# **The Iliad Book 22 Summary**

* Eventually, Apollo lets Achilleus know that he duped him.
* Achilleus is mad, and races back to Troy.
* Priam sees him coming and cries out to Hektor, who has stayed outside the walls to face the Achaian warrior.
* Priam urges his son to come inside the walls.
* He predicts that his death will mean the destruction of Troy.
* Hektor's mother, also on the rampart, exposes her breast to remind her son of the role she played in nurturing him. She, too, asks him to take pity on her and come inside the walls.
* But Hektor refuses to listen. He is too full of pride to turn back – all because he disregarded Poulydamas's advice from the night before not to remain on the beach now that Achilleus has returned to the battle (see our summary of Book 18 for details).
* Hektor figures that it would be better to kill Achilleus now and be done with it.
* He briefly considers trying to reason with him – say, offering to give Helen back along with free pick from among Troy's treasures – but then he realizes that Achilleus would just kill him anyway.
* And yet, just when Achilleus comes close, Hektor's nerve fails him. He turns tail and runs (so much for his boasting back in Book 18).
* Hektor runs three times around the walls of Troy – always with Achilleus in hot pursuit.
* Up on Olympos, Zeus wonders whether they should free Hektor from his fate or let him die.
* But Athene explodes on him, saying, "What are you talking about? No way! This is his fate. You can't let him out of it."
* "Relax, I was only kidding," Zeus says. "Do whatever you want."
* Meanwhile, the heroes are still running around the walls of Troy – Achilleus unable to catch up, and Hektor unable to get away, in what the poet likens to a horrible nightmare.
* The fourth time around, however, Zeus lifts up the golden scales of fate, just as he did with his son Sarpedon back in Book 16. He puts each warrior's fate in the scales. Hektor's heavier fate sinks down towards the underworld.
* At this point, Athene appears beside Achilleus and tells him that he's about to be victorious.
* Then she flies off and stands by Hektor. She takes the form of Deïphobos, Hektor's brother. She tells him that they should fight Achilleus together.
* Hektor is overjoyed, thinking that his brother has come out of the city to help him.
* Hektor faces Achilleus and stands his ground. He suggests that they make a pact: "If I kill you, I won't mutilate your body, and, after I've stripped your armor, I'll even give you back to your comrades for proper burial."
* Achilleus refuses, however, saying that "No pacts are made between humans and lions."
* Then Achilleus throws his spear – but Hektor ducks it.
* Hektor thinks he's sitting pretty. The only problem is, Athene grabs Achilleus's spear and gives it back to him without Hektor noticing.
* Now Hektor throws his spear, but it deflects off Achilleus's shield.
* Hektor calls on Deïphobos to give him another spear – but Deïphobos isn't there.
* That's when Hektor realizes that he's been tricked – and that he is doomed. All the same, he resolves to go down fighting.
* Hektor charges at Achilleus with his sword, but Achilleus stabs him in the neck with his spear – narrowly missing his windpipe. This means that, even though he is mortally wounded, Hektor is still able to speak.
* The dying Hektor asks Achilleus once again to spare his body from the dogs.
* Once again, Achilleus refuses, in even more fearsome terms than before. He says that he wishes he were angry enough to hack off Hektor's flesh and eat it raw.
* Hektor says that he recognizes Achilleus won't be won over. But then he predicts that, some day soon, Apollo and Paris will kill him outside the Skaian Gates.
* Then Hektor dies. Achilleus taunts him.
* Then the Achaians catch up to them. Each of them stabs Hektor's body. They all mock him.
* Achilleus speaks warmly to his comrades and gives the gods credit for his victory.
* He considers continuing with the fight, but then remembers Patroklos back by the ships. He decides to return – as he was instructed to do.
* Then Achilleus does something outrageous: he pierces the tendons at the back of Hektor's feet and then threads rawhide cords through the holes. He attaches these cords to the back of his chariot, and starts dragging Hektor's dead body over the plain, his head dragging in the dust.
* Up on the wall, Hektor's terrified mother starts tearing out her hair in grief.
* Hektor's father, Priam, has to be forcibly restrained from running out of the walls and begging Achilleus to give his son back.
* He rolls around in the mud, defiling himself with filth.
* Back at their home, Hektor's wife, Andromache, has not yet heard the news. She is preparing a bath for when her husband returns from fighting. Then she hears wailing outside.
* She runs to the wall and sees Achilleus dragging Hektor's body back to the ships of the Achaians.
* She starts lamenting, predicting a grim future for their son without a father to protect him.