

ADAPTED FROM THE EPIC POEM BY HOMER

THE ILIAD



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Roy Thomas
Miguel Angel Sepulveda
Sandu Florea
Nathan Fairbairn

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The Story So Far:

When **Helen**, queen of Sparta, was taken across the sea to the city of Troy by its prince **Paris**, her husband **Menelaus** raised a large Achaean (Greek) force, led by his brother **King Agamemnon**, to bring her back. In the war's ninth year, Agamemnon offended proud **Achilles**, so he, their greatest hero of war, vowed to fight no more till the matter was redressed. His goddess-mother **Thetis** persuaded **Zeus**, king of the gods, to favor the Trojans in battle, though the immortals knew Troy (also called Ilium) was eventually doomed to fall.

Paris and Menelaus met in single combat to decide claims to Helen and her treasure. But when Paris lost, the goddesses **Hera** and **Athena** caused the fighting to resume. The Olympians took sides—**Apollo** and **Aphrodite** favoring the Trojans, Hera and Athena the Argives (Greeks), and the war god **Ares** first one side, then the other. At last Zeus forbade any gods to take part in the war, and he himself turned the tide in favor of Troy and her allies. The Achaeans were driven behind their ship-wall, and the Trojans encamped on the plain outside their city. With the dawn, says **Hector**, Troy's greatest warrior, they will destroy the fortifications—and the Achaeans....

The Achaeans



Agamemnon
King of Mycenae



Menelaus
King of Sparta



Achilles
Mightiest Achaean
Warrior



Ajax the Greater
Foremost Achaean
Warrior
after Achilles



Odysseus
King of Ithaca



Diomedes
Youngest Achaean
Commander

The Trojans



Priam
King of Troy



Paris
Son of Priam



Hector
Greatest Warrior
of Troy



Aeneas
Trojan Nobleman
Once Queen of Sparta -
now Helen of Troy



Helen
Once Queen of Sparta -
now Helen of Troy

Writer
Roy Thomas Penciler
Miguel Angel Sepulveda

Inker
Sandu Florea Colorist
Nathan Fairbairn

Letterer
VC's Rus Wooton

Cover
Paolo Rivera

Special Thanks
Chris Allo

Production
Tom Van Cise & Taylor Esposito

Asst. Editor
Lauren Sankovitch

Editor
Nicole Boose

Senior Editor
Ralph Macchio

Editor in Chief
Joe Quesada

Publisher
Dan Buckley

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THUS DID THE TROJANS
WATCH AS THE NIGHT
WORE ON.

BUT PANIC, COMRADE OF BLOOD-STAINED ROUT, HAD TAKEN HOLD OF THE ACHAENS, AND THEIR PRINCES WERE ALL OF THEM IN DESPAIR.

AGAMEMNON SUMMONED HIS CHIEFS TO A COUNCIL... AND SPOKE TO THEM AMID HEAVY SIGHS...

My friends,
the hand of heaven
has been laid heavily
upon me.

Cruel Zeus
swore that I should
sack Troy... but he
has played me false.

Now, therefore,
let us all sail back
to Argos...

For we
shall never
take that
wide-wayed
city!



Son of Atreus, do you truly think the Achaeans so unwarlike--so cowardly?

If your own mind is set upon going home--go! The way is open to you.

But the rest of us will stay here till we have sacked Troy!

Though young, Diomedes, you have spoken wisely.

Agamemnon-- I urged you not to take the girl Briseis from Achilles, but in your pride you dishonored our mightiest warrior.

Let us now appease him, with gifts and fair words.

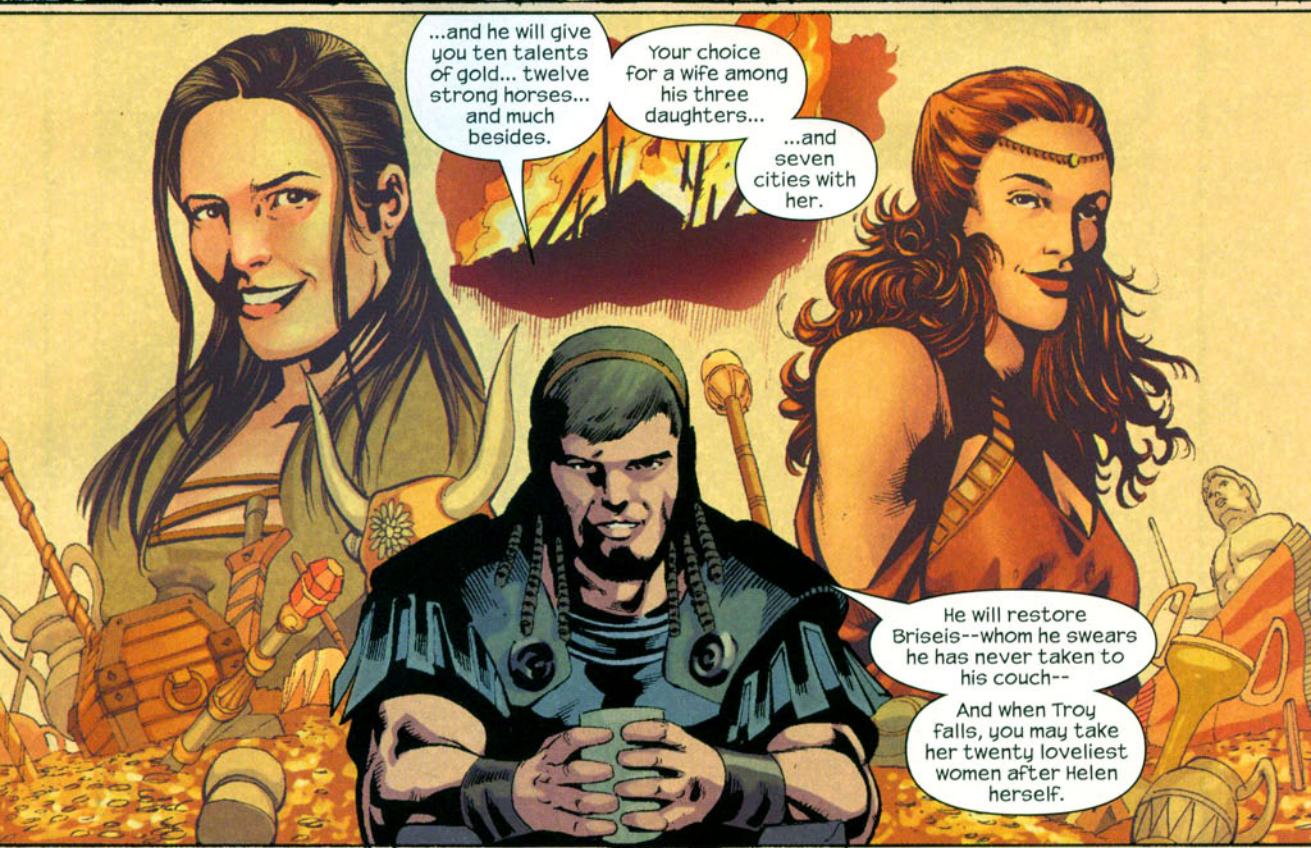
I was wrong in what I did, Nestor... I admit it.

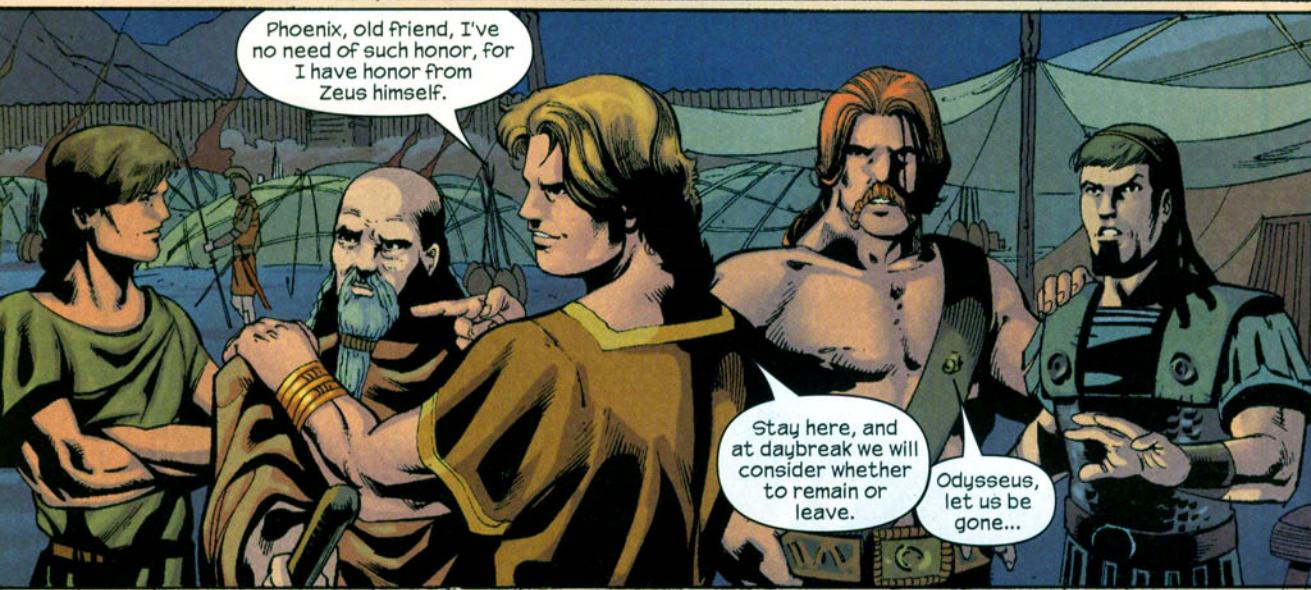
I will send to Achilles an embassy composed of Ajax and Odysseus--and led by Phoenix here, whom he loves.

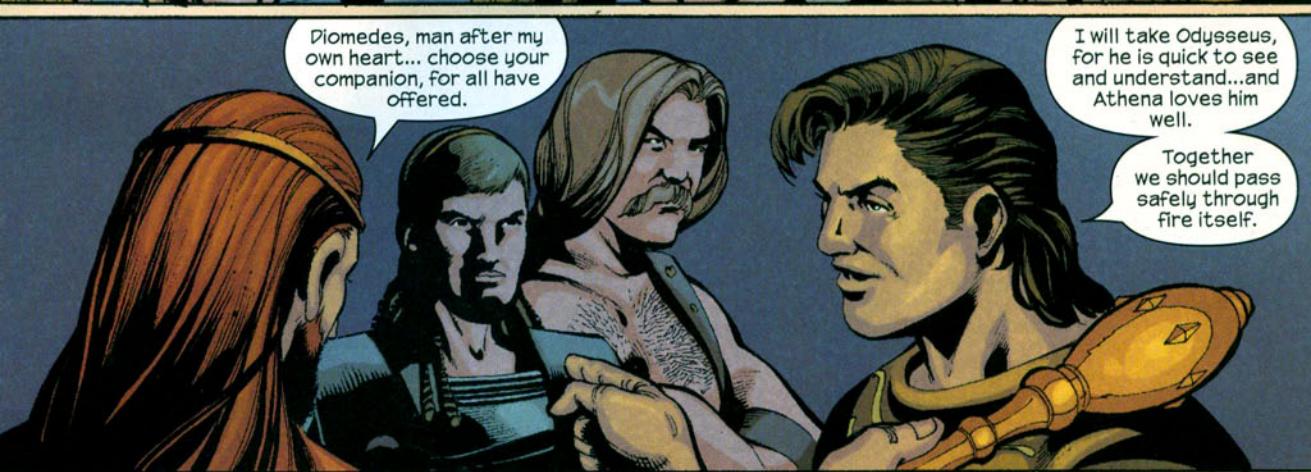
ERE LONG, THE THREE EMISSARIES APPROACHED THE SHIPS AND TENTS OF THE MYRMIDONS...

See, Patroclus. Three who are dearest to me of the Achaeans draw near.

All hail and welcome! You must come upon some great matter.







NOR DID HECTOR LET THE TROJANS SLEEP, FOR HE TOO CALLED A 'COUNCIL'...

Is there one who will go find whether the Achaeans mean to flee in their ships...

...or perhaps by sheer exhaustion fail to keep their watches?

He who dares will win infinite honor... and the Argives' fleetest horses.

I, Hector! I, Dolon, will go to the ships--

--if you swear to give me the chariot and horses of Achilles himself!

May Zeus bear witness that no Trojan but you shall mount those steeds!

MEANWHILE, DIOMEDES AND ODYSSEUS PROWLED LIKE TWO LIONS AMID THE ARMOR AND BLOOD-STAINED BODIES OF THOSE WHO HAD FALLEN...

I hear the cry of a heron upon our right hands-- a sign from Athena.

If she guard us now, I will sacrifice a year-old heifer to her.

Diomedes-- someone comes!

It may be a spy--or some thief who would plunder the dead.

Let us lie down among the corpses and let him get a little past us...



But if I make an end of you--

AARR--



--you will give me no more trouble.

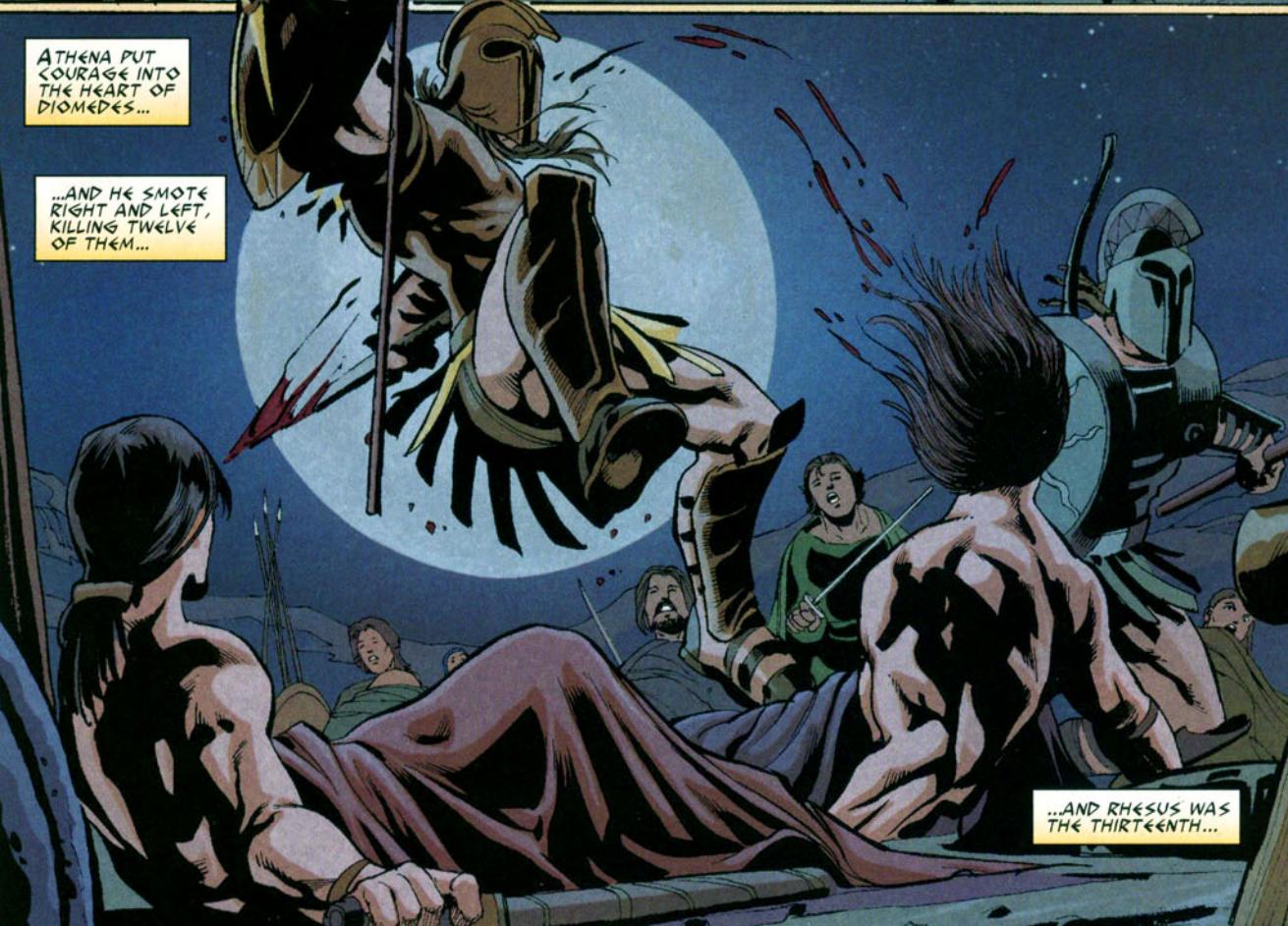
SOON DIOMEDES AND ODYSSEUS CAME TO THE SLEEPING THRACIAN SOLDIERS, TIRED OUT WITH THEIR DAY'S TOIL...

...WITH THEIR KING SLEEPING IN THEIR MIDST, HIS FINE HORSES HARD BY.

ATHENA PUT COURAGE INTO THE HEART OF DIOMEDES...

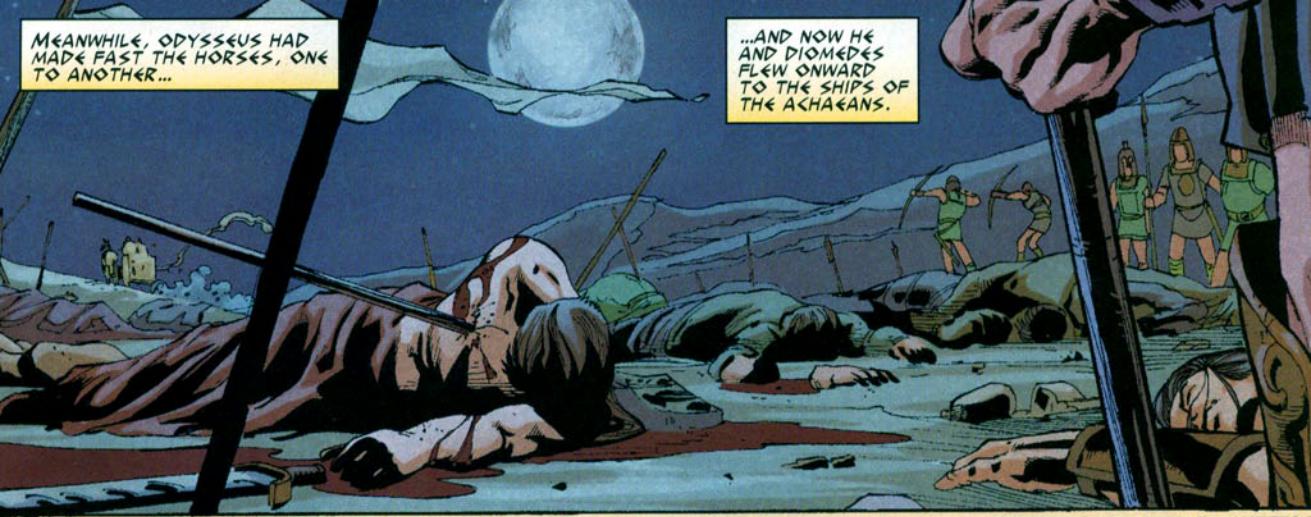
...AND HE SMOTE RIGHT AND LEFT, KILLING TWELVE OF THEM...

...AND RHESUS WAS THE THIRTEENTH...



MEANWHILE, ODYSSEUS HAD MADE FAST THE HORSES, ONE TO ANOTHER...

...AND NOW HE AND DIOMEDES FLEW ONWARD TO THE SHIPS OF THE ACHAEOANS.



SOON, AT THE CAMP OF NESTOR...

I never yet saw or heard of horses such as those you brought back.

Surely some god has met you and given them to you.

Heaven, if it willed, could give us even better horses... but these are freshly brought from Thrace by the king we killed.



AND, AS DAWN BROUGHT LIGHT ALIKE TO MORTALS AND IMMORTALS, ZEUS SENT FORTH THE FIERCE GODDESS DISCORD, WITH THE ENSIGN OF WAR IN HER HANDS...



Get thee to the ships of Odysseus, in the middle of the Achaean line...

...that your voice may carry to the tents of Ajax and Achilles on the nether ends.

BY THE SHIPS COME
FROM ITHACA, DISCORD
TOOK HER STAND...

...AND SHE RAISED A
CRY BOTH LOUD AND
SHRILL.

IT FILLED THE ACHAENS
WITH COURAGE, GIVING
THEM HEART TO FIGHT ON.

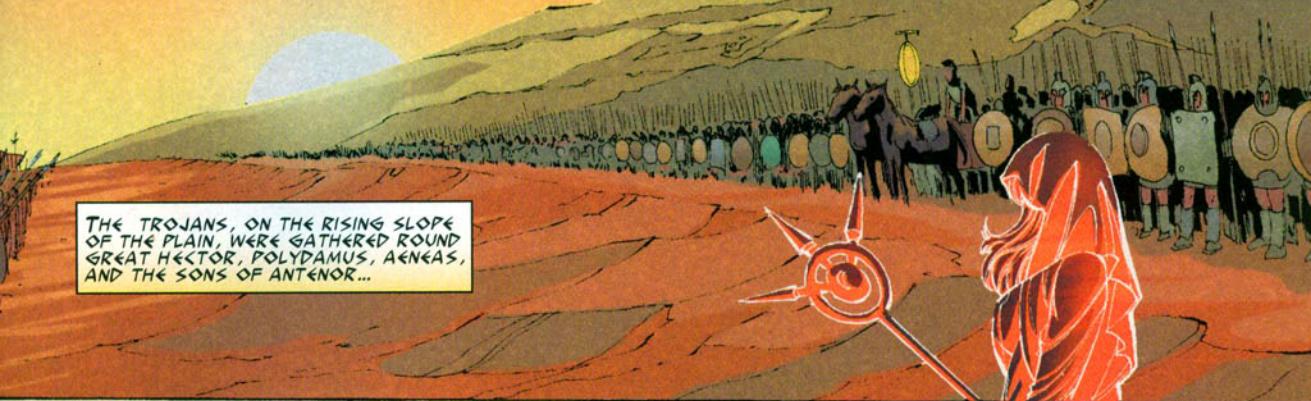
AND AGAMEMNON, SON OF
ATREUS, SHOUTED ALOUD AS
HE DONNED HIS ARMOR...

Argives!
Gird yourselves
for combat!

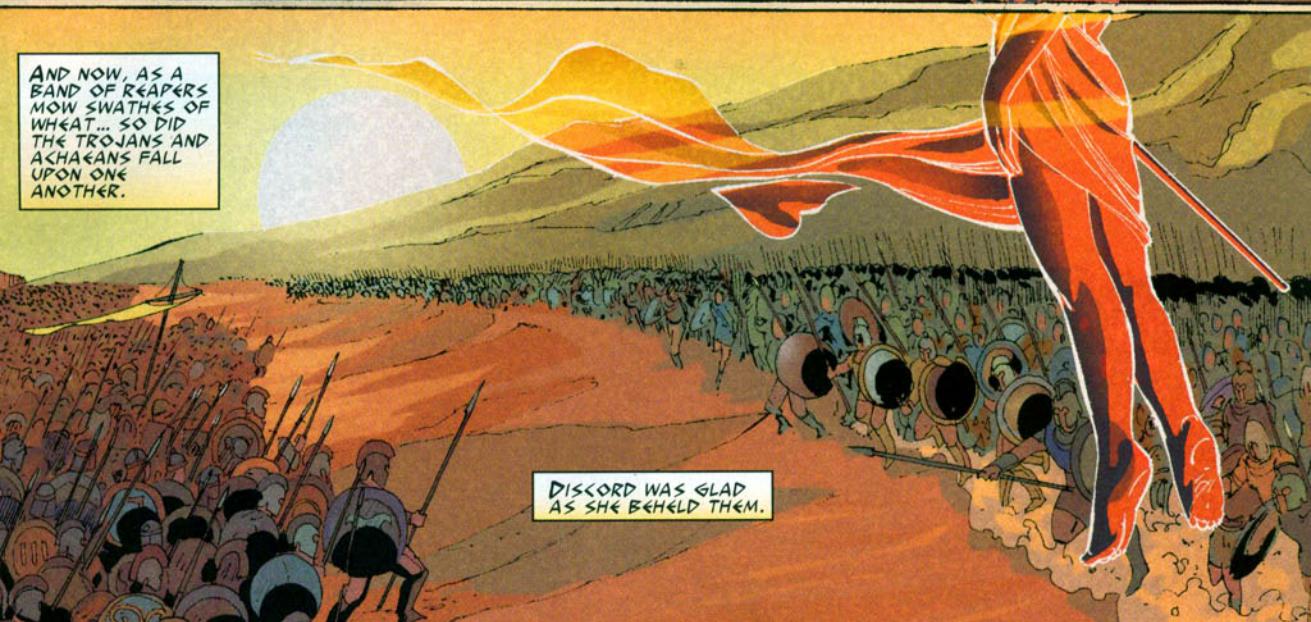
Let every
man now let his
charioteer hold
his horses in
readiness...

...while you
go forward
into battle
on foot!





THE TROJANS, ON THE RISING SLOPE OF THE PLAIN, WERE GATHERED ROUND GREAT HECTOR, POLYDAMUS, AENEAS, AND THE SONS OF ANTENOR...



AND NOW, AS A BAND OF REAPERS MOW SWATHES OF WHEAT... SO DID THE TROJANS AND ACHAEOANS FALL UPON ONE ANOTHER.

DISCORD WAS GLAD AS SHE BEHELD THEM.



THEY FOUGHT LIKE WOLVES...

...UNTIL, AT MIDDAY, AGAMEMNON LED THE WAY IN BREAKING THE BATTALIONS OF THE ENEMY...

Onward, Achaeans--



For surely,
Zeus means us
to take Troy
itself this
day!

BUT, AS THE KING OF
ARGOS WAS ABOUT TO
REACH THE HIGH-WALLED
CITY...



...THE KING OF
GODS CALLED
HIS DIVINE
MESSENGER
TO THE CREST
OF MOUNT IDA.

Go,
fleet
Iris...



...and
speak thus
to Hector...



Son of
Priam... so long
as you see Agamemnon
pressing forward, let
others bear the brunt
of the battle.

But when
he is wounded,
Zeus will give you
strength to slay
till night falls
again.



"Behold how Iphidamus,
son of Antenor--a brave
man of great stature--
now confronts the Argives'
commander..."

With twelve
ships I set sail
from fertile
Thrace--

But I left
them at Percote
and came here
by land--



YET, WHEN HECTOR SAW WOUNDED AGAMEMNON QUIT THE FIELD, HE PLUNGED IN AMONG THE FOREMOST...



Trojans--Lycians--
Dardanians! Be men,
and acquit yourself
bravely!

Their king has
left them--and
Zeus has promised
me a great
triumph!

THEN, WHEN HE SPIED TWO FIERCE ACHAENS WREAKING HAVOC AMONGST THE TROJANS...



Diomedes!
Odysseus!

Great
Hector is
bearing down
upon us!

BRONZE HELMET TURNED BRONZE SPEAR--



We must
stand firm
against his
onset!



BUT HECTOR FELL TO HIS KNEES...FOR DARKNESS HAD FALLEN UPON HIS EYES...

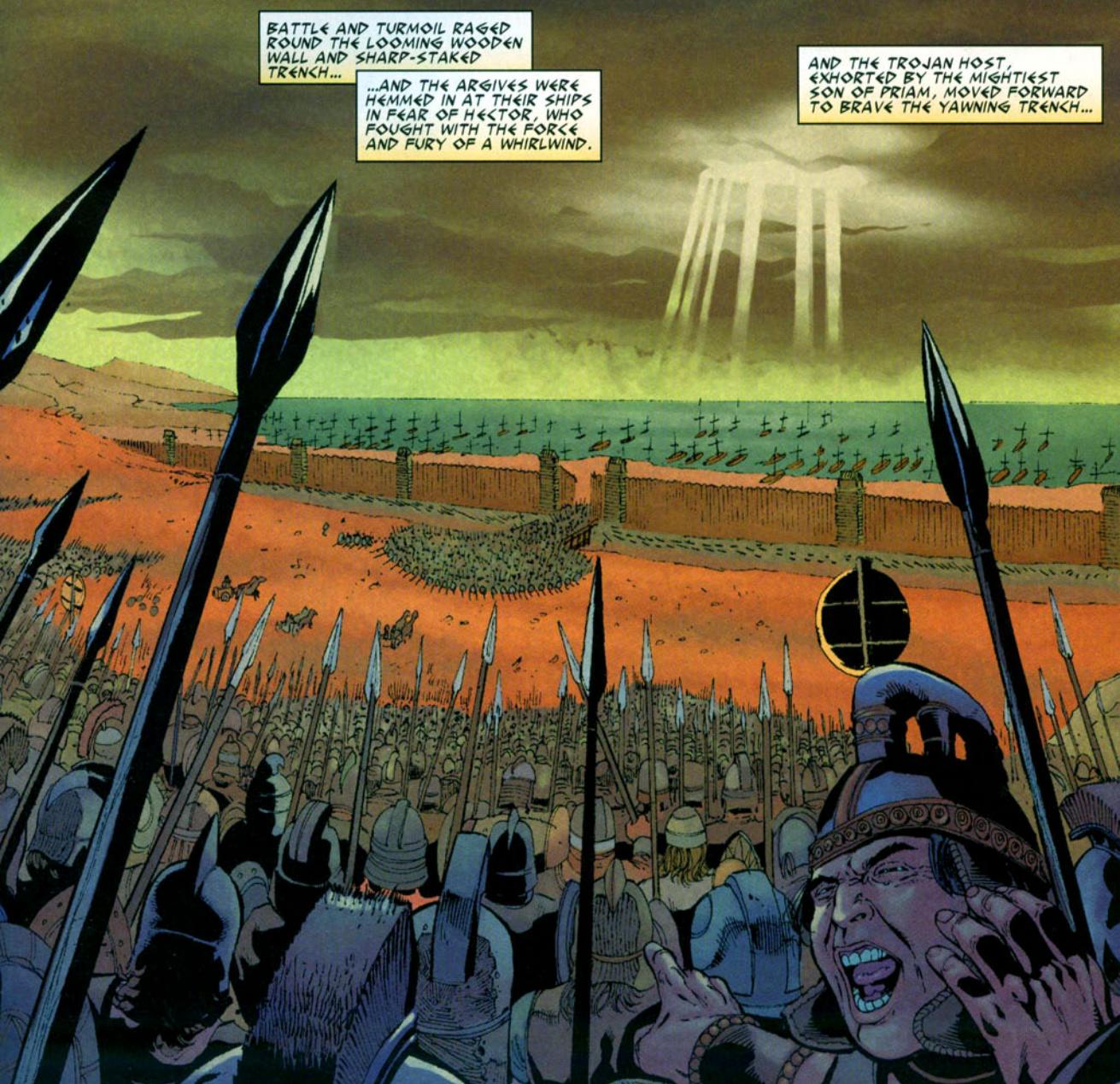
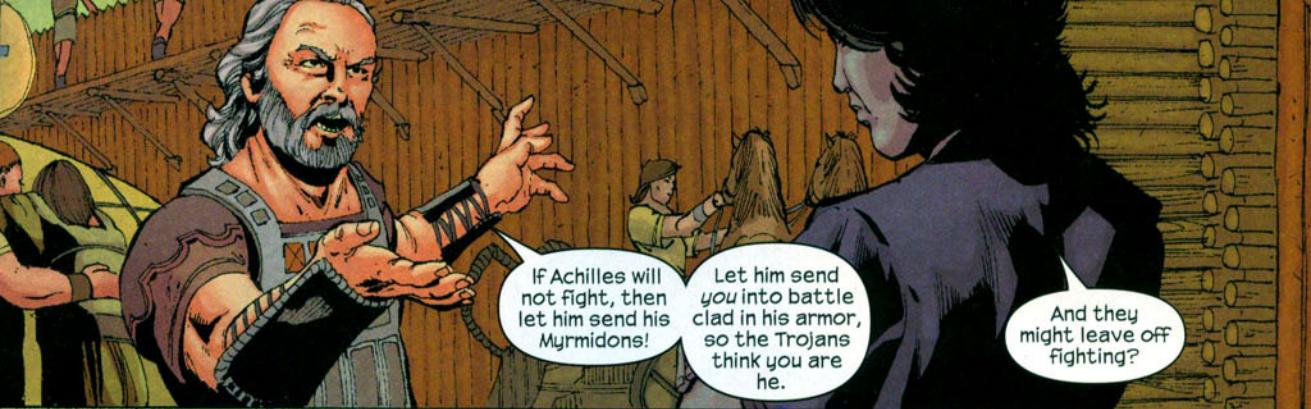
Dog! You
will not escape
from death
this time!

Lord Apollo,
who saved our
Hector from
Diomedes'
spear--



MEANWHILE, ACHILLES SAW IT ALL AND TOOK NOTE, AS HE STOOD ON THE STERN OF HIS SHIP...





YET THEIR HORSES COULD
NEITHER JUMP IT NOR
CROSS IT...

...BUT STOOD NEIGHING
FRIGHTENED UPON ITS
WIDE BRINK...

...AS COMBAT
RAGED AT THE
WALL LIKE
BURNING FIRE.

HECTOR SPRANG FROM HIS
CHARIOT, THAT THE OTHER
TROJANS MIGHT DO
THE SAME...

Follow me
on foot, Paris--
all of you--

And if the day
of their doom is at
hand, the Achaeans
will not be able to
withstand us!

RAISING A LOUD CRY OF
BATTLE, THE WARRIOR'S
OF ILIUM MADE STRAIGHT FOR
THE WOODEN RAMPARTS--

--THE SHIELDS ABOVE THEIR
HEADS WARDING OFF THE ARGIVES'
THUNDERSTORM OF STONES.

BUT EVEN AS THEY
SOUGHT TO SCALE
THE TRENCH--

--A SOARING EAGLE SKIRTED
THEIR LEFT WING--A MONSTROUS
BLOOD-RED SNAKE STRUGGLING
IN ITS TALONS--

--AND WRITHING TILL
IT STRUCK THE BIRD
THAT HELD IT--

--AND WAS DROPPED INTO THE MIDDLE OF THE HOST.

Hector--just as the eagle loosed her hold, so will it be with ourselves.

It is a sign we must not fight the Achaeans at their ships!

Has fear robbed you of your reason, Polydamus?

There is one omen, and one only--

--that a man should fight for his country!

THEN, AS ZEUS SENT A MIGHTY WIND FROM MOUNT IDA, THE TROJANS TORE DOWN THE BREASTWORKS FROM THE ARGIVES' WALLS...

...AND UPHEAVED THE BUTTRESSES BEFORE THEM.

Ajax went about everywhere on the walls...

Argives! Let no man turn in flight--but press forward!

...WHILE TEUCER RAINED DOWN ARROWS ON THE ATTACKERS.







Now IN,
all you sons
of Ilium--

--and fling
fire upon their
ships!

NEXT:
WHEN THE GODS
MAKE WAR...

THE GLOSSARY OF THE ILIAD

Appease – to bring to a state of peace, quiet, ease or calm

Charioteer – driver of a light, two-wheeled vehicle for one person, usually drawn by two horses and driven from a standing position

Embassy – a body of persons entrusted with a mission to a sovereign or government not their own

Ensign – a flag or banner

Entrails – internal parts, intestines

Ere – before

Fertile – bearing, producing, or capable of producing vegetation, crops, etc.

Fray – a fight or battle

Gird – to prepare (oneself) for action

Heifer – a young cow over one year old that has not produced a calf

Hemmed – enclosed or confined

Heron – a bird characterized by being long-legged, long-necked and usually long-billed

Onset – an assault or attack

Play – to use or manipulate, especially for one's own interests

Plunder – to rob or steal

Prattle – to talk in a foolish or simple-minded way

Rampart – a broad embankment raised as a fortification; a protective barrier

Repent – to feel sorry or regret past conduct

Sack – to pillage or loot after capture; plunder

Seducer – a person who leads others astray usually by persuasion or false promises

Shrewd – of a practical or sharp intelligence

Shrill – a loud, piercing sound

Smote – past tense of *smite*, meaning to strike or hit hard, with or as if with the hand, a stick, or other weapon

Stern – the rear part of a ship or boat

Straits – a position of difficulty, perplexity, distress, or need

Swath – the width of a scythe stroke or a mowing-machine blade

Talent – a variable unit of weight and money used in ancient Greece, Rome, and the Middle East

