the obstructing fates and made it possible for lofty Troy to be captured - by doing so, I've captured it. By our shared hopes and Troy's walls about to fall, by the gods I recently stole from the enemy, by whatever still remains that requires wise action, if something bold and dangerous still needs to be attempted, if you think anything remains of Troy's fate - remember me! Or if you don't give the armor to me, give it to this!" And he showed them the fateful statue of Minerva.

The assembly of leaders was moved, and the power of eloquence became clear. The eloquent man carried off the brave man's armor. He who alone had withstood Hector, who had withstood iron, fire, and Jupiter so many times, couldn't withstand one thing - anger. Grief conquered the unconquerable man. He grabbed his sword and said: "This one's certainly mine! Or does Odysseus claim this too? This is what I must use on myself - the blade that's so often been wet with Trojan blood will now be wet with its master's blood, so that no one can defeat Ajax except Ajax himself." He spoke, and then at last drove the lethal sword into his chest, which had never suffered wounds before, in a place where the blade could penetrate. No hands could pull out the embedded weapon - the blood itself expelled it. The ground, red with blood, gave birth to a purple flower from the green turf, the same flower that had

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dixit et in pectus tum demum vulnera passum,
qua patuit ferrum, letalem condidit ensem.
nec valuere manus infixum educere telum:
expulit ipse cruor, rubefactaque sanguine tellus
purpureum viridi genuit de caespite florem,
qui prius Oebalio fuerat de vulnere natus;
littera communis mediis pueroque viroque
inscripta est foliis, haec nominis, illa querellae.
Victor ad Hypsipyles patriam clarique Thoantis
et veterum terras infames caede virorum
vela dat, ut referat Tirynthia tela, sagittas;
quae postquam ad Graios domino comitante revexit,
inposita est sero tandem manus ultima bello.
[Troia simul Priamusque cadunt. Priameia coniunx
perdidit infelix hominis post omnia formam
externasque novo latratu terruit auras,
longus in angustum qua clauditur Hellespontus.]
Ilion ardebat, neque adhuc consederat ignis,
exiguumque senis Priami Iovis ara cruorem
conbiberat, tractata comis antistita Phoebi
non profecturas tendebat ad aethera palmas;
Dardanidas matres patriorum signa deorum,
dum licet, amplexas succensaque templa tenentes
invidiosa trahunt victores praemia Grai;
mittitur Astyanax illis de turribus, unde
pugnantem pro se proavitaque regna tuentem
saepe videre patrem monstratum a matre solebat.
iamque viam suadet Boreas, flatuque secundo
carbasa mota sonant: iubet uti navita ventis;
'Troia, vale! rapimur' clamant, dant oscula terrae
Troades et patriae fumantia tecta relinquunt.
ultima conscendit classem - miserabile visu! -
in mediis Hecabe natorum inventa sepulcris:
prensantem tumulos atque ossibus oscula dantem
Dulichiae traxere manus, tamen unius hausit
inque sinu cineres secum tulit Hectoris haustos;
Hectoris in tumulo canum de vertice crinem,
inferias inopes, crinem lacrimasque reliquit,
Est, ubi Troia fuit, Phrygiae contraria tellus

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earlier been born from Oebalus's wound. A marking common to both the boy and the man is inscribed on the leaves - for one, the name, for the other, the lament.

Philoctetes and the Fall of Troy

The victor sailed to the homeland of Hypsipyle and famous Thoas, to the land once notorious for its slaughter of men, to bring back the arrows of Hercules. Once he'd brought them back to the Greeks with their owner, the war finally received its finishing touch.

Troy fell, and Priam with it. After losing everything, Priam's poor wife even lost her human form and terrified foreign skies with strange barking in that narrow place where the long Hellespont closes in.

Troy was burning. The fire hadn't died down yet. Jupiter's altar was still drinking the little blood of old Priam. Cassandra, Apollo's priestess, was being dragged by her hair, stretching her hands toward the sky - hands that would do no good. The Trojan mothers clung to the statues of their ancestral gods and held onto the burning temples as long as they could, until the victorious Greeks dragged them away as prizes they envied. Astyanax was thrown from those towers where he'd so often watched his father fighting to defend him and the kingdom of his ancestors - pointed out to him by his mother.

The North Wind urged departure, and the sails flapped with the favorable breeze. The captain ordered them to use the winds. "Farewell, Troy! We're being carried away!" the Trojan women cried, kissing the ground and leaving behind their homeland's smoking buildings. Last to board the ships - a pitiful sight! - was Hecuba, found among her children's tombs, clutching the burial mounds and giving kisses to their bones. The Dulichian hands of Odysseus dragged her away, but even so she managed to gather up and carry with her in her robes the ashes of Hector. On Hector's tomb she left a poor offering - a lock of white hair from her head, the hair and her tears.

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Bistoniis habitata viris: Polymestoris illic
regia dives erat, cui te commisit alendum
clam, Polydore, pater Phrygiisque removit ab armis,
consilium sapiens, sceleris nisi praemia magnas
adiecisset opes, animi inritamen avari.
ut cecidit fortuna Phrygum, capit inpius ensem
rex Thracum iuguloque sui demisit alumni
et, tamquam tolli cum corpore crimina possent,
exanimem scopulo subiectas misit in undas.
Litore Threicio classem religarat Atrides,
dum mare pacatum, dum ventus amicior esset:
hic subito, quantus, cum viveret, esse solebat,
exit humo late rupta similisque minanti
temporis illius vultum referebat Achilles,
quo ferus iniustum petiit Agamemnona ferro
'inmemores' que 'mei disceditis,' inquit 'Achivi,
obrutaque est mecum virtutis gratia nostrae!
ne facite! utque meum non sit sine honore sepulcrum,
placet Achilleos mactata Polyxena manes!'
dixit, et inmiti sociis parentibus umbrae,
rapta sinu matris, quam iam prope sola fovebat,
fortis et infelix et plus quam femina virgo
ducitur ad tumulum diroque fit hostia busto.
quae memor ipsa sui postquam crudelibus aris
admota est sensitque sibi fera sacra parari,
utque Neoptolemum stantem ferrumque tenentem;
inque suo vidit figentem lumina vultu,
'utere iamdudum generoso sanguine' dixit
'nulla mora est; at tu iugulo vel pectore telum
conde meo' iugulumque simul pectusque retexit.
'scilicet haud ulli servire Polyxena vellem.
haud per tale sacrum numen placabitis ullum!
mors tantum vellem matrem mea fallere posset:
mater obest minuitque necis mihi gaudia, quamvis
non mea mors illi, verum sua vita tremenda est.
vos modo, ne Stygios adeam non libera manes,
ite procul, si iusta peto, tactuque viriles
virgineo removete manus! acceptior illi,
quisquis is est, quem caede mea placare paratis,

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Polymestor and Polydorus

Across from where Troy once stood, there's a Thracian land inhabited by Bistonian people. There was the wealthy palace of Polymestor, to whom your father, Polydorus, secretly entrusted you to be raised, removing you from the Trojan war - a wise decision, except that he sent great wealth with you, a temptation for a greedy soul.

When Troy's fortune fell, the wicked king of Thrace grabbed his sword, slit his ward's throat, and - as if the crime could be removed along with the body - threw the lifeless corpse into the waves below the cliff.

Agamemnon had moored his fleet on the Thracian shore while the sea calmed and the wind turned friendlier. Here suddenly, as large as he'd been in life, Achilles burst from the widely split earth, wearing the same threatening expression he'd had when he unjustly attacked Agamemnon with his sword. "Are you leaving without remembering me, Greeks?" he said. "Is gratitude for my courage buried with me? Don't let it be! So that my tomb won't go without honor, let Polyxena be sacrificed to appease Achilles's ghost!" He spoke, and his comrades obeyed the pitiless shade. Polyxena was torn from her mother's arms - almost the only comfort her mother still had. The brave, unfortunate girl, more than a woman in courage, was led to the tomb and became a sacrificial victim at that terrible burial mound.

When she was brought to the cruel altar and realized the savage rites were being prepared for her, when she saw Neoptolemus standing there holding the blade and fixing his eyes on her face, she said: "Use my noble blood - there's no delay. But drive your weapon into my throat or my chest" - and she exposed both throat and chest together. "Surely I, Polyxena, wouldn't want to serve anyone as a slave. You won't appease any god with such a sacrifice! I only wish my death could escape my mother's notice. My mother diminishes my joy in death, though it's not my death but her life that should be dreaded. Just so I can reach the Stygian shades as a free woman - if what I ask is just - stand back and remove your male hands from my virgin body! Whoever he is that you're preparing to appease with my slaughter, he'll find free

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liber erit sanguis. siquos tamen ultima nostri
verba movent oris (Priami vos filia regis,
non captiva rogat), genetrici corpus inemptum
reddite, neve auro redimat ius triste sepulcri,
sed lacrimis! tum, cum poterat, redimebat et auro.'
dixerat, at populus lacrimas, quas illa tenebat,
non tenet; ipse etiam flens invitusque sacerdos
praebita coniecto rupit praecordia ferro.
illa super terram defecto poplite labens
pertulit intrepidos ad fata novissima vultus;
tunc quoque cura fuit partes velare tegendas,
cum caderet, castique decus servare pudoris.
Troades excipiunt deploratosque recensent
Priamidas et quot dederit domus una cruores,
teque gemunt, virgo, teque, o modo regia coniunx,
regia dicta parens, Asiae florentis imago,
nunc etiam praedae mala sors; quam victor Ulixes
esse suam nollet, nisi quod tamen Hectora partu
edideras: dominum matri vix repperit Hector!
quae corpus conplexa animae tam fortis inane,
quas totiens patriae dederat natisque viroque,
huic quoque dat lacrimas; lacrimas in vulnera fundit
osculaque ore tegit consuetaque pectora plangit
canitiemque suam concretam sanguine vellens
plura quidem, sed et haec laniato pectore, dixit:
'nata, tuae - quid enim superest? - dolor ultime matris,
nata, iaces, videoque tuum, mea vulnera, vulnus:
en, ne perdiderim quemquam sine caede meorum,
tu quoque vulnus habes; at te, quia femina, rebar
a ferro tutam: cecidisti et femina ferro,
totque tuos idem fratres, te perdidit idem,
exitium Troiae nostrique orbator, Achilles;
at postquam cecidit Paridis Phoebique sagittis,
nunc certe, dixi, non est metuendus Achilles:
nunc quoque mi metuendus erat; cinis ipse sepulti
in genus hoc saevit, tumulo quoque sensimus hostem:
Aeacidae fecunda fui! iacet Ilion ingens,
eventuque gravi finita est publica clades,
sed finita tamen; soli mihi Pergama restant.

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blood more acceptable. But if my final words move any of you - I'm King Priam's daughter asking, not a captive - give my body back to my mother without payment. Don't let her buy the sad right of burial with gold, but with tears. She used to buy it with gold too, when she could." She finished. The people couldn't hold back the tears she was holding back. Even the priest himself wept and reluctantly thrust the blade into the chest she offered. Her knees gave way and she sank to the ground, but carried an unafraid expression to her final moment. Even as she fell, she was careful to cover the parts that should be covered, preserving the honor of chaste modesty.

The Trojan women lifted her up and counted the mourned sons of Priam and how many deaths one house had given. They wept for you, girl, and for you, who were just now a royal wife, called a royal mother, the image of flourishing Asia - now even a bad lottery among the spoils. Odysseus, the victor, wouldn't want to own you, except that you'd given birth to Hector. Hector barely found a master for his mother!

Embracing the lifeless body of such a brave soul, she shed the tears she'd so often given for her country, her children, and her husband. She shed them now for this daughter too. She poured tears into the wounds, covered them with kisses, beat her breast as she always had, and pulling at her white hair caked with blood, she said many things, but including this as she tore at her chest:

"My daughter - for what's left to me? - my final grief, my daughter, you lie here and I see your wound as my wound. Look, so I wouldn't lose any of my children without bloodshed, you too have a wound. But I thought you'd be safe from the sword because you're a woman. You fell to the sword though you're a woman, and the same man who destroyed so many of your brothers destroyed you too - Achilles, the ruin of Troy and the one who left me childless. But after he fell to Paris's arrow and Apollo's, I said, 'Now certainly Achilles isn't to be feared.' Even now I should have feared him. Even the ashes of the buried man rage against our family - even in his tomb we felt him as an enemy. I was fertile for an enemy of Aeacus! Great Troy lies fallen. The public disaster has ended with a grievous outcome, but at least it's

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in cursuque meus dolor est: modo maxima rerum,
tot generis natisque potens nuribusque viroque
nunc trahor exul, inops, tumulis avulsa meorum,
Penelopae munus, quae me data pensa trahentem
matribus ostendens Ithacis "haec Hectoris illa est
clara parens, haec est" dicet "Priameia coniunx,"
postque tot amissos tu nunc, quae sola levabas
maternos luctus, hostilia busta piasti!
inferias hosti peperi! quo ferrea resto?
quidve moror? quo me servas, annosa senectus?
quo, di crudeles, nisi uti nova funera cernam,
vivacem differtis anum? quis posse putaret
felicem Priamum post diruta Pergama dici?
felix morte sua est! nec te, mea nata, peremptam
adspicit et vitam pariter regnumque reliquit.
at, puto, funeribus dotabere, regia virgo,
condeturque tuum monumentis corpus avitis!
non haec est fortuna domus: tibi munera matris
contingent fletus peregrinaeque haustus harenae!
omnia perdidimus: superest, cur vivere tempus
in breve sustineam, proles gratissima matri,
nunc solus, quondam minimus de stirpe virili,
has datus Ismario regi Polydorus in oras.
quid moror interea crudelia vulnera lymphis
abluere et sparsos inmiti sanguine vultus?'
Dixit et ad litus passu processit anili,
albentes lacerata comas. 'date, Troades, urnam!'
dixerat infelix, liquidas hauriret ut undas:
adspicit eiectum Polydori in litore corpus
factaque Threiciis ingentia vulnera telis;
Troades exclamant, obmutuit illa dolore,
et pariter vocem lacrimasque introrsus obortas
devorat ipse dolor, duroque simillima saxo
torpet et adversa figit modo lumina terra,
interdum torvos sustollit ad aethera vultus,
nunc positi spectat vultum, nunc vulnera nati,
vulnera praecipue, seque armat et instruit ira.
qua simul exarsit, tamquam regina maneret,
ulcisci statuit poenaeque in imagine tota est,

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ended. For me alone Troy remains. My grief continues its course. Just now I was supreme, powerful with so many sons and daughters-in-law, sons-in-law and a husband - now I'm dragged away as an exile, destitute, torn from my children's tombs, a gift for Penelope. She'll point me out to the mothers of Ithaca as I spin my assigned thread: 'This is Hector's famous mother,' she'll say, 'this is Priam's wife.' After losing so many, you who alone were easing a mother's grief have now appeased a hostile tomb! I've given offerings to an enemy! Why do I persist, made of iron? Why do I delay? Why, old age, are you preserving me? Why, cruel gods, do you keep an old woman alive, unless it's to see new deaths? Who could have thought Priam could be called fortunate after Troy was destroyed? He's fortunate in his death! He doesn't see you killed, my daughter, and left life and kingship together.

"But I suppose, royal virgin, you'll be honored with a funeral and your body will be laid in your ancestral monuments! That's not our house's fortune. Your mother's gifts will be only tears and a handful of foreign sand! I've lost everything. One thing remains, for whose sake I'll endure living a little longer - he was once the dearest child to his mother, now my only one, once the youngest of my male children: Polydorus, given to the Thracian king on these shores. But why do I delay washing these cruel wounds with water and cleaning this face spattered with savage blood?"

She spoke and walked to the shore with an old woman's step, tearing at her white hair. "Give me a jar, Trojan women!" the poor woman said, so she could draw clear water. She saw Polydorus's body thrown up on the shore, huge wounds made by Thracian weapons. The Trojan women cried out. She went mute with grief, and grief itself devoured both her voice and the tears rising inside. Hard as stone, she stood frozen, sometimes staring at the ground in front of her, sometimes raising her grim face to the sky, now looking at her son's face lying there, now at his wounds - especially his wounds - and she armed and equipped herself with rage.

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utque furit catulo lactente orbata leaena
signaque nacta pedum sequitur, quem non videt, hostem,
sic Hecabe, postquam cum luctu miscuit iram,
non oblita animorum, annorum oblita suorum,
vadit ad artificem dirae, Polymestora, caedis
conloquiumque petit; nam se monstrare relictum
velle latens illi, quod nato redderet, aurum.
credidit Odrysius praedaeque adsuetus amore
in secreta venit: tum blando callidus ore
'tolle moras, Hecabe,' dixit 'da munera nato!
omne fore illius, quod das, quod et ante dedisti,
per superos iuro.' spectat truculenta loquentem
falsaque iurantem tumidaque exaestuat ira
atque ita correpto captivarum agmina matrum
invocat et digitos in perfida lumina condit
expellitque genis oculos (facit ira potentem)
inmergitque manus foedataque sanguine sonti
non lumen (neque enim superest), loca luminis haurit.
clade sui Thracum gens inritata tyranni
Troada telorum lapidumque incessere iactu
coepit, at haec missum rauco cum murmure saxum
morsibus insequitur rictuque in verba parato
latravit, conata loqui: locus exstat et ex re
nomen habet, veterumque diu memor illa malorum
tum quoque Sithonios ululavit maesta per agros.
illius Troasque suos hostesque Pelasgos,
illius fortuna deos quoque moverat omnes,
sic omnes, ut et ipsa Iovis coniunxque sororque
eventus Hecaben meruisse negaverit illos.
Non vacat Aurorae, quamquam isdem faverat armis,
cladibus et casu Troiaeque Hecabesque moveri.
cura deam propior luctusque domesticus angit
Memnonis amissi, Phrygiis quem lutea campis
vidit Achillea pereuntem cuspide mater;
vidit, et ille color, quo matutina rubescunt
tempora, palluerat, latuitque in nubibus aether.
at non inpositos supremis ignibus artus
sustinuit spectare parens, sed crine soluto
sicut erat, magni genibus procumbere non est

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As soon as it blazed up, as if she were still a queen, she determined on vengeance and was entirely consumed with the idea of punishment. Like a lioness robbed of her nursing cub rages and, finding the tracks, follows the enemy she can't see - so Hecuba, after mixing grief with anger, not forgetting her spirit though forgetting her years, went to Polymestor, the architect of the terrible murder, and asked to meet with him. She said she wanted to show him gold she'd hidden, to give to her son.

The Thracian king believed her - accustomed as he was to the love of plunder - and came to the secret place. Then with smooth, cunning words he said: "Stop delaying, Hecuba. Give the gifts to your son! Everything you give, everything you gave before, will be his - I swear by the gods above." She watched him fiercely as he spoke and swore falsely, and swelled with seething rage. Then she grabbed him, called together the crowd of captive mothers, dug her fingers into his treacherous eyes and gouged out his eyeballs - anger made her powerful - and plunged her hands in and, defiled with the guilty blood, scooped out not the eyes (they were gone) but the eye sockets.

The Thracian people, enraged by their tyrant's destruction, began attacking the Trojan woman by throwing stones and javelins. But she went after a thrown rock with a hoarse growl, snapping her teeth at it, and when she opened her mouth ready to speak words, she barked instead. The place still exists and takes its name from the event. For a long time remembering her ancient sorrows, she howled mournfully then too through the Thracian fields. Her fate moved her own Trojans and the enemy Greeks, moved all the gods too - all of them, so much so that even Juno herself, Jupiter's wife and sister, said that Hecuba hadn't deserved that outcome.

Aurora and Memnon

Aurora had no time to be moved by Troy's disasters and Hecuba's fate, though she'd favored the same side. A more personal grief, a domestic sorrow troubled the goddess - the loss of Memnon. His tawny mother had watched him die on the Trojan fields, killed by Achilles's spear. She'd watched, and that rosy

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dedignata Iovis lacrimisque has addere voces:
'omnibus inferior, quas sustinet aureus aether,
(nam mihi sunt totum rarissima templa per orbem)
diva tamen, veni, non ut delubra diesque
des mihi sacrificos caliturasque ignibus aras:
si tamen adspicias, quantum tibi femina praestem,
tum cum luce nova noctis confinia servo,
praemia danda putes; sed non ea cura neque hic est
nunc status Aurorae, meritos ut poscat honores:
Memnonis orba mei venio, qui fortia frustra
pro patruo tulit arma suo primisque sub annis
occidit a forti (sic vos voluistis) Achille.
da, precor, huic aliquem, solacia mortis, honorem,
summe deum rector, maternaque vulnera leni!'
Iuppiter adnuerat, cum Memnonis arduus alto
corruit igne rogus, nigrique volumina fumi
infecere diem, veluti cum flumine Nais
exhalat nebulas, nec sol admittitur infra;
atra favilla volat glomerataque corpus in unum
densetur faciemque capit sumitque calorem
atque animam ex igni (levitas sua praebuit alas)
et primo similis volucri, mox vera volucris
insonuit pennis, pariter sonuere sorores
innumerae, quibus est eadem natalis origo,
terque rogum lustrant, et consonus exit in auras
ter plangor, quarto seducunt castra volatu;
tum duo diversa populi de parte feroces
bella gerunt rostrisque et aduncis unguibus iras
exercent alasque adversaque pectora lassant,
inferiaeque cadunt cineri cognata sepulto
corpora seque viro forti meminere creatas.
praepetibus subitis nomen facit auctor: ab illo
Memnonides dictae, cum sol duodena peregit
signa, parentali moriturae more rebellant.
ergo aliis latrasse Dymantida flebile visum est;
luctibus est Aurora suis intenta piasque
nunc quoque dat lacrimas et toto rorat in orbe.
Non tamen eversam Troiae cum moenibus esse
spem quoque fata sinunt: sacra et, sacra altera, patrem

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color that makes the early morning blush had grown pale, and the sky hid itself in clouds.

But the mother couldn't bear to watch when his body was placed on the final flames. Just as she was, with her hair unbound, she wasn't ashamed to fall at great Jupiter's knees and add these words to her tears:

"Of all the goddesses the golden sky holds, I'm the least - I have the fewest temples throughout the whole world - yet I come as a goddess. Not so you'll give me shrines and days of sacrifice and altars that will burn with fire. Still, if you'd notice how much this woman provides for you when I guard the borders of night with new light, you'd think rewards should be given. But that's not Aurora's concern now, nor is this the situation for me to ask for the honors I deserve. I come because I've lost my Memnon. He bravely but uselessly carried arms for his uncle and was killed in his early years by fierce Achilles - so you willed it. Give him some honor, I pray, as comfort for his death, highest ruler of the gods, and ease a mother's wounds!"

Jupiter nodded his agreement. Then Memnon's tall pyre collapsed in towering flames and black columns of smoke stained the day, the way fog breathes out from a river and doesn't let the sun penetrate below. Black ash flew up, gathered and compressed into a single mass, took shape and drew heat from the fire - and life from the fire too. Its lightness gave it wings. At first it seemed like a bird, then it was a real bird, and it whirred its wings. Countless sisters did the same, all born from the same origin. Three times they circled the pyre, and three times their unified cry rose into the air. On the fourth circuit they separated into two camps. Then two fierce flocks waged war, venting their rage with beaks and hooked talons, exhausting their wings and opposing chests. They fell as offerings to the ashes of their kinsman buried below, their bodies recalling that they were created from a brave man. The birds' creator gave them their name - from him they're called Memnonides, and when the sun has passed through the twelve signs, they fight again in funeral fashion, destined to die.

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fert umeris, venerabile onus, Cythereius heros.
de tantis opibus praedam pius eligit illam
Ascaniumque suum profugaque per aequora classe
fertur ab Antandro sceleratаque limina Thracum
et Polydoreo manantem sanguine terram
linquit et utilibus ventis aestuque secundo
intrat Apollineam sociis comitantibus urbem.
hunc Anius, quo rege homines, antistite Phoebus
rite colebatur, temploque domoque recepit
urbemque ostendit delubraque nota duasque
Latona quondam stirpes pariente retentas.
ture dato flammis vinoque in tura profuso
caesarumque boum fibris de more crematis
regia tecta petunt, positique tapetibus altis
munera cum liquido capiunt Cerealia Baccho.
tum pius Anchises: 'o Phoebi lecte sacerdos,
fallor, an et natum, cum primum haec moenia vidi,
bisque duas natas, quantum reminiscor, habebas?'
huic Anius niveis circumdata tempora vittis
concutiens et tristis ait: 'non falleris, heros
maxime; vidisti natorum quinque parentem,
quem nunc (tanta homines rerum inconstantia versat)
paene vides orbum. quod enim mihi filius absens
auxilium, quem dicta suo de nomine tellus
Andros habet pro patre locumque et regna tenentem?
Delius augurium dedit huic, dedit altera Liber
femineae stirpi voto maiora fideque
munera: nam tactu natarum cuncta mearum
in segetem laticemque meri canaeque Minervae
transformabantur, divesque erat usus in illis.
hoc ubi cognovit Troiae populator Atrides,
(ne non ex aliqua vestram sensisse procellam
nos quoque parte putes), armorum viribus usus
abstrahit invitas gremio genitoris alantque
imperat Argolicam caelesti munere classem.
effugiunt, quo quaeque potest: Euboea duabus
et totidem natis Andros fraterna petita est.
miles adest et, ni dedantur, bella minatur:
victa metu pietas consortia corpora poenae

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So while others thought it pitiful that the daughter of Dymas had barked, Aurora was absorbed in her own grief and even now sheds devoted tears and spreads dew across the whole world.

Aeneas's Journey and Anius

Yet the fates didn't allow hope to be destroyed along with Troy's walls. The hero descended from Venus carried the sacred objects and - another sacred thing - his father on his shoulders, a venerable burden. From all his wealth, devoted Aeneas chose that prize and his son Ascanius. He sailed with his fleet of exiles from Antandros, left behind Thrace's criminal shores and the land flowing with Polydorus's blood, and with favorable winds and tide entered Apollo's city with his companions.

Anius - who ruled the people as king and served Apollo as priest - received him in both temple and home, showed him the city and the famous shrines and the two trees that Latona had clung to when giving birth. After giving incense to the flames, pouring wine onto the incense, and burning the entrails of slaughtered cattle according to custom, they sought the royal halls and, reclining on raised couches, received Ceres's gifts along with flowing wine.

Then devoted Anchises said: "Chosen priest of Apollo, am I wrong, or when I first saw these walls, didn't you have a son and four daughters, as I recall?"

Anius, shaking his head wrapped in white fillets, sadly said: "You're not wrong, greatest hero. You saw me as father of five children, but now - such is the inconstancy of human affairs - you see me almost childless. What help is my absent son to me, who holds the island of Andros, named after him, and rules there as king instead of his father? Apollo gave him the gift of prophecy. But Bacchus gave my daughters gifts even greater than what was asked or believed - everything my daughters touched turned into grain, wine, or Minerva's gray olive oil, and there was rich profit in these things.

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dedidit; et timido possis ignoscere fratri:
non hic Aeneas, non, qui defenderet Andron,
Hector erat, per quem decimum durastis in annum.
iamque parabantur captivis vincla lacertis:
illae tollentes etiamnum libera caelo
bracchia "Bacche pater, fer opem!" dixere, tulitque
muneris auctor opem,si miro perdere more
ferre vocatur opem, nec qua ratione figuram
perdiderint, potui scire aut nunc dicere possum;
summa mali nota est: pennas sumpsere tuaeque
coniugis in volucres, niveas abiere columbas.'
Talibus atque aliis postquam convivia dictis
inplerunt, mensa somnum petiere remota
cumque die surgunt adeuntque oracula Phoebi,
qui petere antiquam matrem cognataque iussit
litora; prosequitur rex et dat munus ituris,
Anchisae sceptrum, chlamydem pharetramque nepoti,
cratera Aeneae, quem quondam transtulit illi
hospes ab Aoniis Therses Ismenius oris:
miserat hunc illi Therses, fabricaverat Alcon
Hyleus et longo caelaverat argumento.
urbs erat, et septem posses ostendere portas:
hae pro nomine erant, et quae foret illa, docebant;
ante urbem exequiae tumulique ignesque rogique
effusaeque comas et apertae pectora matres
significant luctum; nymphae quoque flere videntur
siccatosque queri fontes: sine frondibus arbor
nuda riget, rodunt arentia saxa capellae.
ecce facit mediis natas Orione Thebis
hac non femineum iugulo dare vulnus aperto,
illac demisso per fortia pectora telo
pro populo cecidisse suo pulchrisque per urbem
funeribus ferri celebrique in parte cremari.
tum de virginea geminos exire favilla,
ne genus intereat, iuvenes, quos fama Coronas
nominat, et cineri materno ducere pompam.
hactenus antiquo signis fulgentibus aere,
summus inaurato crater erat asper acantho.
nec leviora datis Troiani dona remittunt

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"When Agamemnon, Troy's destroyer, learned of this - so you'd know that we too felt some of your storm - he used armed force to drag them unwilling from their father's embrace and ordered them to feed the Greek fleet with their divine gift. They escaped where each could. Two fled to Euboea, and two to their brother's island, Andros. Soldiers came and threatened war if they weren't handed over. Fear conquered brotherly duty and he gave up his sisters to punishment. You could forgive the timid brother - there was no Aeneas here to defend Andros, no Hector through whom you lasted ten years.

"Chains were already being prepared for their captive arms when they raised their arms, still free, to the sky and cried: 'Father Bacchus, bring help!' The giver of the gift brought help - if losing their form in a strange way can be called help. I could never learn how they lost their shape, nor can I tell you now. The sum of the disaster is well known: they took on feathers and became white doves, the birds of your wife."

After filling the feast with such talk and others, they left the table, sought sleep, and rose with the day to visit Apollo's oracle. The god told them to seek their ancient mother and kindred shores. The king accompanied them and gave gifts as they left: a scepter for Anchises, a cloak and quiver for his grandson, a mixing bowl for Aeneas - one that his guest Therses of Ismenus had once brought him from Theban shores. Therses had sent it, but Alcon of Hyle had crafted it and engraved it with a long story.

There was a city, and you could count seven gates. These served as its name and showed which city it was. Before the city were funeral processions, tombs, fires, pyres, mothers with hair unbound and breasts bared, showing their grief. Nymphs too seemed to be weeping and lamenting their dried-up springs. The tree stood bare, stripped of leaves. Goats gnawed on dry rocks. Look - in the middle of Thebes he shows Orion's daughters, one giving her throat an unwomanly wound, the other driving a weapon down through her brave chest, both falling for their people and being carried in beautiful funeral processions through the city and cremated in a crowded place. Then from the virgin ashes came two young men - to keep the race from dying out - whom tradition calls the Coronae, and they led the procession for their mother's ashes.

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dantque sacerdoti custodem turis acerram,
dant pateram claramque auro gemmisque coronam.
Inde recordati Teucros a sanguine Teucri
ducere principium Creten tenuere locique
ferre diu nequiere Iovem centumque relictis
urbibus Ausonios optant contingere portus,
saevit hiems iactatque viros, Strophadumque receptos
portubus infidis exterruit ales Aello.
et iam Dulichios portus Ithacamque Samonque
Neritiasque domus, regnum fallacis Ulixis,
praeter erant vecti: certatam lite deorum
Ambraciam versique vident sub imagine saxum
iudicis, Actiaco quae nunc ab Apolline nota est,
vocalemque sua terram Dodonida quercu
Chaoniosque sinus, ubi nati rege Molosso
inpia subiectis fugere incendia pennis.
Proxima Phaeacum felicibus obsita pomis
rura petunt, Epiros ab his regnataque vati
Buthrotos Phrygio simulataque Troia tenetur;
inde futurorum certi, quae cuncta fideli
Priamides Helenus monitu praedixerat, intrant
Sicaniam: tribus haec excurrit in aequora linguis,
e quibus imbriferos est versa Pachynos ad austros,
mollibus oppositum zephyris Lilybaeon, ad arctos
aequoris expertes spectat boreanque Peloros.
hac subeunt Teucri, et remis aestuque secundo
sub noctem potitur Zanclaea classis harena:
Scylla latus dextrum, laevum inrequieta Charybdis
infestat; vorat haec raptas revomitque carinas,
illa feris atram canibus succingitur alvum,
virginis ora gerens, et, si non omnia vates
ficta reliquerunt, aliquo quoque tempore virgo:
hanc multi petiere proci, quibus illa repulsis
ad pelagi nymphas, pelagi gratissima nymphis,
ibat et elusos iuvenum narrabat amores.
cui dum pectendos praebet Galatea capillos,
talibus adloquitur repetens suspiria dictis:
'te tamen, o virgo, genus haut inmite virorum
expetit, utque facis, potes his inpune negare;

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So far went the ancient bronze with its gleaming figures. The rim of the bowl was rough with engraved acanthus. The Trojans gave back gifts no less valuable: they gave the priest a chest for keeping incense, a libation bowl, and a crown bright with gold and gems.

Then, remembering that the Trojans traced their origin from Teucer's blood, they made for Crete. But they couldn't endure Jupiter's land for long, and after leaving a hundred cities they sought to reach Italian ports. The storm raged and tossed the men about. The treacherous harbors of the Strophades received them, and the bird Aello terrified them.

They'd already sailed past the ports of Dulichium, Ithaca, Same, and the houses of Neritos - the realm of deceitful Odysseus. They saw Ambracia, fought over in the gods' dispute, and the rock that was once a judge turned to stone - now famous for Actian Apollo - and the land of Dodona, vocal with its oak, and the Chaonian Gulf, where the sons of King Molossus escaped wicked flames with wings that lifted them up.

Scylla and Galatea

Next they sought the fields of the Phaeacians, rich with fortunate fruit. From there they reached Epirus and Buthrotum, ruled by the Trojan prophet and resembling Troy. Once they'd learned everything about the future - things faithful Helenus, son of Priam, had predicted with trustworthy warning - they entered Sicily. This land juts into the sea with three tongues. Of these, Pachynus faces the rainy south winds, Lilybaeum lies opposite the gentle west winds, and Pelorus looks toward the northern constellations and the north wind, untouched by the sea.

The Trojans approached by this route and with oars and favorable tide reached Zancle's sand at nightfall. Scylla threatens the right side, restless Charybdis the left. Charybdis swallows ships it's snatched and spits them back out. Scylla has a black belly ringed with savage dogs, has a girl's face - and

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at mihi, cui pater est Nereus, quam caerula Doris
enixa est, quae sum turba quoque tuta sororum,
non nisi per luctus licuit Cyclopis amorem
effugere.' et lacrimae vocem inpediere loquentis.
quas ubi marmoreo detersit pollice virgo
et solata deam est, 'refer, o carissima' dixit
'neve tui causam tege (sic sum fida) doloris!'
Nereis his contra resecuta Crataeide natam est:
'Acis erat Fauno nymphaque Symaethide cretus
magna quidem patrisque sui matrisque voluptas,
nostra tamen maior; nam me sibi iunxerat uni.
pulcher et octonis iterum natalibus actis
signarat teneras dubia lanugine malas.
hunc ego, me Cyclops nulla cum fine petebat.
nec, si quaesieris, odium Cyclopis amorne
Acidis in nobis fuerit praesentior, edam:
par utrumque fuit. pro, quanta potentia regni
est, Venus alma, tui! nempe ille inmitis et ipsis
horrendus silvis et visus ab hospite nullo
inpune et magni cum dis contemptor Olympi,
quid sit amor, sentit validaque cupidine captus
uritur oblitus pecorum antrorumque suorum.
iamque tibi formae, iamque est tibi cura placendi,
iam rigidos pectis rastris, Polypheme, capillos,
iam libet hirsutam tibi falce recidere barbam
et spectare feros in aqua et conponere vultus.
caedis amor feritasque sitisque inmensa cruoris
cessant, et tutae veniuntque abeuntque carinae.
Telemus interea Siculam delatus ad Aetnen,
Telemus Eurymides, quem nulla fefellerat ales,
terribilem Polyphemon adit "lumen" que, "quod unum
fronte geris media, rapiet tibi" dixit "Ulixes."
risit et "o vatum stolidissime, falleris," inquit,
"altera iam rapuit." sic frustra vera monentem
spernit et aut gradiens ingenti litora passu
degravat, aut fessus sub opaca revertitur antra.
prominet in pontum cuneatus acumine longo
collis (utrumque latus circumfluit aequoris unda):
huc ferus adscendit Cyclops mediusque resedit;

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if not everything the prophets left behind was fiction, she was once a girl.

Many suitors pursued her. When she rejected them all, she'd go to the sea nymphs - the nymphs loved her dearly - and tell them about the young men's frustrated loves. While Galatea was combing out her hair for her, the sea nymph spoke these words with a sigh:

"But you, girl - at least the kind of men who pursue you isn't cruel, and you can safely refuse them as you're doing. But I, whose father is Nereus, whom sea-blue Doris bore, who'm protected by a crowd of sisters - I couldn't escape the Cyclops's love except through grief."

And tears choked her voice as she spoke. When the girl had wiped them away with her marble thumb and comforted the goddess, she said: "Tell me, dearest one, and don't hide the cause of your sorrow from me - I'm trustworthy."

The Nereid answered Crataeis's daughter like this:

Galatea's Tale: Polyphemus and Acis

"Acis was the son of Faunus and the nymph Symaethis - a great joy to his father and mother, but an even greater joy to me, for he'd joined himself to me alone. He was beautiful, and at sixteen years old soft down was just beginning to mark his tender cheeks. I pursued him, and the Cyclops pursued me endlessly. If you asked whether my hatred of the Cyclops or my love for Acis was stronger, I couldn't tell you - they were equal. O Venus, how great is the power of your realm! That savage creature, feared even by the forests themselves, whom no stranger had ever looked at without harm, who scorned great Olympus and the gods - he felt what love was. Caught by powerful desire, he burned, forgetting his flocks and caves. Now, Polyphemus, you care about your appearance, now you want to please. Now you comb your shaggy hair with a rake, now you're happy to cut your bristly beard with a sickle and to look at your savage face in the water and compose your features. Your lust for killing, your wildness, your

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lanigerae pecudes nullo ducente secutae.
cui postquam pinus, baculi quae praebuit usum,
ante pedes posita est antemnis apta ferendis
sumptaque harundinibus conpacta est fistula centum,
senserunt toti pastoria sibila montes,
senserunt undae; latitans ego rupe meique
Acidis in gremio residens procul auribus hausi
talia dicta meis auditaque mente notavi:
'"Candidior folio nivei Galatea ligustri,
floridior pratis, longa procerior alno,
splendidior vitro, tenero lascivior haedo,
levior adsiduo detritis aequore conchis,
solibus hibernis, aestiva gratior umbra,
mobilior damma, platano conspectior alta,
lucidior glacie, matura dulcior uva,
mollior et cycni plumis et lacta coacto,
et, si non fugias, riguo formosior horto;
'"Saevior indomitis eadem Galatea iuvencis,
durior annosa quercu, fallacior undis,
lentior et salicis virgis et vitibus albis,
his inmobilior scopulis, violentior amne,
laudato pavone superbior, acrior igni,
asperior tribulis, feta truculentior ursa,
surdior aequoribus, calcato inmitior hydro,
et, quod praecipue vellem tibi demere possem,
non tantum cervo claris latratibus acto,
verum etiam ventis volucrique fugacior aura,
(at bene si noris, pigeat fugisse, morasque
ipsa tuas damnes et me retinere labores)
sunt mihi, pars montis, vivo pendentia saxo
antra, quibus nec sol medio sentitur in aestu,
nec sentitur hiems; sunt poma gravantia ramos,
sunt auro similes longis in vitibus uvae,
sunt et purpureae: tibi et has servamus et illas.
ipsa tuis manibus silvestri nata sub umbra
mollia fraga leges, ipsa autumnalia corna
prunaque non solum nigro liventia suco,
verum etiam generosa novasque imitantia ceras.
nec tibi castaneae me coniuge, nec tibi deerunt

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immense thirst for blood all stopped, and ships came and went safely.

"Meanwhile Telemus, son of Eurymus - whom no bird ever deceived - came to Sicily and reached Etna. He approached terrible Polyphemus and said: 'That single eye you have in the middle of your forehead - Odysseus will take it from you.' The Cyclops laughed and said: 'You're the dumbest of prophets - you're wrong! Another woman has already taken it.' So he scorned the man who was warning him truthfully but in vain. He either paced the shore with huge steps, wearing it down, or tired, he'd go back to his shady cave.

"There's a wedge-shaped hill jutting into the sea with a long, sharp point. Water flows around both its sides. The savage Cyclops climbed up here and sat in the middle. His woolly sheep followed, though no one was leading them. After he set down in front of his feet the pine tree that served as his staff - big enough to be a ship's mast - and picked up his panpipe made of a hundred reeds, all the mountains felt the pastoral music, the waves felt it. I was hiding behind a rock, lying in my Acis's lap, and from far away I caught these words with my ears and fixed what I heard in my mind:

"'Galatea, you're whiter than the snowy privet's leaf, more blooming than meadows, taller than the tall alder, more gleaming than glass, more playful than a tender kid, smoother than shells constantly worn by the sea, more welcome than winter sun or summer shade, more graceful than a deer, more striking than a tall plane tree, brighter than ice, sweeter than ripe grapes, softer than swan feathers and curdled milk - and if you didn't run from me, more beautiful than a well-watered garden.

"'But that same Galatea is also fiercer than untamed heifers, harder than an ancient oak, more deceitful than waves, more flexible than willow branches and white vines, more immovable than these rocks, more violent than a river, prouder than a peacock being praised, sharper than fire, rougher than thorns, crueler than a mother bear with cubs, deafer than the sea, more pitiless than a trampled water snake - and what I'd most like to take from you: not just faster than a deer chased by loud barking, but even

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arbutei fetus: omnis tibi serviet arbor.
'"Hoc pecus omne meum est, multae quoque vallibus errant,
multas silva tegit, multae stabulantur in antris,
nec, si forte roges, possim tibi dicere, quot sint:
pauperis est numerare pecus; de laudibus harum
nil mihi credideris, praesens potes ipsa videre,
ut vix circumeant distentum cruribus uber.
sunt, fetura minor, tepidis in ovilibus agni.
sunt quoque, par aetas, aliis in ovilibus haedi.
lac mihi semper adest niveum: pars inde bibenda
servatur, partem liquefacta coagula durant.
'"Nec tibi deliciae faciles vulgataque tantum
munera contingent, dammae leporesque caperque,
parve columbarum demptusve cacumine nidus:
inveni geminos, qui tecum ludere possint,
inter se similes, vix ut dignoscere possis,
villosae catulos in summis montibus ursae:
inveni et dixi 'dominae servabimus istos.'
'"Iam modo caeruleo nitidum caput exere ponto,
iam, Galatea, veni, nec munera despice nostra!
certe ego me novi liquidaeque in imagine vidi
nuper aquae, placuitque mihi mea forma videnti.
adspice, sim quantus: non est hoc corpore maior
Iuppiter in caelo, nam vos narrare soletis
nescio quem regnare Iovem; coma plurima torvos
prominet in vultus, umerosque, ut lucus, obumbrat;
nec mea quod rigidis horrent densissima saetis
corpora, turpe puta: turpis sine frondibus arbor,
turpis equus, nisi colla iubae flaventia velent;
pluma tegit volucres, ovibus sua lana decori est:
barba viros hirtaeque decent in corpore saetae.
unum est in media lumen mihi fronte, sed instar
ingentis clipei. quid? non haec omnia magnus
Sol videt e caelo? Soli tamen unicus orbis.
'"Adde, quod in vestro genitor meus aequore regnat:
hunc tibi do socerum; tantum miserere precesque
supplicis exaudi! tibi enim succumbimus uni,
quique Iovem et caelum sperno et penetrabile fulmen,
Nerei, te vereor, tua fulmine saevior ira est.

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faster than winds and the flying breeze. But if you knew me well, you'd regret running away, you'd condemn your own delays and work to keep me.

"'I have caves - part of the mountain - carved from living rock, where summer's heat isn't felt and winter's cold isn't felt. I have apples weighing down the branches, I have grapes like gold on long vines, and purple ones too - I'm saving both kinds for you. You'll gather soft strawberries with your own hands, born in the forest shade, autumn cornels, and plums - not only the ones dark with black juice but also the choice ones that look like fresh wax. If you marry me, you won't lack for chestnuts or arbutus berries. Every tree will serve you.

"'All these flocks are mine. Many more wander in the valleys, many the forest hides, many are stabled in caves. Don't ask me how many I have - counting your livestock is for poor people. Don't just trust my praise of them - you can see for yourself how their udders are so full they can barely walk around them. There are younger offspring - lambs in warm sheepfolds. There are kids the same age in other pens. I always have snow-white milk. Some is kept for drinking, some is thickened into cheese.

"'You won't get only easy, common gifts - does and rabbits and goats, a pair of doves or a nest taken from a treetop. I found twin cubs of a shaggy bear on the mountaintops, so alike you can barely tell them apart. I found them and said: "I'll save these for my mistress."

"'Come now, lift your shining head from the blue sea! Come, Galatea, and don't despise my gifts. I know myself for certain - I saw myself recently in clear water, and my appearance pleased me when I looked. See how big I am! Jupiter in the sky - you people always talk about some Jupiter who rules there - isn't bigger than this body. Thick hair hangs over my fierce face and shades my shoulders like a grove. Don't think it's ugly that my body bristles with dense, stiff bristles. A tree without leaves is ugly, a horse is ugly unless a mane covers its neck, feathers cover birds, and wool is sheep's glory. A beard and shaggy bristles are right for a man's body. I have one eye in the middle of my forehead, but it's like a huge

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atque ego contemptus essem patientior huius,
si fugeres omnes; sed cur Cyclope repulso
Acin amas praefersque meis conplexibus Acin?
ille tamen placeatque sibi placeatque licebit,
quod nollem, Galatea, tibi; modo copia detur:
sentiet esse mihi tanto pro corpore vires!
viscera viva traham divulsaque membra per agros
perque tuas spargam (sic se tibi misceat!) undas.
uror enim, laesusque exaestuat acrius ignis,
cumque suis videor translatam viribus Aetnam
pectore ferre meo, nec tu, Galatea, moveris."
'Talia nequiquam questus (nam cuncta videbam)
surgit et ut taurus vacca furibundus adempta
stare nequit silvaque et notis saltibus errat,
cum ferus ignaros nec quicquam tale timentes
me videt atque Acin "video" que exclamat "et ista
ultima sit, faciam, Veneris concordia vestrae."
tantaque vox, quantam Cyclops iratus habere
debuit, illa fuit: clamore perhorruit Aetne.
ast ego vicino pavefacta sub aequore mergor;
terga fugae dederat conversa Symaethius heros
et "fer opem, Galatea, precor, mihi! ferte, parentes,"
dixerat "et vestris periturum admittite regnis!"
insequitur Cyclops partemque e monte revulsam
mittit, et extremus quamvis pervenit ad illum
angulus e saxo, totum tamen obruit Acin,
at nos, quod fieri solum per fata licebat,
fecimus, ut vires adsumeret Acis avitas.
puniceus de mole cruor manabat, et intra
temporis exiguum rubor evanescere coepit,
fitque color primo turbati fluminis imbre
purgaturque mora; tum moles iacta dehiscit,
vivaque per rimas proceraque surgit harundo,
osque cavum saxi sonat exsultantibus undis,
miraque res, subito media tenus exstitit alvo
incinctus iuvenis flexis nova cornua cannis,
qui, nisi quod maior, quod toto caerulus ore,
Acis erat, sed sic quoque erat tamen Acis, in amnem
versus, et antiquum tenuerunt flumina nomen.'

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shield. What - doesn't the great Sun see all this from the sky? Yet the Sun has only one orb.

"'Besides, my father rules in your sea. I give him to you as father-in-law. Only have mercy and listen to my prayers as a suppliant! I yield only to you - I who scorn Jupiter and the sky and the piercing thunderbolt, Nereid, I fear you. Your anger is fiercer than lightning. I'd bear this contempt more patiently if you ran from everyone. But why, when you've rejected the Cyclops, do you love Acis and prefer Acis's embraces to mine? Still, let him please himself and - though I wish he wouldn't - please you, Galatea! Just give me the chance. He'll learn I have strength to match my huge body! I'll tear out his living guts and scatter his ripped limbs across the fields and through your waves - so he can mix with you that way! I'm burning, and the fire rages more fiercely when I'm wounded, and I seem to carry Etna, transferred with all its force, in my chest - and you, Galatea, aren't moved.'

"After complaining like this in vain - I saw everything - he got up, and like a bull raging when his cow is taken away, unable to stay still, he wandered through the forest and familiar pastures. When the savage creature, not thinking or fearing anything like this, saw me and Acis, he shouted: 'I see you! And I'll make sure this is the last time your love makes you happy!' His voice was as loud as an enraged Cyclops should have - Etna shook with his shout. Terrified, I dove into the nearby sea. The hero from Symaethis had turned his back to flee and cried: 'Help me, Galatea, I beg you! Help me, parents, and let me into your kingdom - I'm about to die!' The Cyclops chased him and threw a piece he'd torn from the mountain. Though only a corner of that rock reached Acis, it buried him completely.

"But we did what the fates alone allowed us to do - we made Acis take on his ancestral powers. Red blood flowed from the mass of rock, and within a short time the redness began to fade and became the color of a river muddied by first rains, then cleared with time. Then the thrown mass split open, and living, tall reeds rose through the cracks. The hollow opening in the rock echoed with leaping waters. Amazingly, suddenly a young man stood waist-deep in the stream, wearing a crown of fresh reeds on his new horns. Except that he was bigger and his whole face was sea-blue, it was Acis - but even so it was

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Desierat Galatea loqui, coetuque soluto
discedunt placidisque natant Nereides undis.
Scylla redit; neque enim medio se credere ponto
audet, et aut bibula sine vestibus errat harena
aut, ubi lassata est, seductos nacta recessus
gurgitis, inclusa sua membra refrigerat unda:
ecce fretum stringens, alti novus incola ponti,
nuper in Euboica versis Anthedone membris,
Glaucus adest, visaeque cupidine virginis haeret
et, quaecumque putat fugientem posse morari,
verba refert; fugit illa tamen veloxque timore
pervenit in summum positi prope litora montis.
ante fretum est ingens, apicem conlectus in unum
longa sub arboribus convexus in aequora vertex:
constitit hic et tuta loco, monstrumne deusne
ille sit, ignorans admiraturque colorem
caesariemque umeros subiectaque terga tegentem,
ultimaque excipiat quod tortilis inguina piscis.
sensit et innitens, quae stabat proxima, moli
'non ego prodigium nec sum fera belua, virgo,
sed deus' inquit 'aquae: nec maius in aequora Proteus
ius habet et Triton Athamantiadesque Palaemon.
ante tamen mortalis eram, sed, scilicet altis
debitus aequoribus, iam tum exercebar in illis;
nam modo ducebam ducentia retia pisces,
nunc in mole sedens moderabar harundine linum.
sunt viridi prato confinia litora, quorum
altera pars undis, pars altera cingitur herbis,
quas neque cornigerae morsu laesere iuvencae,
nec placidae carpsistis oves hirtaeve capellae;
non apis inde tulit conlectos sedula flores,
non data sunt capiti genialia serta, neque umquam
falciferae secuere manus; ego primus in illo
caespite consedi, dum lina madentia sicco,
utque recenserem captivos ordine pisces,
insuper exposui, quos aut in retia casus
aut sua credulitas in aduncos egerat hamos.
res similis fictae, sed quid mihi fingere prodest?
gramine contacto coepit mea praeda moveri

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still Acis, transformed into a river. And the river kept its ancient name."

Galatea stopped speaking. The gathering broke up, and the Nereids swam away through the calm waves.

Glaucus and Scylla

Scylla returned - she didn't dare trust herself to the open sea - and either wandered naked on the thirsty sand or, when she was tired, found secluded coves in the water and cooled her body enclosed in its pool. Look - Glaucus appeared, a new inhabitant of the deep sea, recently transformed at Euboean Anthedon. He saw the girl and stopped, struck with desire for her, and said whatever he thought might make her stop running. But she fled anyway, and swift with fear reached the top of a mountain sitting near the shore.

There's a huge promontory right on the strait, its long peak gathered into a single point, arched under trees toward the sea. She stopped here, safe in the place, not knowing whether he was a monster or a god, and marveled at his color, his hair covering his shoulders and flowing down his back, and how his body ended in a coiling fish's tail. He sensed this and, leaning on a nearby rock, said:

"I'm not a monster or a savage beast, girl, but a sea god. Neither Proteus nor Triton nor Palaemon, son of Athamas, has greater power over the waters than I do. But I was once mortal, though even then I was committed to the deep seas and worked in them. Sometimes I pulled in nets dragging fish, sometimes I sat on a rock and managed my line with a reed.

"There's a meadow bordering the shore. One side is ringed by water, the other by grass that horned cattle have never hurt with their bite, that peaceful sheep and shaggy goats have never cropped. No busy bee ever took flowers from there, no festive garlands were made for anyone's head, and no scythe-bearing hands ever cut it. I was the first to sit on that turf while I dried my wet nets and laid out in order the fish I'd caught, either those that chance had driven into my nets or those whose own

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et mutare latus terraque ut in aequore niti.
dumque moror mirorque simul, fugit omnis in undas
turba suas dominumque novum litusque relinquunt.
obstipui dubitoque diu causamque requiro,
num deus hoc aliquis, num sucus fecerit herbae:
"quae tamen has" inquam "vires habet herba?" manuque
pabula decerpsi decerptaque dente momordi.
vix bene conbiberant ignotos guttura sucos,
cum subito trepidare intus praecordia sensi
alteriusque rapi naturae pectus amore;
nec potui restare diu "repetenda" que "numquam
terra, vale!" dixi corpusque sub aequora mersi.
di maris exceptum socio dignantur honore,
utque mihi, quaecumque feram, mortalia demant,
Oceanum Tethynque rogant: ego lustror ab illis,
et purgante nefas noviens mihi carmine dicto
pectora fluminibus iubeor supponere centum;
nec mora, diversis lapsi de partibus amnes
totaque vertuntur supra caput aequora nostrum.,
hactenus acta tibi possum memoranda referre,
hactenus haec memini, nec mens mea cetera sensit.
quae postquam rediit, alium me corpore toto
ac fueram nuper, neque eundem mente recepi:
hanc ego tum primum viridem ferrugine barbam
caesariemque meam, quam longa per aequora verro,
ingentesque umeros et caerula bracchia vidi
cruraque pinnigero curvata novissima pisce.
quid tamen haec species, quid dis placuisse marinis,
quid iuvat esse deum, si tu non tangeris istis?'
talia dicentem, dicturum plura, reliquit
Scylla deum; furit ille inritatusque repulsa
prodigiosa petit Titanidos atria Circes.

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gullibility had driven them onto my hooked lines.

"It sounds like fiction, but what's the point of lying? As soon as my catch touched the grass, it started to move and shift sides and struggle on land as if in water. While I hesitated and watched, amazed, my whole catch fled into the waves, leaving their new master and the shore behind. I was stunned and puzzled for a long time, searching for the cause. Did some god do this, or was it the juice of the grass? 'But what grass has these powers?' I said, and I plucked some of the plants with my hand and chewed what I'd plucked. My throat had barely swallowed the strange juices when suddenly I felt my heart trembling inside and my breast seized by love for a different nature. I couldn't resist long. 'Farewell, land that I must never seek again!' I said, and plunged my body beneath the waves.

"The gods of the sea received me and thought me worthy of joining their company. They asked Oceanus and Tethys to remove whatever mortal qualities I still had. I was purified by them. After a spell to cleanse away sin was spoken nine times, I was told to place my chest under a hundred rivers. Right away streams rushing from different directions poured all their waters over my head. This much I can tell you about what happened, this much I remember. My mind didn't register the rest. When I came to again, I found I was completely different in body from what I'd been just before, and not the same in mind either. It was then I first saw this green beard, this hair that I sweep across the long seas, these huge shoulders and sea-blue arms and legs curving down to end in a fish's fins.

"But what good is this appearance, what good is it to have pleased the sea gods, what good is it to be a god, if you're not moved by these things?"

He was saying this, about to say more, when Scylla left him. He raged, infuriated by the rejection, and sought the marvelous halls of Circe, daughter of the Titan.

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BOOK 14

Iamque Giganteis iniectam faucibus Aetnen
arvaque Cyclopum, quid rastra, quid usus aratri,
nescia nec quicquam iunctis debentia bubus
liquerat Euboicus tumidarum cultor aquarum,
liquerat et Zanclen adversaque moenia Regi
navifragumque fretum, gemino quod litore pressum
Ausoniae Siculaeque tenet confinia terrae.
inde manu magna Tyrrhena per aequora vectus
herbiferos adiit colles atque atria Glaucus
Sole satae Circes, variarum plena ferarum.
quam simul adspexit, dicta acceptaque salute,
'diva, dei miserere, precor! nam sola levare
tu potes hunc,' dixit 'videar modo dignus, amorem.
quanta sit herbarum, Titani, potentia, nulli
quam mihi cognitius, qui sum mutatus ab illis.
neve mei non nota tibi sit causa furoris:
litore in Italico, Messenia moenia contra,
Scylla mihi visa est. pudor est promissa precesque
blanditiasque meas contemptaque verba referre;
at tu, sive aliquid regni est in carmine, carmen
ore move sacro, sive expugnacior herba est,
utere temptatis operosae viribus herbae
nec medeare mihi sanesque haec vulnera mando,
fine nihil opus est: partem ferat illa caloris.'
at Circe (neque enim flammis habet aptius ulla
talibus ingenium, seu causa est huius in ipsa,
seu Venus indicio facit hoc offensa paterno,)
talia verba refert: 'melius sequerere volentem
optantemque eadem parilique cupidine captam.
dignus eras ultro (poteras certeque) rogari,
et, si spem dederis, mihi crede, rogaberis ultro.
neu dubites absitque tuae fiducia formae,
en ego, cum dea sim, nitidi cum filia Solis,
carmine cum tantum, tantum quoque gramine possim,
ut tua sim, voveo. spernentem sperne, sequenti
redde vices, unoque duas ulciscere facto.'
talia temptanti 'prius' inquit 'in aequore frondes'
Glaucus 'et in summis nascentur montibus algae,
Sospite quam Scylla nostri mutentur amores.'

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Glaucus, Circe, and Scylla

Now the cultivator of the swelling waters from Euboea had left behind Etna thrust into the jaws of the Giants, the Cyclops's fields that knew nothing of rakes or the use of the plow and owed nothing to yoked oxen, left behind Zancle too and the walls opposite Rhegium and the shipwrecking strait that's pressed between two shores and marks the boundary between the lands of Italy and Sicily. From there, swimming with strong strokes through the Tyrrhenian sea, he reached the grass-covered hills and the halls of Circe, daughter of the Sun, filled with all kinds of wild beasts.

As soon as he saw her and exchanged greetings, he said: "Goddess, have mercy on a god, I beg you! You alone can ease this love - if I seem worthy of it. Titan's daughter, no one knows better than I do how powerful herbs can be, since they're what changed me. But so you'll know the cause of my passion: on the Italian shore, facing Messina's walls, I saw Scylla. I'm ashamed to repeat the promises, prayers, sweet words I spoke - all rejected, all scorned. But you - if there's any power in spells, speak a spell from your sacred mouth, or if herbs work better when tested, use the tried strength of your potent herbs. Don't heal me or cure these wounds - I don't need an end to this. Just let her share some of my fire."

But Circe - no one has a nature more ready for such flames, whether the cause lies in herself or whether Venus, offended by her father's betrayal, makes her this way - answered with these words: "Better to pursue someone willing, wanting the same things, caught by equal desire. You deserved to be asked first - you could have been, certainly - and believe me, if you give any hope, you will be asked. Don't doubt it, have confidence in your looks. Look, though I'm a goddess, though I'm the daughter of the shining Sun, though I can do so much with spells and so much with herbs - I pray to be yours. Scorn the one who scorns you, return the feeling to the one who pursues you, and with one act avenge them both."

Glaucus answered her attempt: "Sooner will leaves grow in the sea and seaweed grow on mountaintops than my love for Scylla will change while she still lives."

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indignata dea est et laedere quatenus ipsum
non poterat (nec vellet amans), irascitur illi,
quae sibi praelata est; venerisque offensa repulsa,
protinus horrendis infamia pabula sucis
conterit et tritis Hecateia carmina miscet
caerulaque induitur velamina perque ferarum
agmen adulantum media procedit ab aula
oppositumque petens contra Zancleia saxa
Region ingreditur ferventes aestibus undas,
in quibus ut solida ponit vestigia terra
summaque decurrit pedibus super aequora siccis.
parvus erat gurges, curvos sinuatus in arcus,
grata quies Scyllae: quo se referebat ab aestu
et maris et caeli, medio cum plurimus orbe
sol erat et minimas a vertice fecerat umbras.
hunc dea praevitiat portentificisque venenis
inquinat; hic pressos latices radice nocenti
spargit et obscurum verborum ambage novorum
ter noviens carmen magico demurmurat ore.
Scylla venit mediaque tenus descenderat alvo,
cum sua foedari latrantibus inguina monstris
adspicit ac primo credens non corporis illas
esse sui partes, refugitque abigitque timetque
ora proterva canum, sed quos fugit, attrahit una
et corpus quaerens femorum crurumque pedumque
Cerbereos rictus pro partibus invenit illis:
statque canum rabie subiectaque terga ferarum
inguinibus truncis uteroque exstante coercet.
Flevit amans Glaucus nimiumque hostiliter usae
viribus herbarum fugit conubia Circes;
Scylla loco mansit cumque est data copia, primum
in Circes odium sociis spoliavit Ulixem;
mox eadem Teucras fuerat mersura carinas,
ni prius in scopulum, qui nunc quoque saxeus exstat,
transformata foret: scopulum quoque navita vitat.
Hunc ubi Troianae remis avidamque Charybdin
evicere rates, cum iam prope litus adessent
Ausonium, Libycas vento referuntur ad oras.
excipit Aenean illic animoque domoque

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The goddess was indignant. Since she couldn't hurt him - and wouldn't want to, being in love - she got angry at the one who'd been preferred to her. Offended by the rejection of her passion, she immediately ground up infamous plants with horrible juices, mixed Hecate's spells with the crushed herbs, put on her dark blue cloak, and walked through the crowd of fawning beasts from the middle of her hall. Heading for Rhegium opposite the rocks of Zancle, she stepped into the waves that seethe with currents. On them she placed her feet as on solid ground and ran across the surface of the water with dry soles.

There was a small pool curved into an arc - a peaceful retreat for Scylla, where she'd escape from the heat of sea and sky when the sun at its highest in the sky made the tiniest shadows. The goddess poisoned this pool ahead of time and polluted it with monstrous venoms. She sprinkled it with juices pressed from harmful roots and muttered an obscure spell of strange words three times nine times from her magic mouth.

Scylla came and had gone in waist-deep when she saw her groin fouled by barking monsters. At first she didn't believe they were parts of her own body. She fled, drove them away, was terrified of the savage mouths of the dogs - but what she ran from, she dragged along. Searching for her body, her thighs, legs, and feet, she found Cerberus-like jaws instead of those parts. She stood on raging dogs, and her truncated groin and jutting belly held up the backs of wild beasts.

Glaucus wept for his love, and he fled marriage with Circe, who'd used the power of her herbs too viciously. Scylla stayed in that place, and when the chance came, in her first act of hatred against Circe she robbed Odysseus of his companions. Soon she would have sunk the Trojan ships too, except that first she was transformed into a rock - a rock that still juts up. Sailors avoid that rock too.

Aeneas's Journey to Italy

Once the Trojan ships had rowed past Scylla and greedy Charybdis, and when they were almost at the Italian shore, a wind carried them back to the Libyan coast. There Dido of Sidon received Aeneas in her heart and home - a woman who wouldn't bear well the departure of her Trojan husband. On a pyre built

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non bene discidium Phrygii latura mariti
Sidonis; inque pyra sacri sub imagine facta
incubuit ferro deceptaque decipit omnes.
rursus harenosae fugiens nova moenia terrae
ad sedemque Erycis fidumque relatus Acesten
sacrificat tumulumque sui genitoris honorat.
quasque rates Iris Iunonia paene cremarat,
solvit et Hippotadae regnum terrasque calenti
sulphure fumantis Acheloiadumque relinquit
Sirenum scopulos, orbataque praeside pinus
Inarimen Prochytenque legit sterilique locatas
colle Pithecusas, habitantum nomine dictas.
quippe deum genitor, fraudem et periuria quondam
Cercopum exosus gentisque admissa dolosae,
in deforme viros animal mutavit, ut idem
dissimiles homini possent similesque videri,
membraque contraxit naresque a fronte resimas
contudit et rugis peraravit anilibus ora
totaque velatos flaventi corpora villo
misit in has sedes nec non prius abstulit usum
verborum et natae dira in periuria linguae;
posse queri tantum rauco stridore reliquit.
Has ubi praeteriit et Parthenopeia dextra
moenia deseruit, laeva de parte canori
Aeolidae tumulum et, loca feta palustribus ulvis,
litora Cumarum vivacisque antra Sibyllae
intrat et, ut manes adeat per Averna paternos,
orat. at illa diu vultum tellure moratum
erexit tandemque deo furibunda recepto
'magna petis,' dixit, 'vir factis maxime, cuius
dextera per ferrum, pietas spectata per ignes.
pone tamen, Troiane, metum: potiere petitis
Elysiasque domos et regna novissima mundi
me duce cognosces simulacraque cara parentis.
invia virtuti nulla est via.' dixit et auro
fulgentem ramum silva Iunonis Avernae
monstravit iussitque suo divellere trunco.
paruit Aeneas et formidabilis Orci
vidit opes atavosque suos umbramque senilem

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to look like a sacred rite, she fell on a sword, deceived herself and deceived everyone else.

Fleeing once more from the new walls of that sandy land, he returned to faithful Acestes and the kingdom of Eryx, and there he performed sacrifices and honored the tomb of his father. He set sail in the ships that Juno's Iris had almost burned, left behind the realm of Aeolus's son and the lands smoking with hot sulfur, passed the Sirens' rocks - daughters of Achelous - and then, his ship robbed of its helmsman, he passed Inarime, Prochyta, and Pithecusae set on a barren hill, named for its inhabitants.

You see, the father of the gods once despised the fraud and lies of the Cercopes and the crimes of that deceitful race, so he changed those people into ugly animals - he wanted them to seem both different from humans and similar to them. He shrank their limbs, flattened their noses snub against their foreheads, furrowed their faces with old-age wrinkles, covered their whole bodies with tawny hair, and sent them to this place. But first he took away their use of words and the tongue born for terrible lies. He left them only able to complain with a hoarse screeching.

After passing these islands, Aeneas left the walls of Parthenope on his right, and on his left the tomb of Aeolus's son, the trumpeter, and the shores of Cumae with their marshy sedge. He entered the cave of the long-lived Sibyl and begged to visit his father's ghost through Avernus.

She kept her eyes fixed on the ground for a long time, then finally raised them, and filled with the god, said: "You're asking for great things, greatest of men, whose right hand has been proven by the sword and whose devotion has been proven by fire. But put aside your fear, Trojan. You'll gain what you seek. With me as your guide, you'll know the Elysian homes and the furthest realms of the world, and the dear ghost of your parent. No path is impassable to courage."

She spoke and showed him the golden bough gleaming in Juno's Avernian grove, and ordered him to tear it from its trunk. Aeneas obeyed, and he saw the terrifying wealth of Orcus, his ancestors, and the aged shade of great-souled Anchises. He learned the laws of those regions too, and what dangers he'd

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magnanimi Anchisae; didicit quoque iura locorum,
quaeque novis essent adeunda pericula bellis.
inde ferens lassos averso tramite passus
cum duce Cumaea mollit sermone laborem.
dumque iter horrendum per opaca crepuscula carpit,
'seu dea tu praesens, seu dis gratissima,' dixit,
'numinis instar eris semper mihi, meque fatebor
muneris esse tui, quae me loca mortis adire,
quae loca me visae voluisti evadere mortis.
pro quibus aerias meritis evectus ad auras
templa tibi statuam, tribuam tibi turis honores.'
respicit hunc vates et suspiratibus haustis
'nec dea sum,' dixit 'nec sacri turis honore
humanum dignare caput, neu nescius erres,
lux aeterna mihi carituraque fine dabatur,
si mea virginitas Phoebo patuisset amanti.
dum tamen hanc sperat, dum praecorrumpere donis
me cupit, "elige," ait "virgo Cumaea, quid optes:
optatis potiere tuis." ego pulveris hausti
ostendens cumulum, quot haberet corpora pulvis,
tot mihi natales contingere vana rogavi;
excidit, ut peterem iuvenes quoque protinus annos.
hos tamen ille mihi dabat aeternamque iuventam,
si Venerem paterer: contempto munere Phoebi
innuba permaneo; sed iam felicior aetas
terga dedit, tremuloque gradu venit aegra senectus,
quae patienda diu est. nam iam mihi saecula septem
acta, tamen superest, numeros ut pulveris aequem,
ter centum messes, ter centum musta videre.
tempus erit, cum de tanto me corpore parvam
longa dies faciet, consumptaque membra senecta
ad minimum redigentur onus: nec amata videbor
nec placuisse deo, Phoebus quoque forsitan ipse
vel non cognoscet, vel dilexisse negabit:
usque adeo mutata ferar nullique videnda,
voce tamen noscar; vocem mihi fata relinquent.'
Talia convexum per iter memorante Sibylla
sedibus Euboicam Stygiis emergit in urbem
Troius Aeneas sacrisque ex more litatis

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have to face in new wars.

Then, carrying his tired steps back along the upward path with the Cumaean guide, he eased his labor with conversation. While he traveled the dreadful journey through dim twilight, he said: "Whether you're a goddess present here or most dear to the gods, you'll always seem like a divinity to me, and I'll confess I owe my life to your gift - you who let me approach the places of death and, having seen them, escape the places of death. For these merits, when I'm lifted into the open air, I'll build you a temple and give you the honors of incense."

The prophetess looked back at him and, drawing deep sighs, said: "I'm not a goddess, and don't honor a human head with sacred incense, so you don't make a mistake in ignorance. Eternal life without end would have been given to me if my virginity had been open to Phoebus as my lover. While he hoped for this, while he wanted to corrupt me first with gifts, he said: 'Choose, Cumaean virgin, whatever you wish - you'll gain what you desire.' I pointed to a heap of gathered dust and foolishly asked to have as many birthdays as there were grains of dust in that pile. I forgot to ask for youth to go along with those years. Still, he would have given me those years and eternal youth too if I'd submitted to Venus. I rejected Phoebus's gift and remain unmarried. But now the happier time of life has turned its back, and feeble old age has come with trembling step - an old age I must endure for a long time. Already I've lived seven centuries, and still, to equal the number of grains of dust, I must see three hundred harvests more, three hundred vintages. A time will come when length of days will make me small from this great body, when my limbs consumed by age will be reduced to the tiniest weight. I won't seem to have been loved or to have pleased a god. Even Phoebus himself perhaps either won't recognize me or will deny he loved me. I'll be changed so much that I'll be visible to no one - but my voice will still be known. The fates will leave me my voice."

Achaemenides and Macareus

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litora adit nondum nutricis habentia nomen.
hic quoque substiterat post taedia longa laborum
Neritius Macareus, comes experientis Ulixis.
desertum quondam mediis qui rupibus Aetnae
noscit Achaemeniden inprovisoque repertum
vivere miratus, 'qui te casusve deusve
servat, Achaemenide? cur' inquit 'barbara Graium
prora vehit? petitur vestra quae terra carina?'
talia quaerenti, iam non hirsutus amictu,
iam suus et spinis conserto tegmine nullis,
fatur Achaemenides: 'iterum Polyphemon et illos
adspiciam fluidos humano sanguine rictus,
hac mihi si potior domus est Ithaceque carina,
si minus Aenean veneror genitore, nec umquam
esse satis potero, praestem licet omnia, gratus.
quod loquor et spiro caelumque et sidera solis
respicio, possimne ingratus et inmemor esse?
ille dedit, quod non anima haec Cyclopis in ora
venit, et ut iam nunc lumen vitale relinquam,
aut tumulo aut certe non illa condar in alvo.
quid mihi tunc animi (nisi si timor abstulit omnem
sensum animumque) fuit, cum vos petere alta relictus
aequora conspexi? volui inclamare, sed hosti
prodere me timui: vestrae quoque clamor Ulixis
paene rati nocuit. vidi, cum monte revulsum
inmanem scopulum medias permisit in undas;
vidi iterum veluti tormenti viribus acta
vasta Giganteo iaculantem saxa lacerto
et, ne deprimeret fluctus ventusve carinam,
pertimui, iam me non esse oblitus in illa.
ut vero fuga vos a certa morte reduxit,
ille quidem totam gemebundus obambulat Aetnam
praetemptatque manu silvas et luminis orbus
rupibus incursat foedataque bracchia tabo
in mare protendens gentem exsecratur Achivam
atque ait: "o si quis referat mihi casus Ulixem,
aut aliquem e sociis, in quem mea saeviat ira,
viscera cuius edam, cuius viventia dextra
membra mea laniem, cuius mihi sanguis inundet

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As the Sibyl spoke these things along the winding path, Trojan Aeneas emerged from the Stygian realms into the Euboean city, performed the proper sacrifices according to custom, and reached a shore that didn't yet have his nurse's name.

Here too, after long hardships, Macareus of Neritos had stopped - a companion of experienced Odysseus. He recognized Achaemenides, once abandoned on the cliffs of Etna, and was amazed to find him unexpectedly alive. "What luck or what god has saved you, Achaemenides?" he said. "Why does a barbarian ship carry a Greek? What land are you sailing for?"

To these questions, Achaemenides - no longer shaggy in clothing, now himself again with no garment stitched together from thorns - answered: "May I see Polyphemus again and those jaws dripping with human blood, if this ship and Ithaca are less dear to me than my home, if I honor Aeneas less than my own father! I could never be grateful enough, even if I gave everything. That I speak and breathe and look at the sky and stars of the sun - how could I be ungrateful and forgetful? He's the one who gave me life so my soul didn't enter the Cyclops's mouth, and so that when I leave the light of life now, I'll be laid in a tomb, at least, and certainly not buried in that belly.

"What do you think I felt then - unless fear took away all feeling and spirit - when I was left behind and watched you seek the deep seas? I wanted to shout, but I was afraid to betray myself to the enemy. Even Odysseus's shouting from your ship nearly harmed it. I saw when he ripped an enormous rock from the mountain and hurled it into the middle of the waves. I saw again when with the force of a catapult he threw massive boulders with his giant arm, and I was terrified - though I'd forgotten I wasn't on that ship - that the waves or wind would sink the vessel.

"When your flight rescued you from certain death, he groaned and walked all over Etna, groping at the woods with his hand, blind as he was, crashing into rocks, stretching his arms fouled with gore toward the sea and cursing the Greek race. He said: 'Oh, if only some chance would bring Odysseus back to me, or one of his companions on whom I could vent my rage, whose guts I could eat, whose living limbs I

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guttur, et elisi trepident sub dentibus artus:
quam nullum aut leve sit damnum mihi lucis ademptae!"
haec et plura ferox, me luridus occupat horror
spectantem vultus etiamnum caede madentes
crudelesque manus et inanem luminis orbem
membraque et humano concretam sanguine barbam.
mors erat ante oculos, minimum tamen illa malorum,
et iam prensurum, iam nunc mea viscera rebar
in sua mersurum, mentique haerebat imago
temporis illius, quo vidi bina meorum
ter quater adfligi sociorum corpora terrae,
cum super ipse iacens hirsuti more leonis
visceraque et carnes cumque albis ossa medullis
semianimesque artus avidam condebat in alvum;
me tremor invasit: stabam sine sanguine maestus,
mandentemque videns eiectantemque cruentas
ore dapes et frusta mero glomerata vomentem:
talia fingebam misero mihi fata parari
perque dies multos latitans omnemque tremiscens
ad strepitum mortemque timens cupidusque moriri
glande famem pellens et mixta frondibus herba
solus inops exspes leto poenaeque relictus
hanc procul adspexi longo post tempore navem
oravique fugam gestu ad litusque cucurri,
et movi: Graiumque ratis Troiana recepit!
tu quoque pande tuos, comitum gratissime, casus
et ducis et turbae, quae tecum est credita ponto.'
Aeolon ille refert Tusco regnare profundo,
Aeolon Hippotaden, cohibentem carcere ventos;
quos bovis inclusos tergo, memorabile munus,
Dulichium sumpsisse ducem flatuque secundo
lucibus isse novem et terram aspexisse petitam;
proxima post nonam cum sese aurora moveret,
invidia socios praedaeque cupidine victos
esse; ratos aurum, dempsisse ligamina ventis;
cum quibus isse retro, per quas modo venerat undas,
Aeoliique ratem portus repetisse tyranni.
'inde Lami veterem Laestrygonis' inquit 'in urbem
venimus: Antiphates terra regnabat in illa.

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could tear with my hands, whose blood would flood my throat, whose crushed joints would tremble under my teeth - how little or light the loss of my sight would be!'

"This and more the savage creature said. Pale horror gripped me as I watched his face still wet with slaughter, his cruel hands, the empty socket where his eye had been, his limbs and beard caked with human blood. Death was before my eyes, but that was the least of my evils. I kept thinking he'd grab me any moment and plunge my guts into his own. My mind held the image of that time when I saw the bodies of two - no, three, four - of my companions dashed against the ground, while he himself lay over them like a shaggy lion and buried their guts and flesh and bones with their white marrow and half-alive limbs in his greedy belly. Trembling seized me. I stood there bloodless and miserable, watching him chew and vomit bloody scraps of food and chunks mixed with wine. I imagined such a fate being prepared for wretched me. For many days I hid, trembling at every sound, fearing death but wanting to die, fighting off hunger with acorns and grass mixed with leaves, alone, helpless, hopeless, abandoned to death and punishment. After a long time I saw this ship from far away, begged with gestures to escape, and ran to the shore. I moved you - and a Greek was taken aboard a Trojan ship!

"But you too, dearest of companions, tell your adventures and those of your leader and the crew entrusted with you to the sea."

Macareus's Tale: Aeolus and the Laestrygonians

Macareus told how Aeolus ruled the Tuscan deep - Aeolus, son of Hippotas, who kept the winds locked up. The Dulichian leader received them as a memorable gift, enclosed in an ox hide, and with a favorable breeze traveled for nine days and caught sight of the land he sought. But when the next dawn rose after the ninth day, his companions, overcome by envy and greed for plunder - thinking it was gold - loosened the bonds on the winds. The winds rushed them back through the same waters they'd just crossed, and the ship returned to the harbor of the Aeolian king.

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missus ad hunc ego sum, numero comitante duorum,
vixque fuga quaesita salus comitique mihique,
tertius e nobis Laestrygonis inpia tinxit
ora cruore suo. fugientibus instat et agmen
concitat Antiphates; coeunt et saxa trabesque
coniciunt merguntque viros merguntque carinas.
una tamen, quae nos ipsumque vehebat Ulixem,
effugit. amissa sociorum parte dolentes
multaque conquesti terris adlabimur illis,
quas procul hinc cernis (procul est, mihi crede, videnda
insula visa mihi!) tuque o iustissime Troum,
nate dea, (neque enim finito Marte vocandus
hostis es, Aenea) moneo, fuge litora Circes!
nos quoque Circaeo religata in litore pinu,
Antiphatae memores inmansuetique Cyclopis,
ire negabamus; sed tecta ignota subire
sorte sumus lecti: sors me fidumque Politen
Eurylochumque simul nimiique Elpenora vini
bisque novem socios Circaea ad moenia misit.
quae simul attigimus stetimusque in limine tecti,
mille lupi mixtaeque lupis ursaeque leaeque
occursu fecere metum, sed nulla timenda
nullaque erat nostro factura in corpore vulnus;
quin etiam blandas movere per aera caudas
nostraque adulantes comitant vestigia, donec
excipiunt famulae perque atria marmore tecta
ad dominam ducunt: pulchro sedet illa recessu
sollemni solio pallamque induta nitentem
insuper aurato circumvelatur amictu.
Nereides nymphaeque simul, quae vellera motis
nulla trahunt digitis nec fila sequentia ducunt:
gramina disponunt sparsosque sine ordine flores
secernunt calathis variasque coloribus herbas;
ipsa, quod hae faciunt, opus exigit, ipsa, quis usus
quove sit in folio, quae sit concordia mixtis,
novit et advertens pensas examinat herbas.
haec ubi nos vidit, dicta acceptaque salute
diffudit vultus et reddidit omina votis.
nec mora, misceri tosti iubet hordea grani

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"From there," he said, "we came to the ancient city of Laestrygonian Lamus. Antiphates ruled that land. I was sent to him with two companions. I barely escaped with one companion to safety through flight - the third of us stained the wicked mouth of the Laestrygonian with his own blood. Antiphates pursued us as we fled and roused his troops. They gathered and threw rocks and timbers, sinking men and sinking ships. One ship escaped, though - the one that carried us and Odysseus himself. Grieving for the loss of so many companions and complaining bitterly, we glided to those lands you can see from far off here. Believe me, that island is best seen from far away! And you, most just of the Trojans, son of a goddess - now that the war is over, you shouldn't be called an enemy, Aeneas - I warn you: flee Circe's shores!

"We too moored our ship on Circe's shore, and remembering Antiphates and the savage Cyclops, we refused to go. But we drew lots to decide who'd enter the unknown house. The lot chose me, faithful Polites, Eurylochus, Elpenor who drank too much wine, and eighteen other companions, and sent us to Circe's walls.

"As soon as we reached them and stood on the threshold of her house, a thousand wolves mixed with bears and lionesses rushed at us and made us afraid. But none was to be feared, none would wound our bodies. In fact, they wagged their tails gently through the air and followed our steps, fawning on us, until servant women received us and led us through the halls with marble floors to their mistress. She sat in a beautiful chamber on a ceremonial throne, wearing a gleaming cloak covered over with a golden robe.

"Nereids and nymphs were with her - they don't pull wool with moving fingers or draw out trailing threads, but they sort out plants and separate scattered flowers into baskets and arrange herbs of various colors. She herself directs the work they do, she herself knows what use each leaf has, which herbs harmonize when mixed, and she carefully weighs and examines the sorted plants.

"When she saw us, she gave a greeting and received ours, spread her face in a smile, and gave good omens to our prayers. Without delay she ordered a mixture to be made - roasted barley grain, honey, the

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mellaque vimque meri cum lacte coagula passo,
quique sub hac lateant furtim dulcedine, sucos
adicit. accipimus sacra data pocula dextra.
quae simul arenti sitientes hausimus ore,
et tetigit summos virga dea dira capillos,
(et pudet et referam) saetis horrescere coepi,
nec iam posse loqui, pro verbis edere raucum
murmur et in terram toto procumbere vultu,
osque meum sensi pando occallescere rostro,
colla tumere toris, et qua modo pocula parte
sumpta mihi fuerant, illa vestigia feci
cumque eadem passis (tantum medicamina possunt!)
claudor hara, solumque suis caruisse figura
vidimus Eurylochum: solus data pocula fugit;
quae nisi vitasset, pecoris pars una manerem
nunc quoque saetigeri, nec tantae cladis ab illo
certior ad Circen ultor venisset Ulixes.
pacifer huic dederat florem Cyllenius album:
moly vocant superi, nigra radice tenetur;
tutus eo monitisque simul caelestibus intrat
ille domum Circes et ad insidiosa vocatus
pocula conantem virga mulcere capillos
reppulit et stricto pavidam deterruit ense.
inde fides dextraeque datae thalamoque receptus
coniugii dotem sociorum corpora poscit.
spargimur ignotae sucis melioribus herbae
percutimurque caput conversae verbere virgae,
verbaque dicuntur dictis contraria verbis.
quo magis illa canit, magis hoc tellure levati
erigimur, saetaeque cadunt, bifidosque relinquit
rima pedes, redeunt umeri et subiecta lacertis
bracchia sunt: flentem flentes amplectimur ipsi
haeremusque ducis collo nec verba locuti
ulla priora sumus quam nos testantia gratos.
annua nos illic tenuit mora, multaque praesens
tempore tam longo vidi, multa auribus hausi,
hoc quoque cum multis, quod clam mihi rettulit una
quattuor e famulis ad talia sacra paratis.
cum duce namque meo Circe dum sola moratur,

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strength of wine with milk curdled in raisin wine, and she secretly added juices that would hide under the sweetness. We took the cups she offered from her sacred right hand. As soon as we'd drunk them down with thirsty, dry mouths, and the terrible goddess had touched the tops of our heads with her wand - I'm ashamed but I'll tell it - I began to bristle with stiff hairs, couldn't speak anymore, gave out a harsh grunt instead of words, and fell forward entirely face-first to the ground. I felt my mouth hardening into a broad snout, my neck swelling with muscles, and the same part of me that had just taken the cup now made tracks with it. Along with the others who'd suffered the same fate - drugs have such power! - I was shut in a pen. We saw that Eurylochus alone had kept his shape. He alone had avoided the offered cup. If he hadn't avoided it, I'd still be part of the bristly herd even now, and Odysseus would never have learned from him about such disaster and never have come to Circe as an avenger.

"The peacemaker from Cyllene had given him a white flower - the gods call it moly, and it's held by a black root. Protected by this and the warnings of heaven, he entered Circe's house. When he was invited to the treacherous cups and she tried to stroke his hair with her wand, he pushed her back and frightened the terrified woman with his drawn sword. Then trust and right hands were given, and received in her bed, he demanded the bodies of his companions as a wedding gift.

"We were sprinkled with the juices of better, unknown herbs, struck on the head with the reversed stroke of the wand, and words were spoken - words opposite to the earlier words. The more she chanted, the more we rose up from the ground. Our bristles fell off, the cleft that split our feet into two left, our shoulders returned and below our shoulders were our arms. Weeping, we embraced him who was weeping, clung to our leader's neck, and the first words we spoke were none other than those that showed our gratitude.

"We stayed there a full year. In that long time I saw much, heard much with my ears, including this tale that one of the four servant women prepared for those sacred rites secretly told me.

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illa mihi niveo factum de marmore signum
ostendit iuvenale gerens in vertice picum,
aede sacra positum multisque insigne coronis.
quis foret et quare sacra coleretur in aede,
cur hanc ferret avem, quaerenti et scire volenti
"accipe" ait, "Macareu, dominaeque potentia quae sit
hinc quoque disce meae; tu dictis adice mentem!
'"Picus in Ausoniis, proles Saturnia, terris
rex fuit, utilium bello studiosus equorum;
forma viro, quam cernis, erat: licet ipse decorem
adspicias fictaque probes ab imagine verum;
par animus formae; nec adhuc spectasse per annos
quinquennem poterat Graia quater Elide pugnam.
ille suos dryadas Latiis in montibus ortas
verterat in vultus, illum fontana petebant
numina, naiades, quas Albula, quasque Numici,
quas Anienis aquae cursuque brevissimus Almo
Narve tulit praeceps et opacae Farfarus umbrae,
quaeque colunt Scythicae stagnum nemorale Dianae
finitimosque lacus; spretis tamen omnibus unam
ille colit nymphen, quam quondam in colle Palati
dicitur ancipiti peperisse Venilia Iano.
haec ubi nubilibus primum maturuit annis,
praeposito cunctis Laurenti tradita Pico est,
rara quidem facie, sed rarior arte canendi,
unde Canens dicta est: silvas et saxa movere
et mulcere feras et flumina longa morari
ore suo volucresque vagas retinere solebat.
quae dum feminea modulatur carmina voce,
exierat tecto Laurentes Picus in agros
indigenas fixurus apros tergumque premebat
acris equi laevaque hastilia bina ferebat
poeniceam fulvo chlamydem contractus ab auro.
venerat in silvas et filia Solis easdem,
utque novas legeret fecundis collibus herbas,
nomine dicta suo Circaea reliquerat arva.
quae simul ac iuvenem virgultis abdita vidit,
obstipuit: cecidere manu, quas legerat, herbae,
flammaque per totas visa est errare medullas.

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The Tale of Picus and Canens

"While Circe lingered alone with my leader, that servant woman showed me a statue made of white marble set in a sacred shrine - a youthful figure bearing a woodpecker on its head, adorned with many garlands. I asked who he was and why he was worshipped in the sacred shrine and why he wore that bird. 'Listen, Macareus,' she said, 'and from this too learn what power my mistress has. Pay close attention to what I tell you.

"'Picus, Saturn's son, was king in the Italian lands, passionate about war horses useful in battle. His form was what you see here - you can look at his beauty yourself and approve the truth from this sculpted image. His spirit matched his form. He hadn't yet seen the games held every four years in Greek Elis. He'd turned the dryads born on Latin mountains to look at him, the water nymphs sought him - naiads from the Albula, from Numicus's waters, from the Anio's stream and the Almo, shortest in its course, from rushing Nar and shady Farfarus, and those who dwell in Scythian Diana's wooded pool and the neighboring lakes. But scorning all of them, he cherished only one nymph, who they say Venilia once bore to two-faced Janus on the Palatine hill.

"'When she'd first ripened to marriageable years, she was given to Picus of Laurentum, preferred above all others. She was rare indeed in beauty, but rarer in the art of singing - that's why she was called Canens. She used to move forests and rocks with her mouth, tame wild beasts, make long rivers pause, and hold back wandering birds.

"'While she was modulating songs with her womanly voice, Picus had left his house and gone out into the Laurentine fields to hunt the native boars. He pressed the back of a spirited horse and held two spears in his left hand, wearing a crimson cloak clasped with tawny gold.

"'The Sun's daughter had also come into those same woods to gather new herbs from the fertile hills. She'd left the fields named for her - Circean fields. As soon as she saw the young man hidden in the underbrush, she froze. The herbs she'd gathered fell from her hand, and flame seemed to wander

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ut primum valido mentem conlegit ab aestu,
quid cuperet, fassura fuit: ne posset adire,
cursus equi fecit circumfususque satelles.
'non' ait 'effugies, vento rapiare licebit,
si modo me novi, si non evanuit omnis
herbarum virtus, nec me mea carmina fallunt.'
dixit et effigiem nullo cum corpore falsi
fingit apri praeterque oculos transcurrere regis
iussit et in densum trabibus nemus ire videri,
plurima qua silva est et equo loca pervia non sunt.
haut mora, continuo praedae petit inscius umbram
Picus equique celer spumantia terga relinquit
spemque sequens vanam silva pedes errat in alta.
concipit illa preces et verba venefica dicit
ignotosque deos ignoto carmine adorat,
quo solet et niveae vultum confundere Lunae
et patrio capiti bibulas subtexere nubes.
tum quoque cantato densetur carmine caelum
et nebulas exhalat humus, caecisque vagantur
limitibus comites, et abest custodia regis.
nacta locum tempusque 'per o, tua lumina,' dixit
'quae mea ceperunt, perque hanc, pulcherrime, formam,
quae facit, ut supplex tibi sim dea, consule nostris
ignibus et socerum, qui pervidet omnia, Solem
accipe nec durus Titanida despice Circen.'
dixerat; ille ferox ipsamque precesque repellit
et 'quaecumque es,' ait 'non sum tuus; altera captum
me tenet et teneat per longum, conprecor, aevum,
nec Venere externa socialia foedera laedam,
dum mihi Ianigenam servabunt fata Canentem.'
saepe retemptatis precibus Titania frustra
'non inpune feres, neque' ait 'reddere Canenti,
laesaque quid faciat, quid amans, quid femina, disces
rebus; at est et amans et laesa et femina Circe!'
tum bis ad occasus, bis se convertit ad ortus,
ter iuvenem baculo tetigit, tria carmina dixit.
ille fugit, sed se solito velocius ipse
currere miratur: pennas in corpore vidit,
seque novam subito Latiis accedere silvis

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through all her marrow. As soon as she collected her mind from the powerful heat and was about to confess what she desired, the speed of his horse and the soldiers surrounding him made it impossible for her to approach.

"""You won't escape," she said, "even if you're carried off by the wind - if I still know myself, if all the power of herbs hasn't vanished, if my spells don't fail me."

"'She spoke and created the phantom of a boar with no real body, and ordered it to run past the king's eyes and seem to enter the dense grove where the forest was thickest and the place wasn't passable for a horse. Right away, Picus chased the shadow of his prey, ignorant of the trick, leaped quickly from his foaming horse's back, and wandered on foot through the deep forest following an empty hope.

"'She conceived prayers and spoke poisonous words, worshipped unknown gods with an unknown spell - the spell she usually used to blur the face of the snowy Moon and weave moisture-bearing clouds over her father's head. Now too, when the spell was chanted, the sky grew thick and the earth exhaled mists. His companions wandered on blind paths, and the king's guard was absent.

"'She'd gained the place and time. "By your eyes," she said, "which have captured mine, and by this beauty, most beautiful one, which makes me, a goddess, a suppliant to you - favor my fire and accept the Sun, who sees all things, as your father-in-law. Don't be harsh and scorn Titan's daughter Circe."

"'She'd spoken, but he fiercely rejected both her and her prayers. "Whoever you are," he said, "I'm not yours. Another holds me captive and may she hold me, I pray, through long ages. I won't violate our marriage bond with a foreign love as long as the fates preserve Janus's daughter Canens for me."

"'The Titan's daughter tried her pleas again and again in vain. "You won't get away with this," she said. "You won't be returned to Canens. You'll learn what a woman who loves, who's been wronged, who is a woman, can do - and Circe is loving and wronged and a woman!"

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indignatus avem duro fera robora rostro
figit et iratus longis dat vulnera ramis;
purpureum chlamydis pennae traxere colorem;
fibula quod fuerat vestemque momorderat aurum,
pluma fit, et fulvo cervix praecingitur auro,
nec quicquam antiquum Pico nisi nomina restat.
'"Interea comites, clamato saepe per agros
nequiquam Pico nullaque in parte reperto,
inveniunt Circen (nam iam tenuaverat auras
passaque erat nebulas ventis ac sole recludi)
criminibusque premunt veris regemque reposcunt
vimque ferunt saevisque parant incessere telis:
illa nocens spargit virus sucosque veneni
et Noctem Noctisque deos Ereboque Chaoque
convocat et longis Hecaten ululatibus orat.
exsiluere loco (dictu mirabile) silvae,
ingemuitque solum, vincinaque palluit arbor,
sparsaque sanguineis maduerunt pabula guttis,
et lapides visi mugitus edere raucos
et latrare canes et humus serpentibus atris
squalere et tenues animae volitare silentum:
attonitum monstris vulgus pavet; illa paventis
ora venenata tetigit mirantia virga,
cuius ab attactu variarum monstra ferarum
in iuvenes veniunt: nulli sua mansit imago.
'"Sparserat occiduus Tartessia litora Phoebus,
et frustra coniunx oculis animoque Canentis
exspectatus erat: famuli populusque per omnes
discurrunt silvas atque obvia lumina portant;
nec satis est nymphae flere et lacerare capillos
et dare plangorem (facit haec tamen omnia) seque
proripit ac Latios errat vesana per agros.
sex illam noctes, totidem redeuntia solis
lumina viderunt inopem somnique cibique
per iuga, per valles, qua fors ducebat, euntem;
ultimus adspexit Thybris luctuque viaque
fessam et iam longa ponentem corpora ripa.
illic cum lacrimis ipso modulata dolore
verba sono tenui maerens fundebat, ut olim

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"'Then twice she turned to the west, twice to the east, touched the young man three times with her wand, spoke three spells. He ran, but he marveled that he was running faster than usual. He saw feathers on his body. Indignant at suddenly becoming a strange bird added to the Latin forests, he attacked the hard oak with his fierce beak and in anger gave wounds to the long branches. His feathers took on the purple color of his cloak. The golden brooch that had fastened his garment became plumage, and his neck was ringed with tawny gold. Nothing ancient remained to Picus except his name.

"'Meanwhile his companions had called for Picus many times through the fields in vain, and when he wasn't found anywhere, they discovered Circe - for by then she'd thinned the air and allowed the mists and breezes to be scattered by the sun. They pressed her with true accusations and demanded their king back, threatened force, and prepared to attack with savage weapons. She scattered harmful virus and the juices of poison, called on Night and the gods of Night and Erebus and Chaos, and prayed to Hecate with long howls.

"'The groves leaped from their place - amazing to tell - the ground groaned, nearby trees turned pale, the scattered grass was wet with bloody drops, stones seemed to give out harsh bellows, dogs barked, the earth crawled with black serpents, and the thin ghosts of the silent dead flitted about. The crowd, stunned by these portents, panicked. As they panicked, she touched their astonished faces with her poisonous wand. At its touch, the strange forms of various beasts came upon the young men. None kept his own shape.

"'The setting sun had scattered Tartessian shores, and Canens's eyes and spirit had waited in vain for her husband. Servants and people ran through all the forests carrying torches to meet him. It wasn't enough for the nymph to weep and tear her hair and beat her breast - though she did all these things - she rushed out and wandered mad through the Latin fields. Six nights and six returning suns saw her without sleep or food, going over ridges and through valleys wherever chance led her. The Tiber was the last to see her, exhausted by grief and journey, laying her body down on his long bank.

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carmina iam moriens canit exequialia cycnus;
luctibus extremum tenues liquefacta medullas
tabuit inque leves paulatim evanuit auras,
fama tamen signata loco est, quem rite Canentem
nomine de nymphae veteres dixere Camenae."
'Talia multa mihi longum narrata per annum
visaque sunt. resides et desuetudine tardi
rursus inire fretum, rursus dare vela iubemur,
ancipitesque vias et iter Titania vastum
dixerat et saevi restare pericula ponti:
pertimui, fateor, nactusque hoc litus adhaesi.'
Finierat Macareus, urnaque Aeneia nutrix
condita marmorea tumulo breve carmen habebat
hic : me : caietam : notae : pietatis : alumnus
ereptam : argolico : quo : debuit : igne : cremavit
solvitur herboso religatus ab aggere funis,
et procul insidias infamataeque relinquunt
tecta deae lucosque petunt, ubi nubilus umbra
in mare cum flava prorumpit Thybris harena;
Faunigenaeque domo potitur nataque Latini,
non sine Marte tamen. bellum cum gente feroci
suscipitur, pactaque furit pro coniuge Turnus.
concurrit Latio Tyrrhenia tota, diuque
ardua sollicitis victoria quaeritur armis.
auget uterque suas externo robore vires,
et multi Rutulos, multi Troiana tuentur
castra, neque Aeneas Euandri ad moenia frustra,
at Venulus frustra profugi Diomedis ad urbem
venerat: ille quidem sub Iapyge maxima Dauno
moenia condiderat dotaliaque arva tenebat;
sed Venulus Turni postquam mandata peregit
auxiliumque petit, vires Aetolius heros
excusat: nec se aut soceri committere pugnae
velle sui populos, aut quos e gente suorum
armet habere ullos, 'neve haec commenta putetis,
admonitu quamquam luctus renoventur amari,
perpetiar memorare tamen. postquam alta cremata est
Ilios, et Danaas paverunt Pergama flammas,
Naryciusque heros, a virgine virgine rapta,

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"'There, with tears, she poured out words modulated in thin sound by her own grief, sadly - just as the swan sometimes sings its funeral song when dying. Finally, melted by grief, her tender marrow wasted away and she gradually vanished into thin air. But her fame was marked by the place, which the old Camenae rightly named Canens after the nymph."

"'I saw and heard many such things during that long year. We grew sluggish and slow from inactivity, and we were ordered to enter the sea again, to set sail again. Circe had said the paths were uncertain, the voyage vast, and the dangers of the savage sea remained. I was terrified, I confess, and when I reached this shore, I stayed."

Diomedes's Tale

Macareus finished. Aeneas's nurse was buried in a marble urn on a tomb that bore a brief inscription: "Here Aeneas, pupil of noted devotion, cremated me, Caieta, snatched from Argolic fire, as he should have."

The rope was loosed from the grassy mound where it had been tied, and they left far behind the traps and the infamous house of the goddess. They sought the groves where the cloud-dark Tiber bursts into the sea with tawny sand. Aeneas gained the home and daughter of Latinus, son of Faunus, but not without war. He fought a war with a fierce people, and Turnus raged for his promised bride. All Etruria clashed with Latium, and for a long time a hard-won victory was sought with anxious arms. Each side increased its strength with foreign forces. Many defended the Rutulian camp, many the Trojan. Aeneas hadn't gone to Evander's walls in vain, but Venulus had gone in vain to the city of exiled Diomedes.

That hero had founded a great city under Iapygian Daunus and held lands given as dowry. But when Venulus delivered Turnus's orders and asked for help, the Aetolian hero made excuses about his forces. He didn't want to commit either his father-in-law's people to battle or to arm any men he had from his own race. "And so you don't think I'm making this up, though the reminder renews bitter grief, I'll endure recounting it. After lofty Troy was burned and the Pergamene towers had fed Greek flames, the

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quam meruit poenam solus, digessit in omnes,
spargimur et ventis inimica per aequora rapti
fulmina, noctem, imbres, iram caelique marisque
perpetimur Danai cumulumque Capherea cladis,
neve morer referens tristes ex ordine casus,
Graecia tum potuit Priamo quoque flenda videri.
me tamen armiferae servatum cura Minervae
fluctibus eripuit, patriis sed rursus ab agris
pellor, et antiquo memores de vulnere poenas
exigit alma Venus, tantosque per alta labores
aequora sustinui, tantos terrestribus armis,
ut mihi felices sint illi saepe vocati,
quos communis hiems inportunusque Caphereus
mersit aquis, vellemque horum pars una fuissem.
'Ultima iam passi comites belloque fretoque
deficiunt finemque rogant erroris, at Acmon
fervidus ingenio, tum vero et cladibus asper,
"quid superest, quod iam patientia vestra recuset
ferre, viri?" dixit "quid habet Cytherea, quod ultra,
velle puta, faciat? nam dum peiora timentur,
est in vota locus: sors autem ubi pessima rerum,
sub pedibus timor est securaque summa malorum.
audiat ipsa licet, licet, ut facit, oderit omnes
sub Diomede viros, odium tamen illius omnes
spernimus: haud magno stat magna potentia nobis."
talibus inritans Venerem Pleuronius Acmon
instimulat verbis veteremque resuscitat iram.
dicta placent paucis, numeri maioris amici
Acmona conripimus; cui respondere volenti
vox pariter vocisque via est tenuata, comaeque
in plumas abeunt, plumis nova colla teguntur
pectoraque et tergum, maiores bracchia pennas
accipiunt, cubitique leves sinuantur in alas;
magna pedis digitos pars occupat, oraque cornu
indurata rigent finemque in acumine ponunt.
hunc Lycus, hunc Idas et cum Rhexenore Nycteus,
hunc miratur Abas, et dum mirantur, eandem
accipiunt faciem, numerusque ex agmine maior
subvolat et remos plausis circumvolat alis:

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Naryician hero - who because of a virgin raped from a virgin earned the punishment he deserved alone but shared it with everyone - we Greeks were scattered and dragged by hostile winds over unfriendly seas. We endured lightning, night, rains, the anger of sky and sea, and the peak disaster of Caphereus. So I won't drag on recounting sad events in order, Greece at that time could have seemed pitiable even to Priam.

"But Minerva's care for me as a warrior snatched me from the waves. Yet I was driven again from my ancestral fields, and kind Venus, remembering the old wound, demanded punishment. I endured such great hardships on the high seas, such great ones in land wars, that I often called blessed those whom the shared storm and harsh Caphereus drowned in the waters - and I wished I'd been one of them.

"'My companions, having suffered the worst in war and sea, gave up and begged for an end to our wandering. But Acmon, hot-tempered by nature and then made harsh by disasters too, said: "What's left that your patience would refuse to bear, men? What more could Venus do - suppose she wanted to? For while worse things are feared, there's room for prayers. But when fortune is at its worst, fear is under your feet and the summit of evils is safe. Let her hear this herself, let her hate all the men under Diomedes - as she does. We all scorn her hatred. Great power comes at no great cost to us."

"'With such words Acmon of Pleuron provoked Venus, stirred up her old anger. His words pleased few. Most of us, his friends, rebuked Acmon. As he tried to answer, his voice and the passage of his voice both grew thin. His hair turned to feathers, feathers covered his new neck, his chest and back. Larger feathers took his arms, his elbows curved into light wings. A large part of his foot was occupied by toes, and his mouth hardened with horn and ended in a sharp point. Lycus watched him in amazement, Idas watched, Rhexenor, Nycteus, Abas watched, and while they watched, they took on the same form. The larger number from our group flew up and circled the oars with beating wings. If you ask what form these sudden birds have - while they're not swans, they're very close to white swans.

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si volucrum quae sit subitarum forma requiris,
ut non cycnorum, sic albis proxima cygnis.
vix equidem has sedes et Iapygis arida Dauni
arva gener teneo minima cum parte meorum.'
Hactenus Oenides, Venulus Calydonia regna
Peucetiosque sinus Messapiaque arva relinquit.
in quibus antra videt, quae, multa nubila silva
et levibus cannis latitantia semicaper Pan
nunc tenet, at quodam tenuerunt tempore nymphae.
Apulus has illa pastor regione fugatas
terruit et primo subita formidine movit,
mox, ubi mens rediit et contempsere sequentem,
ad numerum motis pedibus duxere choreas;
inprobat has pastor saltuque imitatus agresti
addidit obscenis convicia rustica dictis,
nec prius os tacuit, quam guttura condidit arbor:
arbor enim est, sucoque licet cognoscere mores.
quippe notam linguae bacis oleaster amaris
exhibet: asperitas verborum cessit in illa.
Hinc ubi legati rediere, negata ferentes
arma Aetola sibi, Rutuli sine viribus illis
bella instructa gerunt, multumque ab utraque cruoris
parte datur; fert ecce avidas in pinea Turnus
texta faces, ignesque timent, quibus unda pepercit.
iamque picem et ceras alimentaque cetera flammae
Mulciber urebat perque altum ad carbasa malum
ibat, et incurvae fumabant transtra carinae,
cum memor has pinus Idaeo vertice caesas
sancta deum genetrix tinnitibus aera pulsi
aeris et inflati conplevit murmure buxi
perque leves domitis invecta leonibus auras
'inrita sacrilega iactas incendia dextra,
Turne!' ait. 'eripiam: nec me patiente cremabit
ignis edax nemorum partes et membra meorum.'
intonuit dicente dea, tonitrumque secuti
cum saliente graves ceciderunt grandine nimbi,
aeraque et tumidum subitis concursibus aequor
Astraei turbant et eunt in proelia fratres.
e quibus alma parens unius viribus usa

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"'I, the son-in-law, barely hold these lands and the dry fields of Iapygian Daunus with a tiny portion of my men."

So spoke the son of Oeneus. Venulus left Diomedes's Calydonian realm, the bays of Peucetia, and the Messapian fields. In them he saw caves hidden by thick forest and slender reeds - caves that the half-goat Pan now holds, though nymphs once held them. An Apulian shepherd from that region had frightened them and driven them away, stirring them first with sudden terror. But soon, when their minds returned and they scorned their pursuer, they began dancing in rhythm with moving feet. The shepherd mocked them and imitated their leaping with rustic bounds, adding crude abuse to obscene words. He didn't shut his mouth until a tree enclosed his throat - for he is a tree now, and you can recognize his character from its sap. The wild olive shows the mark of his tongue in its bitter berries. The harshness of his words passed into them.

The Ships Become Nymphs and Aeneas's Victory

When the ambassadors returned from there, bringing news that the Aetolian arms were denied to them, the Rutulians waged war without those forces. Much blood was given by both sides. Look - Turnus brought greedy torches against the pine-built ships, and the vessels that had survived the water now feared fire. Now Vulcan was burning the pitch and wax and other food for flames, and the fire traveled up through the tall mast to the sails, and the curved keel's benches were smoking. Then the holy mother of the gods, remembering that these pines had been cut from Mount Ida, filled the air with the clashing of cymbals and the sound of the blown boxwood flute. Carried through the light air on her tamed lions, she said: "Turnus, you're throwing useless fires with your sacrilegious hand. I'll snatch them away. I won't let the devouring fire burn parts and limbs of my groves."

Thunder crashed as the goddess spoke, and after the thunder came heavy hailstones falling with leaping rain. The brothers born of Astraeus suddenly stirred the air and the swelling sea into turmoil and went to war. The kind mother used the strength of one of them, broke the hempen cables of the Trojan fleet,

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stuppea praerupit Phrygiae retinacula classis,
fertque rates pronas medioque sub aequore mergit;
robore mollito lignoque in corpora verso
in capitum faciem puppes mutantur aduncae,
in digitos abeunt et crura natantia remi,
quodque prius fuerat, latus est, mediisque carina
subdita navigiis spinae mutatur in usum,
lina comae molles, antemnae bracchia fiunt,
caerulus, ut fuerat, color est; quasque ante timebant,
illas virgineis exercent lusibus undas
Naides aequoreae durisque in montibus ortae
molle fretum celebrant nec eas sua tangit origo;
non tamen oblitae, quam multa pericula saepe
pertulerint pelago, iactatis saepe carinis
subposuere manus, nisi siqua vehebat Achivos:
cladis adhuc Phrygiae memores odere Pelasgos
Neritiaeque ratis viderunt fragmina laetis
vultibus et laetis videre rigescere puppim
vultibus Alcinoi saxumque increscere ligno.
Spes erat, in nymphas animata classe marinas
posse metu monstri Rutulum desistere bello:
perstat, habetque deos pars utraque, quodque deorum est
instar, habent animos; nec iam dotalia regna,
nec sceptrum soceri, nec te, Lavinia virgo,
sed vicisse petunt deponendique pudore
bella gerunt, tandemque Venus victricia nati
arma videt, Turnusque cadit: cadit Ardea, Turno
sospite dicta potens; quam postquam barbarus ignis
abstulit et tepida latuerunt tecta favilla,
congerie e media tum primum cognita praepes
subvolat et cineres plausis everberat alis.
et sonus et macies et pallor et omnia, captam
quae deceant urbem, nomen quoque mansit in illa
urbis, et ipsa suis deplangitur Ardea pennis.
Iamque deos omnes ipsamque Aeneia virtus
Iunonem veteres finire coegerat iras,
cum, bene fundatis opibus crescentis Iuli,
tempestivus erat caelo Cythereius heros.
ambieratque Venus superos colloque parentis

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and carried the ships headlong, plunging them beneath the middle of the sea. The wood softened and turned into bodies. The curved prows changed into the form of heads, the oars became swimming fingers and legs, the side that had been there before remained a side, and the keel set under the middle of the ships changed into a spine's use. The rigging became soft hair, the yardarms became arms, and the color remained sea-blue as before. The ones they'd feared before, they now play with in girlish games - sea nymphs born on hard mountains now dwell in the soft strait, and their origin doesn't touch them. Still, not forgetting how many dangers they'd often endured on the sea, they've often put their hands under tossed ships - unless one was carrying Greeks. Still remembering the Trojan disaster, they hate the Greeks. They saw the fragments of Odysseus's ship with happy faces and saw the ship of Alcinous stiffen into stone with happy faces.

There was hope that with the fleet transformed into sea nymphs, the Rutulian might give up the war out of fear of the portent. But he persisted. Each side had gods, and what equals the gods - they had courage. They no longer sought the dowry kingdoms or the scepter of their father-in-law or you, Lavinia, virgin, but victory. They waged war ashamed to lay it down. Finally Venus saw her son's victorious arms. Turnus fell. Ardea fell - called powerful while Turnus lived. After the barbarian fire destroyed it and the buildings lay hidden under warm ash, from the middle of the heap a bird flew up, recognized then for the first time, and beat the ashes with its beating wings. Its cry, its leanness, its pallor - everything that befits a captured city - even the name remained in it from the city, and Ardea herself mourns with her own feathers.

Aeneas's Deification

Now Aeneas's virtue had forced all the gods, even Juno herself, to end their old anger. The growing wealth of Iulus was well established, and the Cytherean hero was ripe for heaven. Venus had approached the gods and, her arms thrown around her father's neck, said: "Father, you've never been harsh to me at any time - now I hope you'll be most gentle. Grant some divinity, however small, to my Aeneas, excellent

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circumfusa sui 'numquam mihi' dixerat 'ullo
tempore dure pater, nunc sis mitissimus, opto,
Aeneaeque meo, qui te de sanguine nostro
fecit avum, quamvis parvum des, optime, numen,
dummodo des aliquod! satis est inamabile regnum
adspexisse semel, Stygios semel isse per amnes.'
adsensere dei, nec coniunx regia vultus
inmotos tenuit placatoque adnuit ore;
tum pater 'estis' ait 'caelesti munere digni,
quaeque petis pro quoque petis: cape, nata, quod optas!'
fatus erat: gaudet gratesque agit illa parenti
perque leves auras iunctis invecta columbis
litus adit Laurens, ubi tectus harundine serpit
in freta flumineis vicina Numicius undis.
hunc iubet Aeneae, quaecumque obnoxia morti,
abluere et tacito deferre sub aequora cursu;
corniger exsequitur Veneris mandata suisque,
quicquid in Aenea fuerat mortale, repurgat
et respersit aquis; pars optima restitit illi.
lustratum genetrix divino corpus odore
unxit et ambrosia cum dulci nectare mixta
contigit os fecitque deum, quem turba Quirini
nuncupat Indigetem temploque arisque recepit.
Inde sub Ascanii dicione binominis Alba
resque Latina fuit. succedit Silvius illi.
quo satus antiquo tenuit repetita Latinus
nomina cum sceptro, clarus subit Alba Latinum.
Epytus ex illo est; post hunc Capetusque Capysque,
sed Capys ante fuit; regnum Tiberinus ab illis
cepit et in Tusci demersus fluminis undis
nomina fecit aquae; de quo Remulusque feroxque
Acrota sunt geniti. Remulus maturior annis
fulmineo periit, imitator fulminis, ictu.
fratre suo sceptrum moderatior Acrota forti
tradit Aventino, qui, quo regnarat, eodem
monte iacet positus tribuitque vocabula monti;
iamque Palatinae summam Proca gentis habebat.
Rege sub hoc Pomona fuit, qua nulla Latinas
inter hamadryadas coluit sollertius hortos

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father - he who made you a grandfather from our blood. Just grant him something! It's enough that he's looked once upon the unlovable realm, that he's once gone through the Stygian rivers."

The gods nodded agreement, and the royal wife didn't keep her face unmoved but nodded with a peaceful expression. Then the father said: "You both deserve heaven's gift, both you who ask and he for whom you ask. Take what you desire, daughter."

He'd spoken. She rejoiced and thanked her father, and carried through the light air on yoked doves, she reached the Laurentine shore, where the Numicius, hidden by reeds, creeps with its river waters into the nearby sea. She ordered this river to wash away from Aeneas whatever was subject to death and carry it beneath the sea in a silent current. The horned river obeyed Venus's commands, purified and washed away with his waters whatever had been mortal in Aeneas. The best part remained in him.

His mother anointed his purified body with divine perfume, touched his mouth with ambrosia mixed with sweet nectar, and made him a god. The Roman people call him Indiges and have received him in a temple and at altars.

Then Alba, with its double name, came under Ascanius's rule, and the Latin state continued. Silvius succeeded him. From him came Latinus, who took the ancient name again along with the scepter. Famous Alba succeeded Latinus. Epytus came from him, and after him Capetus and Capys - but Capys came first. Tiberinus received the kingdom from them and, drowned in the Tuscan river's waters, gave his name to the stream. From him fierce Remulus and Acrota were born. Remulus, older in years, perished struck by a lightning-like blow - an imitator of lightning. His brother Acrota, more moderate than brave, handed the scepter to Aventinus, who lies on the same mountain where he reigned and gave the mountain its name. And now Proca held the summit power of the Palatine people.

Pomona and Vertumnus

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nec fuit arborei studiosior altera fetus;
unde tenet nomen: non silvas illa nec amnes,
rus amat et ramos felicia poma ferentes;
nec iaculo gravis est, sed adunca dextera falce,
qua modo luxuriem premit et spatiantia passim
bracchia conpescit, fisso modo cortice virgam
inserit et sucos alieno praestat alumno;
nec sentire sitim patitur bibulaeque recurvas
radicis fibras labentibus inrigat undis.
hic amor, hoc studium, Veneris quoque nulla cupido est;
vim tamen agrestum metuens pomaria claudit
intus et accessus prohibet refugitque viriles.
quid non et Satyri, saltatibus apta iuventus,
fecere et pinu praecincti cornua Panes
Silvanusque, suis semper iuvenilior annis,
quique deus fures vel falce vel inguine terret,
ut poterentur ea? sed enim superabat amando
hos quoque Vertumnus neque erat felicior illis.
o quotiens habitu duri messoris aristas
corbe tulit verique fuit messoris imago!
tempora saepe gerens faeno religata recenti
desectum poterat gramen versasse videri;
saepe manu stimulos rigida portabat, ut illum
iurares fessos modo disiunxisse iuvencos.
falce data frondator erat vitisque putator;
induerat scalas: lecturum poma putares;
miles erat gladio, piscator harundine sumpta;
denique per multas aditum sibi saepe figuras
repperit, ut caperet spectatae gaudia formae.
ille etiam picta redimitus tempora mitra,
innitens baculo, positis per tempora canis,
adsimulavit anum: cultosque intravit in hortos
pomaque mirata est 'tanto' que 'potentior!' inquit
paucaque laudatae dedit oscula, qualia numquam
vera dedisset anus, glaebaque incurva resedit
suspiciens pandos autumni pondere ramos.
ulmus erat contra speciosa nitentibus uvis:
quam socia postquam pariter cum vite probavit,
'at si staret' ait 'caelebs sine palmite truncus,

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Under this king there was Pomona. None among the Latin hamadryads cultivated gardens more skillfully, none was more devoted to the fruit of trees - that's where she gets her name. She didn't love forests or rivers but the countryside and branches bearing happy fruit. Her right hand was heavy not with a javelin but with a curved sickle, with which she'd sometimes prune back excess growth and trim spreading branches, sometimes insert a graft in split bark and provide sap to a foreign nursling. She wouldn't let them feel thirst, but watered the curved fibers of the thirsty root with trickling streams.

This was her love, her passion. She had no desire for Venus at all. Yet fearing violence from country folk, she closed her orchards from inside and shut out and fled from male approaches. What didn't the Satyrs - the young crew fit for dancing - do, and the Pans with pine-wreathed horns, and Silvanus, always more youthful than his years, and the god who frightens off thieves with his sickle or his groin, to try to possess her? But Vertumnus surpassed even these in loving and was no more successful than they were.

How often, wearing the outfit of a tough harvester, did he carry grain in a basket and look like a real harvester! Often, wearing temples bound with fresh hay, he could have seemed to have just turned the cut grass. Often he carried a goad in his hard hand, so you'd swear he'd just unyoked exhausted oxen. Given a pruning knife, he was a pruner and trimmer of vines. Wearing a ladder, you'd think he was about to pick apples. With a sword, he was a soldier; with a fishing rod, a fisherman. In short, through many forms he often found a way in so he could capture the joy of seeing her beauty.

He even put on a painted headband around his temples, leaned on a staff, laid false gray hair at his temples, and pretended to be an old woman. He entered the cultivated gardens, admired the fruit, and said: "You're so much more powerful!" He gave a few kisses to the woman he praised - kisses a real old woman would never have given - sat down bent over on the turf, looking up at the branches weighed down by autumn's burden.

Across from him was an elm, beautiful with gleaming grapes. After he'd praised it along with the vine that partnered it, he said: "But if that trunk stood unmarried without the vine's shoot, it would have

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nil praeter frondes, quare peteretur, haberet;
haec quoque, quae iuncta est, vitis requiescit in ulmo:
si non nupta foret, terrae acclinata iaceret;
tu tamen exemplo non tangeris arboris huius
concubitusque fugis nec te coniungere curas.
atque utinam velles! Helene non pluribus esset
sollicitata procis nec quae Lapitheia movit
proelia nec coniunx nimium tardantis Ulixis.
nunc quoque, cum fugias averserisque petentes,
mille viri cupiunt et semideique deique
et quaecumque tenent Albanos numina montes.
sed tu si sapies, si te bene iungere anumque
hanc audire voles, quae te plus omnibus illis,
plus, quam credis, amo: vulgares reice taedas
Vertumnumque tori socium tibi selige! pro quo
me quoque pignus habe: neque enim sibi notior ille est,
quam mihi; nec passim toto vagus errat in orbe,
haec loca sola colit; nec, uti pars magna procorum,
quam modo vidit, amat: tu primus et ultimus illi
ardor eris, solique suos tibi devovet annos.
adde, quod est iuvenis, quod naturale decoris
munus habet formasque apte fingetur in omnes,
et quod erit iussus, iubeas licet omnia, fiet.
quid, quod amatis idem, quod, quae tibi poma coluntur,
primus habet laetaque tenet tua munera dextra!
sed neque iam fetus desiderat arbore demptos
nec, quas hortus alit, cum sucis mitibus herbas
nec quicquam nisi te: miserere ardentis et ipsum,
qui petit, ore meo praesentem crede precari.
ultoresque deos et pectora dura perosam
Idalien memoremque time Rhamnusidis iram!
quoque magis timeas, (etenim mihi multa vetustas
scire dedit) referam tota notissima Cypro
facta, quibus flecti facile et mitescere possis.
'Viderat a veteris generosam sanguine Teucri
Iphis Anaxareten, humili de stirpe creatus,
viderat et totis perceperat ossibus aestum
luctatusque diu, postquam ratione furorem
vincere non potuit, supplex ad limina venit

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nothing but leaves to make it desirable. And this vine too, which is joined to it, rests on the elm. If it weren't married, it would lie bent down on the ground. But you're not touched by this tree's example, you flee from marriage and don't care to be joined. I wish you would! Helen wouldn't have been pursued by more suitors, nor she who stirred up the Lapith wars, nor the wife of too-slow Odysseus. Even now, though you flee and turn away from those who seek you, a thousand men desire you - demigods and gods and whatever divinities hold the Alban mountains.

"But if you're wise, if you want to marry well and listen to this old woman, who loves you more than all of them - more than you believe - reject common matches and choose Vertumnus as your marriage partner! Take me as a pledge for him too. He's not better known to himself than he is to me. He doesn't wander randomly through the whole world - he cultivates only these places. Unlike most suitors who love whatever they've just seen, you'll be his first and last passion, and he'll devote his years to you alone. Add that he's young, that he has beauty as a natural gift and shapes himself aptly into all forms, and whatever you order - though you order all things - he'll become. What's more, you both love the same things, and what fruit you cultivate, he's the first to have, and he holds your gifts in his happy hand!

"But now he doesn't desire fruit plucked from trees, or the herbs your garden feeds with gentle juices, or anything except you. Pity the one who burns, and believe that he himself, present in my mouth, is begging. Fear the avenging gods and the Idalian who hates hard hearts, and remember Rhamnusian anger! And so you'll fear more - for old age has taught me to know many things - I'll tell you a story most famous throughout all Cyprus, by which you could easily be bent and softened.

The Tale of Iphis and Anaxarete

"'Iphis, born of humble stock, had seen Anaxarete, descended from the noble blood of ancient Teucer. He'd seen her and absorbed heat through all his bones. After struggling a long time, when he couldn't conquer his madness with reason, he came as a suppliant to her threshold. Sometimes he confessed his

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et modo nutrici miserum confessus amorem,
ne sibi dura foret, per spes oravit alumnae,
et modo de multis blanditus cuique ministris
sollicita petiit propensum voce favorem;
saepe ferenda dedit blandis sua verba tabellis,
interdum madidas lacrimarum rore coronas
postibus intendit posuitque in limine duro
molle latus tristisque serae convicia fecit.
saevior illa freto surgente cadentibus Haedis,
durior et ferro, quod Noricus excoquit ignis,
et saxo, quod adhuc vivum radice tenetur,
spernit et inridet, factisque inmitibus addit
verba superba ferox et spe quoque fraudat amantem.
non tulit impatiens longi tormenta doloris
Iphis et ante fores haec verba novissima dixit:
"vincis, Anaxarete, neque erunt tibi taedia tandem
ulla ferenda mei: laetos molire triumphos
et Paeana voca nitidaque incingere lauru!
vincis enim, moriorque libens: age, ferrea, gaude!
certe aliquid laudare mei cogeris amoris,
quo tibi sim gratus, meritumque fatebere nostrum.
non tamen ante tui curam excessisse memento
quam vitam geminaque simul mihi luce carendum.
nec tibi fama mei ventura est nuntia leti:
ipse ego, ne dubites, adero praesensque videbor,
corpore ut exanimi crudelia lumina pascas.
si tamen, o superi, mortalia facta videtis,
este mei memores (nihil ultra lingua precari
sustinet) et longo facite ut narremur in aevo,
et, quae dempsistis vitae, date tempora famae!"
dixit, et ad postes ornatos saepe coronis
umentes oculos et pallida bracchia tollens,
cum foribus laquei religaret vincula summis,
"haec tibi serta placent, crudelis et inpia!" dixit
inseruitque caput, sed tum quoque versus ad illam,
atque onus infelix elisa fauce pependit.
icta pedum motu trepidantum aperire iubentem
visa dedisse sonum est adapertaque ianua factum
prodidit, exclamant famuli frustraque levatum

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wretched love to her nurse and begged her, for the hope of her nursling, not to be harsh toward him. Sometimes he flattered each of her many servants and sought their eager favor with anxious voice. Often he gave his words to be carried on flattering tablets. Sometimes he hung garlands wet with the dew of his tears on the doorposts, laid his soft side on the hard threshold, and cursed the cruel lock.

"'She was more savage than the sea rising when the Kids are setting, harder than iron that Noric fire smelts, and harder than rock that still clings to its living root. She scorned and mocked him, added arrogant words to her cruel deeds with savage pride, and robbed her lover even of hope.

"'Iphis, impatient, couldn't endure the torments of long pain, and before her doors he spoke these final words: "You win, Anaxarete, and you won't have to bear any more annoyance from me. Prepare your happy triumph and call for the paean, crown yourself with bright laurel! You win, and I die willingly. Come on, woman of iron, rejoice! Surely you'll be forced to praise something in my love, by which I'll please you, and you'll confess I deserve it. But remember that my care for you didn't leave before my life did, and I must lose both lights at once. The news of my death won't come to you as rumor. I myself - don't doubt it - will be there, present to be seen, so your cruel eyes can feast on my lifeless body. But you gods, if you see mortal deeds, remember me - my tongue can't pray for anything more - and make me spoken of in long ages. Add to my fame the time you've taken from my life!"

"'He spoke, and lifting his moist eyes and pale arms toward the doorposts often adorned with garlands, as he tied the noose's bonds to the top of the doors, he said: "Do these wreaths please you, cruel and wicked woman?" and thrust his head into the noose, but even then turned toward her. The unlucky burden hung with his crushed throat.

"'His feet's trembling movement seemed to knock at the door, commanding it to open, and when the door opened it revealed the deed. The servants cried out and lifted him in vain - his father had already died - and carried him to his mother's threshold. She received him in her lap, embraced the cold limbs of her son, and after she'd spoken the words of wretched parents and done the deeds of wretched mothers,

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(nam pater occiderat) referunt ad limina matris;
accipit illa sinu conplexaque frigida nati
membra sui postquam miserorum verba parentum
edidit et matrum miserarum facta peregit,
funera ducebat mediam lacrimosa per urbem
luridaque arsuro portabat membra feretro.
forte viae vicina domus, qua flebilis ibat
pompa, fuit, duraeque sonus plangoris ad aures
venit Anaxaretes, quam iam deus ultor agebat.
mota tamen "videamus" ait "miserabile funus"
et patulis iniit tectum sublime fenestris
vixque bene inpositum lecto prospexerat Iphin:
deriguere oculi, calidusque e corpore sanguis
inducto pallore fugit, conataque retro
ferre pedes haesit, conata avertere vultus
hoc quoque non potuit, paulatimque occupat artus,
quod fuit in duro iam pridem pectore, saxum.
neve ea ficta putes, dominae sub imagine signum
servat adhuc Salamis, Veneris quoque nomine templum
Prospicientis habet. - quorum memor, o mea, lentos
pone, precor, fastus et amanti iungere, nymphe:
sic tibi nec vernum nascentia frigus adurat
poma, nec excutiant rapidi florentia venti!'
Haec ubi nequiquam formae deus aptus anili
edidit, in iuvenem rediit et anilia demit
instrumenta sibi talisque apparuit illi,
qualis ubi oppositas nitidissima solis imago
evicit nubes nullaque obstante reluxit,
vimque parat: sed vi non est opus, inque figura
capta dei nympha est et mutua vulnera sensit.
Proximus Ausonias iniusti miles Amuli
rexit opes, Numitorque senex amissa nepotis
munere regna capit, festisque Palilibus urbis
moenia conduntur; Tatiusque patresque Sabini
bella gerunt, arcisque via Tarpeia reclusa
dignam animam poena congestis exuit armis;
inde sati Curibus tacitorum more luporum
ore premunt voces et corpora victa sopore
invadunt portasque petunt, quas obice firmo

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she led the tearful funeral through the middle of the city and carried the pale limbs on a bier to be burned.

"'By chance the house where the tearful procession went was near the road, and the sound of mourning came to the ears of cruel Anaxarete, whom the avenging god was already driving. Still she was moved. "Let's see the pitiful funeral," she said, and she entered a lofty house with wide windows. She'd barely looked properly at Iphis laid on the bier when her eyes stiffened, the warm blood fled from her body as pallor spread over it. Trying to step backward, her feet stuck. Trying to turn her face away, she couldn't do that either. Gradually the stone that had long been in her hard heart took over her limbs.

"'And so you don't think this is made up - Salamis still preserves a statue in the image of the mistress, and it also has a temple in the name of Venus the Watcher. Remembering these things, my dear, put aside, I beg you, your slow pride and join yourself to your lover, nymph. So may spring frost not burn your budding fruits, nor swift winds shake off your blossoms!"

Pomona and Vertumnus United

When the god, suited to an old woman's form, had spoken these things in vain, he returned to youth and removed the old woman's props from himself. He appeared to her as when the Sun's most brilliant image has conquered the clouds that stood in its way and shines with nothing blocking it. He prepared to use force, but force wasn't needed. The nymph was captured by the god's beauty and felt mutual wounds.

The Early Kings and Romulus

Next the unjust soldier Amulius ruled over Italian wealth, and old Numitor regained the kingdom he'd lost through his grandson's help. On the festival day of the Palilia, the city's walls were founded. Tatius and the Sabine fathers waged war, and Tarpeia, after opening a path to the citadel, paid with her life - a worthy punishment - crushed under heaped-up arms.

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clauserat Iliades: unam tamen ipse reclusit
nec strepitum verso Saturnia cardine fecit;
sola Venus portae cecidisse repagula sensit
et clausura fuit, nisi quod rescindere numquam
dis licet acta deum. Iano loca iuncta tenebant
naides Ausoniae gelido rorantia fonte:
has rogat auxilium, nec nymphae iusta petentem
sustinuere deam venasque et flumina fontis
elicuere sui; nondum tamen invia Iani
ora patentis erant, neque iter praecluserat unda:
lurida subponunt fecundo sulphura fonti
incenduntque cavas fumante bitumine venas.
viribus his aliisque vapor penetravit ad ima
fontis, et Alpino modo quae certare rigori
audebatis aquae, non ceditis ignibus ipsis!
flammifera gemini fumant aspergine postes,
portaque nequiquam rigidis promissa Sabinis
fonte fuit praestructa novo, dum Martius arma
indueret miles; quae postquam Romulus ultro
obtulit, et strata est tellus Romana Sabinis
corporibus strata estque suis, generique cruorem
sanguine cum soceri permiscuit inpius ensis.
pace tamen sisti bellum nec in ultima ferro
decertare placet Tatiumque accedere regno.
Occiderat Tatius, populisque aequata duobus,
Romule, iura dabas: posita cum casside Mavors
talibus adfatur divumque hominumque parentem:
'tempus adest, genitor, quoniam fundamine magno
res Romana valet nec praeside pendet ab uno,
praemia, (sunt promissa mihi dignoque nepoti)
solvere et ablatum terris inponere caelo.
tu mihi concilio quondam praesente deorum
(nam memoro memorique animo pia verba notavi)
"unus erit, quem tu tolles in caerula caeli"
dixisti: rata sit verborum summa tuorum!'
adnuit omnipotens et nubibus aera caecis
occuluit tonitruque et fulgure terruit orbem.
quae sibi promissae sensit rata signa rapinae,
innixusque hastae pressos temone cruento

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Then the men born in Cures, silent as wolves, held their voices in their mouths and attacked the bodies overcome by sleep, seeking the gates that Aeneas's son had closed with a strong bar. But Saturn's daughter herself had opened one and made no sound when she turned the hinge. Venus alone noticed that the gate's bolts had fallen and would have closed it - but the gods are never allowed to undo what gods have done.

Italian naiads held a place near Janus, a place dripping with a cold spring. Venus asked them for help. The nymphs didn't refuse the goddess's just request, and they opened the veins and streams of their fountain. But Janus's open mouth wasn't yet impassable, and water hadn't yet blocked the way. They put yellow sulfur under the fertile spring and set the hollow veins on fire with smoking bitumen. With these forces and others, vapor penetrated to the depths of the fountain. And you waters, who just now dared to rival Alpine cold - you don't yield to fire itself! The twin doorposts smoke with the spray of flames, and the gate promised in vain to the hardy Sabines was barred by the new fountain while the Roman soldier put on his arms.

Then after Romulus had offered battle first, the Roman ground was strewn with Sabine bodies and strewn with its own. The impious sword mixed a son-in-law's blood with his father-in-law's blood. But they decided it was better to end the war with peace rather than fight to the finish with steel, and Tatius joined the kingdom.

Tatius had died, and you, Romulus, were giving equal laws to both peoples. Mars, setting down his helmet, spoke these words to the father of gods and men: "The time has come, father, since the Roman state stands strong on a great foundation and doesn't depend on one protector, to pay the reward you promised to me and your worthy grandson - to take him from earth and place him in heaven. You once said to me when the council of gods was present - I remember and have kept your devoted words in my mindful heart - 'One there will be whom you'll lift to the blue of heaven.' Let the full meaning of your words be confirmed."

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inpavidus conscendit equos Gradivus et ictu
verberis increpuit pronusque per aera lapsus
constitit in summo nemorosi colle Palati
reddentemque suo iam regia iura Quiriti
abstulit Iliaden: corpus mortale per auras
dilapsum tenues, ceu lata plumbea funda
missa solet medio glans intabescere caelo;
pulchra subit facies et pulvinaribus altis
dignior, est qualis trabeati forma Quirini.
Flebat ut amissum coniunx, cum regia Iuno
Irin ad Hersilien descendere limite curvo
imperat et vacuae sua sic mandata referre:
'o et de Latia, o et de gente Sabina
praecipuum, matrona, decus, dignissima tanti
ante fuisse viri coniunx, nunc esse Quirini,
siste tuos fletus, et, si tibi cura videndi
coniugis est, duce me lucum pete, colle Quirini
qui viret et templum Romani regis obumbrat';
paret et in terram pictos delapsa per arcus,
Hersilien iussis conpellat vocibus Iris;
illa verecundo vix tollens lumina vultu
'o dea (namque mihi nec, quae sis, dicere promptum est,
et liquet esse deam) duc, o duc' inquit 'et offer
coniugis ora mihi, quae si modo posse videre
fata semel dederint, caelum accepisse fatebor!'
nec mora, Romuleos cum virgine Thaumantea
ingreditur colles: ibi sidus ab aethere lapsum
decidit in terras; a cuius lumine flagrans
Hersilie crinis cum sidere cessit in auras:
hanc manibus notis Romanae conditor urbis
excipit et priscum pariter cum corpore nomen
mutat Horamque vocat, quae nunc dea iuncta Quirino est.

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The almighty nodded, hid the sky with dark clouds, and terrified the world with thunder and lightning. Mars sensed these as sure signs of the promised seizure. Leaning on his spear and fearless, he mounted his horses pressed down by the bloody yoke, cracked the whip to urge them on, and slid headlong through the air. He stopped on the summit of the wooded Palatine hill and took away Aeneas's son just as he was dispensing royal justice to his Roman people. His mortal body dissolved through the thin air like a lead ball shot from a broad sling usually melts away in the middle of the sky. A beautiful appearance took its place, one more worthy of high couches - the form of robed Quirinus.

Hersilia's Apotheosis

His wife was weeping as if she'd lost him, when royal Juno ordered Iris to descend along the curved rainbow and carry these commands to the widowed woman:

"O matron, supreme glory of both the Latin and Sabine race, most worthy to have been the wife of such a great man before and now of Quirinus, stop your tears. And if you care to see your husband, follow me to the grove that grows green on Quirinus's hill and shades the temple of Rome's king."

Iris obeyed and, gliding down to earth along her painted arc, addressed Hersilia with the commanded words. She, barely raising her eyes with modest expression, said: "O goddess - for it's not easy for me to say who you are, but it's clear you are a goddess - lead me, oh lead me and show me my husband's face! If only the fates would grant me to see it just once, I'll confess I've reached heaven!"

Without delay, she climbed Romulus's hill with the virgin daughter of Thaumas. There a star slid down from the sky and fell to earth. As Hersilia's hair blazed with light from it, she vanished into the air with the star. The founder of the Roman city received her in familiar hands and changed her former body and name together, calling her Hora. Now as a goddess she's joined to Quirinus.

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BOOK 15

Quaeritur interea qui tantae pondera molis
sustineat tantoque queat succedere regi:
destinat imperio clarum praenuntia veri
fama Numam; non ille satis cognosse Sabinae
gentis habet ritus, animo maiora capaci
concipit et, quae sit rerum natura, requirit.
huius amor curae patria Curibusque relictis
fecit ut Herculei penetraret ad hospitis urbem.
Graia quis Italicis auctor posuisset in oris
moenia, quaerenti sic e senioribus unus
rettulit indigenis, veteris non inscius aevi:
'dives ab Oceano bobus Iove natus Hiberis
litora felici tenuisse Lacinia cursu
fertur, et armento teneras errante per herbas
ipse domum magni nec inhospita tecta Crotonis
intrasse et requie longum relevasse laborem
atque ita discedens, "aevo" dixisse "nepotum
hic locus urbis erit," promissaque vera fuerunt.
nam fuit Argolico generatus Alemone quidam
Myscelus, illius dis acceptissimus aevi.
hunc super incumbens pressum gravitate soporis
claviger adloquitur: 22a
"patrias, age, desere sedes; 23b
i, pete diversi 23a
lapidosas Aesaris undas!" 22b
et, nisi paruerit, multa ac metuenda minatur;
post ea discedunt pariter somnusque deusque
surgit Alemonides tacitaque recentia mente
visa refert, pugnatque diu sententia secum:
numen abire iubet, prohibent discedere leges,
poenaque mors posita est patriam mutare volenti.
candidus Oceano nitidum caput abdiderat Sol,
et caput extulerat densissima sidereum Nox:
visus adesse idem deus est eademque monere
et, nisi paruerit, plura et graviora minari.
pertimuit patriumque simul transferre parabat
in sedes penetrale novas: fit murmur in urbe,
spretarumque agitur legum reus, utque peracta est
causa prior, crimenque patet sine teste probatum,

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Numa and the Founding of Croton

Meanwhile people wondered who could take up the weight of such a great burden and succeed such a king. Rumor, the true herald of fame, designated Numa for the throne. It wasn't enough for him to know just the rites of the Sabine people - in his capacious mind he conceived greater things and asked what the nature of the universe was. This love of learning made him leave his homeland and Cures and travel to the city of his Herculean host.

When he asked which Greek had founded these walls on Italian shores, one of the elders who knew the ancient age told him this story:

"Rich with Spanish cattle, born from Jupiter, Hercules is said to have reached the fortunate Lacinian coast from the Ocean. While his herd wandered over the tender grass, he himself entered the great house - the not inhospitable dwelling - of Croton, and there he rested his body from his long labor. As he was leaving he said: 'In the time of your descendants, this place will be a city,' and his promises came true.

"For there was a man named Myscelus, son of Alemon from Argos, the most acceptable to the gods of his time. The club-bearer leaned over him, heavy with sleep, and spoke to him: 'Come on, leave your ancestral home! Go, seek the stony waters of distant Aesarus!' He threatened many terrible things if Myscelus didn't obey. Then the god and sleep departed together.

"The son of Alemon rose and silently turned over in his mind what he'd recently seen. For a long time his decision battled with itself: divine will ordered him to go, but the laws forbade departure, and death was the penalty for wanting to change one's homeland.

"The bright Sun had hidden his shining head in the Ocean, and the very dense Night had raised her starry face. The same god seemed to appear again and warn him of the same things, threatening more

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squalidus ad superos tollens reus ora manusque
"o cui ius caeli bis sex fecere labores,
fer, precor" inquit "opem! nam tu mihi criminis auctor."
mos erat antiquus niveis atrisque lapillis,
his damnare reos, illis absolvere culpa;
tunc quoque sic lata est sententia tristis, et omnis
calculus inmitem demittitur ater in urnam:
quae simul effudit numerandos versa lapillos,
omnibus e nigro color est mutatus in album,
candidaque Herculeo sententia numine facta
solvit Alemoniden: grates agit ille parenti
Amphitryoniadae ventisque faventibus aequor
navigat Ionium Sallentinumque Neretum
praeterit et Sybarin Lacedaemoniumque Tarentum
Sirinosque sinus Crimisenque et Iapygis arva,
vixque pererratis, quae spectant aequora, terris,
invenit Aesarei fatalia fluminis ora
nec procul hinc tumulum, sub quo sacrata Crotonis
ossa tegebat humus, iussaque ibi moenia terra
condidit et nomen tumulati traxit in urbem.'
talia constabat certa primordia fama
esse loci positaeque Italis in finibus urbis.
Vir fuit hic ortu Samius, sed fugerat una
et Samon et dominos odioque tyrannidis exul
sponte erat isque licet caeli regione remotos
mente deos adiit et, quae natura negabat
visibus humanis, oculis ea pectoris hausit,
cumque animo et vigili perspexerat omnia cura,
in medium discenda dabat coetusque silentum
dictaque mirantum magni primordia mundi
et rerum causas et, quid natura, docebat,
quid deus, unde nives, quae fulminis esset origo,
Iuppiter an venti discussa nube tonarent,
quid quateret terras, qua sidera lege mearent,
et quodcumque latet, primusque animalia mensis
arguit inponi, primus quoque talibus ora
docta quidem solvit, sed non et credita, verbis:
'Parcite, mortales, dapibus temerare nefandis
corpora! sunt fruges, sunt deducentia ramos

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and heavier punishments if he didn't obey. He was terrified and prepared to move his ancestral household gods to a new home. But murmuring arose in the city, and he was put on trial for scorning the laws. When the earlier case was completed and the crime was proven without a witness, the squalid defendant raised his face and hands to the gods and said: 'O you who earned the right to heaven with twelve labors, bring help, I pray! For you're the cause of my crime.'

"There was an ancient custom of condemning the guilty with black pebbles and acquitting them with white ones. This harsh sentence was passed in the same way, and every black stone was dropped into the pitiless urn. But when the urn was turned over and poured out the pebbles to be counted, the color of all of them had changed from black to white, and the verdict, made bright by Hercules's divine power, freed the son of Alemon. He gave thanks to his father Amphitryon's son, and with favorable winds he sailed across the Ionian Sea, passed Sallentine Neretum, Spartan Tarentum, the bays of Sybaris and Siris, Crimisa and the fields of Iapyx, and having scarcely journeyed around the lands that face the seas, he found the fated mouth of the Aesarus River.

"Not far from here was a mound under which the sacred bones of Croton covered the earth. He built the ordered walls there in that land and took the city's name from the buried man."

This, according to reliable tradition, was the origin of the place and the city founded on Italian shores.

Pythagoras and His Teachings

There was a man here born in Samos, but he'd fled both Samos and its rulers at the same time, and he was voluntarily an exile because he hated tyranny. Though the gods were remote in their region of the sky, he approached them with his mind, and those things that nature denied to human sight, he drank in with the eyes of his spirit. When he'd examined all things with his mind and wakeful care, he offered them to the public to be learned. To silent crowds who marveled at his words, he taught about the origins of the great universe and the causes of things - what nature is, what god is, where snow comes

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pondere poma suo tumidaeque in vitibus uvae,
sunt herbae dulces, sunt quae mitescere flamma
mollirique queant; nec vobis lacteus umor
eripitur, nec mella thymi redolentia florem:
prodiga divitias alimentaque mitia tellus
suggerit atque epulas sine caede et sanguine praebet.
carne ferae sedant ieiunia, nec tamen omnes:
quippe equus et pecudes armentaque gramine vivunt;
at quibus ingenium est inmansuetumque ferumque,
Armeniae tigres iracundique leones
cumque lupis ursi, dapibus cum sanguine gaudent.
heu quantum scelus est in viscera viscera condi
ingestoque avidum pinguescere corpore corpus
alteriusque animans animantis vivere leto!
scilicet in tantis opibus, quas, optima matrum,
terra parit, nil te nisi tristia mandere saevo
vulnera dente iuvat ritusque referre Cyclopum,
nec, nisi perdideris alium, placare voracis
et male morati poteris ieiunia ventris!
'At vetus illa aetas, cui fecimus aurea nomen,
fetibus arboreis et, quas humus educat, herbis
fortunata fuit nec polluit ora cruore.
tunc et aves tutae movere per aera pennas,
et lepus inpavidus mediis erravit in arvis,
nec sua credulitas piscem suspenderat hamo:
cuncta sine insidiis nullamque timentia fraudem
plenaque pacis erant. postquam non utilis auctor
victibus invidit, quisquis fuit ille, leonum
corporeasque dapes avidum demersit in alvum,
fecit iter sceleri, primoque e caede ferarum
incaluisse potest maculatum sanguine ferrum
(idque satis fuerat) nostrumque petentia letum
corpora missa neci salva pietate fatemur:
sed quam danda neci, tam non epulanda fuerunt.
'Longius inde nefas abiit, et prima putatur
hostia sus meruisse mori, quia semina pando
eruerit rostro spemque interceperit anni;
vite caper morsa Bacchi mactandus ad aras
ducitur ultoris: nocuit sua culpa duobus!

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from, what the origin of lightning is, whether Jupiter thunders or the winds when they break the cloud, what shakes the earth, by what law the stars move, and whatever else lies hidden.

He was also the first to argue against placing animals on our tables, and the first to open his learned mouth - though it wasn't believed - with words like these:

"Stop, mortals, defiling your bodies with wicked feasts! There are grains, there are fruits weighing down the branches with their own weight, and swelling grapes on the vines. There are sweet herbs, and there are some that can be softened and made tender by flame. The flowing milk isn't taken from you, nor honey fragrant with thyme's flower. The earth, lavish in its wealth, offers gentle foods and provides feasts without slaughter and blood.

"Beasts satisfy their hunger with meat, but not all of them - horses and sheep and cattle live on grass. But those with fierce and savage natures - Armenian tigers and raging lions and bears and wolves - delight in bloody banquets. How great a crime it is to bury guts in guts, to fatten a greedy body by cramming in another body, for one living thing to live by the death of another living thing! Is it possible that in the midst of such abundance that the earth, best of mothers, produces, nothing pleases you but to chew on sad wounds with cruel teeth and bring back the ways of the Cyclopes, and you can't appease the cravings of your ill-mannered, greedy belly unless you destroy another life?

"But that ancient age, which we called golden, was blessed with the fruit of trees and the herbs that the earth produces, and didn't pollute mouths with blood. Then birds moved their wings safely through the air, and the rabbit wandered fearlessly through the middle of the fields, and no fish's own gullibility hung it on a hook. Everything was without traps and feared no treachery and was full of peace.

"But after some worthless instigator - whoever he was - envied the lions their diet and plunged flesh food into his greedy belly, he paved the way for crime. First the iron sword could have grown warm and stained with the slaughter of wild beasts - and that would have been enough! We confess that creatures

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quid meruistis oves, placidum pecus inque tuendos
natum homines, pleno quae fertis in ubere nectar,
mollia quae nobis vestras velamina lanas
praebetis vitaque magis quam morte iuvatis?
quid meruere boves, animal sine fraude dolisque,
innocuum, simplex, natum tolerare labores?
inmemor est demum nec frugum munere dignus,
qui potuit curvi dempto modo pondere aratri
ruricolam mactare suum, qui trita labore
illa, quibus totiens durum renovaverat arvum,
quot dederat messes, percussit colla securi.
nec satis est, quod tale nefas committitur: ipsos
inscripsere deos sceleri numenque supernum
caede laboriferi credunt gaudere iuvenci!
victima labe carens et praestantissima forma
(nam placuisse nocet) vittis insignis et auro
sistitur ante aras auditque ignara precantem
inponique suae videt inter cornua fronti,
quas coluit, fruges percussaque sanguine cultros
inficit in liquida praevisos forsitan unda.
protinus ereptas viventi pectore fibras
inspiciunt mentesque deum scrutantur in illis;
inde (fames homini vetitorum tanta ciborum)
audetis vesci, genus o mortale! quod, oro,
ne facite, et monitis animos advertite nostris!
cumque boum dabitis caesorum membra palato,
mandere vos vestros scite et sentite colonos.
'Et quoniam deus ora movet, sequar ora moventem
rite deum Delphosque meos ipsumque recludam
aethera et augustae reserabo oracula mentis:
magna nec ingeniis investigata priorum
quaeque diu latuere, canam; iuvat ire per alta
astra, iuvat terris et inerti sede relicta
nube vehi validique umeris insistere Atlantis
palantesque homines passim et rationis egentes
despectare procul trepidosque obitumque timentes
sic exhortari seriemque evolvere fati!
'O genus attonitum gelidae formidine mortis,
quid Styga, quid tenebras et nomina vana timetis,

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seeking our death can be killed without impiety. But as much as they deserved killing, they didn't deserve eating.

"From there the evil went further. The pig is thought to have been the first victim to deserve death, because it rooted up seeds with its broad snout and cut short the year's hope. The goat too, for biting the vine, is led to the altars of avenging Bacchus to be sacrificed. Their own guilt harmed these two!

"But what have you done, sheep - peaceful flock, born to protect humans - you who carry nectar in your full udders, who give us soft clothing from your wool, who help us more by your life than by your death? What have oxen deserved - animals without fraud or deceit, harmless, simple, born to endure labor? Utterly ungrateful and undeserving of the gift of grain is the man who could slaughter his own farm worker right after removing the weight of the curved plow, who struck with an axe those necks worn out by labor - necks that had so often renewed the hard field, that had given so many harvests!

"It's not enough that such an evil is committed - they've even involved the gods in their crime! They believe the divine power rejoices in the slaughter of the laboring bull! A victim without blemish and most beautiful in form - for beauty harms it - distinguished with ribbons and gold, stands before the altars. Ignorant, it hears the prayer and sees placed between the horns on its forehead the very grain it cultivated, and struck, it stains the knives with blood - knives it perhaps saw earlier in clear water.

"Immediately they rip the guts from its living chest and examine them, searching for the will of the gods in them. Then - so great is humanity's hunger for forbidden foods - you dare to eat them, mortal race! I beg you, don't do this! Pay attention to my warnings! When you give the limbs of slaughtered cattle to your mouths, know and understand that you're chewing your own farmers.

"And since a god moves my mouth, I'll follow the god who moves my mouth properly. I'll reveal my Delphi and the very heavens themselves, and I'll open the oracles of my august mind. I'll sing of great things not investigated by the minds of earlier thinkers, things that have long lain hidden. It's a joy to

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materiem vatum, falsi terricula mundi?
corpora, sive rogus flamma seu tabe vetustas
abstulerit, mala posse pati non ulla putetis!
morte carent animae semperque priore relicta
sede novis domibus vivunt habitantque receptae:
ipse ego (nam memini) Troiani tempore belli
Panthoides Euphorbus eram, cui pectore quondam
haesit in adverso gravis hasta minoris Atridae;
cognovi clipeum, laevae gestamina nostrae,
nuper Abanteis templo Iunonis in Argis!
omnia mutantur, nihil interit: errat et illinc
huc venit, hinc illuc, et quoslibet occupat artus
spiritus eque feris humana in corpora transit
inque feras noster, nec tempore deperit ullo,
utque novis facilis signatur cera figuris
nec manet ut fuerat nec formam servat eandem,
sed tamen ipsa eadem est, animam sic semper eandem
esse, sed in varias doceo migrare figuras.
ergo, ne pietas sit victa cupidine ventris,
parcite, vaticinor, cognatas caede nefanda
exturbare animas, nec sanguine sanguis alatur!
'Et quoniam magno feror aequore plenaque ventis
vela dedi: nihil est toto, quod perstet, in orbe.
cuncta fluunt, omnisque vagans formatur imago;
ipsa quoque adsiduo labuntur tempora motu,
non secus ac flumen; neque enim consistere flumen
nec levis hora potest: sed ut unda inpellitur unda
urgeturque prior veniente urgetque priorem,
tempora sic fugiunt pariter pariterque sequuntur
et nova sunt semper; nam quod fuit ante, relictum est,
fitque, quod haut fuerat, momentaque cuncta novantur.
'Cernis et emensas in lucem tendere noctes,
et iubar hoc nitidum nigrae succedere nocti;
nec color est idem caelo, cum lassa quiete
cuncta iacent media cumque albo Lucifer exit
clarus equo rursusque alius, cum praevia lucis
tradendum Phoebo Pallantias inficit orbem.
ipse dei clipeus, terra cum tollitur ima,
mane rubet, terraque rubet cum conditur ima,

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travel through the lofty stars, a joy to leave the earth and its sluggish home behind, to ride on clouds and stand on the shoulders of mighty Atlas, to look down from afar at people wandering everywhere and lacking reason, trembling and fearing death, and to encourage them like this and unroll the sequence of fate:

"'O race stunned by the terror of cold death, why do you fear the Styx, why darkness and empty names - the stuff of poets, the terrors of an unreal world? Whether flame or time's decay takes your bodies, you can be sure they can suffer no evil. Souls lack death and always, when they've left their former home, live in new dwellings, are received and dwell there. I myself - for I remember - was Euphorbus, son of Panthus, at the time of the Trojan war, in whose chest once stuck the heavy spear of the younger son of Atreus. Recently I recognized the shield, the burden of my left arm, in the temple of Juno at Argos!

"'All things change, nothing dies. The spirit wanders and comes here from there, goes there from here, and occupies whatever bodies it likes. From beasts it passes into human bodies, and from us into beasts, and it never perishes in any time. And just as soft wax is easily stamped with new shapes and doesn't remain as it was and doesn't keep the same form, but is still itself the same wax - so I teach that the soul is always the same, but migrates into various forms.

"'Therefore, so that piety isn't conquered by the belly's desire, stop, I prophesy, driving out kindred souls with wicked slaughter, and don't let blood be nourished by blood!

Pythagoras on Universal Flux

"'And since I've set sail on the great ocean and given my sails to the wind: nothing in the whole world endures. Everything flows, and every image is formed as a wanderer. Time itself glides with constant motion, no different from a river. For neither can a river stand still, nor can the fleeting hour. But as wave is pushed by wave, and the one in front is pressed by the one coming and presses the one before it, so times both flee and follow in the same way, and are always new. For what was before is left behind,

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candidus in summo est, melior natura quod illic
aetheris est terraeque procul contagia fugit.
nec par aut eadem nocturnae forma Dianae
esse potest umquam semperque hodierna sequente,
si crescit, minor est, maior, si contrahit orbem.
'Quid? non in species succedere quattuor annum
adspicis, aetatis peragentem imitamina nostrae?
nam tener et lactens puerique simillimus aevo
vere novo est: tunc herba recens et roboris expers
turget et insolida est et spe delectat agrestes;
omnia tunc florent, florumque coloribus almus
ludit ager, neque adhuc virtus in frondibus ulla est.
transit in aestatem post ver robustior annus
fitque valens iuvenis: neque enim robustior aetas
ulla nec uberior, nec quae magis ardeat, ulla est.
excipit autumnus, posito fervore iuventae
maturus mitisque inter iuvenemque senemque
temperie medius, sparsus quoque tempora canis.
inde senilis hiems tremulo venit horrida passu,
aut spoliata suos, aut, quos habet, alba capillos.
'Nostra quoque ipsorum semper requieque sine ulla
corpora vertuntur, nec quod fuimusve sumusve,
cras erimus; fuit illa dies, qua semina tantum
spesque hominum primae matris latitavimus alvo:
artifices natura manus admovit et angi
corpora visceribus distentae condita matris
noluit eque domo vacuas emisit in auras.
editus in lucem iacuit sine viribus infans;
mox quadrupes rituque tulit sua membra ferarum,
paulatimque tremens et nondum poplite firmo
constitit adiutis aliquo conamine nervis.
inde valens veloxque fuit spatiumque iuventae
transit et emeritis medii quoque temporis annis
labitur occiduae per iter declive senectae.
subruit haec aevi demoliturque prioris
robora: fletque Milon senior, cum spectat inanes
illos, qui fuerant solidorum mole tororum
Herculeis similes, fluidos pendere lacertos;
flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,

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and what never was comes into being, and every moment is renewed.

"'You see how night, once it's run its course, stretches toward light, and this bright radiance succeeds black night. The color of the sky isn't the same when everything lies exhausted in the middle of rest as when bright Lucifer comes forth on his white horse, or again when Aurora, forerunner of the light, stains the orb she'll hand over to Phoebus. The god's own shield is red when it rises from the lowest earth in the morning, and red when it's hidden in the lowest earth, but it's brilliant white at its peak - because there the nature of the upper air is better and it escapes far from the earth's contamination. Nor can the form of nocturnal Diana ever be equal or the same - if she's growing, she's smaller today than tomorrow; if she's shrinking, she's larger.

"'What about this? Don't you see the year passing through four stages, imitating the phases of our own life? For it's tender and milky in early spring, and most like a child's age. Then the grass is fresh and lacks strength, swells but isn't solid, and delights the farmers with hope. Everything then blooms, and the nourishing field plays with flowers' colors, but there's not yet any vigor in the leaves. After spring passes, the year moves into summer and becomes a strong youth. There's no more robust age, none more fertile, none that burns hotter. Then autumn arrives, after youth's heat is laid aside - mature and mild, between youth and old age, moderate in temperament, with temples sprinkled with gray hair. Then shivering winter comes with its dreadful, trembling step, either stripped of its hair or, what hair it has, white.

"'Our own bodies too are always changing without rest, and what we were or are, we won't be tomorrow. There was that day when we were only seeds and human promise, hidden in our mother's womb. Nature applied her artisan hands and didn't want bodies to be cramped in distended guts, and she sent us from our home into the open air. Brought out into the light, the infant lay without strength. Soon it became a four-footed creature and supported its limbs in the way of beasts. Gradually, trembling and not yet firm in the knees, it stood up, the sinews aided by some effort. Then it became strong and swift, and passed

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Tyndaris et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit.
tempus edax rerum, tuque, invidiosa vetustas,
omnia destruitis vitiataque dentibus aevi
paulatim lenta consumitis omnia morte!
'Haec quoque non perstant, quae nos elementa vocamus,
quasque vices peragant, animos adhibete: docebo.
quattuor aeternus genitalia corpora mundus
continet; ex illis duo sunt onerosa suoque
pondere in inferius, tellus atque unda, feruntur,
et totidem gravitate carent nulloque premente
alta petunt, aer atque aere purior ignis.
quae quamquam spatio distent, tamen omnia fiunt
ex ipsis et in ipsa cadunt: resolutaque tellus
in liquidas rarescit aquas, tenuatus in auras
aeraque umor abit, dempto quoque pondere rursus
in superos aer tenuissimus emicat ignes;
inde retro redeunt, idemque retexitur ordo.
ignis enim densum spissatus in aera transit,
hic in aquas, tellus glomerata cogitur unda.
'Nec species sua cuique manet, rerumque novatrix
ex aliis alias reparat natura figuras:
nec perit in toto quicquam, mihi credite, mundo,
sed variat faciemque novat, nascique vocatur
incipere esse aliud, quam quod fuit ante, morique
desinere illud idem. cum sint huc forsitan illa,
haec translata illuc, summa tamen omnia constant.
'Nil equidem durare diu sub imagine eadem
crediderim: sic ad ferrum venistis ab auro,
saecula, sic totiens versa est fortuna locorum.
vidi ego, quod fuerat quondam solidissima tellus,
esse fretum, vidi factas ex aequore terras;
et procul a pelago conchae iacuere marinae,
et vetus inventa est in montibus ancora summis;
quodque fuit campus, vallem decursus aquarum
fecit, et eluvie mons est deductus in aequor,
eque paludosa siccis humus aret harenis,
quaeque sitim tulerant, stagnata paludibus ument.
hic fontes natura novos emisit, at illic
clausit, et aut imis commota tremoribus orbis

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through the space of youth. When it had lived through the years of middle age too, it slides down the sloping path of declining old age. Old age undermines and destroys the strength of earlier time. Old Milo weeps when he looks at those sagging arms that used to be solid with the mass of muscles, similar to Hercules's, now hanging flabby. Tyndareus's daughter also weeps when she sees old-age wrinkles in a mirror, and asks herself why she was twice abducted.

"'Time, devourer of things, and you, envious old age - you destroy everything! Gnawed by the teeth of time, you consume all things gradually with slow death!

"'Even these things that we call elements don't endure. Pay attention and I'll teach you what changes they go through. The eternal universe contains four generative bodies. Of these, two are heavy and by their own weight are carried downward - earth and water. And just as many lack weight and, with nothing pressing them down, seek the heights - air and fire, which is purer than air. Though they're separated in space, still everything comes from them and returns into them. Earth, dissolved, thins into flowing water. Water, attenuated, goes off into winds and air. Air in turn, with its weight removed, flashes up as the finest fire into the upper regions. Then they return backward, and the same order is unwoven. For fire, condensing, passes into thick air; this into water; water, compressed, gathers into earth.

"'No form remains the same for anything, and nature, the renewer of things, repairs forms from others into others. Nothing in the whole world, believe me, dies, but it varies and renews its face. What's called being born is beginning to be something different from what it was before, and dying is ceasing to be that same thing. Though perhaps those things are transferred here, and these transferred there, still the total sum remains constant.

"'I wouldn't believe that anything endures long under the same appearance. That's how you've come from the golden age to the iron, you generations - that's how often the fortune of places has been

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flumina prosiliunt, aut exsiccata residunt.
sic ubi terreno Lycus est epotus hiatu,
existit procul hinc alioque renascitur ore;
sic modo conbibitur, tecto modo gurgite lapsus
redditur Argolicis ingens Erasinus in arvis,
et Mysum capitisque sui ripaeque prioris
paenituisse ferunt, alia nunc ire Caicum;
nec non Sicanias volvens Amenanus harenas
nunc fluit, interdum suppressis fontibus aret.
ante bibebatur, nunc, quas contingere nolis,
fundit Anigrus aquas, postquam, nisi vatibus omnis
eripienda fides, illic lavere bimembres
vulnera, clavigeri quae fecerat Herculis arcus.
quid? non et Scythicis Hypanis de montibus ortus,
qui fuerat dulcis, salibus vitiatur amaris?
'Fluctibus ambitae fuerant Antissa Pharosque
et Phoenissa Tyros: quarum nunc insula nulla est.
Leucada continuam veteres habuere coloni:
nunc freta circueunt; Zancle quoque iuncta fuisse
dicitur Italiae, donec confinia pontus
abstulit et media tellurem reppulit unda;
si quaeras Helicen et Burin, Achaidas urbes,
invenies sub aquis, et adhuc ostendere nautae
inclinata solent cum moenibus oppida mersis.
est prope Pittheam tumulus Troezena, sine ullis
arduus arboribus, quondam planissima campi
area, nunc tumulus; nam (res horrenda relatu)
vis fera ventorum, caecis inclusa cavernis,
exspirare aliqua cupiens luctataque frustra
liberiore frui caelo, cum carcere rima
nulla foret toto nec pervia flatibus esset,
extentam tumefecit humum, ceu spiritus oris
tendere vesicam solet aut derepta bicorni
terga capro; tumor ille loci permansit et alti
collis habet speciem longoque induruit aevo.
'Plurima cum subeant audita et cognita nobis,
pauca super referam. quid? non et lympha figuras
datque capitque novas? medio tua, corniger Ammon,
unda die gelida est, ortuque obituque calescit,

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reversed. I myself have seen what was once the most solid land become a strait. I've seen lands made from the sea. Seashells have lain far from the ocean, and an old anchor has been found on mountain peaks. What was a plain, a downrush of water has made into a valley, and by flooding, a mountain has been brought down to the level sea. Where there was marshy land, dry earth now bakes with arid sands, and what endured thirst now stands soaked with swamps.

"'Here nature has opened new springs, there she's closed them. Rivers either burst forth when the earth is shaken by deep tremors, or they shrink and dry up. So when the Lycus is drunk up by a terrestrial chasm, it emerges far from there and is reborn from another mouth. So the mighty Erasinus is sometimes swallowed up, sometimes flows with hidden stream and is returned to the Argolic fields. The Mysus too is said to have regretted its source and former banks, and now the Caicus flows in a different course. In Sicily the Amenanus now rolls along sandy waters, now flows dry with its springs suppressed. Before, it could be drunk, but now the Anigrus pours out waters you wouldn't want to touch - not unless we should take all credibility from the poets! - after the two-formed centaurs washed there the wounds that the club-bearer's bow had made.

"'What about this? Hasn't the Hypanis, which rises from the Scythian mountains and was sweet, been spoiled by bitter salts?

"'Antissa, Pharos, and Phoenician Tyre were surrounded by waves - now none of them is an island. The ancient colonists had Leucas as a continuous landmass - now the straits flow around it. Zancle too is said to have been joined to Italy, until the sea stole the border and pushed the land back with its intervening wave. If you look for the Achaean cities of Helice and Buris, you'll find them under the waters, and sailors still point out the submerged towns with their sloping walls.

"'Near Pittheus's Troezen there's a mound, steep and without any trees - once the flattest area of a plain, but now a mound. For - the thing is horrible to tell! - the fierce force of winds, enclosed in dark caverns

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admotis Athamanas aquis accendere lignum
narratur, minimos cum luna recessit in orbes.
flumen habent Cicones, quod potum saxea reddit
viscera, quod tactis inducit marmora rebus;
Crathis et huic Subaris nostris conterminus oris
electro similes faciunt auroque capillos;
quodque magis mirum est, sunt, qui non corpora tantum,
verum animos etiam valeant mutare liquores:
cui non audita est obscenae Salmacis undae
Aethiopesque lacus? quos si quis faucibus hausit,
aut furit aut patitur mirum gravitate soporem;
Clitorio quicumque sitim de fonte levavit,
vina fugit gaudetque meris abstemius undis,
seu vis est in aqua calido contraria vino,
sive, quod indigenae memorant, Amythaone natus,
Proetidas attonitas postquam per carmen et herbas
eripuit furiis, purgamina mentis in illas
misit aquas, odiumque meri permansit in undis.
huic fluit effectu dispar Lyncestius amnis,
quem quicumque parum moderato gutture traxit,
haut aliter titubat, quam si mera vina bibisset.
est locus Arcadiae, Pheneon dixere priores,
ambiguis suspectus aquis, quas nocte timeto:
nocte nocent potae, sine noxa luce bibuntur;
sic alias aliasque lacus et flumina vires
concipiunt.++tempusque fuit, quo navit in undis,
nunc sedet Ortygie; timuit concursibus Argo
undarum sparsas Symplegadas elisarum,
quae nunc inmotae perstant ventisque resistunt.
nec quae sulphureis ardet fornacibus Aetne,
ignea semper erit, neque enim fuit ignea semper.
nam sive est animal tellus et vivit habetque
spiramenta locis flammam exhalantia multis,
spirandi mutare vias, quotiensque movetur,
has finire potest, illas aperire cavernas;
sive leves imis venti cohibentur in antris
saxaque cum saxis et habentem semina flammae
materiam iactant, ea concipit ictibus ignem,
antra relinquentur sedatis frigida ventis;

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and struggling in vain, desiring to breathe out somewhere and enjoy freer sky, when there was no crack in the whole prison and no passage open to the blasts, swelled up the stretched earth, just as breath from the mouth usually swells a bladder or the hide stripped from a two-horned goat. That swelling of the place remained and has the appearance of a high hill and has hardened with long age.

Pythagoras on Natural Wonders and Transformations

""Though many things that I've heard and learned come to mind, I'll mention just a few more. What about this? Doesn't water too give and take new forms? Your wave, horned Ammon, is cold at midday, but it grows warm at sunrise and sunset. The Athamanes are said to set wood on fire when water is brought near, when the moon has shrunk to its smallest orbs. The Ciconians have a river that, when drunk, turns the guts to stone and encrusts things it touches with marble. The Crathis and the Sybaris, bordering our shores, make hair like amber and gold. And what's more wondrous - there are liquids that can change not just bodies but even minds. Who hasn't heard of the obscene water of Salmacis and the Ethiopian lakes? Whoever drinks from them with their lips either goes mad or suffers a marvelous heavy sleep. Whoever has relieved thirst from the Clitorian spring flees wine and rejoices in pure water while abstaining - either there's a power in the water opposed to warming wine, or, as the natives tell it, the son of Amythaon, after he snatched Proetus's daughters from their furies through song and herbs, threw the purgings of their minds into those waters, and the hatred of wine has remained in the stream. A river with a different effect, the Lyncestian, flows from this. Whoever has drunk from it with too immoderate a throat stumbles along no differently than if he'd drunk pure wine.

""There's a place in Arcadia that the ancients called Pheneos, suspected for its ambiguous waters - fear them at night. At night they harm when drunk; without harm they're drunk in daylight. So lakes and rivers acquire first one power, then another. There was a time when Ortygia floated on the waves - now it sits still. The Argo feared the Symplegades, which used to clash together with the meeting of scattered waves - now they stand immobile and resist the winds. Etna, which burns with sulfurous furnaces, won't

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sive bitumineae rapiunt incendia vires,
luteave exiguis ardescunt sulphura fumis,
nempe, ubi terra cibos alimentaque pinguia flammae
non dabit absumptis per longum viribus aevum,
naturaeque suum nutrimen deerit edaci,
non feret illa famem desertaque deseret ignis.
'Esse viros fama est in Hyperborea Pallene,
qui soleant levibus velari corpora plumis,
cum Tritoniacam noviens subiere paludem;
haut equidem credo: sparsae quoque membra venenis
exercere artes Scythides memorantur easdem.
'Siqua fides rebus tamen est addenda probatis,
nonne vides, quaecumque mora fluidove calore
corpora tabuerint, in parva animalia verti?
in scrobe deiecto mactatos obrue tauros
(cognita res usu): de putri viscere passim
florilegae nascuntur apes, quae more parentum
rura colunt operique favent in spemque laborant.
pressus humo bellator equus crabronis origo est;
concava litoreo si demas bracchia cancro,
cetera supponas terrae, de parte sepulta
scorpius exibit caudaque minabitur unca;
quaeque solent canis frondes intexere filis
agrestes tineae (res observata colonis)
ferali mutant cum papilione figuram.
'Semina limus habet virides generantia ranas,
et generat truncas pedibus, mox apta natando
crura dat, utque eadem sint longis saltibus apta,
posterior partes superat mensura priores.
nec catulus, partu quem reddidit ursa recenti,
sed male viva caro est; lambendo mater in artus
fingit et in formam, quantam capit ipse, reducit.
nonne vides, quos cera tegit sexangula fetus
melliferarum apium sine membris corpora nasci
et serosque pedes serasque adsumere pennas?
Iunonis volucrem, quae cauda sidera portat,
armigerumque Iovis Cythereiadasque columbas
et genus omne avium mediis e partibus ovi,
ni sciret fieri, fieri quis posse putaret?

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always be fiery, nor has it always been fiery. For whether the earth is an animal and lives and has many breathing places exhaling flame, it can change the paths of breathing whenever it moves, and can close these caverns and open those. Or if light winds are locked in the lowest caves and hurl rocks against rocks and material containing seeds of flame, that material catches fire from the blows - but the caves will be left cold when the winds calm. Or if bituminous forces kindle fires, or yellow sulfur burns with thin fumes - surely when the earth no longer provides food and rich nourishment for the flame, when its strength has been consumed through long time, and the greedy nature's nutriment fails, it won't bear the hunger, and fire, deserted, will desert.

"'There's a story that men in Hyperborean Pallene are accustomed to cover their bodies with light feathers when they've dipped nine times in the Tritonian marsh. I certainly don't believe it. The Scythian women too are said to practice the same arts with their limbs sprinkled with poisons.

"'But if any trust should be added to proven things - don't you see how bodies that have rotted with lingering time or fluid heat turn into small living creatures? Bury slaughtered bulls in a trench - it's a fact known from experience - from the putrid guts everywhere flower-gathering bees are born, and like their parents they cultivate the fields, favor work, and labor with hope. When a war horse is pressed into the ground, it gives birth to hornets. If you remove the curving arms from a shore crab and bury the rest in earth, a scorpion will emerge from the buried part and threaten with its curved tail. Caterpillars that weave threads around leaves in the country - a thing farmers have observed - change their form with a funeral butterfly.

"'Mud contains seeds that generate green frogs, and it generates them without feet at first, but soon gives them legs fit for swimming, and so that they're also fit for long leaps, the hind parts exceed the measure of the front parts. And the cub that a mother bear has just delivered isn't a cub but barely living flesh - the mother shapes it into limbs by licking and brings it down to a form that she herself can assume. Don't you see how the offspring of honey-making bees, which the six-sided wax covers, are born

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sunt qui, cum clauso putrefacta est spina sepulcro,
mutari credant humanas angue medullas.
'Haec tamen ex aliis generis primordia ducunt,
una est, quae reparet seque ipsa reseminet, ales:
Assyrii phoenica vocant; non fruge neque herbis,
sed turis lacrimis et suco vivit amomi.
haec ubi quinque suae conplevit saecula vitae,
ilicet in ramis tremulaeque cacumine palmae
unguibus et puro nidum sibi construit ore,
quo simul ac casias et nardi lenis aristas
quassaque cum fulva substravit cinnama murra,
se super inponit finitque in odoribus aevum.
inde ferunt, totidem qui vivere debeat annos,
corpore de patrio parvum phoenica renasci;
cum dedit huic aetas vires, onerique ferendo est,
ponderibus nidi ramos levat arboris altae
fertque pius cunasque suas patriumque sepulcrum
perque leves auras Hyperionis urbe potitus
ante fores sacras Hyperionis aede reponit.
'Si tamen est aliquid mirae novitatis in istis,
alternare vices et, quae modo femina tergo
passa marem est, nunc esse marem miremur hyaenam;
id quoque, quod ventis animal nutritur et aura,
protinus adsimulat, tetigit quoscumque colores.
victa racemifero lyncas dedit India Baccho:
e quibus, ut memorant, quicquid vesica remisit,
vertitur in lapides et congelat aere tacto.
sic et curalium quo primum contigit auras
tempore, durescit: mollis fuit herba sub undis.
'Desinet ante dies et in alto Phoebus anhelos
aequore tinguet equos, quam consequar omnia verbis
in species translata novas: sic tempora verti
cernimus atque illas adsumere robora gentes,
concidere has; sic magna fuit censuque virisque
perque decem potuit tantum dare sanguinis annos,
nunc humilis veteres tantummodo Troia ruinas
et pro divitiis tumulos ostendit avorum.
clara fuit Sparte, magnae viguere Mycenae,
nec non et Cecropis, nec non Amphionis arces.

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as bodies without limbs and later take on feet and wings? Who would think it could happen unless they knew it happened - Juno's bird that carries stars in its tail, Jupiter's armor-bearer, Cytherea's doves, and every kind of bird coming from the middle of an egg?

"'There are those who believe that when the spine is closed up in a tomb and rotted, human marrow changes into a snake.

"'But all these things draw their origins from others. There's one bird that renews itself and reseeds itself - the Assyrians call it the phoenix. It doesn't live on grain or herbs, but on drops of frankincense and the juice of balsam. When it has completed five centuries of its life, immediately it builds itself a nest in the branches and on the top of a trembling palm tree with its talons and pure beak. As soon as it has laid beneath itself cassia and spikes of soft nard and broken cinnamon with tawny myrrh, it settles itself on top and ends its life among the perfumes. Then they say from the father's body a small phoenix is reborn, destined to live just as many years. When age has given it strength and it can carry the burden, it lifts the nest's weight from the branches of the high tree. Dutiful, it carries its own cradle and its father's tomb, and having gained the city of Hyperion through the light breezes, it lays it down before the sacred doors in Hyperion's temple.

"'But if there's something of marvelous newness in these things, let's marvel that the hyena alternates roles, and what just now was a female who'd taken a male on her back is now a male. That creature too, which feeds on wind and air, immediately imitates whatever colors it's touched. Conquered India gave lynxes to vine-bearing Bacchus. From them, as they tell it, whatever the bladder releases turns to stones and hardens when it touches the air. So too coral, which was a soft plant under the waves, hardens the first moment it touches the air.

"'The day will end and Phoebus will dip his panting horses in the deep ocean before I can recount in words all the things translated into new forms. We see times changing and some nations taking on

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vile solum Sparte est, altae cecidere Mycenae,
Oedipodioniae quid sunt, nisi nomina, Thebae?
quid Pandioniae restant, nisi nomen, Athenae?
nunc quoque Dardaniam fama est consurgere Romam,
Appenninigenae quae proxima Thybridis undis
mole sub ingenti rerum fundamina ponit:
haec igitur formam crescendo mutat et olim
inmensi caput orbis erit! sic dicere vates
faticinasque ferunt sortes, quantumque recordor,
Priamides Helenus flenti dubioque salutis
dixerat Aeneae, cum res Troiana labaret:
"nate dea, si nota satis praesagia nostrae
mentis habes, non tota cadet te sospite Troia!
flamma tibi ferrumque dabunt iter: ibis et una
Pergama rapta feres, donec Troiaeque tibique
externum patria contingat amicius arvum,
urbem et iam cerno Phrygios debere nepotes,
quanta nec est nec erit nec visa prioribus annis.
hanc alii proceres per saecula longa potentem,
sed dominam rerum de sanguine natus Iuli
efficiet, quo cum tellus erit usa, fruentur
aetheriae sedes, caelumque erit exitus illi."
haec Helenum cecinisse penatigero Aeneae
mente memor refero cognataque moenia laetor
crescere et utiliter Phrygibus vicisse Pelasgos.
'Ne tamen oblitis ad metam tendere longe
exspatiemur equis, caelum et quodcumque sub illo est,
inmutat formas, tellusque et quicquid in illa est.
nos quoque, pars mundi, quoniam non corpora solum,
verum etiam volucres animae sumus, inque ferinas
possumus ire domos pecudumque in pectora condi,
corpora, quae possint animas habuisse parentum
aut fratrum aut aliquo iunctorum foedere nobis
aut hominum certe, tuta esse et honesta sinamus
neve Thyesteis cumulemus viscera mensis!
quam male consuescit, quem se parat ille cruori
inpius humano, vituli qui guttura ferro
rumpit et inmotas praebet mugitibus aures,
aut qui vagitus similes puerilibus haedum

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strength while others fall. So Troy was great in census and men and could give so much blood for ten years - now, humbled, it shows only ancient ruins and instead of wealth it shows the tombs of ancestors. Sparta was famous, great Mycenae flourished, and so did the citadels of Cecrops and Amphion. Sparta is worthless ground, lofty Mycenae has fallen. What are the Thebes of Oedipus but a name? What remains of Pandion's Athens but the name? Now too the story goes that Dardanian Rome is rising - Rome that, next to Appenine-born Tiber's waves, lays foundations for affairs under an immense mass. This city, then, is changing its form by growing, and someday will be the head of the immense world! So the prophets say, so the oracles of fate declare. And as far as I remember, Priam's son Helenus said to Aeneas when he was weeping and uncertain of safety, when Troy's affairs were failing: 'Son of a goddess, if you understand the prophecies of my mind well enough, Troy won't fall entirely while you're safe! Flame and sword will give you a path. You'll go and carry Pergamum away with you, until an external land more friendly than your homeland comes to Troy and you together. I even foresee a city owed to Phrygian descendants, as great as none exists, none will be, none has been seen in earlier ages. Other leaders through long centuries will make it powerful, but one born from Iulus's blood will make it mistress of the world. When the earth has used him, the heavenly homes will enjoy him, and heaven will be his destination.'

"These things Helenus sang to Aeneas who carried the household gods, I remember and recall with my mind, and I rejoice that the walls related to us are growing and that the Phrygians' victory over the Greeks has been useful.

"But so that we don't wander too far from the goal with horses that have forgotten the reins - the sky and whatever is under it changes forms, and the earth and whatever is in it does too. We too are part of the world, and since we're not just bodies but also winged souls and can go into the homes of beasts and be contained in the chests of cattle, let's allow bodies that may have held the souls of parents or brothers or people joined to us by some bond or certainly of humans to be safe and honored, and let's not fill our

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edentem iugulare potest aut alite vesci,
cui dedit ipse cibos! quantum est, quod desit in istis
ad plenum facinus? quo transitus inde paratur?
bos aret aut mortem senioribus inputet annis,
horriferum contra borean ovis arma ministret,
ubera dent saturae manibus pressanda capellae!
retia cum pedicis laqueosque artesque dolosas
tollite! nec volucrem viscata fallite virga
nec formidatis cervos includite pinnis
nec celate cibis uncos fallacibus hamos;
perdite siqua nocent, verum haec quoque perdite tantum:
ora cruore vacent alimentaque mitia carpant!'
Talibus atque aliis instructo pectore dictis
in patriam remeasse ferunt ultroque petitum
accepisse Numam populi Latialis habenas.
coniuge qui felix nympha ducibusque Camenis
sacrificos docuit ritus gentemque feroci
adsuetam bello pacis traduxit ad artes.
qui postquam senior regnumque aevumque peregit,
exstinctum Latiaeque nurus populusque patresque
deflevere Numam; nam coniunx urbe relicta
vallis Aricinae densis latet abdita silvis
sacraque Oresteae gemitu questuque Dianae
inpedit. a! quotiens nymphae nemorisque lacusque,
ne faceret, monuere et consolantia verba
dixerunt! quotiens flenti Theseius heros
'siste modum,' dixit 'neque enim fortuna querenda
sola tua est; similes aliorum respice casus:
mitius ista feres, utinamque exempla dolentem
non mea te possent relevare! sed et mea possunt.
'Fando aliquem Hippolytum vestras si contigit aures
credulitate patris, sceleratae fraude novercae
occubuisse neci, mirabere, vixque probabo,
sed tamen ille ego sum. me Pasiphaeia quondam
temptatum frustra patrium temerare cubile,
quod voluit, finxit voluisse et, crimine verso
(indiciine metu magis offensane repulsae?)
damnavit, meritumque nihil pater eicit urbe
hostilique caput prece detestatur euntis.

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guts with Thyestean banquets!

"How badly he accustoms himself, how he prepares himself for impious human blood - the man who slits the throat of a calf with iron and gives unmoved ears to its bellowing, or who can slaughter a kid giving out cries similar to a child's, or feed on a bird to which he himself had given food! How much is lacking in this to make the crime complete? Where is this the preparation to go from here? Let the ox plow or owe death to old age, let the sheep provide weapons against the dreadful north wind, let well-fed she-goats give udders to be pressed by our hands! Take away nets and snares and the rope-traps and tricks! Don't deceive birds with lime-smeared rods, don't enclose frightened deer with feathered lines, don't hide hooked hooks with deceiving food! Destroy what harms, but even destroy only that - let mouths be empty of blood and take gentle food!'

Such teachings and others like these, they say, equipped Numa's heart, and he returned to his homeland. Sought out without asking, he accepted the reins of the Latin people. Happy with a nymph as wife and with the Muses as guides, he taught sacred rites and led a race accustomed to fierce war to the arts of peace. When, as an old man, he'd completed both his reign and his life, the Latin brides and people and fathers mourned the departed Numa. For his wife left the city and hid herself, concealed in the dense woods of the Arician valley, and with her groaning and complaining she interfered with the rites of Orestes's Diana.

Egeria and Hippolytus

Ah, how many times the nymphs of grove and lake warned her not to do this and spoke comforting words! How many times Theseus's hero said to her as she wept: "Stop your grief. Your fortune isn't the only one to be mourned. Look at the similar misfortunes of others - you'll bear yours more gently. I wish my examples couldn't ease your pain! But they can.

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Pittheam profugo curru Troezena petebam
iamque Corinthiaci carpebam litora ponti,
cum mare surrexit, cumulusque inmanis aquarum
in montis speciem curvari et crescere visus
et dare mugitus summoque cacumine findi;
corniger hinc taurus ruptis expellitur undis
pectoribusque tenus molles erectus in auras
naribus et patulo partem maris evomit ore.
corda pavent comitum, mihi mens interrita mansit
exiliis contenta suis, cum colla feroces
ad freta convertunt adrectisque auribus horrent
quadrupedes monstrique metu turbantur et altis
praecipitant currum scopulis; ego ducere vana
frena manu spumis albentibus oblita luctor
et retro lentas tendo resupinus habenas.
nec tamen has vires rabies superasset equorum,
ni rota, perpetuum qua circumvertitur axem,
stipitis occursu fracta ac disiecta fuisset.
excutior curru, lorisque tenentibus artus
viscera viva trahi, nervos in stipe teneri,
membra rapi partim partimque reprensa relinqui,
ossa gravem dare fracta sonum fessamque videres
exhalari animam nullasque in corpore partes,
noscere quas posses: unumque erat omnia vulnus.
num potes aut audes cladi conponere nostrae,
nympha, tuam? vidi quoque luce carentia regna
et lacerum fovi Phlegethontide corpus in unda,
nec nisi Apollineae valido medicamine prolis
reddita vita foret; quam postquam fortibus herbis
atque ope Paeonia Dite indignante recepi,
tum mihi, ne praesens augerem muneris huius
invidiam, densas obiecit Cynthia nubes,
utque forem tutus possemque inpune videri,
addidit aetatem nec cognoscenda reliquit
ora mihi Cretenque diu dubitavit habendam
traderet an Delon: Delo Creteque relictis
hic posuit nomenque simul, quod possit equorum
admonuisse, iubet deponere "qui" que "fuisti
Hippolytus," dixit "nunc idem Virbius esto!"

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"Perhaps the story of some Hippolytus has reached your ears - how I died because of my father's belief and my wicked stepmother's deceit. You'll be amazed, and you'll scarcely believe it, but I'm that very man. Once Pasiphae's daughter tried in vain to seduce me to violate my father's bed, and what she wanted, she pretended I had wanted. She reversed the crime - whether more from fear of being accused or offense at being rejected - and without my deserving it my father drove me from the city and cursed my head with hostile prayers as I departed.

"I was heading in my chariot as an exile to Pittheus's Troezen, and I was already traveling the shores of the Corinthian sea when the sea rose up, and a massive heap of water seemed to curve into the form of a mountain and grow and give bellowing sounds and split at its highest peak. From here a horned bull was driven out through the broken waves, raised upright to the chest through the soft air, vomiting part of the sea from its nostrils and gaping mouth.

"My companions' hearts were terrified, but my mind remained fearless, absorbed in my exile. When my fierce horses turned their necks toward the strait and pricked up their ears in fear, disturbed by the monster's terror, they rushed the chariot headlong down the high cliffs. I struggled to pull back the foaming reins, my hands smeared with white foam, and bent backward I strained on the pliant reins. But not even this force would have overcome the horses' rage if the wheel, as it turned its continuous axle, hadn't been broken and shattered by the impact of a stump.

"I was thrown from the chariot. My limbs were held by the reins, and you could have seen my living guts dragged, my sinews caught on the stump, my limbs partly ripped away and partly held fast, my bones giving out a heavy sound when they broke, and my exhausted soul being breathed out - and there were no parts in my body you could recognize. It was all one wound.

"Can you dare, nymph, to compare your disaster to ours? I also saw the lightless realms and bathed my mangled body in the Phlegethon's wave, and my life wouldn't have been restored except by the powerful

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hoc nemus inde colo de disque minoribus unus
numine sub dominae lateo atque accenseor illi.'
Non tamen Egeriae luctus aliena levare
damna valent; montisque iacens radicibus imis
liquitur in lacrimas, donec pietate dolentis
mota soror Phoebi gelidum de corpore fontem
fecit et aeternas artus tenuavit in undas.
Et nymphas tetigit nova res, et Amazone natus
haut aliter stupuit, quam cum Tyrrhenus arator
fatalem glaebam mediis adspexit in arvis
sponte sua primum nulloque agitante moveri,
sumere mox hominis terraeque amittere formam
oraque venturis aperire recentia fatis:
indigenae dixere Tagen, qui primus Etruscam
edocuit gentem casus aperire futuros;
utve Palatinis haerentem collibus olim
cum subito vidit frondescere Romulus hastam,
quae radice nova, non ferro stabat adacto
et iam non telum, sed lenti viminis arbor
non exspectatas dabat admirantibus umbras;
aut sua fluminea cum vidit Cipus in unda
cornua (vidit enim) falsamque in imagine credens
esse fidem, digitis ad frontem saepe relatis,
quae vidit, tetigit, nec iam sua lumina damnans
restitit, ut victor domito remeabat ab hoste,
ad caelumque oculos et eodem bracchia tollens
'quicquid,' ait 'superi, monstro portenditur isto,
seu laetum est, patriae laetum populoque Quirini,
sive minax, mihi sit.' viridique e caespite factas
placat odoratis herbosas ignibus aras
vinaque dat pateris mactatarumque bidentum,
quid sibi significent, trepidantia consulit exta;
quae simul adspexit Tyrrhenae gentis haruspex,
magna quidem rerum molimina vidit in illis,
non manifesta tamen; cum vero sustulit acre
a pecudis fibris ad Cipi cornua lumen,
'rex,' ait 'o! salve! tibi enim, tibi, Cipe, tuisque
hic locus et Latiae parebunt cornibus arces.
tu modo rumpe moras portasque intrare patentes

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medicine of Apollo's son. When I'd recovered it by Paeon's help and powerful herbs, though Pluto resented it, then Cynthia threw dense clouds in front of me - so that by being present I wouldn't increase envy for this gift. And so that I'd be safe and could be seen without danger, she added age and left my face unrecognizable. For a long time she debated whether to give me Crete or Delos to hold. Leaving Delos and Crete behind, she placed me here. At the same time she ordered me to lay down my name that could remind me of horses. 'You who were Hippolytus,' she said, 'now be Virbius!' From then on I've inhabited this grove and, as one of the lesser gods, I lie hidden under my mistress's divine power and am counted among her retinue."

But Egeria's grief couldn't be lightened by the misfortunes of others. Lying at the base of the mountain, she melted into tears, until Phoebus's sister, moved by the piety of the grieving woman, turned her body into a cold spring and thinned her limbs into eternal waters.

The strange event struck the nymphs, and the son of the Amazon was as amazed as when the Tuscan farmer saw a fateful clod of earth in the middle of his fields move of its own accord, with no one stirring it, and then take on human shape and lose the form of earth and open its mouth, recently created, to future fates. The natives called him Tages, who first taught the Etruscan race to open up future events. Or as when Romulus once suddenly saw his spear, which clung to the Palatine hills, put forth leaves - it stood by a new root, not driven in by iron, and now was not a weapon but a supple branch's tree, offering unexpected shade to the amazed.

Or as when Cipus saw his own horns in the river's water - for he saw them - and thinking the reflection was lying, he often brought his fingers to his forehead and touched what he saw, and now, no longer blaming his eyes, he stopped. As victor he was returning from a conquered enemy. Raising his eyes and arms together to the sky, he said: "Whatever, gods, this portent predicts - if it's joyful, may it be joyful for my homeland and the Roman people. If it's threatening, let it be for me!"

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adpropera! sic fata iubent; namque urbe receptus
rex eris et sceptro tutus potiere perenni.'
rettulit ille pedem torvamque a moenibus urbis
avertens faciem 'procul, a! procul omnia' dixit
'talia di pellant! multoque ego iustius aevum
exul agam, quam me videant Capitolia regem.'
dixit et extemplo populumque gravemque senatum
convocat, ante tamen pacali cornua lauro
velat et aggeribus factis a milite forti
insistit priscosque deos e more precatus
'est' ait 'hic unus, quem vos nisi pellitis urbe,
rex erit: is qui sit, signo, non nomine dicam:
cornua fronte gerit! quem vobis indicat augur,
si Romam intrarit, famularia iura daturum.
ille quidem potuit portas inrumpere apertas,
sed nos obstitimus, quamvis coniunctior illo
nemo mihi est: vos urbe virum prohibete, Quirites,
vel, si dignus erit, gravibus vincite catenis
aut finite metum fatalis morte tyranni!'
qualia succinctis, ubi trux insibilat eurus,
murmura pinetis fiunt, aut qualia fluctus
aequorei faciunt, siquis procul audiat illos,
tale sonat populus; sed per confusa frementis
verba tamen vulgi vox eminet una 'quis ille est?'
et spectant frontes praedictaque cornua quaerunt.
rursus ad hos Cipus 'quem poscitis,' inquit 'habetis'
et dempta capiti populo prohibente corona
exhibuit gemino praesignia tempora cornu.
demisere oculos omnes gemitumque dedere
atque illud meritis clarum (quis credere possit?)
inviti videre caput: nec honore carere
ulterius passi festam inposuere coronam;
at proceres, quoniam muros intrare vetaris,
ruris honorati tantum tibi, Cipe, dedere,
quantum depresso subiectis bobus aratro
conplecti posses ad finem lucis ab ortu.
cornuaque aeratis miram referentia formam
postibus insculpunt, longum mansura per aevum.
Pandite nunc, Musae, praesentia numina vatum,

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And from the green turf he appeased the grassy altars with fragrant fires, gave wine in bowls, and from the slaughtered sheep consulted the trembling guts to see what they meant. As soon as the haruspex of the Etruscan race examined them, he saw great undertakings in them indeed, though not clearly manifested. But when he raised his keen gaze from the animal's guts to Cipus's horns, he said: "Hail, O king! For to you, to you and your horns, Cipus, this place and the Latin citadels will submit. Only break delays and hurry to enter the open gates! So the fates command. For once you're received in the city, you'll be king and hold the scepter with lasting security."

He stepped back and turned his grim face away from the city's walls. "Far off, ah, far off may the gods drive all such things!" he said. "Much more justly will I spend my life in exile than have the Capitol see me as king." He spoke, and immediately summoned the people and the solemn senate. But first he covered his horns with peaceful laurel, stood on a mound made by his brave soldiers, and after praying to the ancient gods in the customary way, said: "There's one man here who, unless you drive him from the city, will be king. I'll tell you who he is by a sign, not by name. He bears horns on his forehead! The seer indicates to you that if he enters Rome, he'll give you slavish laws. He could have burst through the open gates, but we stood in his way, though no one is more closely connected to me than he is. Keep this man from the city, citizens, or if he deserves it, bind him with heavy chains, or end your fear with the death of the fated tyrant!"

The kind of murmuring the people made was like the sounds pine forests make when the fierce east wind hisses, or the kind ocean waves make if someone hears them from far off. But through the confused words of the roaring crowd, one voice stands out: "Who is he?" They looked at foreheads and sought the predicted horns.

Cipus spoke to them again: "You have the one you're asking for," he said, and though the people tried to prevent it, he removed the crown from his head and revealed his forehead marked with the twin horns. Everyone lowered their eyes and gave a groan. And that head, famous for its merits - who could believe

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(scitis enim, nec vos fallit spatiosa vetustas,)
unde Coroniden circumflua Thybridis alti
insula Romuleae sacris adiecerit urbis.
Dira lues quondam Latias vitiaverat auras,
pallidaque exsangui squalebant corpora morbo.
funeribus fessi postquam mortalia cernunt
temptamenta nihil, nihil artes posse medentum,
auxilium caeleste petunt mediamque tenentes
orbis humum Delphos adeunt, oracula Phoebi,
utque salutifera miseris succurrere rebus
sorte velit tantaeque urbis mala finiat, orant:
et locus et laurus et, quas habet ipse, pharetrae
intremuere simul, cortinaque reddidit imo
hanc adyto vocem pavefactaque pectora movit
'quod petis hinc, propiore loco, Romane, petisses,
et pete nunc propiore loco: nec Apolline vobis,
qui minuat luctus, opus est, sed Apolline nato.
ite bonis avibus prolemque accersite nostram.'
iussa dei prudens postquam accepere senatus,
quam colat, explorant, iuvenis Phoebeius urbem,
quique petant ventis Epidauria litora, mittunt;
quae simul incurva missi tetigere carina,
concilium Graiosque patres adiere, darentque,
oravere, deum, qui praesens funera gentis
finiat Ausoniae: certas ita dicere sortes.
dissidet et variat sententia, parsque negandum
non putat auxilium, multi retinere suamque
non emittere opem nec numina tradere suadent:
dum dubitant, seram pepulere crepuscula lucem;
umbraque telluris tenebras induxerat orbi,
cum deus in somnis opifer consistere visus
ante tuum, Romane, torum, sed qualis in aede
esse solet, baculumque tenens agreste sinistra
caesariem longae dextra deducere barbae
et placido tales emittere pectore voces:
'pone metus! veniam simulacraque nostra relinquam.
hunc modo serpentem, baculum qui nexibus ambit,
perspice et usque nota visu, ut cognoscere possis!
vertar in hunc: sed maior ero tantusque videbor,

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it? - they saw unwillingly. Nor did they allow him to lack honor any longer - they placed a festive crown on him.

But the leaders, since you're forbidden to enter the walls, gave you, Cipus, as much honored country land as you could encompass with a plow drawn by yoked oxen from sunrise to the end of light. And they carved horns with a marvelous likeness onto the bronze doorposts, destined to remain through long ages.

Aesculapius Comes to Rome

Now reveal, Muses - you divinities present to poets, for you know, and the vast stretch of time doesn't deceive you - how the island that the deep Tiber flows around was added to the sacred rites of Romulus's city.

Once a dreadful plague had corrupted the Latin air, and pale bodies were wasting with bloodless disease. Exhausted by funerals, when they saw that mortal efforts achieved nothing and the arts of healing could do nothing, they sought heavenly help. They traveled to Delphi, which holds the middle of the earth's ground, and to Phoebus's oracle, and begged him to be willing with his healthbringing prophecy to aid their wretched affairs and end the evils of such a great city.

Both the place and the laurels and the quivers that the god himself carries trembled together, and the prophetic seat gave this voice from the lowest shrine and stirred their frightened hearts: "What you seek here, Roman, you should have sought in a nearer place, and seek now in a nearer place. You don't need Apollo to lessen your grief - you need Apollo's son. Go with good omens and summon our offspring."

When the wise senate received the god's commands, they searched to learn what city the young god of Phoebus cultivated, and sent men with favorable winds to seek the shores of Epidaurus. As soon as the sent men touched that place with their curved ship, they approached the council of the Greek leaders

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in quantum verti caelestia corpora debent.'
extemplo cum voce deus, cum voce deoque
somnus abit, somnique fugam lux alma secuta est.
postera sidereos aurora fugaverat ignes:
incerti, quid agant, proceres ad templa petiti
conveniunt operosa dei, quaque ipse morari
sede velit, signis caelestibus indicet, orant.
vix bene desierant, cum cristis aureus altis
in serpente deus praenuntia sibila misit
adventuque suo signumque arasque foresque
marmoreumque solum fastigiaque aurea movit
pectoribusque tenus media sublimis in aede
constitit atque oculos circumtulit igne micantes:
territa turba pavet, cognovit numina castos
evinctus vitta crines albente sacerdos
et 'deus en, deus est! animis linguisque favete,
quisquis ades!' dixit 'sis, o pulcherrime, visus
utiliter populosque iuves tua sacra colentes!'
quisquis adest, iussum veneratur numen, et omnes
verba sacerdotis referunt geminata piumque
Aeneadae praestant et mente et voce favorem.
adnuit his motisque deus rata pignora cristis
ter repetita dedit vibrata sibila lingua;
tum gradibus nitidis delabitur oraque retro
flectit et antiquas abiturus respicit aras
adsuetasque domos habitataque templa salutat.
inde per iniectis adopertam floribus ingens
serpit humum flectitque sinus mediamque per urbem
tendit ad incurvo munitos aggere portus.
restitit hic agmenque suum turbaeque sequentis
officium placido visus dimittere vultu
corpus in Ausonia posuit rate: numinis illa
sensit onus, pressa estque dei gravitate carina;
Aeneadae gaudent caesoque in litore tauro
torta coronatae solvunt retinacula navis.
inpulerat levis aura ratem: deus eminet alte
inpositaque premens puppim cervice recurvam
caeruleas despectat aquas modicisque per aequor
Ionium zephyris sextae Pallantidos ortu

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and begged them to grant them the god who, present, would end the deaths of the Ausonian race. The oracles had said so clearly.

Opinion was divided and varied. Some thought help shouldn't be denied. Many advised keeping their own resource and not sending out their god or handing over their divine power. While they hesitated, late twilight had struck down the light, and earth's shadow had brought darkness to the world, when the healing god seemed to stand in a dream before your couch, Roman, but just as he usually is in his temple. He held a rustic staff in his left hand and stroked his long beard with his right, and sent out these words from his peaceful chest: "Lay aside your fears! I'll come and leave behind my statue. Only look carefully at this serpent that coils around my staff and notice it with your sight, so you can recognize it! I'll transform into it, but I'll be bigger and will seem as large as celestial bodies should be when they transform."

Immediately with the voice the god departed, and with the god sleep departed, and gentle daylight followed sleep's departure. The next dawn had put the starry fires to flight. Uncertain what to do, the leaders gathered at the god's elaborate temple and prayed that he indicate with celestial signs what dwelling he himself wished to inhabit. They'd barely finished when the god, in the form of a serpent with lofty crests, sent out warning hisses of gold and, by his arrival, shook the cult statue and the altars and the marble floor and the golden roof. He stood sublime in the middle of the temple, raised to mid-chest, and looked around with eyes flashing with fire. The terrified crowd panicked. The priest recognized the divine presence - his chaste hair was bound with a white ribbon - and said: "It's a god - a god it is! Be favorable in hearts and tongues, whoever's here! May you, most beautiful one, be seen favorably, and may you help the peoples who cultivate your rites!"

All who were present worshipped the god as ordered, and they all repeated the priest's words doubled back, and the Aeneadae showed their piety with both mind and voice. The god nodded to them and, with moving crests, gave sure pledges repeated three times, with tongue vibrating hissing. Then he glided

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Italiam tenuit praeterque Lacinia templo
nobilitate deae Scylaceaque litora fertur;
linquit Iapygiam laevisque Amphrisia remis
saxa fugit, dextra praerupta Cocinthia parte,
Romethiumque legit Caulonaque Naryciamque
evincitque fretum Siculique angusta Pelori
Hippotadaeque domos regis Temesesque metalla
Leucosiamque petit tepidique rosaria Paesti.
inde legit Capreas promunturiumque Minervae
et Surrentino generosos palmite colles
Herculeamque urbem Stabiasque et in otia natam
Parthenopen et ab hac Cumaeae templa Sibyllae.
hinc calidi fontes lentisciferumque tenetur
Liternum multamque trahens sub gurgite harenam
Volturnus niveisque frequens Sinuessa columbis
Minturnaeque graves et quam tumulavit alumnus
Antiphataeque domus Trachasque obsessa palude
et tellus Circaea et spissi litoris Antium.
huc ubi veliferam nautae advertere carinam,
(asper enim iam pontus erat), deus explicat orbes
perque sinus crebros et magna volumina labens
templa parentis init flavum tangentia litus.
aequore placato patrias Epidaurius aras
linquit et hospitio iuncti sibi numinis usus
litoream tractu squamae crepitantis harenam
sulcat et innixus moderamine navis in alta
puppe caput posuit, donec Castrumque sacrasque
Lavini sedes Tiberinaque ad ostia venit.
huc omnis populi passim matrumque patrumque
obvia turba ruit, quaeque ignes, Troica, servant,
Vesta, tuos, laetoque deum clamore salutant.
quaque per adversas navis cita ducitur undas,
tura super ripas aris ex ordine factis
parte ab utraque sonant et odorant aera fumis,
ictaque coniectos incalfacit hostia cultros.
iamque caput rerum, Romanam intraverat urbem:
erigitur serpens summoque acclinia malo
colla movet sedesque sibi circumspicit aptas.
scinditur in geminas partes circumfluus amnis

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down the gleaming steps and turned his head back as he was leaving, looked at the ancient altars, greeted his accustomed home and the temple he'd inhabited.

From there the huge serpent crept along the ground covered with strewn flowers, bent in coils, and headed through the middle of the city to the harbor protected by a curved dike. Here he stopped and seemed to dismiss his retinue with peaceful expression and the crowd of attendants from their duty. He placed his body in the Ausonian ship. It felt the weight of his divine presence, and the keel was pressed down by the god's heaviness. The Aeneadae rejoiced, slaughtered a bull on the shore, and released the cables of the garlanded, wreathed ship.

A light breeze had pushed the vessel. The god rose up high, pressed the curving stern with his imposed neck, and looked down at the sea-blue waters. Through the Ionian sea with gentle west winds, at the rising of the sixth day he reached Italy and passed Lacinia's temple famous for the goddess, and the Scylacean shores. He left Iapygia behind, avoided the Amphrisian rocks with left-side oars, passed steep Cocinthus on the right, made for Romethium and Caulon and Narycia, escaped the strait of Sicilian Pelorus and the home of King Hippotades and the bronze of Temese. He sought Leucosia and the rose gardens of warm Paestus.

From there he passed along Capri and the promontory of Minerva and the hills of Surrentum rich with vines, and the city of Hercules, Stabiae, and Parthenope created for leisure, and from there the temple of the Cumaean Sibyl. From here the warm springs, and Liternum rich in mastic trees, and the Volturnus dragging much sand under its stream, and Sinuessa crowded with snow-white doves, and the graves of Minturnae, and what his nursling buried, and the house of Antiphates, and Trachas surrounded by marshland, and Circean land, and the crowded shore of Antium.

When the sailors steered their sail-bearing ship here - for now the sea was rough - the god uncoiled his folds and, gliding through the many turns and great curves, entered the temple of his parent that

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(Insula nomen habet) laterumque a parte duorum
porrigit aequales media tellure lacertos:
huc se de Latia pinu Phoebeius anguis
contulit et finem specie caeleste resumpta
luctibus inposuit venitque salutifer urbi.
Hic tamen accessit delubris advena nostris:
Caesar in urbe sua deus est; quem Marte togaque
praecipuum non bella magis finita triumphis
resque domi gestae properataque gloria rerum
in sidus vertere novum stellamque comantem,
quam sua progenies; neque enim de Caesaris actis
ullum maius opus, quam quod pater exstitit huius:
scilicet aequoreos plus est domuisse Britannos
perque papyriferi septemflua flumina Nili
victrices egisse rates Numidasque rebelles
Cinyphiumque Iubam Mithridateisque tumentem
nominibus Pontum populo adiecisse Quirini
et multos meruisse, aliquos egisse triumphos,
quam tantum genuisse virum, quo praeside rerum
humano generi, superi, favistis abunde!
ne foret hic igitur mortali semine cretus,
ille deus faciendus erat; quod ut aurea vidit
Aeneae genetrix, vidit quoque triste parari
pontifici letum et coniurata arma moveri,
palluit et cunctis, ut cuique erat obvia, divis
'adspice,' dicebat 'quanta mihi mole parentur
insidiae, quantaque caput cum fraude petatur,
quod de Dardanio solum mihi restat Iulo.
solane semper ero iustis exercita curis,
quam modo Tydidae Calydonia vulneret hasta,
nunc male defensae confundant moenia Troiae,
quae videam natum longis erroribus actum
iactarique freto sedesque intrare silentum
bellaque cum Turno gerere, aut, si vera fatemur,
cum Iunone magis? quid nunc antiqua recordor
damna mei generis? timor hic meminisse priorum
non sinit; en acui sceleratos cernitis enses.
quos prohibete, precor, facinusque repellite neve
caede sacerdotis flammas exstinguite Vestae!'

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touches the yellow shore. When the sea had been calmed, the god from Epidaurus left his father's altars. Having enjoyed the hospitality of the related divine power, he scraped the sandy shore with the rasping of his scales, slid along and leaned his head on the high stern's rudder, and rested there until he came to Castrum and the sacred halls of Lavinium and to the Tiber's mouth.

Here all the people in a crowd, both matrons and fathers, rushed out to meet him everywhere, and those women who guard your Trojan fires, Vesta, and greeted the god with joyful shouts. Wherever the swift ship was drawn through the opposing waves, incense sounded on altars made in order on both banks and perfumed the air with smoke, and the struck victim warmed the thrown knives.

And now the ship had entered Rome, the head of the world. The serpent raised himself, leaned his neck against the top of the mast, moved it, and looked around for a seat suitable for himself. The river divides into two equal parts - it's called the Island - and it stretches out equal arms from the middle land on both sides. Here Apollo's snake made his way from the Latin pine and, taking back his heavenly form, put an end to grief and came as a health-bringer to the city.

Caesar's Deification

This god, however, came as a stranger to our temples. Caesar is a god in his own city. War and the toga marked him as supreme - not so much his wars completed with triumphs, and his domestic deeds accomplished, and his glory's swift culmination, as his own offspring transformed him into a new star, a comet. For there's no greater work among Caesar's acts than that he became this man's father.

Really - was it greater to have tamed the sea-surrounded Britons, to have driven victorious fleets through the seven-flowing waters of the papyrus-bearing Nile, to have added to the Roman people the rebellious Numidians and Juba of Cynips and Pontus swelling with Mithridates's names, and to have deserved many triumphs and celebrated some, than to have fathered so great a man? Gods, you've favored the human race abundantly by making him guardian of the world!

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Talia nequiquam toto Venus anxia caelo
verba iacit superosque movet, qui rumpere quamquam
ferrea non possunt veterum decreta sororum,
signa tamen luctus dant haut incerta futuri;
arma ferunt inter nigras crepitantia nubes
terribilesque tubas auditaque cornua caelo
praemonuisse nefas; solis quoque tristis imago
lurida sollicitis praebebat lumina terris;
saepe faces visae mediis ardere sub astris,
saepe inter nimbos guttae cecidere cruentae;
caerulus et vultum ferrugine Lucifer atra
sparsus erat, sparsi lunares sanguine currus;
tristia mille locis Stygius dedit omina bubo,
mille locis lacrimavit ebur, cantusque feruntur
auditi sanctis et verba minantia lucis.
victima nulla litat, magnosque instare tumultus
fibra monet, caesumque caput reperitur in extis,
inque foro circumque domos et templa deorum
nocturnos ululasse canes umbrasque silentum
erravisse ferunt motamque tremoribus urbem.
non tamen insidias venturaque vincere fata
praemonitus potuere deum, strictique feruntur
in templum gladii: neque enim locus ullus in urbe
ad facinus diramque placet nisi curia caedem.
tum vero Cytherea manu percussit utraque
pectus et Aeneaden molitur condere nube,
qua prius infesto Paris est ereptus Atridae,
et Diomedeos Aeneas fugerat enses.
talibus hanc genitor: 'sola insuperabile fatum,
nata, movere paras? intres licet ipsa sororum
tecta trium: cernes illic molimine vasto
ex aere et solido rerum tabularia ferro,
quae neque concursum caeli neque fulminis iram
nec metuunt ullas tuta atque aeterna ruinas;
invenies illic incisa adamante perenni
fata tui generis: legi ipse animoque notavi
et referam, ne sis etiamnum ignara futuri.
hic sua conplevit, pro quo, Cytherea, laboras,
tempora, perfectis, quos terrae debuit, annis.

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So that he wouldn't be born from mortal seed, that one had to be made a god. When the golden mother of Aeneas saw this, and also saw that grim death was being prepared for the high priest and that conspirators' arms were moving, she grew pale and said to whichever gods she met: "Look how vast a plot is being prepared against me, with what deceit they seek the head that alone remains to me from Dardanian Iulus! Will I alone always be tormented with just worries - now wounded by Tydeus's son's Calydonian spear, now confounded by Troy's badly defended walls? Will I see my son driven by long wanderings, tossed on the strait, entering the homes of the silent dead, waging war with Turnus - or, if I speak the truth, more with Juno? Why am I now recalling the old losses of my race? This fear doesn't let me remember earlier ones. Look, you can see wicked swords being sharpened! Prevent them, I pray, and repel the crime, and don't extinguish Vesta's flames by killing her priest!"

Venus, anxious, cast these words in vain throughout all heaven and moved the gods, who, though they can't break the iron decrees of the ancient sisters, still gave signs of coming grief that weren't uncertain. They say arms were heard clanging among dark clouds, and terrible trumpets and horns heard in the sky forewarned of the crime. The sun's sad face too offered lurid light to the troubled earth. Often torches seemed to burn among the middle of the stars. Often drops of blood fell from the clouds. The morning star was dark blue and spattered with black rust, and the moon's chariot was splashed with blood. The Stygian owl gave sad omens in a thousand places, ivory wept in a thousand places, and songs and threatening words were reported to have been heard in sacred groves.

No victim brings success, and the liver warns that great turmoil is approaching, and a severed head is found in the entrails. In the forum and around homes and temples of the gods, dogs are reported to have howled at night, and the shades of the silent dead to have wandered, and the city to have been shaken with tremors. But the warnings of the gods couldn't overcome the conspirators and conquer the approaching fates. Drawn swords were brought into the temple - for no place in the city pleased them for this crime and the dreadful murder except the senate house.

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ut deus accedat caelo templisque colatur,
tu facies natusque suus, qui nominis heres
inpositum feret unus onus caesique parentis
nos in bella suos fortissimus ultor habebit.
illius auspiciis obsessae moenia pacem
victa petent Mutinae, Pharsalia sentiet illum,
Emathiique iterum madefient caede Philippi,
et magnum Siculis nomen superabitur undis,
Romanique ducis coniunx Aegyptia taedae
non bene fisa cadet, frustraque erit illa minata,
servitura suo Capitolia nostra Canopo.
quid tibi barbariam gentesque ab utroque iacentes
oceano numerem? quodcunque habitabile tellus
sustinet, huius erit: pontus quoque serviet illi!
'Pace data terris animum ad civilia vertet
iura suum legesque feret iustissimus auctor
exemploque suo mores reget inque futuri
temporis aetatem venturorumque nepotum
prospiciens prolem sancta de coniuge natam
ferre simul nomenque suum curasque iubebit,
nec nisi cum senior meritis aequaverit annos,
aetherias sedes cognataque sidera tanget.
hanc animam interea caeso de corpore raptam
fac iubar, ut semper Capitolia nostra forumque
divus ab excelsa prospectet Iulius aede!'
Vix ea fatus erat, medi cum sede senatus
constitit alma Venus nulli cernenda suique
Caesaris eripuit membris nec in aera solvi
passa recentem animam caelestibus intulit astris
dumque tulit, lumen capere atque ignescere sensit
emisitque sinu: luna volat altius illa
flammiferumque trahens spatioso limite crinem
stella micat natique videns bene facta fatetur
esse suis maiora et vinci gaudet ab illo.
hic sua praeferri quamquam vetat acta paternis,
libera fama tamen nullisque obnoxia iussis
invitum praefert unaque in parte repugnat:
sic magnus cedit titulis Agamemnonis Atreus,
Aegea sic Theseus, sic Pelea vicit Achilles;

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Then truly Cytherea beat her chest with both hands and tried to hide the son of Aeneas in a cloud, the way she'd earlier snatched Paris from hostile Atreus's son and the way Aeneas had fled Diomedes's swords. But the father spoke to her like this: "Alone, daughter, do you prepare to move insuperable fate? You may enter the home of the three sisters yourself - you'll see there the archive of events with massive construction, made of bronze and solid iron, which fears neither the crash of heaven nor the lightning's wrath nor any ruin, safe and eternal. You'll find there the fates of your race carved in everlasting adamant. I myself read them and noted them in my mind, and I'll report them so you won't still be ignorant of the future.

"This man, for whom you labor, Cytherea, has completed his time and finished the years he owed to earth. You and his son will make it so that he accesses heaven as a god and is worshipped in temples. His son, heir of the name, will alone bear the burden imposed and will have us as his strongest avenger in war for his murdered father. Under his leadership the conquered walls of besieged Mutina will seek peace. Pharsalia will feel him, Macedonian Philippi will be wet again with slaughter, and a great name will be defeated in the Sicilian waves. The Egyptian wife of a Roman general, trusting badly in the marriage torches, will fall, and she'll have threatened in vain that our Capitol would serve her Canopus!

"Why should I count for you the barbarian lands and peoples lying near both oceans? Whatever habitable land the earth sustains will be his! The sea too will serve him! When peace is given to the lands, he'll turn his mind to civil laws and, as the most just author, will issue laws and regulate customs by his example. Looking toward the age of future time and coming descendants, he'll order the son born from his sacred wife to carry simultaneously his name and his cares. And not until, as an old man, he's equaled his years with his merits, will he touch the heavenly seats and kindred stars.

"Meanwhile, from the murdered body, snatch this soul and make it a star, so that always the divine Julius may look down on our Capitol and the forum from his lofty temple!"

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denique, ut exemplis ipsos aequantibus utar,
sic et Saturnus minor est Iove: Iuppiter arces
temperat aetherias et mundi regna triformis,
terra sub Augusto est; pater est et rector uterque.
di, precor, Aeneae comites, quibus ensis et ignis
cesserunt, dique Indigetes genitorque Quirine
urbis et invicti genitor Gradive Quirini
Vestaque Caesareos inter sacrata penates,
et cum Caesarea tu, Phoebe domestice, Vesta,
quique tenes altus Tarpeias Iuppiter arces,
quosque alios vati fas appellare piumque est:
tarda sit illa dies et nostro serior aevo,
qua caput Augustum, quem temperat, orbe relicto
accedat caelo faveatque precantibus absens!
Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis
nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.
cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi:
parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum,
quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,
siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam.

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He'd barely spoken when nurturing Venus stood in the middle of the senate house, visible to no one. She snatched the recent soul from Caesar's body and didn't allow it to dissolve into air, but carried it among the heavenly stars. As she carried it, she felt it catch light and burst into flame, and she released it from her breast. It flies higher than the moon and, trailing a fiery tail in its vast orbit, gleams as a star - and seeing his son's good deeds, he confesses they're greater than his own and rejoices to be surpassed by him.

Though he forbids his own acts to be preferred to his father's, fame, free and answerable to no commands, unwilling, prefers him and rebels against him in this one thing alone. So great Atreus yields in honors to Agamemnon, so Aegeus to Theseus, so Peleus was conquered by Achilles. Finally, to use examples equal to them, so too Saturn is less than Jupiter. Jupiter controls the citadels of the sky and the realms of the triple universe - the earth is under Augustus. Each is both father and ruler.

I pray, you gods who accompanied Aeneas, to whom sword and fire yielded, you native gods, and Quirinus, father of the city, and Gradivus, father of unconquered Quirinus, and Vesta sacred among Caesar's household gods, and you, Phoebus, domestic with Caesarean Vesta, and you, Jupiter, who hold the lofty Tarpeian citadels, and whatever other gods it's right and pious for a prophet to call upon - may that day be slow and later than our age when Augustus, having left the world he governs, accesses heaven and absent favors those who pray!

Epilogue

Now I've completed a work that neither Jupiter's anger nor fire nor sword nor devouring old age will be able to destroy. When it wishes, let that day, which has power over nothing except this body, end the span of my uncertain life. Yet in my better part I'll be borne immortal above the lofty stars, and my name will be indelible. Wherever Roman power extends over conquered lands, I'll be read by the people's mouths, and through all the ages, if prophets' foretellings have any truth, I'll live in fame.

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