

## Book 5

NOW on Tydeus's son Diomēdēs Pallas Athēnē bestowed  
power and courage, that he might be clearly preeminent  
among all the Argives, and gather illustrious renown.<sup>1</sup>  
From his helmet and shield she made blaze an unwearying flame,  
like that star of the harvest season that shines out most intensely 5  
after dipping in Ocean's stream: of such a nature  
was the light that she made to gleam from his head and shoulders,  
and she thrust him into the center, where the struggle was greatest.

There was a Trojan, one Darēs, both wealthy and virtuous,  
a priest of Hēphaistos; and this man had two sons, 10  
Phēgeus and Idaios, well skilled in all kinds of fighting.  
These now broke out from the line and went against Diomēdēs—  
they mounted in their chariot, while he advanced on foot.  
When they got close enough, each of them to the other,  
Phēgeus was the first to hurl his far-shadowing spear, 15  
at Tydeus's son, but the point flew over his left shoulder  
and missed him. Then Tydeus's son in turn attacked with the bronze.  
Not in vain from his hand did the missile fly, but struck  
Phēgeus full in mid-breast, threw him clear of his horses.  
Then from the fine-crafted chariot Idaios sprang down, 20  
but dared not make a stand over his slain brother,  
nor would he himself have escaped the black death spirit  
without the aid of Hēphaistos, who saved him, hid him in darkness,  
to ensure that aged Darēs was not wholly undone by grief.  
But his horses the son of high-spirited Tydeus drove off, 25  
and gave to his comrades to lead to the hollow ships,  
and when the high-spirited Trojans saw Darēs' two sons—  
one in flight, the other lying slain beside his chariot—  
the spirits of all were dismayed. But grey-eyed Athēnē

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1. What follows is a remarkable killing spree by Diomēdēs, a sustained sequence of successful assaults only halted by divine intervention. Such spotlighted one-man performances by Iliadic heroes (e.g., Agamemnōn, bk. 11; Hektōr, bk. 15; Patroklos, bk. 16; Achilles bks. 19–22) are a formal feature of Homeric epic, known as *aristeiai*, or “displays of excellence” (see Glossary).

grasped fierce Arēs' hand, and thus addressed him: "Arēs, 30  
Arēs, ruin of mortals, blood-guilty, city-stormer,  
should we not now leave both Trojans and Achaians  
to battle it out, let our father Zeus apportion  
the glory, while we two withdraw, avoid Zeus's anger?"

So saying, she led fierce Arēs away from the fighting, 35  
sat him down beside the Skamandros river. Meanwhile  
the Danāans routed the Trojans: each one of their leaders  
killed him a man. First of all the lord of men, Agamemnōn,  
knocked the Halizōnēs' leader, tall Odios, off his chariot  
just as he turned to flee, drove the spear into his back 40  
between the shoulders, and right through to his chest.  
He fell with a thud, and his armor rattled upon him.

Idomeneus slew Phaistos, the son of Maiōnian  
Bōros, who had come there from rich-soiled Tarnē.  
Idomeneus, famous spearman, ran him through with his long 45  
lance, in the right shoulder, just as he was mounting;  
he slumped from his chariot, and loathsome darkness took him.

Him Idomeneus's henchmen stripped of his armor; and now  
Skamandrios, Strophios's son, well trained in the chase,  
Menelāos, son of Atreus, took down with his sharpened spear, 50  
fine hunter though he was, one whom Artemis herself  
taught to shoot all wild things that the mountain woodlands  
nourish.

Yet of no avail to him now was Artemis the archer,  
nor the skilled bowmanship in which he once excelled,  
but Atreus's son Menelāos, that famous spearman, 55  
plunged, as he fled before him, a spear into his back  
between the shoulder blades, drove it through to his chest.  
He slumped down face first, and his armor rattled upon him.

Mērionēs brought down Phereklos, son of Tektōn,  
and Harmōn's grandson, whose hands were skilled to fashion 60  
all kinds of intricate work: he was dear to Pallas Athēnē.  
He it was built for Aléxandros those trim ships  
that started the trouble, became a curse to all Trojans—  
and to himself, who knew nothing of the gods' planned ordinances.  
When Mērionēs in his pursuit caught up with Phereklos 65  
he speared him in the right buttock, and the spear point

pierced right through to the bladder beneath the bone:  
he screamed and fell to his knees, and death enfolded him.

Megēs now killed Pēdaios, Antēnōr's son—  
a bastard, but noble Theanō reared him devotedly, 70  
like her own children, out of affection for her husband.  
But Phyleus's son, famed spearman, rushing forward,  
stabbed into his neck tendon with a sharp spear: clean through  
his teeth the bronze went, and severed his tongue at the root.  
He collapsed in the dust, teeth clamped on the cold bronze. 75

Eurypylos, son of Euaimōn, took down high-spirited  
Dolopiōn's son, the noble Hypsēnōr, who'd been made  
priest of Skamandros: the people revered him like a god.  
In pursuit of him went Eurypylos, Euaimōn's splendid son,  
as he fled, and, still running, closed in, raised his sword, 80  
slashed at one shoulder, cut off the weighty arm,  
that dropped, still spurting blood, onto the ground; his eyes  
were closed by blood-red death and all-mastering fate.

Thus they were laboring in the grind of battle;  
but as for Tydeus's son, you could not tell which side 85  
he was fighting on—was he with the Trojans or the Achaians?—  
so wildly he ranged the plain, like some swollen winter torrent  
that, rushing onward, sweeps away dikes unable,  
however close-packed, to hold back its raging progress,  
nor can its sudden coming be stopped by the flourishing vineyard's 90  
walls, when a Zeus-sent rainstorm augments its waters,  
and many good man-made works collapse before it. Just so  
before Tydeus's son's advance the massed Trojan battalions  
were routed, not standing to face him, despite their numbers.

When Lykaōn's fine son Pandaros caught sight of him storming 95  
across the plain, and driving those battalions before him, at once  
against Tydeus's son he bent his curved bow, aimed true,  
and hit him in the right shoulder as he pressed on forward,  
on the plate of his corselet: clean through winged the bitter shaft,  
piercing the flesh, and the corselet was blood-bespattered. Then 100  
over him loud exulted Lykaōn's fine son: "Rouse up now,  
all you high-spirited Trojans, you spurrers of horses! The best  
warrior of the Achaians is hit, and he won't, I assure you,

long survive my strong missile, if it's true it was Lord Apollo,  
Zeus's son, who encouraged me to come here from Lycia." 105

Boastful words; but the swift shaft did not fell Diomēdēs.  
He gave ground, went back, stood there in front of his chariot  
and horses: called out to Kapaneus's son Sthenelos: "Quick now,  
good son of Kapaneus, get down from the chariot, come  
and pull this bitter shaft out from my shoulder." 110

So he spoke,  
and Sthenelos instantly leapt down onto the ground  
from the driver's place, stood by him, drew the swift arrow out  
through his shoulder. Blood spurted from the soft folds of his tunic.  
Then Diomēdēs, good at the war cry, made this prayer:  
"Hear me, unwearied child of Zeus of the aegis! 115  
If ever with kindly heart you stood beside my father  
in the madness of battle, now befriend me too, Athēnē!  
Let me take down this man, let him come within my spear cast,  
whose shot caught me unawares, who now boasts over me, who  
swears that not for much longer shall I look on the sun's bright light." 120

So he spoke in prayer, and Pallas Athēnē heard him.  
She made his limbs buoyant, his legs and the arms above them,  
and standing close by his side spoke to him winged words:  
"Take heart now, Diomēdēs, for your battle against the Trojans,  
for in your breast I have set your father's dauntless fury— 125  
such as he had, he, the horseman, Tydeus the shield wielder;<sup>2</sup>  
and the mist that was over your eyes I have taken away  
to let you clearly distinguish a god from a mortal. So now  
if some god comes here to make trial of you, no way  
are you to meet in battle any one of the other immortals 130  
save Aphrodītē alone, Zeus's daughter. But if she enters  
the fighting, her you may wound with your keen-edged bronze."

This said,  
grey-eyed Athēnē departed. Then Tydeus's son went back  
and plunged headlong into the ranks of the foremost fighters.  
Though before he'd been hot in his heart to battle Trojans, now 135  
a fury three times as great possessed him, like that of a lion

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2. "Shield wielder" (*σάκεσπαλος*, *sakéspalos*) is an interesting epithet: Tydeus did not merely carry a shield, he used it—a mark of his savage fierceness—as an aggressive weapon.

that a shepherd out in the country, guarding his fleecy sheep,  
 has wounded, but not killed, as it leapt the sheepfold's wall,  
 arousing its rage, so that he now abandons his defense  
 and retreats to the steading's shelter, leaving his terrified flock 140  
 without protection—the sheep in huddled heaps,  
 while the lion in its fury springs out from the high sheepfold—  
 so strong Diomēdēs raged as he mingled with the Trojans.

Astynoōs now he slew, and Hypeirōn, his people's shepherd,  
 the one hit above the nipple with a cast of his bronze-tipped spear, 145  
 the other with his great sword on the collarbone by the shoulder  
 he struck, slicing off the shoulder from neck and back. Leaving these  
 he went off in pursuit of Abas and Polyīdos,  
 both sons of a dream interpreter, the aged Eurydamas. Though  
 the old man read no dreams against their homecoming, still 150  
 strong Diomēdēs slew them, and stripped them of their armor.  
 Next he went after Xanthos and Thoōn, Phainōps's twin sons,  
 his latest-born: he himself was worn out by bitter old age  
 and sired no other son to leave heir to his possessions.  
 Diomēdēs dispatched them both, destroyed their vital spirit, 155  
 left for their father mourning and bitter sorrow,  
 since they never came home alive from the fighting for him  
 to welcome them back: distant kinsmen divided his property.

Next he took on two sons of Dardanos's scion Priam,  
 both in one chariot, Echemmōn and Chromios. 160  
 Just as a lion springs in among cattle, breaks the neck  
 of a calf or cow, as they graze in their woodland pasture,  
 so did Tydeus's son force the pair of them, all unwilling,  
 out of their chariot, then stripped the armor from them,  
 and gave his comrades their horses to drive off to the ships. 165

Aineias watched him wreak havoc among the warriors' ranks,  
 and set off through the fighting and the chaos of flying spears  
 looking for godlike Pandaros, to see if he might find him;  
 and he came on Lykaōn's son, the strong, the illustrious,  
 and confronted him, and addressed him in these words: 170  
 "Pandaros, where now are your bow and your flighted arrows?  
 Where's your famous skill, in which no man here is your rival,  
 nor can any in Lycia boast that they're your better?  
 So come, flight a shaft at this man—but first supplicate Zeus—

whoever he is, whose huge prowess has done such endless harm  
to the Trojans, unstringing the knees of so many warlike fighters—  
unless this be some god with a grudge against Trojans over  
a sacrifice: a god's wrath sits heavily on us mortals.” 175

In answer to him then spoke Lykaōn's splendid son:  
“Aineias, counselor to the bronze-corseleted Achaians, 180  
I find him in all respects like the warlike son of Tydeus.  
By his shield I recognize him, by his helmet's visor,  
by the look of his horses—yet he might, I'm not sure, be a god!  
If he's the man I say, though, the warlike son of Tydeus,  
not without some god's aid can he rage thus: an immortal 185  
must be standing close by him, shoulders hidden in mist,  
who turned aside my swift shaft, the moment it reached him—  
for just now I let fly a shaft at him, pierced his right shoulder  
clean through the plate of his corselet, so that I told myself  
I'd dispatch him straight to Hādēs. Yet nevertheless 190  
I failed to destroy him: some god must be resentful.  
Nor have I at hand either horses or a chariot to mount in,  
though in Lykaōn's stables there are, I think, eleven—  
fine ones, just carpentered, newly made, with canvas  
covers spread over them, and by each its two-horse team 195  
stands munching its fodder of white barley and spelt.  
Indeed, I got strong advice from Lykaōn, the old spearman,  
at my departure, while still in our well-built house:  
he wanted me to go mounted, with chariot and horses,  
and be to the Trojans a leader in their fierce engagements. 200  
But I ignored his counsel—far better had I listened!—  
and spared the horses, for fear they might lack fodder  
amid the crush of troops, they that were used to eating  
their fill, and left them, and journeyed on foot to Ilion,  
trusting my bow. But that, it seems, was to be of no use— 205  
already I've sent shafts winging at two of their leading men,  
the sons of Tydeus and Atreus, hit them both squarely,  
drew blood from each one, yet only roused them more.  
Ill-fated I was, then, when I took my curved bow from its peg  
that day on which I first set off to lovely Ilion 210  
with my Trojans, doing a service to illustrious Hektōr.  
But if I survive to go home, once more see with my own eyes  
my fatherland, and my wife, and my great high-roofed house,

then may some stranger at once strike the head from my shoulders  
if I don't break this bow with my hands and cast it away 215  
into a blazing fire: it's served me no better than wind."

To him then Aineias, leader of Trojans, made answer:  
"Don't talk in that way. Things will not get any better  
until we two together, with chariot and horses,  
go out against this man, and make trial of him in arms. 220  
Come now, get into my chariot, see for yourself  
the breed of these horses of Trōs,<sup>3</sup> well trained to charge  
swiftly over the plain, in pursuit or retreat! This pair  
will bring us back safe to the city, if yet once more  
to Tydeus's son Diomēdēs Zeus grants the glory. 225  
So come now, you take the whip and the bright-polished  
reins, and I'll dismount to join in the fighting—or else  
you face this man's charge, while I look after the horses."

In answer to him then spoke Lykaōn's splendid son:  
"Aineias, you yourself should keep the reins and the horses. 230  
Better with a known driver will they pull your curved chariot  
if we are forced to retreat before the son of Tydeus.  
I fear they might take fright and stampede, might well refuse to  
carry us out of the fighting, without your voice to rule them,  
and high-spirited Tydeus's son would then assail us, 235  
and kill us both, and drive off your whole-hoofed horses.  
So you yourself should control your chariot and your horses,  
while I meet this man's assault with my keen-edged spear."

After conversing thus they mounted the inlaid chariot,  
and eagerly urged their swift steeds against the son of Tydeus. 240  
Now Sthenelos saw them, Kapaneus's splendid son,  
and at once to the son of Tydeus addressed winged words:  
"Diomēdēs, Tydeus's son, so dear to my heart, I see  
two powerful warriors set on doing battle with you,  
men of unmeasured strength: one, a well-skilled archer, 245  
Pandaros, also claims to be the son of Lykaōn;  
the other, Aineias, claims he was sired by blameless

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3. Trōs, who started this breed of divine (and divinely speedy) horses, was the great-great-grandfather of Aineias: the original pair was given to him by Zeus in compensation for the abduction of his son Ganymēdēs. Aineias' father Anchīsēs "later managed to breed from their stock by stealth" (265–72 below; cf. 318–24, 8.105–8, and Kirk, 2: 83).

Anchīsēs, and also that his mother is Aphroditē!  
So let's pull back in our chariot—and don't, I beg you,  
rage on this way in the forefront, lest you maybe lose your life.” 250

To him with a fierce glance strong Diomēdēs made answer:  
“No arguments for retreat! You won't change my mind. It's not  
a family tradition of mine to shrink from combat or  
to crouch down and hide: my fury remains firm set.  
I don't want to mount that chariot. Just as I am I'll go on 255  
and face them: Pallas Athēnē will not let me be afraid.  
And as for those two, their swift horses won't carry them both  
safely away from us, even should one of them escape.  
And another thing I will tell you, and you take it to heart:  
If Athēnē of many counsels should grant me the renown 260  
of killing them both, then you must tether these swift horses  
in place here, lash their reins firmly onto the chariot rail,  
and yourself set your mind to seizing Aineias's horses  
and driving them from the Trojans to the well-greaved Achaians;  
for they're from that stock which far-seeing Zeus gave Trōs 265  
as amends for his son Ganymēdēs, being the finest  
of all horses anywhere under sunlight or daybreak. This  
was the breed from which that lord of men, Anchīsēs,  
stole, by putting his mares to them, without Laomedōn's  
knowledge, and from these mares six foals were born to him 270  
in his stables: four he kept, to be nurtured at his mangers;  
the last two he gave to Aineias as harbingers of rout,  
so—capture this pair, and we'd win ourselves high renown.”

Such was their conversation, the one to the other.  
Meanwhile the two approached, driving their swift horses, 275  
and the first of them to speak was Lykaōn's splendid son:  
“Stout-hearted warlike son of illustrious Tydeus, indeed  
my swift shaft failed to dispatch you, my bitter arrow; but now  
I'll make trial of you with my spear, and hope to hit you.”

So saying, he swung and let fly his far-shadowing spear, 280  
and hit Diomēdēs' shield: clean through it drove  
the bronze spear point in its flight, came near the corselet,  
and a great shout went up from Lykaōn's splendid son:  
“You're hit in the midriff, right through! I'm pretty certain  
you won't survive long now! You've given me great glory!” 285



To him then, still unperturbed, strong Diomēdēs made answer:  
“You didn’t hit me, you missed. Still, I fancy the two of you  
won’t rest until one or the other has fallen, and glutted  
Arēs the oxhide-shield warrior with his fill of blood.”

So saying he let fly, and Athēnē guided his missile  
close by one eye to the nose, and it sheared through the white teeth.  
The man’s tongue was cut off at its root by the stubborn bronze,  
and the spear point came out below, from the back of his jaw.  
He fell from his chariot, and his armor rattled upon him,  
gleaming and polished bright; and the swift-footed horses  
shied away in terror. There his spirit and strength were undone. 290  
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But Aineias sprang down with his shield and his long spear,  
afraid that somehow the corpse might be dragged off by the Achaians.  
Lion-like he bestrode him, trusting in his strength,  
holding before him his spear and his nicely balanced shield, 300  
hot to kill any fighter who might come to confront him,  
and roaring defiance. But Tydeus’s son hefted a rock  
in his hands—a great feat, that would take two mortals and more,  
such as men are today; yet, alone, he easily wielded it,  
struck Aineias’s hip, where the thighbone turns 305  
in its socket—what’s commonly known as the cup—  
and crushed this cup, as well as severing both tendons.  
The rock’s rough edge tore off the skin. Then the warrior sank  
to his knees and remained thus, leaning on one strong hand  
thrust to the ground, while black night shrouded his vision. 310

Now indeed Aineias, that lord of men, would have perished,  
if not for the quick sharp eye of Zeus’s daughter Aphrodītē,  
his mother, on whom Anchīsēs sired him when out herding  
his oxen: about her dear son she flung her white arms,  
and before him spread a bright fold of her robe to hide him 315  
and act as a wall against missiles, lest some swift-horsed Danaän  
might let fly bronze at his body and rob him of life.

So she brought her dear son safely out from the conflict.  
Nor did the son of Kapaneus forget the instructions  
given him by Diomēdēs, good at the war cry: 320  
he tethered his own whole-hoofed horses well away  
from the turmoil, lashing their reins tight to the chariot rail,  
and made straight for the fine-maned horses of Aineias,

drove them off from the Trojans to the well-greaved Achaians,  
 and turned them over there to Deïpylos, his dear comrade— 325  
 whom he honored above all of his age: their minds were as one—  
 to drive to the hollow ships. That done, the hero mounted  
 his chariot, picked up the gleaming reins, and at once  
 in search of Tydeus's son urged on his strong-hoofed horses  
 with furious zest. But the latter had taken his pitiless bronze 330  
 in pursuit of Kypris, aware what a weakling goddess she was—  
 not the kind who lords it in a battle of warriors,  
 no Athēnē she, for sure, no Enyo, sacker of cities!<sup>4</sup>  
 Now, when he overtook her in his chase through the crowded ranks,  
 he sprang at her, did high-spirited Tydeus's son, and lunged, 335  
 and sliced into the flesh of her hand with his keen-edged bronze—  
 that delicate hand! The spear drove straight into her flesh—  
 clean through the fragrant robe toiled on by the Graces themselves—  
 at the base of her palm: out flowed the goddess's blood, immortal  
 ichōr, such as flows in the veins of the blessed gods, 340  
 for they neither eat bread nor drink fire-bright wine, and so  
 are bloodless, and come thus to be called immortals.  
 She screamed aloud, and let her son fall, but Phoibos  
 Apollo gathered him up in his arms and kept him safe  
 in a dark cloud, lest one of the swift-horsed Danaāns 345  
 might flight bronze into his breast and rob him of life.  
 But over her Diomēdēs, good at the war cry, shouted:  
 "Back off, daughter of Zeus! Give up fighting and warfare!  
 Does it not suffice you to mislead weakling women?  
 If you meddle with battle again, I tell you, you'll shudder 350  
 at its very name, even if you only hear it from others."

So he spoke, but she went off distraught, in a sorry state,  
 and was met by wind-footed Iris, who led her from the turmoil,  
 bent double with pain, her lovely flesh now darkened.  
 Then, away on the left of the battlefield, she found fierce Arēs, 355  
 sitting, his spear left leaning against a cloud, with his swift  
 horses. She fell on her knees before her beloved brother,  
 and begged him with many prayers for his gold-bridled horses:

4. Kypris, i.e., "she of Cyprus", was a common epithet of Aphroditē, though in the *Iliad* it occurs only here (five times) in bk. 5, and "does not participate in a formulaic system" (*HE* 2: 450). Enyo was a minor war goddess: her name is limited to Diomēdēs' *aristeia*. Arēs (whom she attends at 592) has the linked epithet *Enyalios*.

“Dear brother, come to my rescue, give me your horses!  
 I need to go to Olympos, the abode of the immortals— 360  
 I have a most painful wound, that this mortal person dealt me:  
 Tydeus’s son, who’d fight now even with Zeus our father.”

So she spoke, and Arēs gave her his gold-frontleted horses,  
 and she climbed aboard the chariot distraught at heart,  
 and Iris mounted beside her, grasped the reins in her hands, 365  
 and whipped up the horses. They, nothing loath, took flight,  
 and quickly arrived at the gods’ abode, steep Olympos.  
 There wind-footed swift Iris made the horses stop,  
 unyoked them from the chariot, fed them ambrosial fodder.  
 But glorious Aphrodītē collapsed in the lap of Diōnē,<sup>5</sup> 370  
 her mother, who clasped her daughter in her arms,  
 soothingly stroked her, and addressed her with these words:  
 “Which of the gods in heaven, dear child, has done this to you,  
 without reason, as though you were openly misbehaving?”

To her then sweetly-smiling Aphrodītē made reply: 375  
 “It was Tydeus’s son wounded me, high-spirited Diomēdēs,  
 because I was taking my dear son away from the fighting—  
 Aineias, by far the dearest of all men to me: for now  
 the grim fighting’s no longer between Trojans and Achaians—  
 these Danaäns are fighting even with the immortals.” 380

To her then the glorious goddess Diōnē made reply:  
 “Bear up, my child, and endure, despite what you’re suffering;  
 for many of us suffer likewise—we, the Olympos-dwellers—  
 at the hands of men, and bring harsh grief on one another.  
 Thus Arēs suffered,<sup>6</sup> when Ōtos and powerful Ephialtēs, 385  
 the sons of Alōeus, bound him in prisoning fetters,  
 and there in a brazen jar he lay chained for thirteen months.  
 Then indeed would Arēs, that glutton for war, have perished,  
 had not their stepmother, beautiful Ēëriboia,  
 told all to Hermēs, who rescued Arēs by stealth— 390

5. Diōnē (the *di-* may simply indicate “goddess”) was of uncertain parentage; and there is a better-known myth (Hes. *Th.* 188–93) reporting Aphrodītē’s birth from the foam generated by Ouranos’s severed genitals. Perhaps a Homeric desire here to keep clear of the latter?

6. Ōtos and Ephialtēs, sons of Poseidōn, were among the Giants (nine fathoms tall when nine years old) who piled Ossa on Olympos (*Od.* 11.305–20). Their assault on Arēs was in revenge for his killing Adonis, whose safeguarding had been their responsibility.

in a sorry state now, worn out by his harsh bonds.  
 Thus Hērē suffered, when Hēraklēs, Amphitryōn's strong son,  
 shot her in the right breast with a three-barbed arrow;  
 then she too was seized by unquenchable agony.  
 Huge Hādēs was another one hurt by a bitter arrow, 395  
 when this same man, son of Zeus the aegis-bearer,  
 among the dead shot him in Pylos, gave him over to pain.  
 So he went to the house of Zeus and high Olympos  
 grieving at heart, transfixed with pain: for the arrow  
 had pierced his powerful shoulder, affected his heart. 400  
 But Paiëōn,<sup>7</sup> by applying painkilling herbs and ointments  
 healed him: no mortal he, not made for death.  
 Brutal and violent man, who did vile acts without thinking,  
 who with his archery troubled the gods that hold Olympos!  
 Now against you the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē, has set 405  
 this man: fool that he is, Tydeus's son's mind does not grasp  
 the fact that there's no long life for a man who fights the gods—  
 that Papa won't come back for his children to greet or cling  
 round  
 his knees: no return from the wars and the bitter grind of battle.  
 So now let Tydeus's son, mighty warrior though he be, 410  
 take care lest someone better than you should fight him,  
 and indeed lest Aigialeia, Adrēstos's watchful daughter,  
 should rouse her household from sleep with her agonized wailing  
 for her wedded husband, the finest warrior of the Achaians—  
 she, the strong-hearted wife of Diomēdēs the horse breaker.” 415  
 So saying, with both hands she wiped the wrist clean of ichōr:  
 Aphrodītē's arm was made whole, her sharp pains were allayed.  
 But as they both looked on, Athēnē and Hērē  
 kept needling Zeus son of Kronos with sarcastic comments,  
 the first to speak being the grey-eyed goddess Athēnē: 420  
 “Zeus, father, will you be angry with me for what I tell you?  
 It would seem that our Kypris has been urging some Achaian  
 lady to go with the Trojans, whom now she madly adores,

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7. About Ēēriboia nothing certain was known even in antiquity. Amphitryōn's strong son is Hēraklēs. The shooting of Hādēs at Pylos is recorded only here and was much discussed by baffled Hellenistic scholars (Kirk, 2: 102, cf. Ganz 70). Paiëōn was a god of healing, mentioned on a Linear B tablet from Knossos, who much later came to be identified with Apollo.

and while caressing whichever well-dressed Achaian she chose,  
scratched her delicate hand on the lady's golden brooch." 425

So she spoke; but he smiled, did the father of gods and men,  
and spoke thus, calling her over, to golden Aphrodītē:  
"Not for you, my child, is the business of warfare: you  
should rather be concerned with the charming works of marriage,  
and leave all these other things to swift Arēs and Athēnē." 430

But while they were talking like this, each one to the other,  
Diomēdēs of the great war cry sprang at Aineias,  
well aware that he was protected by Apollo himself:  
yet not even the great god awed him, he was still urgent  
to kill Aineias, and strip his splendid armor from him. 435  
Three times he lunged at Aineias, mad-keen to cut him down;  
three times his gleaming shield was slammed back by Apollo.  
But when for the fourth time he charged, like some divine being,  
then in a terrible voice Apollo the archer shouted:  
"Think well, son of Tydeus! Withdraw, do not presume 440  
to think like the gods, since in no manner is the race  
of immortals akin to that of earthbound men."

Such his words: Tydeus's son gave ground a little, backwards,  
to keep clear of the wrath of Apollo the archer, who then  
took Aineias out of the turmoil, set him down far away 445  
in sacred Pergamon, where his own shrine had been founded:  
there Lētō together with bow-hunter Artemis  
healed him in the great sanctuary, shed splendor on him,  
while a phantom was fashioned by silver-bowed Apollo,  
a clone of Aineias himself, with his kind of armor, 450  
and round that phantom both Trojans and resplendent Achaians  
hacked at the ox-hide shields protecting each other's chests,  
the round shields and the fringed leather bucklers. Then indeed  
to fierce Arēs there spoke Phoibos Apollo: "Arēs,  
Arēs ruin of mortals, blood-guilty, city-stormer, 455  
won't you now intervene, drag this man out of the fighting—  
Tydeus's son, who at present would even fight Zeus the Father?  
First he tackled Kypris, wounded her hand at the wrist,  
then he came charging at me like some superhuman creature."  
So he spoke, and set himself down on Pergamon's heights, 460  
while killer Arēs entered the Trojans' ranks, spurred them on,

in the likeness of Akamas, quick-footed Thracian leader,  
 calling on Priam's sons, Zeus's nurslings, to take action:  
 "You sons of Priam, a king well favored by Zeus,  
 how long will you let your people be slaughtered by the Achaians? 465  
 Will it be till the fighting is round our strong-built gates?  
 That man is down whom we honored as much as noble Hektōr—  
 Aineias, great-hearted Anchīsēs' son. So come now,  
 let's rescue our noble comrade from the tumult of battle."

With these words he aroused each man's urgency and spirit, 470  
 while Sarpēdōn severely rebuked illustrious Hektōr:  
 "Hektōr, that rage you once had—where has it vanished to?  
 Did you think you'd hold this city without troops or allies?  
 Just you alone, with your brothers and your sisters' husbands?  
 Not a single one of these now can I see or recognize— 475  
 No, they're cowering back like dogs set around a lion,  
 And the fighting's left to us, who are only your allies!  
 Such an ally am I, and I came here from far away—  
 far distant is Lycia, by the eddying Xanthos river,  
 where I left my dear wife and my infant son, and many 480  
 possessions, things that the needy all eye with longing.  
 Yet even so I urge on the Lycians, am fired up myself  
 to engage hand to hand, though there's nothing here of the sort  
 that the Achaians might want to drive or carry off—  
 whereas you just stand around, don't even command 485  
 your men to be steadfast, and fight to protect their wives!  
 Take care you're not snared in the seine of a catch-all net  
 and end as the prey and spoil of enemy warriors,  
 who'll soon lay waste your city and its flourishing people!  
 All this should be your concern, both night and day, 490  
 with entreaties to the commanders of your far-famed allies  
 to stand firm: that's how you'll avoid such stern rebukes."

So spoke Sarpēdōn, and his words stung Hektōr's spirit.  
 At once he sprang to the ground, in his armor, from his chariot,  
 brandishing two sharp spears, ranged widely through the ranks, 495  
 urging them on to fight, stirred up the clash of battle.  
 So they rallied, stood firm, facing up to the Achaians,  
 and the Argives closed ranks at their coming, did not falter.  
 As the wind blows chaff across the sacred threshing-floors  
 when men are winnowing, when golden-haired Dēmētēr 500

amid gusts of wind works hard to separate grain from chaff,  
 and the heaps of chaff slowly whiten, so now the Achaians  
 became white with the flying dust kicked up amongst them  
 to the brazen sky by the horses' hooves, as battle was joined  
 once more, and the charioteers came wheeling around. 505

They bore their hands' fury straight onward, while fierce Arēs  
 shrouded the battle in darkness to help the Trojans, ranged  
 across the whole field, thus fulfilling the injunctions  
 of gold-sworded Phoibos Apollo, who commanded him  
 to arouse the Trojans' spirits, seeing that Pallas Athēnē 510  
 had gone away, since it was she was supporting the Danaäns.

Now Apollo himself sent Aineias forth from the wealthy  
 sanctuary, put great strength in the breast of the people's shepherd.  
 So Aineias was back there among his companions, who rejoiced  
 to see him rejoin them alive, unhurt and sound of limb, 515  
 and full of high courage. But they questioned him not at all,  
 being concerned with that other work, which he of the silver bow  
 and Arēs, ruin of mortals, and ever-fierce Strife were rousing.

Meanwhile both Aiases and Odysseus and Diomēdēs  
 were urging the Danaäns on to battle; but they themselves 520  
 had no fear of the Trojans' violence or of their onsets,  
 but stood there steadfast, like clouds that the son of Kronos  
 on a windless day sets down on mountain summits—  
 quite still, while the rage of the north wind sleeps, and the other  
 furious winds, that scatter the shadowy clouds 525  
 with the force of their screaming gales: in such a way  
 did the Danaäns face the Trojans: steadfast, unyielding,  
 while Atreus's son ranged through the ranks with many  
 a call to his troops: "My friends, be men now, make brave your hearts,  
 feel shame before one another in this violent combat— 530  
 of those who feel shame more survive than lose their lives,  
 while runaways get no glory, win no battles."

With that he threw his spear swiftly, hit a prime fighter,  
 Deïkoön, a comrade of high-spirited Aineias,  
 Pergasos's son, whom the Trojans honored like Priam's own 535  
 offspring, since he was quick to fight in the front ranks.  
 His shield was hit by the spear that lord Agamemnōn cast,  
 and failed to stop it: the bronze point drove clean through,

pierced his baldric, and entered the lower part of his belly.  
He fell with a thud, and his armor rattled upon him. 540

Then in return Aineias killed two Danaän prime fighters,  
sons both of Dioklēs, Krēthōn and Orsilochos,  
whose father dwelt in Phērē, a well-built settlement,  
a man of rich livelihood—his lineage that of the river  
Alpheios, whose broad stream flows through Pylian country— 545  
who sired Orsilochos to be lord over many men.  
Now Orsilochos in turn sired high-spirited Dioklēs,  
and to Dioklēs were born these two sons, being twins,  
Krēthōn and Orsilochos, fine all-round warriors both.  
When these two reached manhood they went on the black ships 550  
to horse-rich Troy with the Argives, seeking indemnity  
for Atreus's sons, Agamemnōn and Menelaös; but  
themselves it was that the fate of death now obliterated.  
They resembled a pair of lions, high mountain dwellers,  
reared by their mother as cubs in some deep woodland thicket: 555  
the pair of them, snatching cattle and fattened sheep, wreak havoc  
on the steadings of shepherds, till finally they themselves  
fall victim to men's hands, are slain with the sharp bronze.  
Just so these two, overcome by the hands of Aineias,  
crashed headlong, like a couple of tall felled fir trees. 560

Now

their falling stirred pity in Menelaös the warlike:  
through the front ranks he strode, armored in gleaming bronze,  
spear poised and ready—with Arēs inflaming his rage,  
so that he might be destroyed at the hands of Aineias.  
But Nestōr's high-spirited son Antilochos saw him: through 565  
the front ranks he strode, concerned for the people's shepherd,  
lest he suffer some hurt, and lose them all they'd toiled for.  
Both men had their arms raised, each with his keen-edged spear  
aimed at the other, both in a fury to do battle:  
but Antilochos then took his place beside the people's shepherd, 570  
and Aineias did not stand firm, swift warrior though he was,  
when he saw those two side by side, and holding the line:  
who then, after dragging the corpses to the Achaians' ranks,  
left them—ill-fated pair—in the hands of their companions,  
and themselves turned back to join the front-line fighters. 575



There they took down Pylaimenēs, a match for Arēs,  
 lord of the high-spirited Paphlagōnian shield men:  
 him the son of Atreus, famed spearman Menelaös,  
 ran through as he stood there, going in at the collarbone,  
 while Antilochos caught Mydōn, his henchman and charioteer, 580  
 Atymnios's noble son, as he wheeled his whole-hoofed horses,  
 with a flung rock, square on the elbow: from his hands the reins,  
 white with ivory inlay, fell, and were dragged in the dust.  
 Antilochos sprang at him, drove his sword-point through  
 Mydōn's temple: gasping, he slumped from the fine chariot 585  
 headlong into the dust on head and shoulders, held up  
 firm for a moment—he'd hit a deep sand-drift—but then  
 his horses downed him, trampled him into the dust,  
 as Antilochos whipped and drove them back to his own lines.

Hektōr glimpsed them across the lines, ran at them, 590  
 whooping aloud, and the ranks of the Trojans followed after  
 in full strength: Arēs led them, and Enyo, queenly goddess:  
 she brought with her the reckless tumult of battle,  
 while Arēs, fists brandishing an enormous spear,  
 ranged now in front of Hektōr, now behind him. 595

Seeing Arēs, Diomēdēs of the great war cry shuddered.  
 As when a man stops, helpless, on his way across a great plain,  
 confronted by a swift river flowing down to the sea,  
 and seeing it in foaming spate starts sharply backwards,  
 so now Tydeus's son gave ground, and called to his troops: 600  
 "Friends, we were always in great awe of noble Hektōr—  
 as a spearman, as a brave warrior, even though there was  
 always one of the gods at his side, keeping ruin from him:  
 so now accompanying him is Arēs, clad in a mortal  
 warrior's form! Keep facing the Trojans, but give ground 605  
 steadily. Do not strive to match the gods in battle."

While he spoke, the Trojans drew ever closer to them.  
 Then Hektōr killed two men well skilled in warfare,  
 a pair in one chariot, Anchialos and Menesthēs,  
 and their fall stirred great Aias, Telamōn's son, to pity: 610  
 he stepped up close, stood, and hurled his bright bronze spear  
 and hit Amphios, son of Selagos, who had his dwelling  
 in Paisos, a man of much wealth, of broad acres; yet destiny

drove him to come as an ally to Priam and his sons.  
 He was hit through the belt by Telamōn's son Aias, 615  
 who into his nether belly plunged the far-shadowing spear.  
 He fell with a thud, and illustrious Aias ran up  
 to strip off his armor. The Trojans now showered him  
 with their sharp and gleaming spears: many lodged in his shield.  
 He set his heel on the corpse, drew out the bronze 620  
 spear, yet was not able to work the man's splendid arms  
 free from his shoulders, so beset he was by missiles,  
 and he feared the strong ring-defense of these proud Trojans  
 facing him, spears in their hands, so many, so brave,  
 and despite his height, and strength, and manly valor 625  
 they thrust him away from them: he staggered and backed off.

So these were laboring in the hard-fought conflict.  
 Now Tlēpolemos, Hēraklēs' son, a big strong fellow,  
 was urged against godlike Sarpēdōn by all-mastering destiny;  
 and when in their advance they were close one to the other— 630  
 the son and the grandson of Zeus the cloud-gatherer—  
 then Tlēpolemos was the first of the two to speak. He said:  
 "Sarpēdōn, the Lycians' counselor, what necessity  
 brings you to skulk here, you, a fellow unskilled in battle?  
 They lie who claim you're the offspring of Zeus the aegis-bearer: 635  
 truth is, you fall very far short of those real men  
 who were sired by Zeus in the days of our ancestors.  
 Of a different breed, they say, was that mighty force Hēraklēs  
 —my father, large-spirited, with the heart of a lion,  
 who once came here on account of Laomedōn's mares<sup>8</sup> 640  
 with only six ships and a handful of followers,  
 yet sacked the city of Ilion, widowed its streets.  
 But yours is a coward's heart, and your people are perishing.  
 No help of any sort, I think, to the Trojans  
 will be your coming from Lycia, be you never so strong: 645  
 vanquished, rather, by me you'll pass the gates of Hādēs."

To him Sarpēdōn, the Lycian leader, responded:  
 "Tlēpolemos, that man did indeed destroy sacred Ilion,

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8. The semi-divine horses mentioned at 222 (see n. 3). Hēraklēs rescued Laomedōn's daughter Hēsionē from a sea monster; Laomedōn had promised him some of the horses as a reward, but reneged on his promise, after which Hēraklēs sacked Troy.

through the senselessness of one person, lordly Laomedōn,  
 who rewarded his good work with the harshest of insults, 650  
 and refused him the mares for which he had come so far.  
 But for you, here, I tell you, the black death-spirit will bring  
 your end at my hands: laid low by my spear you'll give  
 glory to me, and your soul to horse-proud Hādēs."

So spoke Sarpēdōn. Tlēpolemos lifted his ash spear, 655  
 and both men's long lances sped from their hands at the same  
 instant. Sarpēdōn's struck home square on the neck,  
 clean through which its lethal point now penetrated,  
 Tlēpolemos's sight was shrouded by the murky gloom of night;  
 while his own long spear struck home on Sarpēdōn's left thigh, 660  
 and the zestful point drove in forcefully, scraping the bone,  
 but Sarpēdōn's father Zeus still warding off death from him.

Then his noble comrades began to carry godlike Sarpēdōn  
 out of the fighting, weighed down by the length of the spear  
 that dragged behind; yet no one had noticed it, let alone thought 665  
 of pulling the ash spear out of his thigh, to let him walk,  
 so busy they were, such toil they had in his protection.

On the other side, the Achaians, well-greaved, began carrying  
 Tlēpolemos out of the fighting. This noble Odysseus noticed—  
 he of the steadfast spirit—and his heart was hot for action. 670  
 Now he debated his choice, what he thought, how he felt:  
 Was he to further pursue the son of loud-thundering Zeus?  
 Or should he set out to kill many more of the Lycians?  
 But since it was not fated that great-hearted Odysseus  
 should lay this strong son of Zeus low with the keen-edged bronze, 675  
 Athēnē now turned his mind toward the Lycians in general.  
 So he went on to take down Koiranos, Alastōr, Chromios,  
 Alkandros, Halios, Noēmōn, and Prytanis:  
 and more Lycians still would great-hearted Odysseus have slain  
 had not great bright-helmeted Hektōr taken sharp notice. 680  
 Through the front ranks he strode, in his helmet of gleaming bronze,  
 bringing fear to the Danaäns. But there was joy at his coming  
 for Zeus's son Sarpēdōn, who addressed him piteously:  
 "Son of Priam, don't let me lie here, as prey for the Danaäns,  
 but come to my aid! Then, afterwards, let life leave me 685  
 if it's in your city—seemingly I was not destined

to make the journey back to my own, my native land,  
and gladden the heart of my wife, and my infant son.”

So he spoke: bright-helmeted Hektōr made him no answer,  
but hurried past, eager as quickly as might be 690  
to drive back the Argives, to take the lives of many.

Then the noble companions of godlike Sarpēdōn set him down  
under the splendid oak, sacred to Zeus of the aegis,  
and out through his thigh the ash spear was thrust by his dear  
comrade, strong Pelagōn. The breath of life 695  
left him, and over his eyes a mist was shed. But he got  
his breath back again, and the blustering north wind’s  
gusts now restored the life he’d so painfully gasped out.

The Argives, hard-pressed by Arēs and bronze-clad Hektōr,  
though they did not turn and flee to their black ships, yet 700  
could not hold firm in the battle line, kept backing off,  
now that they’d noticed Arēs among the Trojans.

So who

was the first, who the last that got to be slaughtered by  
Hektōr, the son of Priam, and brazen Arēs?  
Godlike Teuthras, and, next, Orestēs, driver of horses, 705  
Trēchos, Aitōlian spearman, Oinomāos,  
Helenos, Oinōps’s son, bright-kilted Oresbios  
who dwelt in Hylē—a man much occupied with wealth—  
close by the Kephisian lake, and near him lived other  
Boiōtians, all of them owners of rich and fertile acres. 710

But when the goddess, white-armed Hērē, saw them  
busily killing off Argives in violent combat, then  
straight away she addressed Athēnē with winged words:  
“Well now, unwearying child of Zeus of the aegis,  
vain indeed was the promise we made to Menelaös, 715  
that he’d sack strong-walled Ilion before returning home,  
if we allow baneful Arēs to rage on in this fashion!  
So, let us two likewise put our minds to daring valor.”

Thus she spoke; the grey-eyed goddess Athēnē did not  
disregard her. Off she went to harness the gold-bridled horses— 720  
she, Hērē, high goddess, daughter of great Kronos!—  
while Hēbē quickly, at the chariot’s sides, set the curved

and eight-spoked wheels round the iron axle. Of these  
the outer rim is of gold, imperishable: laid on it  
are tires of fitted bronze, a marvel to look upon, 725  
with hubs of silver, revolving on either side,  
while the body is tightly woven with straps of gold  
and silver, and there are two rails that run around it.  
From it stood out the silver pole, and on its end  
she bound fast the yoke, and to it fastened the harness, 730  
both of fine gold, while Hērē brought under the yoke  
the swift-footed horses, impatient for strife and the war cry.

But Athēnē, the daughter of Zeus the aegis-bearer,  
let fall on her father's floor the soft embroidered robe  
that she herself had made, worked with her own hands, 735  
and, donning the tunic of Zeus the cloud-gatherer,  
armed herself in all grim warfare's accoutrements.  
Over her shoulders she spread the tasseled aegis—  
a fearful thing, crowned all around with Panic,  
and Strife is on it, and Prowess, and heart-chilling Pursuit; 740  
there too is the Gorgon head of the fearful monster,  
fearful and terrible, portent of Zeus the aegis-bearer.  
She set on her head the helmet, double-bossed, quadruple-plated,  
all golden, its inlay showing the troops of a hundred cities.  
Into the fiery chariot then she stepped, grasped her spear— 745  
weighty, huge, thick—with which she quells the ranks of men,  
the heroes who've angered this child of a mighty sire.  
Now Hērē gave a quick flick of her whip to the horses;  
of themselves the sky's gates groaned open, guarded by  
the Seasons, to whom are entrusted the firmament and Olympos, 750  
whether to lift off the thick clouds, or impose them.  
Straight through those gates they drove their goad-spurred horses,  
and found the son of Kronos apart from the other gods,  
ensconced on the topmost peak of many-ridged Olympos.  
Then the goddess, white-armed Hērē, halted the horses, 755  
and to most high Zeus, son of Kronos, put this question:  
"Zeus, father, are you not wroth at these violent deeds of Arēs—  
that he's destroyed so many—and such fine—Achaian troops,  
pointlessly, out of due order, to my grief, while Kypris  
and silver-bowed Apollo, at their ease, rejoice at having 760  
let loose this madman who knows nothing of decent conduct?"

Zeus, father, will you hold it against me if I give Arēs  
a painful beating, and chase him away from the battlefield?”

Then in reply to her words Zeus the cloud-gatherer said:  
“Yes, go to it, rouse up against him Athēnē the spoil-bringer: 765  
she’s especially used to inflicting harsh pain upon him.”

So he spoke, and the goddess, white-armed Hērē, did not  
ignore him. She whipped up her horses, and they, not unwilling,  
winged their way between earth and starry heaven. As far 770  
as a man’s gaze reaches into the hazy distance  
while he sits on a lookout point, staring over the wine-hued deep,  
such the span that the gods’ neighing horses leap at one bound.  
But when they came to Troy and its two flowing rivers,  
where Simoeis and Skamandros merge their streams,  
then the goddess, white-armed Hērē, halted her horses, 775  
unharnessed them from the chariot, hid them in thick mist,  
while Simoeis made ambrosia spring up for their grazing.

Now the two queens strutted off like a brace of wild pigeons,  
eager to come to the aid of the Argive warriors;  
and when they reached the place where the most and the bravest 780  
stood ranged round the mighty person of Diomēdēs,  
the horse breaker, like lions that rend and eat raw flesh,  
or wild pigs, boars, whose strength is far from trifling,  
then white-armed Hērē, the goddess, stopped and shouted,  
in the likeness of great-hearted Stentōr, the brazen-voiced, 785  
whose shout matched in volume that of fifty other men:  
“Shame, Argives! Cowardly creatures, good only to look at!  
So long as noble Achilles took part in the fighting, then  
the Trojans would not even venture beyond the Dardanian gates,  
so scared they were of that massive spear of his. But now 790  
they fight far away from the city, out by the hollow ships.”

So saying she aroused the passion and spirit of every man,  
while to Tydeus’s son now sped the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē,  
and found the king close beside his horses and chariot,  
cooling the wound that the arrow of Pandaros dealt him; 795  
for the sweat was giving him trouble under the broad strap  
of his round shield. He was troubled, his arm had wearied  
from lifting the strap and wiping the dark blood clots away.  
Laying hold of his horses’ yoke the goddess declared:

“Not much indeed like himself was the son that Tydeus begot— 800  
 Tydeus was short of stature, but what a great fighter!  
 Even that time when I wouldn’t let him do battle  
 or parade his courage—when, no other Achaians with him,  
 he came to Thēbē as a messenger, to its great crowd  
 of Kadmeians. I told him to feast in their halls, relax, 805  
 but he with his fierce spirit, the same as always,  
 challenged the young Kadmeians, beat them at everything  
 easily—such a supporter I was on his behalf!  
 Now beside you too I stand as a guardian,  
 ready and eager to bid you battle the Trojans— 810  
 yet either fatigue from much fighting has entered your limbs,  
 or maybe you’re in the grip of craven fear—if so,  
 you’re no true offspring of Tydeus, Oineus’s warrior son.”

Then in response to her words strong Diomēdēs declared:  
 “I know you, goddess, daughter of Zeus of the aegis: 815  
 so I’ll answer you readily, tell the truth, hide nothing.  
 No craven fear grips me, no shrinking from action. But I  
 still remember the charges that you yourself laid on me:  
 you would not permit me to battle, at close quarters,  
 the rest of the blessed gods; but should Zeus’s daughter Aphrodītē 820  
 enter the fighting, her I should wound with the sharp bronze.  
 That is why I have pulled back myself, and have ordered all the rest  
 of the Argives to regroup here, being well aware  
 that it’s Arēs who lords it at present over the battlefield.”

Then in answer to him spoke the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē: 825  
 “Diomēdēs, Tydeus’s son, so dear to my heart, you need not  
 fear Arēs because of that, nor any one of the other  
 immortals—such a supporter I am on your behalf!  
 So come, straight off at Arēs drive your whole-hoofed horses—  
 Get up close, hit him, don’t be in awe of frantic Arēs, 830  
 this raving madman, a sick piece of work, a two-faced  
 liar, who just now promised, when talking with me and Hērē,  
 to fight the Trojans, yes, and give aid to the Argives—  
 but now consorts with the Trojans, his promises forgotten.”

So saying, she seized Sthenelos, pulled him backwards, 835  
 dumped him out of the chariot. Nimbly he jumped aside,  
 while she now mounted and stood beside noble Diomēdēs,

a goddess hot for the fray. Loud creaked the oaken axle  
under its load: it bore a great man, and a terrible goddess.

Pallas Athēnē then grasped the whip and the reins, 840  
and instantly straight at Arēs she drove the whole-hoofed horses.

He was busy stripping the armor from huge Periphas, by far  
the best man among the Aitōlians, Ochlēsios's splendid son.

Him bloodstained Arēs was stripping; but Athēnē put on  
the cap of Hādēs,<sup>9</sup> to stop mighty Arēs from seeing her. 845

But when Arēs, ruin of mortals, saw noble Diomēdēs,  
he left giant Periphas lying there, on the same spot  
where he'd first cut him down and robbed him of his life,  
and made straight for Diomēdēs, the horse breaker, and then  
when, in their advance, they were near the one to the other, 850

Arēs lunged out over the yoke and the horses' reins  
with his bronze spear, hungry to snatch the life out of him; but  
it was caught by the hand of the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē,  
who jerked it up over the chariot, to miss its target. Next,  
Diomēdēs of the good war cry thrust out hard 855

with his bronze spear, and Pallas Athēnē drove it  
into Arēs' lower belly, where the kilt guarded him.  
Here he hit, here he wounded him, ripping his fine flesh,  
and tore the spear out again. Then brazen Arēs bellowed  
as loud as the war cry of nine thousand—no, ten thousand— 860  
fighting troops, as they clash in his, Arēs', strife.

Now Achaians and Trojans were seized by fear and trembling,  
so loudly bellowed Arēs, he of warfare insatiate.

Like a black tornado that's formed out of the clouds  
after a heat-spell, when a blustering wind arises, 865  
so to Tydeus's son Diomēdēs did brazen Arēs  
look, as he rose through the clouds to the wide heaven.

Swiftly he came to the gods' seat, to steep Olympus,  
sat down by Zeus son of Kronos, anguished at heart,  
showed him the immortal blood still flowing from his wound, 870  
and tearfully thus addressed him with winged words:

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9. The sole mention by Homer of this cap of invisibility, a very old, widespread piece of folklore evidently linked to the popular etymology of Hādēs, "the unseen one" (Kirk, 2: 147). "[I]t is of course not necessary to suppose that the poet conceives Athena as literally putting on a cap," Leaf solemnly informs us; this was just "the traditional—almost proverbial—way of saying that she makes herself invisible to Ares" (1: 194).



“Zeus, father, are you not angered at seeing these violent deeds?  
 We gods must always endure the most cruel suffering  
 through each others’ ill will when we ally with mortals!  
 We’re all at war with you, for you bore this mad accursed 875  
 daughter of yours, her mind always set on lawless acts!  
 Look, all the other gods who are on Olympos  
 are obedient to you, each one of us is your subject;  
 yet her you oppose in no way, neither by word nor deed,  
 but give her her head, since the little horror’s your child. 880  
 So now Tydeus’s son, the arrogant Diomēdēs,  
 she’s incited to vent his fury against the immortal gods.  
 First he tackled Kypris, wounded her hand at the wrist,  
 then he came charging at me like some superhuman creature.  
 But my quick feet let me escape—otherwise long since 885  
 I’d have been lying there in agony among the gruesome corpses,  
 alive still, yet made strengthless by his bronze’s strokes.”  
 To him with a fierce glance spoke Zeus the cloud-gatherer:  
 “Don’t sit here by me and whine, you two-faced trimmer!  
 Of all the gods on Olympos, I find you the most hateful— 890  
 quarrels are what you love most, and wars and battles.  
 You’ve got all your mother’s spirit, ungovernable, unyielding—  
 Hērē! It’s all *I* can do to make her heed my orders,  
 so it’s by her promptings, I’d guess, that you’re in this trouble.  
 Still, I can’t bear to let you endure pain any longer— 895  
 you’re my offspring, it was to me your mother bore you.  
 Had it been any other god who sired such a little horror,  
 you’d long since have found yourself down lower than the Titans.”  
  
 So saying, he commanded Paiëōn to make Arēs whole,  
 and over his wound Paiëōn spread pain-killing medicines 900  
 and healed him: for he was not made of mortal stuff. As when  
 an infusion of fig juice quickly thickens white milk  
 that was liquid before, and it curdles as a man stirs it,  
 so swiftly now did he heal impetuous Arēs, and Hēbē  
 gave him a bath, and dressed him in elegant garments, 905  
 and he sat there by Zeus son of Kronos, exulting in his glory.

Then those two—Hērē of Argos and Athēnē the Defender—  
 went back to great Zeus’s palace, after thus making Arēs,  
 ruin of mortals, give up his slaughter of warriors.