

ADAPTED FROM THE EPIC POEM BY HOMER

THE ILIAD



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MARVEL
LIMITED SERIES

5 of 8



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THE ILIAD

The Story So Far:

When **Helen**, queen of Sparta, was taken across the sea to the city of Troy (also called Ilium) 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**, and that greatest of heroes vowed to fight no more till the matter was redressed. His goddess-mother **Thetis** persuaded **Zeus**, king of the gods, to favor the Achaeans in battle for a time.

At times, the Olympian gods took sides in the war—**Apollo** and **Aphrodite** favoring the Trojans, **Hera** and **Athena** the Argives (Greeks). At last Zeus forbade any gods to take part in combat, and he turned the tide of battle temporarily in favor of Troy and her allies. The Achaeans were driven behind their ship-wall, and pleas to Achilles to return to the fray fell on deaf ears. It seemed that **Hector**, Troy's greatest warrior, might burn the Achaeans' ships and doom the invaders...

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



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NOW ZEUS LEFT TROJANS
AND ACHAEOGS TO THEIR
NEVER-ENDING TOIL, AND
TURNED HIS KEEN EYES
TO OTHER PEOPLES, IN
OTHER LANDS.

FOR HE DID NOT
BELIEVE THAT
ANY OF THE
IMMORTALS WOULD
DARE HELP EITHER
SIDE IN THE FRAY.

BUT POSEIDON,
GOD OF THE SEA,
PITIED THE ARGIVES...

...AND STRONG WAS
HIS ANGER AGAINST
HIS BROTHER ZEUS.

AS THE SEA OPENED A
PATH BEFORE HIS CHARIOT,
SEA-MONSTERS LEFT THEIR
LAIRS AND CAME GAMBOLING
ABOUT HIM FROM EVERY
CORNER OF THE DEEP ...

FOR THEY
KNEW THEIR
MASTER.

THUS DID HE
COME TO THE
ACHAEAN HOST...



...WHERE THE
TROJANS FOLLOWED
HECTOR LIKE A
STORM-CLOUD.



THE SEA-GOD BEHELD THE TWO
AJAXES--THE GREATER AND THE
LESSER--FIGHTING SIDE BY SIDE...



You two can be the
saving of the Achaeans,
if you can hold
out here--

--where
furious Hector
leads them
like a pillar
of flame!

THUS SAYING, HE
STRUCK BOTH OF THEM
WITH HIS SCEPTER...





AT POSEIDON'S WORDS,
AROUND THE TWO AJAXES
THERE GATHERED STRONG
BANDS OF MEN OF WHOM
NOT EVEN ARES OR ATHENA
COULD HAVE MADE LIGHT.

THEY MADE A LIVING
FORCE--SPEAR TO
SPEAR, SHIELD TO
SHIELD, MAN TO MAN--

AND THEIR
HEARTS WERE
SET ON BATTLE.



TEUCER LOOSED ARROW
AFTER ARROW INTO
TROJAN RANKS FROM A
RAISED MOUND OF EARTH...



YET STILL
HECTOR
PRESSED
ON...

The
Achaeans
will not
check me for
long.

For Zeus
himself has
inspired my
onset!





HECTOR THEN
TOOK AIM AT
THE ARCHER
TEUCER--

HAH!
I evade your
spear, son of
Priam!

BUT HE STRUCK
INSTEAD AMPHIMACHUS,
SON OF CTAEATUS--

--AND GRANDSON
OF POSEIDON!

THE SEA-LORD WAS
ENRAGED TO SEE
AMPHIMACHUS FALL...

Idomeneus--what has
become of the threats
you once hurled at
the Trojans?

I would
not yield even
to Achilles in
hand-to-hand
fight!

THEN DID THE
WARRIOR-KING OF
CRETE LEAD THE
SONS OF HELLAS
AGAINST THE
TROJANS' LEFT WING--

--SPREADING PANIC
AS THEY BEHELD
HIM COMING ON,
STRONG AS FLAME!



NOW WOULD THE
TROJANS HAVE
BEEN DRIVEN IN
SORRY PLIGHT
FROM THE SHIPS...

BUT HECTOR
AND PARIS
RALLIED THEM.



AND THEN THE GREATER AJAX
STRODE OUT OF THE RANKS...

Hector! The
time is near
when you shall
pray Zeus and all
the gods--

--that your
steeds may be
swifter than hawks
as they bear you
back to your
city!



AND AS HE SPOKE,
AN EAGLE FLEW BY--AND
THE ARGIVES TOOK
HEART AT THE OMEN.



Ajax,
braggart and
false of tongue--
this day is great with
the destruction of
the Achaeans!

Your flesh
will glut our hounds
and birds of prey if
you dare await my
long spear!

MEANWHILE, BEHIND
THEIR HARD-PRESSED
LINES, MANY AN ACHAEN
HERO-KING WAS TENDING
TO HIS WOUNDS:

MENELAUS,
GRAZED ON THE
FOREHEAD BY
A BATTLE-AXE...

ODYSSEUS, HIS
THIGH SLICED BY
A SPEAR...

DIOMEDES, WHOSE
FOOT HAD BEEN
PIERCED BY PARIS'
ARROW...

AGAMEMNON,
STRUCK BY ONE
TROJAN BROTHER
WHEN HE SLEW
THE OTHER.

Agamemnon!
The wall before our
ships is fallen--and the
fighting has reached
our ships!

Then,
Nestor, it must
be the will of Zeus
that the Achaeans
perish here, far
from Argos.

Perhaps
we can
escape ruin by
fleeing...

Son of Atreus, you should have commanded some other, baser army--

--not Achaeans, to whom Zeus has allotted a life of hard fighting from youth to old age!

Let us go to the fray, wounded though we be--and spur on others!

THUS DID THE ARMORED KINGS SET OUT, WITH POSEIDON GRANTING THEM FRESH COURAGE...



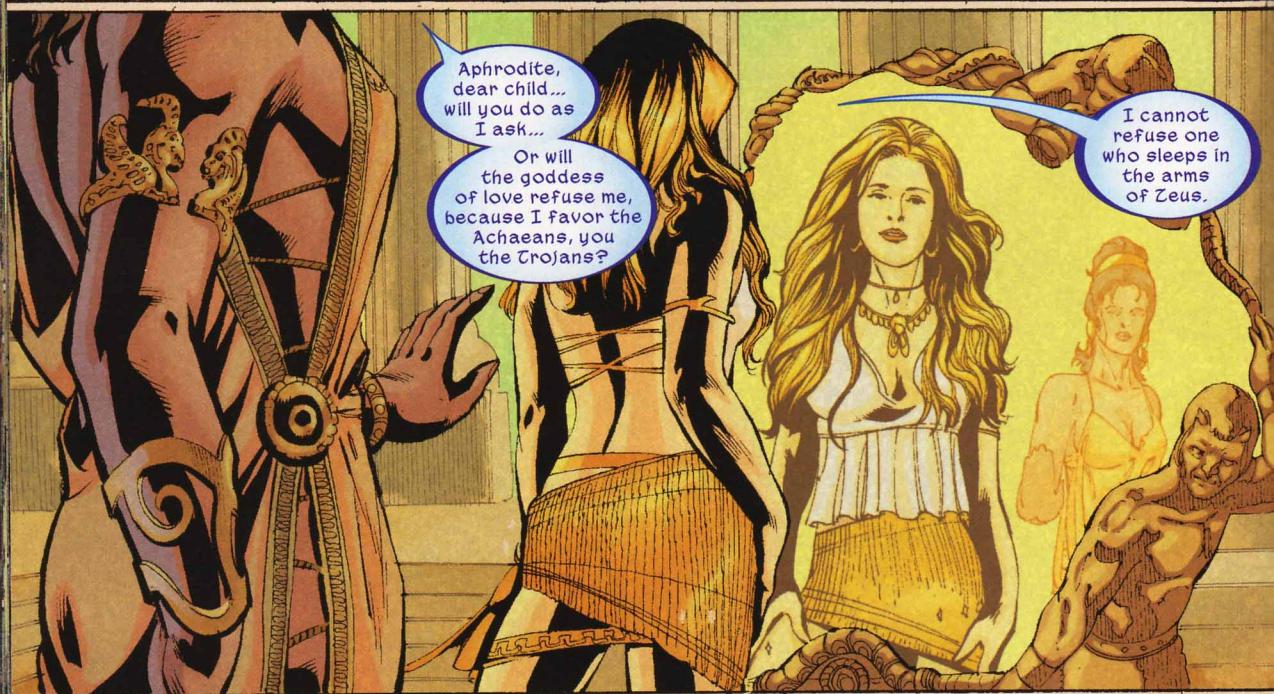
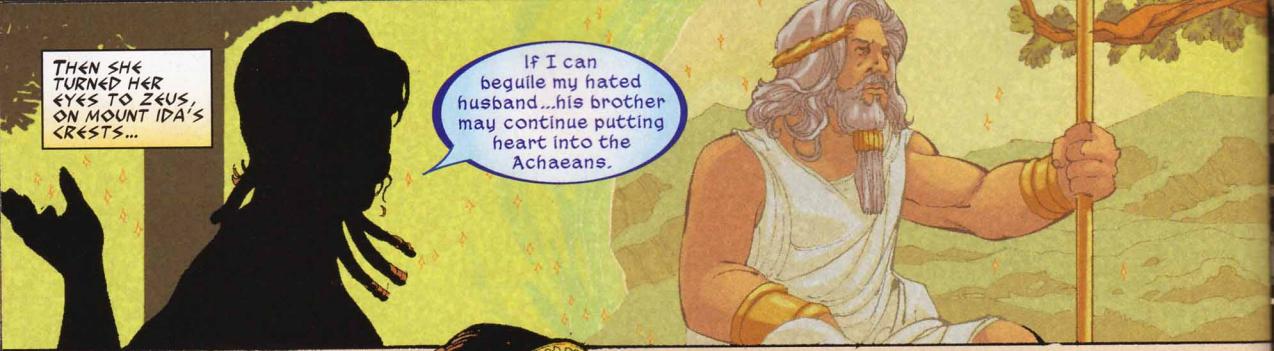
...EVEN AS HERA, WIFE OF ZEUS, LOOKED DOWN FROM A PEAK OF OLYMPUS...

...AND WAS GLADDENED BY THE SIGHT OF THE SEA-GOD AIDING HER FAVERED ARGIVES.



THEN SHE TURNED HER EYES TO ZEUS, ON MOUNT IDA'S CRESTS...

If I can beguile my hated husband...his brother may continue putting heart into the Achaeans.



THEN DID HERA SPEED
NOT TOWARD OCEANUS,
BUT FAR OVER THE WAVES
OF THE SEA...

...TILL SHE
REACHED THE
CITY OF LEMNOS.

Sleep,
brother of
Death...

You who
lord it alike over
mortals and
immortals...



Do me
but one service,
and I shall
be grateful to
you forever
after.

What
does the queen
of goddesses
want?

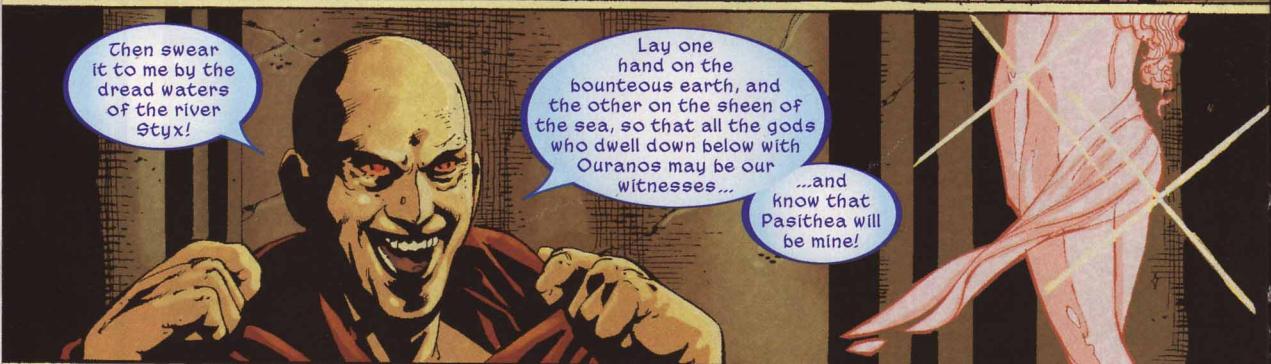
Close Zeus'
eyes in slumber
while I clasp him in
my embrace...

...and my
son Hephaestus
will make you a
golden chair and
footstool.

Any
of the other
gods I would lull to
sleep without
compunction.

But I dare
not go near
Zeus unless he
bids me.





SOON, HERA
STOOD ON
MOUNT IDA...

...WHILE SLEEP
PERCHED UPON A
TREE BRANCH, IN
THE SEMBLANCE
OF A BIRD...

Zeus--I
came to tell you
I am going to the
world's end, to
reconcile a quarrel
between Oceanus
and mother
Tethys.

AND THE GIRDLE OF
APHRODITE INFAMED
THE DESIRE OF ZEUS.

You can
choose another
time to visit
Oceanus.

Never have
I been so
overwhelmed by
passion for goddess
or for mortal
woman...

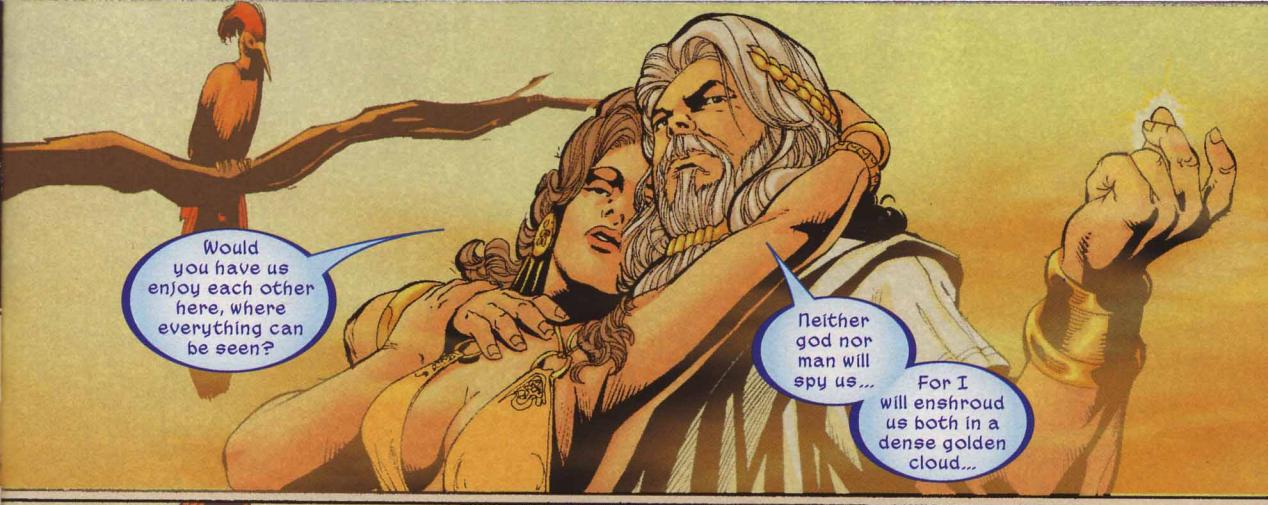
...no, not
for the wife
of Ixion...

...or for
Semele...

...or for
Danaë, or the
daughter of
Phoenix...

...or
Demeter...

...or even
for lovely
Leto...





DIOMEDEUS--
AGAMEMNON--
MENELAUS--
ODYSSEUS--

WOUNDED THOUGH
THEY WERE, THEY
MARCHED WITH
POSEIDON...

AND MIGHTY WAS THE
UPROAR AS ACHAAN AND
TROJAN FORCES MET.

MIGHTY HECTOR
AIMED HIS SPEAR
AT GREAT AJAX...

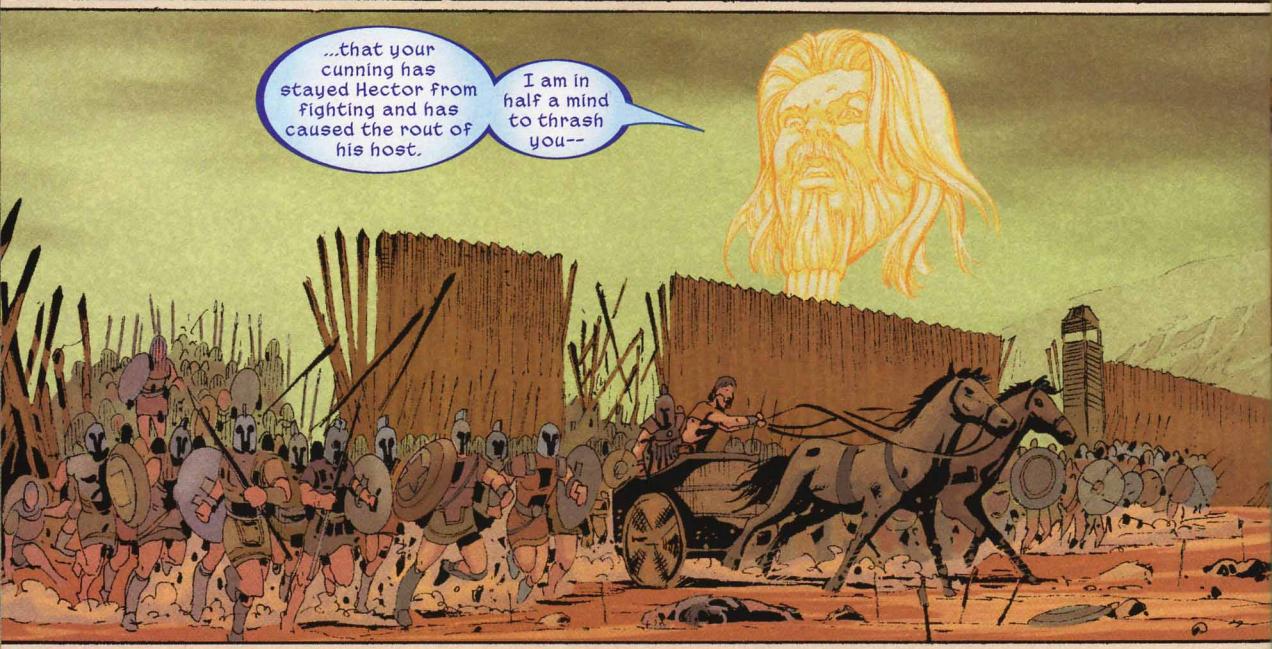
BUT IT WAS NOT
DESTINED TO GET
PAST HIS SHIELD.

Was it
some spiteful god
that protected
you?



AS THE TROJANS RETREATED, ZEUS WOKE ON THE CRESTS OF IDA...

I see, Hera...



If I were advising him, I would tell him to do as you bid him!

Then go send Iris to Poseidon, to tell him to leave off fighting.

Troy is fated to fall--but not till I have kept my promise to Thetis, concerning her son Achilles.

SOON IRIS, FLEET AS THE WIND, APPROACHED THE GOD OF THE SEAS...

O Poseidon! Zeus bids you cease fighting--

--or else consider whether you are strong enough to hold your own against Zeus himself.

We were three brothers--he and I and Hades, who now rules the world below.

We cast lots and divided the world into three parts--and Zeus should keep to his own!

Am I really to take this unyielding message to Zeus--or will you reconsider?

Goddess, your words are wise.

I will give way in spite of my displeasure.

But let Zeus understand that, if he spares Troy in the end, he will incur my implacable resentment!

MEANWHILE, APOLLO DESCENDED BEHIND THE TROJAN LINES NEAR HECTOR, WHO HAD JUST COME TO HIMSELF AGAIN...

Hector,
son of Priam...
why are you here
away from the
others?

Which
of the gods
asks me
thus?

I am
Phoebus
Apollo, sent by
Zeus to stand
by you.

Therefore,
order your
chariots toward
the ships in great
multitudes.

I will
go before
you, to turn
the Achaeans
in flight.

AS APOLLO SPOKE,
HE INFUSED GREAT
STRENGTH INTO THE
SHEPHERD OF HIS
PEOPLE.

THEN DID
HECTOR URGE HIS
HORSEMEN
ON...

...WHILE HE SPED
FORWARD AS FAST
AS HIS LIMBS
COULD TAKE HIM.



AND THOAS,
LEADER OF THE
AETOLIANS,
ADDRESSED
THE ARGIVES...



Look! One
of the gods has
brought Hector
to life again, after
he seemed slain
by Ajax!

Let our
main force fall
back upon the
ships...



...while we
who profess to
be the flower
of the army
stand firm!

BUT WHO COULD STAND
AGAINST INVISIBLE APOLLO,
WHO KICKED DOWN THE
BANKS OF THE ACHAean
TRENCH IN ITS MIDDLE...

...SO THAT
EARTH FILLED
THE TRENCH...

...AND THE TROJAN
BATTALIONS POURED
OVER THAT GREAT
BROAD BRIDGE, CRYING
FOR BLOOD!

AS A WAVE BREAKS
OVER THE BULWARKS
OF A SHIP WHEN THE
SEA RUNS HIGH
BEFORE A GALE--

EVEN SO DID THE
TROJANS SPRING
OVER THE WALL
WITH A SHOUT--

--WITH
HECTOR IN THE
FORFRONT!

Behold,
Trojans!
I have
seized the
stern of a ship
that brought many
an Achaean to
our shores--

--but will
never bear
them back to
their native
land!

AND
GREAT AJAX
SHOUTED
BACK--

Argive
heroes--
servants of
Ares--be
MEN!

We are
on the plain of
Troy, with the sea
behind us, and far
from our own
country!

Our only
salvation--is in
the might of our
hands!

NEXT:
THE RETURN
OF ACHILLES

THE GLOSSARY OF THE ILIAD

Allot – to assign as a portion, distribute

Ambrosial – exceptionally pleasing to taste or smell

Attire – clothes or apparel

Base – of little or no value; worthless; dishonorable

Beguile – to influence by trickery

Bounteous – giving freely; generous

Braggart – a person who does a lot of boasting or speaks often of self-importance

Bulwark – a solid wall-like structure raised for defense

Compunction – a strong uneasiness caused by a sense of guilt

Crest – the highest or culminating point; the peak

Enshroud – to conceal

Flee – to run away

Fray – a fight or battle

Gambol – to skip about, as in dancing or playing

Girdle – a belt, cord, sash, or the like, worn about the waist

Glut – to feed or fill to satiety

Grisly – horrible; gruesome

Implacable – impossible to appease or pacify

Infuse – to introduce into or instill

Keen – characterized by strength of perception; extremely sensitive or responsive

Perish – to suffer destruction or ruin

Plight – a condition or state of misfortune

Scepter – a rod or wand that serves as a symbol of regal or imperial power

Semblance – a likeness, image, or copy

Sheen – luster or brightness

Spur – to urge to go on

Stern – the rear part of a ship or boat

Styx – a river in the underworld in Greek mythology, over which the souls of the dead were ferried by Charon, and by which the gods swore their most solemn oaths

Thrash – to beat soundly in punishment

