

The Iliad

Book Twenty Achilles Returns to Battle

[As the armies ready for battle, Zeus summons an assembly of gods, tells them they can join the fight on either side; the gods leave Olympus for the battle; Apollo persuades Aeneas to fight Achilles; Aeneas and Achilles confront each other; Aeneas explains his ancestry; Aeneas and Achilles fight; Poseidon saves Aeneas; Achilles starts his slaughter of Trojans; Hector confronts Achilles; Apollo saves Hector; Achilles continues his slaughter]

Then, son of Peleus, Achaeans armed themselves
around you, feeding your boundless appetite for war.
On the other side, higher up the sloping plain,
the Trojans did the same. At that very moment,
from the summit of many-ridged Olympus,
Zeus told Themis to summon gods to an assembly.
She raced around, calling them to Zeus' home.
None of the rivers was left out, except Oceanus,
nor any nymph. All those who live in lovely woods,
[10] river springs, and grassy meadows came together
at cloud-gatherer Zeus' home, seating themselves
on porticoes of polished stone, constructed there
by Hephaestus' cunning arts for his father Zeus.
The gods gathered there in Zeus' house. Poseidon
also answered Themis' summons, coming from the sea
to join them. He sat in the middle of them all,
asking about Zeus' purposes:

“Lord of bright lightning,
why have you called gods to this assembly?
Are you concerned for Trojans and Achaeans?
[20] Right now their fight is close to flaring up
into a total war.”

Cloud-gatherer Zeus
then said to Poseidon in reply:

“You understand, Earthshaker,

the plans here in my chest, the reasons why
I've summoned you. Yes, I am concerned for them.
Though they are being destroyed, I'll stay here,
sitting on a ridge of Mount Olympus.
From here I'll look on to my heart's content.
But all the rest of you can go away
to join Trojans and Achaeans, helping
[30] either side, as your spirits each dictate.
For if we leave Achilles there alone
to fight the Trojans, they'll not hold out
against the swift-footed son of Peleus,
not even briefly. In earlier days,
if they saw him, their fear would make them shake,
and now his heart's so terribly enraged
for his companion, I fear he may go
beyond what Fate ordains and storm the walls."

With these words, Cronos' son then launched relentless war.
[40] The gods charged off to battle, their hearts divided
in two groups. Hera went to the assembled ships,
with Pallas Athena and Poseidon, who shakes the earth.
Helper Hermes accompanied them as well, the god
with the most cunning mind of all. Hephaestus
also went along with them, exulting in his power.
Though he was lame, his feet moved quickly under him.
Ares with the shining helmet joined the Trojans,
taking with him long-haired Phoebus, archer Artemis,
Leto, Xanthus, and laughter-loving Aphrodite.*

[50] As long as the gods were far away from mortal men,
Achaeans won the glory, since Achilles
had come back, after staying away from war so long.
For every Trojan's limbs were seized with trembling fear
when they observed him there, swift son of Peleus
in that blazing armour, like man-killing Ares.
But once Olympians mingled in the crowds of soldiers,
then mighty Strife, who stirs men up in battle,

went into action, while Athena kept on shouting,
sometimes standing by the ditch they'd dug beyond the wall,
[60] sometimes yelling out beside the roaring sea shore.

On the other side, like a black whirlwind, Ares
kept shouting out his piercing orders to the Trojans,
sometimes from the city heights, sometimes as he raced
along the banks of Simois to Callicolone.*

Thus, sacred gods spurred both sides on, urging them
to war, inciting cruel conflict. From on high,
the father of gods and men thundered ominously,
while Poseidon shook the vast earth under them
and lofty mountain crests. All the lower slopes of Ida,
[70] with its many springs, trembled, as did the peaks,
the Trojan city, and Achaean ships. Under the earth,
the king of the dead, Aidoneus, was terrified.*

He leapt up from his throne afraid and shouting,
frightened that Earthshaker Poseidon would split up
the earth above him and reveal to gods and men
the dark and dreadful habitations of the dead,
which even gods detest, so massive was the shock
when gods collided in that war, with Poseidon
matched against Apollo with his feathered arrows,

[80] glittery eyed Athena going against a mighty god,
Ares Enyalios, and Hera against Artemis,
with her golden arrows, goddess of the noisy hunt,
sister of Apollo, god who shoots from far away.
Strong Helper Hermes was opposed by Leto,
and Hephaestus by that huge and swirling river
the gods call Xanthus, but all men name Scamander.
So the gods went out to battle other gods.

But of all warriors in that fighting crowd, Achilles
was most eager to meet Hector, son of Priam.
[90] His spirit urged him to glut Ares, warrior god
with the bull's hide shield, on Hector's blood, more so
than on the blood of any other man. But Apollo,
who inspires men to fight, sent out Aeneas

to confront the son of Peleus directly.
The god placed great force within him. Making his voice
like Lycaon's, a son of Priam, Apollo,
Zeus' son, taking on that man's shape, spoke out:

“Aeneas, Trojan counsellor, where are now
those threats you used to make to Trojan princes,
[100] as you drank your wine and promised them
you'd fight Peleus' son, Achilles, man to man?”

Aeneas then said to Apollo in reply:

“Son of Priam, why are you telling me
to fight the arrogant son of Peleus,
when I don't wish to? This isn't the first time
swift Achilles and I have come to blows.
Once before he chased me away from Ida
with his spear—he'd come for our cattle,
when he destroyed Lyrnessus and Pedasus.
[110] But then Zeus saved me—he gave me strength
and made my legs run faster. Otherwise,
Athena and Achilles would have killed me.
She went on ahead of him to make things safe.
Then she told him to kill off the Leleges
with his bronze spear, as well as Trojans.
No man can face Achilles in a fight—
some god is constantly beside him, saving him
and making sure his spear flies always straight,
not stopping till it's hit some human flesh.
[120] If some god made sure our fight was equal,
he'd not easily defeat me, even though
he boasted he's completely made of bronze.”

Apollo, son of Zeus, then said to Aeneas:

“But, as a warrior, you, too, should pray
to the immortal gods. For people say

that Aphrodite, Zeus' daughter, bore you,
while he comes from a lesser goddess.
Your mother is great Zeus' daughter, but his
a daughter of the Old Man of the Sea.

[130] So go straight at him with your tireless bronze.
Don't let him hold you back with words,
expressing his contempt or making threats."

With these words, Apollo breathed great power then
into that shepherd of his people. Through the front lines
Aeneas strode, armed in gleaming bronze. As he moved,
going after Peleus' son among those crowds of men,
he did not go unnoticed. Seeing Anchises' son,
Hera gathered her companion gods and said:

"Poseidon, Athena, both your hearts
[140] should think about what's going on. Aeneas,
armed in gleaming bronze, is going to meet
the son of Peleus, at Apollo's urging.
So let's work to turn him back at once,
or else one of us should help Achilles,
give him great strength, so that his heart won't flinch.
And then he'll know the gods who love him
are the best of the immortals and those gods
who up to now have guarded Trojans
in this war's battles have only little power,
[150] as feeble as the wind. We've all come here,
down from Olympus, to join this conflict,
so Achilles will not come to any harm
from Trojans, at least not in the fight today.
Later, he'll suffer everything which Fate
spun with her thread for him that very day
his mother bore him. But if Achilles
doesn't learn this from a god who speaks to him,
then he may be fearful if some god appears
against him in the battle. For the gods
[160] are terrifying when they reveal themselves."

Earthshaker Poseidon then answered her:

“Hera,

don’t let your rage defeat your common sense.
There’s no need. For I have no desire
that gods should fight each other in this battle.
We should move off to one side and sit down
where we can watch, leaving this war to men.
But if Phoebus Apollo or if Ares
begins to fight or holds Achilles back,
not allowing him to go on fighting,
[170] then we’ll get in the conflict right away,
join in the battle. Soon enough, I think,
those two will remove themselves from warfare,
returning to Olympus, to the company
of other gods whom our strong hands have conquered.”

With these words, the dark-haired god Poseidon led the way
to the remnants of the wall of godlike Hercules,
the high rampart Pallas Athena and the Trojans
had built for him, so he could protect himself
and escape that monster from the sea, when it forced him
[180] to move in from the shore. Poseidon sat there,
beside the other gods, wrapping a concealing cloud
around their shoulders. The other group of gods
sat on the crest of Callicolone, around you,
archer Phoebus, and Ares, who destroys whole cities.
So these gods sat there on either side, making plans,
both groups holding back from fighting painful war.
Sitting high above them, Zeus stayed in control.

The whole plain by now was filled with men and horses,
all in gleaming bronze. The ground shook underfoot,
[190] as men charged each other. Two of the finest men
then came at one another in the middle ground
between the armies, both prepared for combat—

Aeneas, Anchises' son, and godlike Achilles.
Aeneas strode out first, making threatening taunts,
his heavy helmet nodding as he moved around.
Holding his strong shield across his chest, he brandished
his bronze spear. The son of Peleus, from the other side,
charged up against him like a murderous lion
which a whole community is keen to slaughter—
[200] At first, the beast moves on and leaves the group alone,
but when some quick young hunter hits it with a spear,
the lion gathers itself, opens its jaws wide,
foaming at the mouth, as its brave heart roars inside.
Its tail twitches to and fro against its ribs and flanks.
Then it drives itself to fight, charging straight ahead
with furiously glaring eyes to kill someone
or die there in the first attack. That's how Achilles,
driven by his furious proud heart, came on then
against the brave Aeneas. As they approached each other,
[210] coming to close quarters, swift-footed Achilles yelled:

“Aeneas, why have you stepped forward,
standing here so far in front of all your men?
Does your heart prompt you to fight against me
in the hope you'll win Priam's royal honours
among horse-taming Trojans? If you kill me,
that won't make Priam put his regal power
in your hands. For he has his own sons.
Besides, he's healthy, and he is no fool.
Or have the Trojans given you some land
[220] better than all the rest—a fine orchard,
as well as land to plough—yours to keep,
if you kill me? You'll find that hard to do.
My spear has sent you running once before.
Don't you remember? You were alone.
I chased you away from your own cattle.
You scampered off, down Mount Ida's slopes,
and quickly, too. That time we met, you ran
and never once looked back, then hid yourself

inside Lyrnessus. But I destroyed that city—
[230] I attacked it with help from Athena,
as well as Father Zeus, seized their women
and took away their freedom. You were saved,
thanks to Zeus and other gods. But today,
I don't think he'll save you, as your heart hopes.
So I'm telling you to move back now,
retreat into the crowd. Don't stand against me,
or you'll come up against an evil time.
A man who doesn't face the facts is stupid.”

Aeneas then said in response:

“Son of Peleus,
[240] don't try to scare me off with words, as if
I were a child. I, too, know well enough
how to hand out threats and insults. We both know
each other's parents and our ancestry.
We've heard the famous tales of mortal men,
told long ago, though your eyes have not seen
my parents, nor mine yours. People say
you're noble Peleus' son, your mother
fair-haired Thetis, daughter of the sea.
Well, I claim I'm great Anchises' son,
[250] and Aphrodite is my mother. Today,
one of them will mourn a dear dead son.
For I don't think that you and I will leave
without a fight, once we've exchanged
some childish conversation. But if you wish,
then listen to me, so you'll understand
my lineage well. Many people know it.
First cloud-gatherer Zeus fathered Dardanus,
who built Dardania, for sacred Ilion,
city of mortal men, was not yet built
[260] here in the plain. His people settled there,
by the slopes of Ida with its many springs.
Dardanus, in turn, was father to a son,

king Erichthonius, and he became
the richest of all mortals, possessing
three thousand horses grazing in the fens,
all mares happy with their foals. Then North Wind
fell in love with them as they pastured there.
Taking on the form of a dark stallion,
he copulated with them. They conceived,
[270] delivering twelve foals. When these foals played,
running across the fertile farmland, they'd skim
the highest ears of corn and never break them,
or they'd race across the sea's broad back,
gliding the surface of the breaking waves.
This Erichthonius had a son Tros,
who ruled the Trojans, and Tros then fathered
three outstanding sons—Ilus, Assaracus,
and godlike Ganymede, the handsomest man
among all mortal men, so beautiful,
[280] gods kidnapped him and made him cup bearer
to Zeus himself, so he'd live among immortals.
Ilus had a noble son, Laomedon,
who fathered Priam and Tithonus,
Clytius and warlike Hicataon.
Assaracus fathered his son Capys,
who had Anchises. He is my father.
Priam's son is godlike Hector. That, then,
is my ancestry, the blood I boast of.
But as for courage, well, that's up to Zeus,
[290] who makes it less or greater as he wills,
for he's the mightiest one of all. But come,
let's no longer talk this way, like little boys
standing in the middle of a battle.
Both of us have insults we could utter,
lots of them, so many that a cargo ship
with a hundred oars could not take on the load.
Men's tongues are glib, with various languages—
words can go here and there in all directions,
and the sorts of words one speaks will be

[300] the sorts of words one has to listen to.

But what's the point? Why should the two of us
be squabbling here and fight by trading insults
back and forth, like two irritated women,
who, in some heart-wrenching raging spat,
go into the street to scream at one another
with facts and lies, each one gripped by anger.
I want to fight—your words won't send me off,
not before we've fought it out with bronze,
man to man. So come. Let's start this now

[310] and test each other with our bronze-tipped spears.”

Aeneas finished. Then he threw his heavy spear
at Achilles' wondrous, dreadful shield. As it hit,
the spear point made the shield ring out. Peleus' son
held the shield away from him in his big fist,
fearing the long-shadowed spear from brave Aeneas
would easily go through. That was a foolish thought!
His heart and mind were not aware that gifts like that,
splendid presents from the gods to mortal men,
are not so easily defeated, nor do they fail.

[320] So the mighty spear of warrior Aeneas
did not break the shield, stopped by the golden armour,
a present from the god. It drove on through two layers,
but there were still three more, for crippled god Hephaestus
had hammered out five layers, two made of bronze,
two inner ones of tin, with a gold one in between.
The gold one stopped that ash spear from Aeneas.
Then Achilles, in his turn, hurled his long-shadowed spear,
hitting Aeneas' round shield right on the rim,
where bronze and leather backing were the thinnest.

[330] The spear of Pelian ash drove straight through the shield,
which rattled from the blow. Aeneas cowered down,
holding the shield out away from him in terror.
The spear flew high, above his back, then drove itself
into the ground. But it ripped apart two layers
on that protective shield. Having escaped the spear,

Aeneas straightened up, eyes glazed with shock,
frightened that the spear had come so close to him.
Drawing his sword, Achilles launched a frenzied charge
with a blood-curdling scream. Aeneas picked up a rock,
[340] a heavy lift, which no two men now alive could do,
although he managed it with ease all by himself.
With that rock Aeneas would have struck Achilles,
as he charged at him, on his helmet or the shield
which had rescued him from death, and then Achilles
in close combat with his sword would have taken
Aeneas' life, had not the Earthshaker Poseidon
been paying attention. He spoke up immediately,
addressing the immortal gods beside him.

“Here's trouble. I feel sorry for Aeneas,
[350] who'll be going down to Hades quickly,
slain by Peleus' son, because Apollo,
the far shooter, talked him into it, the fool!
Apollo won't protect him from grim death.
But why should an innocent man like him
suffer such misfortune, without doing wrong,
just because of other people's troubles?
With all his gifts, he's bringing pleasure
to the gods who live in spacious heaven.
So come, let's carry him away from death,
[360] in case the son of Cronos grows enraged,
if he's killed by Achilles. For Fate ordains
that he'll escape, so the Dardanian race
will not die out and leave no seed alive.*
For the son of Cronos did love Dardanus
above all other children born to him
from mortal women, though he's come to hate
the family of Priam. So now Trojans
will be ruled by powerful Aeneas,
his children's children born in years to come.”

[370] Ox-eyed queen Hera then said to Poseidon:

“Earthshaker, in your own heart and mind
you must decide whether to save Aeneas,
or to leave him, for all his nobleness,
to be killed by Peleus’ son, Achilles.
We two, Pallas Athena and myself,
have often sworn among immortals
not to rescue Trojans from wretched death,
not even when all Troy is being engulfed
in all-consuming, blazing fire, set off
by Achaea’s warrior sons.”

[380] Hearing her words,

Earthshaker Poseidon went down into the battle,
among the flying spears and came right to the place
where Aeneas stood with glorious Achilles.
At once he cast a dense mist on Achilles’ eyes,
pulled the ash spear of Peleus’ son out of the shield
of brave Aeneas and set it at Achilles’ feet.
Poseidon then raised Aeneas up, swinging him
far above the ground. Aeneas soared high up,
above the many ranks of warriors and chariots,

[390] flying from Poseidon’s hand, and then came down
on the fringes of that battle, where the Caucones
were arming for the fight. Then Earthshaker Poseidon,
coming up beside Aeneas, spoke to him—
his words had wings:

“Aeneas,
what god brought on such foolishness in you—
fighting man to man with proud Achilles,
a stronger man and more loved by the gods?
When you run into him, you must move back,
or you’ll end up in Hades’ house, contravening
[400] what destiny ordains. But when Achilles
has met his fate and died, then you may fight
in full confidence among those at the front,

for of all Achaeans no one else will kill you.”

With these words, Poseidon left, once he’d explained these matters to Aeneas. Then he took away the wondrous mist over Achilles’ eyes. He looked out, testing his eyesight, and spoke to his great heart, passionately confused:

“What’s happening?

My eyes are playing amazing tricks on me.

[410] I see my spear lying here upon the ground,
but I don’t see the man I threw it at
in my eagerness to kill him. Aeneas
must be really dear to the immortal gods,
though I thought those things he boasted of
were merely idle talk. Well, let him go.
He’ll have no heart to try me once again.
He’ll be delighted to escape being killed.
Come, I’ll give a shout to these Danaans
to fight more Trojans—put them to the test.”

[420] Achilles finished. Then he leapt in among the ranks,
calling each man:

“Don’t just stand there any more,
you fine Achaeans—don’t stay away from Trojans.
Let each of you go up against your man
in full warrior fury. It’s hard for me,
though I’m a powerful man, to attack
so many men and battle with them all.
Even deathless gods like Ares and Athena
could not fight them in the jaws of war
in such a conflict and keep on going.

[430] But what I can do with my hands and feet
and my own power, I’ll do. I’ll not hold back,
but go straight at their lines. I don’t think
a Trojan who gets within my spear range

will have reason to feel happy.”

With these words,
Achilles urged them on. Then splendid Hector,
calling with a shout, announced that he’d come forward
to confront Achilles.

“You proud-hearted Trojans,
don’t be afraid of that son of Peleus.
I, too, can battle anyone with words,
[440] even the immortals. But with a spear,
that’s more difficult—they’re so much stronger.
Achilles won’t accomplish everything
he says he will. Some of it he’ll manage,
some he’ll leave undone. I’ll go against him,
though his blazing hands are like a fire,
his strength like glittering iron.”

With these words
he roused them into action. Trojans held their spears up high,
then turned to face Achaeans. Both sides joined battle
in a terrific frenzy. Then Phoebus Apollo,
moving close to Hector, spoke to him:

[450] “Hector, & nbsp;
don’t step out to face Achilles openly.
Wait for him in the noisy crowd of men.
Don’t let him hit you with his spear or slash you
at close quarters with his sword.”

Apollo spoke.
Hector pulled back into the crowd of soldiers,
seized with fear at hearing a god’s voice talk to him.
Giving a blood-curdling scream, Achilles leapt
among the Trojans, his heart wrapped in battle fury.
First he killed Iphition, Otrynteus’ brave son,
[460] who commanded many men. A Naiad nymph bore him

to Otrynteus, sacker of cities, in Hyde,
a fertile land, below snow-covered Mount Tmolus.
As he charged right at him, godlike Achilles
struck Iphition with his spear squarely in the head,
splitting his skull apart. He fell with a crash.
Godlike Achilles then cried out in triumph:

“Lie there, son of Otrynteus, of all men
the one we fear the most. Here you die.
You were born beside the Gygaean lake,
[470] on your father’s land, by the fish-filled Hyllus
and the swirling Hermus rivers.”

Achilles triumphed. But down on Iphition’s eyes
the darkness fell, and then, in the first attack,
Achaean wheel rims on the chariots ripped him up.
After him, Achilles went for Demoleon,
Antenor’s son, a brave defensive fighter,
hitting the bronze cheek armour on his helmet.
But that didn’t check the spear—it smashed through,
breaking his skull, splattering all his brains inside.
[480] That stopped his fighting charge. Then Hippodamas
jumped down out of his chariot to flee Achilles.
But Achilles speared him in the back. As he died,
panting his life away, he screamed—just as a bull roars,
when it’s pulled around the altar of Poseidon,
lord of Helice, the Earthshaker, who delights
in those young lads who drag the beast—in just that way
Hippodamas bellowed then, as his noble spirit
slipped out from his bones. Then Achilles with his spear
attacked noble Polydorus, son of Priam.
[490] His father would not let Polydorus fight,
for of all his children he was the youngest born,
the one most loved. He was the fastest runner, too.
Now, like a fool, he was showing off his speed,
sprinting through front lines until he lost his life.
As he ran past, swift-footed godlike Achilles

threw his spear into the middle of his back,
where the golden belt clasps joined together
on the overlapping body armour. The spear point,
going straight through, came out his navel. With a scream,
[500] he fell onto his knees. Then black cloud enveloped him.
As he collapsed, his guts spilled out into his hands.

When Hector saw his brother Polydorus there,
down on the ground, collapsed and holding his own entrails,
a mist flowed right across his eyes. He could no longer
bear to keep his distance. He moved against Achilles,
waving his sharp spear, just like a flame. Achilles,
when he saw him, jumped out and roared in triumph:

“He’s getting closer—the very man
who scarred my heart more than all other men.
[510] We won’t be evading one another
in the battle lanes much longer.”

As he said this, Achilles scowled at godlike Hector,
then yelled at him:

“Come closer,
so you can meet your fatal doom more quickly.”

Hector of the shining helmet, quite unafraid,
then cried out to Achilles:

“Son of Peleus,
don’t try to frighten me with words, as if
I were some child. I, too, know well enough
how to shout out taunting words and insults.
[520] I know you’re brave, stronger than me by far.
But these things are in the lap of the gods.
Though I’m the weaker man, I’ll take your life,
with one throw of my spear, for in the past
it’s proved it’s sharp enough.”

With these words,
Hector raised his spear and threw it. But Athena,
with the slightest puff of breath, blew it aside,
away from glorious Achilles, turning it back
to godlike Hector. It landed there beside his feet.
Then, with a terrifying shout, Achilles charged,
[530] lusting to kill. But Apollo snatched up Hector,
something a god can do with ease, then hid him
in thick cloud. Swift-footed, godlike Achilles
charged that cloud three times, striking hard each time
with his bronze spear. When for the fourth time
he came on like a god with a terrific shout,
Achilles cried out these winged words to Hector:

“You dog—once more you’re evading death for now.
But you’ve narrowly escaped disaster.
Phoebus Apollo has saved you one more time.
[540] No doubt you always pray to him as you go
out into the sound of thudding spears.
Next time we meet, I’ll surely finish you,
if some god is there to assist me, too.
For now I’ll fight the others, any man
I chance to meet.”

Achilles finished shouting.
Then he struck Dryops with his spear right in the neck.
Dryops fell at Achilles’ feet. But he left him there.
Next, Achilles stopped Demouchus, Philetor’s son,
a big brave warrior, with a spear thrust in his knee.
[550] Then he hit him with his massive sword, taking his life.
After that, he went at Dardanus and Laogonus,
both sons of Bias, throwing them out of their chariot
onto the ground. He hit one of them with his spear
and slashed the other at close quarters with his sword.

Then Tros, Alastor’s son, fell at Achilles knees,

clutching them, begging him to spare his life,
to capture him alive, instead of killing him,
moved by pity for a man the same age as himself.
What a fool! He did not know there was no way
[560] to change Achilles' mind—he was not a tender man
with a soft heart, but full of fighting rage. With his hands
Tros tried to clutch Achilles' knees, desperate
to plead for mercy, but Achilles' sword struck him
in his liver, which slid out from the wound.
Black blood, pouring from the gash, filled up his lap.
Then darkness veiled his eyes, and his spirit left him.

Next, Achilles moved up to Mulius and with his spear
struck him on the ear. The bronze point, driven in hard,
came out his other ear. Then he hit Echeclus,
[570] Agenor's son, with his hilted sword right on his head.
The blood made the whole blade hot. Then dark death,
his powerful fate, came down across his eyes.
Next, Achilles hit Deucalion—his bronze spear point
struck him in the arm where tendons meet the elbow.
His arm now useless, Deucalion stood there waiting,
staring death right in the face. Achilles hit him
with his sword blade in the neck, slicing off his head.
He knocked the head and the helmet far away.
From Deucalion's spine the marrow spurted out,
[580] as his body lay there, stretched out on the ground.
Next, Achilles, after chasing the noble son of Peires,
Rhigmus, who'd come from fertile Thrace, hit him
with a spear throw in the gut, fixing the bronze
firmly in his belly. Rhigmus fell from his chariot.
His attendant, Areithous, wheeled the horses round,
but Achilles' sharp spear struck him in the back
and threw him from the chariot. The horses bolted.

Just as a terrifying fire rages through deep woods
on a parched mountain, burning dense stands of trees,
[590] as the driving wind blows flames to every spot,

that how Achilles, like a god, raged with his spear,
attacking and killing men all through the fight.
The dark earth ran with blood. Just as a man yokes oxen,
big bulls, wide in the shoulder, to grind barley
on a well-built threshing floor, and lowing oxen
quickly flatten all the grain, that how brave Achilles
drove his sure-footed horses to trample on the dead
and on their shields as well. The chariot axle underneath
got sprayed with blood. Blood soaked the chariot rails,
[600] thrown up in gouts from horses' hooves and wheel rims.
But Peleus' son pushed on to win more glory,
blood spattered over his all-conquering hands.