

Book 7

So saying, illustrious Hektōr charged out through the gates,
and with him Aléxandros, his brother: in their hearts
both were hungry for battle and combat. Just as a god
will provide eager sailors with a more than welcome
tailwind, when they're weary of thrusting back seawater 5
with polished pinewood oars, and the labor's loosened their
limbs,
so these two now appeared before the eager Trojans.

Then they started in. Paris cut down king Areithoös's son,
Menesthios, native of Arnē, whom the war-club-wielding
Areithoös sired on ox-eyed Phylomedousa; 10
and Hektōr struck Ēioneus with his sharp-tipped spear
in the neck, under his good bronze helmet, undid his limbs;
and Glaukos son of Hippolochos, the Lycians' leader,
hit Iphinoös with his spear in the hard-fought combat—
Dexios's son—as he leapt up behind his swift mares, 15
in the shoulder: he fell to the ground, his limbs were loosened.

When the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē, noticed these two
slaughtering Argives in the hard-fought combat, she
set off, quickly darting down from the heights of Olympos
to sacred Ilion. Apollo hurried across to meet her, 20
for he'd glimpsed her from Pergamos, and wanted victory
for the Trojans. The two of them met beside the oak tree,
and the first to speak was the son of Zeus, Lord Apollo:
"What's your urgency this time, daughter of mighty Zeus?
Why has your great spirit sent you down from Olympos? 25
Do you want to give victory, for a change, to the Danaäns?
You've certainly no pity for the Trojans who are dying.
Look, if you'd do as I say, it would make things better by far.
Let's break off the warfare and fighting now, at least
for today—though hereafter they'll battle again, till they witness 30
Ilion's end, since it's dear to the hearts of you
immortal ladies to see this city at last laid waste."

In answer to him then spoke the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē:
 “Let it be so, archer: it’s what I myself had in mind
 coming down from Olympos to visit the Trojans and Achaians. 35
 But tell me, how do you plan to stop these men from fighting?”

In answer to her then spoke the son of Zeus, Lord Apollo:
 “Let us stir up the mighty passion of Hektōr the horse breaker,
 to the end that he may challenge some Danaän to face him,
 man against man, in the grimness of single combat. Then 40
 the bronze-greaved Achaians are sure, in their resentment,
 to find an individual who’ll duel with noble Hektōr.”

So he spoke, and the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē, did not
 dissent. Now Helenos, Priam’s son, sensed in his heart
 the plan that the gods had chosen as they debated,¹ 45
 and he went and stood beside Hektōr, and spoke to him, saying:

“Hektōr, son of Priam, equal of Zeus in counsel,
 will you be persuaded by me, since I am your brother?
 Tell all the rest, both Achaians and Trojans, to be seated
 while you challenge whoever’s the best of the Achaians 50
 to fight single-handed against you in fearful conflict, seeing
 it’s not yet your time to die, to meet your allotted fate:
 thus I have heard it said by the gods who live forever.”

So he spoke, and Hektōr took great pleasure in his words.
 Into the midst he strode, holding back the Trojan ranks 55
 with his spear, grasped in the middle, and they all sat down,
 and Agamemnon settled the well-greaved Achaians, while
 Athēnē and the lord of the silver bow, Apollo,
 perched in the likeness of birds—vultures—high up on
 the tall oak of Zeus, the Father and aegis-bearer, 60
 enjoying the sight of the warriors, whose serried ranks
 bristled with shields, helmets, spears. Just in the way
 the deep sea’s ruffled by a cat’s-paw breeze each time
 the west wind first stirs, and the deep turns black beneath it,
 so were the ranks of Achaians and Trojans as they settled 65
 themselves in the plain, and Hektōr, between them both, now
 spoke:

1. Priam’s son Helenos has the power of prophecy (cf. 6.76) and can thus intuit what the gods have decided. His role as seer is not stressed (any more than that of Kassandrē), but as Kirk says, “the Trojans need a prophet, if only to balance Kalkhas” (Kirk 2: 237).

“Hear me out, you Trojans, and you well-greaved Achaians,
 while I tell you what the heart in my breast dictates. Our oaths
 the high-throned son of Kronos has not let be fulfilled,
 but rather has evil in mind for both sides, until either 70
 you capture Troy of the fine ramparts, or else yourselves
 are brought low by the side of your own seafaring vessels.
 In your ranks are the best men of all the Achaians: from them
 let the one whose spirit impels him to fight me now come forth
 out of the mass, be your champion, battle noble Hektôr!
 So thus I declare, and let Zeus be our witness to it: 75
 If that man cuts me down with the keen-edged bronze,
 he can strip off my armor, take it back to the hollow ships,
 but must give back my corpse to be carried home, so that Trojans
 and Trojans’ wives may grant it its proper due of fire. 80
 But if I should slay him, and Apollo lets me triumph,
 I shall strip off his armor, take it back to sacred Ilion,
 and hang it up there in the shrine of Apollo the archer;
 but his corpse I’ll surrender at the well-benched vessels,
 to let the long-haired Achaians offer him funeral rites, 85
 and raise him a burial mound beside the wide Hellespont.
 And one day in the future someone not yet born may say,
 as he sails his many-benched vessel over the wine-faced deep,
 ‘This is the burial mound of a warrior long deceased,
 slain, fighting valiantly, by illustrious Hektôr.’ Thus 90
 someone will speak, and my fame will never perish.”

Such were his words, and they all sat quiet, in silence,
 ashamed to refuse the challenge, yet scared to accept it.
 But at last Menelaös stood up and spoke among them,
 with bitter contempt, greatly saddened at heart: “Ah me, 95
 you empty braggarts, you women, not men, of Achaia!
 This will be an embarrassing business, deep, deep disgrace,
 if no Danaän now steps forward to stand against Hektôr!
 But you—may you all become mere earth and water,
 sitting here, every one a lifeless clod, without glory! 100
 Against this man I will don arms myself, though it’s on high
 that the issues of victory rest, with the immortal gods.”

This said, he put on his magnificent armor. And now,
 Menelaös, the end of your life would have been made manifest
 at Hektôr’s hands, since he was more powerful by far, 105

had not the Achaian princes sprung up and caught hold of you,
 while Atreus's son himself, wide-ruling Agamemnōn,
 clasping your right hand, addressed you in these words:
 "You're out of your mind, Menelaös! There's no need
 for this madness in you. Hold back, for all your distress, 110
 don't let mere rivalry drive you to fight a better man:
 Hektör, Priam's son, from whom others, too, shrink back—
 even Achilles shuddered at meeting this man in battle
 that brings men glory, and he is better by far than you.
 Go and sit down now in the company of your comrades: 115
 the Achaians will find an antagonist to fight with this man,
 and even though he be fearless, and a glutton for battle,
 he'll be glad enough, I tell you, to bend knee and rest,
 if he escapes deadly warfare and the horrors of combat."

With these words the hero won over his brother's mind, 120
 since what he urged made good sense. Menelaös agreed,
 and his attendants, rejoicing, took the armor from his shoulders,
 while Nestör rose to his feet and addressed the Argives:
 "What a business! Great grief, for sure, is come upon Achaia.
 Loud would be the groans of old Pēleus, driver of horses, 125
 the Myrmidons' noble counselor and spokesman,
 who once, in his own house, took pleasure in questioning me,
 asking about all the Argives, their birth and lineage.
 Were he to hear that they all were now cringing before Hektör
 he'd keep raising his hands in prayer to the immortals 130
 that his spirit might leave his limbs for the house of Hādēs!

How I wish—Zeus, Father, Athēnē, Apollō!—I were
 as young as I was when, gathered near swift-flowing Keladōn,
 men of Pylos and spear-mad Arkadians fought together
 outside the walls of Pheia, around Iardanos's streams. 135
 Ereuthaliōn stood as their champion, a godlike man,
 wearing upon his shoulders the armor of the lord Areithoös:
 noble Areithoös, tagged with the nickname "Clubber"
 by warriors—and by their fine-sashed women too—
 since his weapon was neither the bow nor the long spear 140
 but a club of iron with which he smashed through the ranks.
 Him Lykourgos killed, by trickery, not by might,
 in a narrow defile, where his iron club could not save him
 from destruction: Lykourgos got his blow in first,

spearing him through the midriff, slammed him down on his back, 145
stripped him of the armor brazen Arēs had given him.

This gear he then wore himself in war's bruising turmoil;
But when Lykourgos was coming to old age in his halls
he gave it to his dear henchman Ereuthaliōn to wear,
and clad in that armor he challenged all our best warriors; 150
but they all shuddered in terror, and none dared face him.

My own unflinching spirit set me on in my boldness
to do battle with him, though I was the youngest of them all.
So I fought against him, and Athēnē gave me the glory.
This was the tallest, strongest man that ever I killed— 155

a sprawling mass, spread-eagled this way and that. How I wish
I were still that young, that my strength were still intact—
then would bright-helmeted Hektōr quickly get his fight!
But you lot, though you're the best the Achaians can muster,
not even so are you minded, much less eager, to face Hektōr." 160

Thus the old man chastised them. Then nine in all stood up:
by far the first to rise was the lord of men, Agamemnōn,
next came the son of Tydeus, powerful Diomēdēs,
followed by the two Aiaes, both clad in daring valor;
after them Idomeneus with Idomeneus's henchman 165
Mērionēs, a match for Enyalios the killer,
and close behind these Eurypylos, Euaimōn's splendid son.

Next Thoas, Andraimōn's son, stood up, and noble Odysseus:
all these were set on doing battle with noble Hektōr.
Then Nestōr, Gerēnian horseman, spoke among them again: 170
"Now shake the lots thoroughly, to find out who'll be chosen,
for he'll surely bring good fortune to the well-greaved Achaians
and to his own spirit, should he chance to escape
from deadly warfare and the terrible grind of combat.'

So he spoke: now each man marked his own lot, and they 175
tossed them into the helmet of Atreus's son Agamemnōn,
while the troops all prayed, arms uplifted to the gods,
and thus would someone say, staring up at the broad sky:
"Zeus, Father, let the lot fall on Aias, on Tydeus's son,
or on the king of gold-rich Mykēnai himself." 180

So they spoke,
and Nestōr, Gerēnian horseman, shook the helmet,
and out leapt the lot which they themselves had hoped for:

that of Aias. A herald carried it round the crowd
 from left to right, displayed it to all the Achaian leaders:
 none recognized the lot, each denied it was his. But when, 185
 as the herald went through the crowd, he reached the man
 who'd thrown it, marked, into the helmet, illustrious Aias,
 then Aias stretched out his hand, and he put the lot in it.
 At a glance Aias knew his mark, and rejoiced at heart,
 then dropped the lot on the ground beside his foot, exclaiming: 190
 "My friends, this lot is mine, and I rejoice in my heart,
 since I'm convinced I shall conquer noble Hektôr.
 But come, while I'm putting on my armor for the battle,
 you should all pray to Lord Zeus, the son of Kronos,
 silently, by yourselves, so the Trojans learn nothing of it— 195
 or out loud, since in any case there is no man we fear,
 and none who can put me to flight, his will against mine,
 using either force or skill, for I don't think I was born
 and raised, on Salamis, completely unskilled myself."

So he spoke, and they prayed to Lord Zeus, the son of Kronos, 200
 and thus would someone say, looking up at the broad sky:
 "Zeus, Father, ruling from Ida, most glorious, most great,
 grant victory to Aias, let him win a great triumph—
 or, if you love Hektôr too, and care for his welfare,
 then furnish both men with equal strength and glory." 205

Such their words, while Aias was arming himself
 in gleaming bronze. But when all his gear was attached,
 all his body protected, he stepped forth like huge Arēs
 when he goes to war among men whom the son of Kronos
 has assembled to fight in the rage of heart-devouring strife: 210
 just so sallied forth huge Aias, the bulwark of the Achaians,
 with a smile on his grim features, taking lengthy strides
 on his feet below, as he brandished his far-shadowing spear.
 The Argives indeed rejoiced as they watched him, but a fearful
 trembling seized on the limbs of every Trojan— 215
 even Hektôr's own heart beat faster against his rib cage,
 yet he had no chance to withdraw, to lose himself in the mass
 of his people, since he it was had made the fighting challenge.
 So Aias drew near, hefting his tower-like shield of bronze
 and sevenfold bull's hide, that Tychios toiled at making: 220
 Tychios, first among hide workers, whose home was in Hylē,

who'd worked Aias's glinting shield with seven layered hides
 from well-fed bulls, and on top an eighth, of hammered bronze.
 Holding this out from his chest, Aias, Telamōn's son,
 marched up close to Hektōr, and addressed him threateningly: 225
 "Hektōr, you're going to learn, very clearly, man to man,
 what champions the Danaāns still have amongst them,
 even after Achillēs—the lionheart, the rank breaker!
 He now beside his curved, deep-voyaging vessels
 lies raging at Agamemnōn, the shepherd of the people; 230
 yet we too are such men as can stand and face you—
 and we're many! So begin the battle, the warfare!"

To this great Hektōr, the bright-helmeted, made his answer:
 "Aias, scion of Zeus, son of Telamōn, lord of your people,
 don't try to scare me as though I were some weak child, 235
 or a woman, knowing nothing of the business of warfare!
 Not so: I'm well acquainted with combat and killings,
 I know how to wield—see, to left, to right—my toughened
 oxhide shield: that's real shieldmanship in battle!
 I'm skilled at charging into the mêlée of galloping horses, 240
 I can, at close quarters, dance the measure of deadly Arēs;
 yet I don't mean to catch such a one as you off guard
 by a furtive sighting and cast: I'll throw openly, hope to hit you."
 That said, he poised and let fly his far-shadowing spear,
 and hit Aias's sturdy shield, with its seven oxhide layers, 245
 on its outermost bronze, that formed the eighth layer on it.
 Through six of these folds the tough bronze tore its way,
 but was stopped by the seventh hide. Then in response
 Aias, scion of Zeus, let fly his far-shadowing spear,
 and struck Priam's son on his all-round well-balanced shield: 250
 clean through the gleaming shield pierced the weighty spear,
 clean through the subtly worked corselet it forced its way,
 and tore a hole in his tunic, close to the rib cage—
 but Hektōr leaned off to one side, escaped the black death-spirit.
 Both grasped their long spears, pulled them out at the same moment, 255
 and fell on each other like lions that devour raw meat
 or wild boars, creatures of no small strength. Priam's son
 thrust with his spear, struck the other's shield in the middle,
 but the bronze failed to break the surface, its point was bent,
 and Aias sprang at him, pierced his shield: the spear point 260

went clean through, brought his fierce charge to a halt,
 tore its way into his neck, and the black blood spurted up.
 Yet not even so did bright-helmeted Hektōr yield,
 but started back, and hefted in one strong hand
 a rock that lay on the plain, black, jagged, huge, and with it 265
 struck Aias's fearsome sevenfold oxhide shield
 in the middle, right on the boss, and the bronze re-echoed.
 In reply now Aias heaved up an even bigger rock,
 whirled and flung it, with measureless force in his throw,
 crushed the shield in with this rock that was like a millstone, 270
 and Hektōr's knees gave way, he lay stretched on his back
 beaten down under his shield. But Apollo quickly raised him.
 Now with their swords they'd have been lunging hand to hand,
 had not the heralds, those envoys of Zeus and mortals,
 come, one from the Trojans, one from the bronze-clad Achaians: 275
 Talthybios and Idaios, both men of sound understanding.
 They held out their staffs between them, and the herald Idaios,
 a master of wise advice, made this proclamation:
 "Fight no longer, dear sons; abandon your battle!
 You both are dear to the heart of Zeus the cloud-gatherer, 280
 both men of the spear: that indeed we have seen for ourselves!
 Besides, night is upon us, and it's good to yield to night."

 In response to his words then Aias, Telamōn's son, declared:
 "Idaios, you must tell Hektōr to give the answer to this,
 since it was he who issued the challenge to all our best men. 285
 Let him go first: I am ready to do whatever he says."

 Then great bright-helmeted Hektōr spoke as follows:
 "Aias, since some god gave you both stature and power,
 and good sense too, and with spear you outclass all Achaians,
 let us now take a break from fighting, cease our combat— 290
 for today at least: hereafter we'll battle again, until heaven
 decides between us, lets one or the other triumph:
 besides, night is upon us, and it's good to yield to night.
 This way you'll cheer all the Achaians beside their ships,
 and most your own kin and comrades, such as you have; 295
 while I, throughout this great city of King Priam's,
 shall encourage the men of Troy and their long-robed women
 who are bound for the gods' assembly to pray on my behalf.
 Come then, let's give one another ennobling gifts,

so that Achaians and Trojans may say amongst themselves: 300
“Truly these two fought each other in heart-devouring strife,
yet still reached an agreement, parted in friendship.”

So speaking, he offered Aias a silver-studded sword,
complete with matching scabbard and well-cut baldric,
and Aias gave him a sash, that was dyed bright purple. 305
So they parted, one to the Achaian host, the other
to the gathering of the Trojans, who rejoiced when they saw
Hektōr alive and whole, and coming towards them—
having got clear of Aias’s violence, his irresistible hands—
and escorted him to the city, scarce believing him to be safe. 310
On the other side now the well-greaved Achaians led off
Aias, agog at his victory, to noble Agamemnōn.

When these arrived at the huts of Atreus’s son, for them
the lord of men, Agamemnon, made sacrifice of an ox,
a male, five years old, to Kronos’s all-powerful son. 315
This they then flayed and got ready, butchered the carcass,
cut up the meat with skill, threaded the bits on skewers,
grilled them with care, then drew them all off. But when
they were through with their work, and the meal had been got ready,
they feasted, and no one’s heart lacked a fair share in the feasting, 320
and Aias received in his honor the whole length of the chine
from Atreus’s heroic son, wide-ruling Agamemnōn.
But when they had satisfied their desire for food and drink,
for them, first, the old man Nestōr began to weave a plan—
Nestōr, whose counsel had earlier, too, seemed best. 325
He, with friendly intent now spoke before the assembly:
“Son of Atreus, and you other leaders of all the Achaians:
The dead of the long-haired Achaians now are many,
whose dark blood impetuous Arēs has spilt around
swift-flowing Skamandros: their souls have gone down to Hādēs. 330
So at dawn you must call a halt to the Achaians’ fighting,
and we’ll gather up the corpses, wheel them back here
on oxcars and mulecars. After that we’ll cremate them
a little way off from the ships, so each man may carry home
their bones to their sons—when we’re back in our native land. 335
And round the pyre let us heap up, there in the plain,
one communal burial mound, and quickly build beside it
high walls, a protection for our vessels and ourselves,

and in the walls let us fashion close-fitted gateways,
 wide enough to let chariots be driven through them, 340
 and outside, close to these, we should dig a deep ditch
 running all round that hold off troops and horses
 if ever we're under assault by these overweening Trojans."

So he spoke, and all the princes gave him their assent.
 The Trojans too held a meeting, up on Ilion's citadel, 345
 in alarm and disorder, alongside the gates of Priam,
 and amongst them wise Antēnōr was the first to speak:
 "Listen to me, you Trojans, Dardanians, and allies,
 while I say what the heart in my breast is bidding me tell you.
 Come, then: Argive Helen, along with her possessions— 350
 let's give her, to take away, back to the sons of Atreus.
 Now we're fighting with oaths forsworn, so I have no hope
 of anything going our way unless we take this course."

This said, he sat down, and there then stood up amongst them
 the noble Aléxandros, fair-haired Helen's husband, 355
 who in reply now addressed him with winged words:
 "Antēnōr, the things you are saying no longer please me:
 you can think up a different speech, one better than this.
 If your public message is meant in all seriousness,
 then the gods themselves must surely have addled your wits. 360
 So I will speak out before the Trojans, breakers of horses,
 and declare to your face: I refuse. My wife I'll not give back.
 But all the possessions I brought from Argos to our home—
all—I'm prepared to return, and add to them from my store."

This said, he sat down, and there then stood up amongst them 365
 Priam, of Dardanos's lineage, a match for the gods in counsel.
 He with friendly intent now spoke before the assembly:
 "Listen to me, you Trojans, Dardanians, and allies,
 while I say what the heart in my breast is bidding me tell you.
 For now, take your dinner throughout the city, as usual, 370
 and keep a good lookout, and each of you stay alert;
 but at daybreak let Idaios make his way to the hollow ships
 to inform Atreus's sons, Agamemnōn and Menelaös,
 of the words of Aléxandros, over whom this quarrel began;
 and let him add this wise proposal: that they should agree 375
 to a truce from dolorous warfare, until we have burned

our dead: after that we'll fight again, until heaven
decides between us, gives victory to one side or the other."

So he spoke: they listened attentively, and obeyed him.
Their dinner they ate at their posts, throughout the army, 380
and at daybreak Idaios made his way to the hollow ships.

There he found, in assembly, the Danaäns, henchmen of Arēs,
at the stern end of Agamemnōn's vessel. Standing there
amongst them, the herald, strong of voice, now spoke as follows:
"Son of Atreus, and you other leaders of all the Achaïans, 385
I am ordered by Priam and the rest of our eminent Trojans
to repeat to you—in the hope you may find them agreeable—
the words of Aléxandros, over whom this quarrel began.
The goods that Aléxandros—how I wish he had perished first!—
brought back to Troy in his hollow ships, all these 390
he's willing to give back, and increase from his own store;
but as for the wedded wife of illustrious Menelaös,
her he will not return, though indeed the Trojans urge it.
This too they bade me propose: that you should agree
to a truce from dolorous warfare, until we have burned 395
our dead: after that we'll fight again, until heaven
decides between us, gives victory to one side or the other."

So he spoke, and they all became hushed in silence, until
at last Diomēdēs, good at the war cry, addressed them:
"Let no man now accept these goods from Aléxandros, 400
nor Helen either: it's obvious, even to the witless,
that already destruction's noose is tightening round the Trojans."

So he spoke: the Achaïans' sons all roared their approval,
in delight at the words of Diomēdēs the horse breaker.
Then the lord Agamemnōn made this reply to Idaios: 405
"Idaios, you hear for yourself the Achaïans' utterance,
their answer to you: this gives me pleasure as well.
As for the dead, I don't object to your burning them:
You can't dilly-dally with corpses: as soon as they're dead,
you have to quickly give them the comfort of fire. These oaths 410
let Zeus now witness, Hērē's loud-thundering husband."

So saying, he raised his scepter for all the gods to see,
and Idaios made his way back to sacred Ilion. There
all were met in assembly, Trojans, Dardanians,

gathered together, all waiting upon the return
of Idaios. At last he arrived, and delivered his message,
standing amongst them. Then they quickly made ready
for both tasks, fetching the corpses, and gathering firewood,
while the Argives likewise, setting off from their well-benched
ships,

hastened, some for firewood, others to bring in the dead. 420

The sun's first rays were striking the fields as it rose
from the streams of Ocean—deep-flowing, silent, peaceful—
climbing the sky, as the two sides met one another.

A hard task it was to identify each individual,
but they washed off the clotted gore with water,
shedding warm tears, and hoisted them onto the wagons. 425

Great Priam forbade all keening, so it was in silence
that they loaded the pyre with corpses, grieving at heart,
and, when they'd burned them, went back to sacred Ilion.

Likewise on the other side the well-greaved Achaians
loaded the pyre with corpses, grieving at heart,
and, when they'd burned them, went back to the hollow ships. 430

When it was not yet dawn, but a grey half-darkness,
then at the pyre there gathered a chosen troop of Achaians,
and round it they now began raising in the plain
one communal burial mound, and beside it built
high walls, a protection for their vessels and themselves,
in which they then constructed close-fitting gateways,
wide enough to let chariots be driven through them,
while outside, close to these, they dug a deep ditch,
both wide and ample, bristling with sharpened stakes. 440

Thus they labored on, did the long-haired Achaians;
and the gods, sitting there by Zeus, the lord of lightning,
were amazed at the bronze-clad Achaians' mighty work.
First to speak amongst them was Poseidōn the Earth-Shaker: 445
"Zeus, Father, is any mortal left on this boundless earth
who'll still tell the immortals his thinking, his intentions?
Don't you see that the long-haired Achaians are at it again—
they've built a wall to defend their ships, and round it
have dug a ditch, yet without fitting sacrifice to us gods!
Its fame will reach out as far as the dawn light spreads, 450

and men will forget the wall that Phoibos Apollo and I
built, with enormous labor, for the hero Laomedōn.”²

Greatly troubled, Zeus the cloud-gatherer responded:
“Come, wide-ruling Earth-Shaker, what a thing to have said! 455
Some other one of the gods might be scared by this idea—
one far feebler than you in both strength and forcefulness.
But *your* fame will surely reach as far the dawn light spreads!
Think now: once they’re gone, these long-haired Achaians,
back with their ships to their own dear native land, 460
you can break up their wall and shred it all into the sea,
and once more cover the whole long shoreline with sand:
so let the Achaians’ great wall be leveled, destroyed.”
Such was the way they talked, the one to the other.

As the sun went down, the Achaians’ work was completed, 465
and they slew oxen by the huts, and had their dinner,
and ships arrived from Lēmnos, ferrying wine,
a flotilla dispatched by Jason’s son Eunēos,
whom Hypsipylē bore to Jason, shepherd of his people;
and for Atreus’s sons, Agamemnōn and Menelaös, 470
Jason’s son sent some special wine, a thousand measures.
From this convoy the long-haired Achaians bought their wine,
some in exchange for bronze, others for gleaming iron,
others again for hides, or the cattle themselves, and some
in exchange for war captives. They set up a lavish feast, 475
and then, all night through, the long-haired Achaians
feasted, as did the Trojans and their allies in the city;
and all night through Zeus the counselor planned them harm,
thundering fearfully, so that pale terror seized them.
They spilt on the ground the wine from their cups: no one dared 480
to drink more till they’d poured a libation to the almighty
son of Kronos. Then they lay down and took the gift of sleep.

2. Perhaps in punishment for some divine indiscretion (the sources are unclear), Poseidōn and Apollo were obliged to build the walls of Troy for Priam’s father, Laomedōn, king of Troy, and take care of his flocks and herds. When Laomedōn refused to pay them for their work, Poseidōn dispatched a sea monster against the Trojans (20.145–48) and Apollo afflicted the city with plague. Further references at 12.3–33 and 21.441–57.