

## Book 16

While these fought on around the well-benched vessel,  
Patroklos came and stood by Achilles, the people's shepherd,  
shedding warm tears, like a spring of black-sourced water  
that sends its dark stream coursing down some deserted rock face.  
At the sight of him swift-footed noble Achilles felt pity, 5  
and addressed himself to him, speaking with winged words:  
"Why are you weeping, Patroklos, like a girl, a small child  
who runs to her mother's side and begs to be picked up,  
clutching at her dress, delays her when she's busy,  
looks up at her tearfully, till she gives in and carries her? 10  
That's what you're like, Patroklos, shedding those big round tears!  
Have you got some news for the Myrmidons, or for me myself,  
or a message from Phthië that you alone know about?  
Menoitios, Aktōr's son, still lives, they say, and Pēleus  
Aiakos's son, is alive there, among the Myrmidons— 15  
for those two indeed we'd grieve sorely if they were dead!  
Or is your lament for the Argives, the way they're being slaughtered  
by the hollow ships, on account of their own presumption?  
Speak up, don't keep it a secret—we both should know it."

Then, horseman Patroklos, sighing heavily, you replied: 20  
"Ah, Achilles, Pēleus's son, far the mightiest of the Achaians,  
do not be angry! Such trouble has come upon the Achaians—  
for all those who were once the very best of our warriors  
are laid up aboard their ships, either shot or speared:  
shot is the son of Tydeus, mighty Diomēdēs, 25  
speared are Odysseus, famed spearman, and Agamemnōn,  
shot, too, is Eurypylos, with an arrow through his thigh.  
Healers well-skilled in medicaments are now busy about them,  
treating their wounds. But Achilles, you are so stubborn!  
Never may such wrath master me, as that which you cherish 30  
in your lethal valiance! How will men not yet born  
profit by you, if you don't keep vile ruin from the Argives?  
Pitiless man, your father was not Pēleus the horseman,  
nor was Thetis your mother: no, the grey sea bore you,

and the towering rocks, for your mind is unchangeable! 35  
 But if in your thoughts it's some prophecy you're evading,  
 —some word from Zeus passed on by your lady mother—  
 at least send me out now, and the rest of the Myrmidon  
 force with me, and maybe I'll prove a light to the Danaäns—  
 and give me your armor, to wear on my own shoulders, 40  
 so the Trojans may take me for you, back off from the fighting,  
 let the Achaians' warlike sons, who are now exhausted,  
 catch their breath: too brief is the breathing space from battle.  
 We're fresh, not tired—we should easily drive men exhausted  
 by battle back to the city, away from the ships and huts." 45

Such his entreaty, the great fool: but as fate decreed,  
 his own ghastly death and destruction it was for which he prayed.

To him swift-footed Achilles, deeply troubled, then replied:  
 "Ah, me, Zeus-born Patroklos, what's this that you've said?  
 I'm not bothered by any prophecy that I know of, 50  
 nor has my lady mother told me of any word  
 from Zeus; but there's bitter grief invades both heart and spirit  
 when a man decides to rob somebody who's his equal  
 and take back his prize, just because he has the greater power!  
 Bitter grief this to me, for I was wounded in my pride. 55  
 That girl the Achaians' sons had given me as an award,  
 whom I won with my spear after sacking a well-walled city—  
 her now has the lord Agamemnōn, yes, Atreus's son, snatched back  
 from my arms, as though I were some unhonored refugee!  
 Still, all this we'll let go as past and done with: no way 60  
 was it in my heart to be wrathful for ever, although  
 I did declare I'd not put an end to my anger until  
 the sounds of war and the fighting arrived at my own ships.  
 So do you, then, array my famed armor on your shoulders,  
 and lead out the war-loving Myrmidons into battle, 65  
 if indeed the dark cloud that's the Trojans has surrounded  
 the ships by main force, and the seashore with a thin  
 strip of land is all that's left in the hands of the Argives,  
 and the Trojans' whole city has come out in force against them,  
 boldly, since they don't see the light glinting off my helmet 70  
 up close—soon enough they'd be routed, choking the creeks  
 with their corpses, if only the lord Agamemnōn had been minded  
 to treat me well, whereas now they're fighting around the camp!

For not in the hands of Diomēdēs, Tydeus's son,  
 is the spear now raging to hold off disaster from the Danaäns, 75  
 nor as yet have I heard the voice of Atreus's son bellowing  
 out of his loathsome head; no, it's man-killing Hektōr's  
 I hear echoing round me, exhorting the Trojans, while they  
 with their war whoops fill all the plain, as they trounce the Achaians.  
 Yet even so, Patroklos, to keep disaster from the ships 80  
 have at them mightily, lest with their blazing torches  
 they fire the ships and deprive us of our longed-for return!  
 Now: follow well the instructions I shall put in your mind,  
 so you'll win me great honor and glory from all  
 the Danaäns, and they'll deliver that beautiful girl 85  
 back to me, along with more splendid gifts besides.  
 When you've driven them from the ships, come right back here!  
 Should Hērē's loud-thundering husband let you achieve glory,  
 don't be too eager to go battling on without me  
 against the war-loving Trojans: you'd diminish my honor. 90  
 Nor should you become so exultant in warfare and fighting  
 that, while you're killing Trojans, you press on towards Ilion,  
 lest one of the gods eternal descends from Olympos  
 and pitches in: Apollo the archer loves them dearly.  
 Turn back as soon as you've set the light of deliverance 95  
 among the ships; leave the others to battle it out on the plain.  
 How much I wish—Zeus, Father, Athēnē, and Apollo!—  
 that not one out of all the Trojans might escape death,  
 nor a single Argive, but that only we two should not perish,  
 and together, alone, should loosen Troy's sacred diadem!<sup>1</sup> 100

Such was their conversation, each to the other. Meanwhile  
 Aias no longer held firm, being hard-pressed by missiles,  
 overcome by the will of Zeus, and the noble Trojans  
 all letting fly at him: terribly rang the gleaming  
 helmet about his temples as it was struck: the well-wrought 105  
 cheekpieces took endless hits, his left shoulder grew weary  
 as he held up his bright shield. Yet they remained unable  
 to knock it away from him, despite their many missiles.  
 He kept gasping painfully, the sweat poured down in rivers

1. "[T]he breaching of the citadel's ring of walls is compared to a captive woman's headdress being torn off," Janko explains (329). The word here translated metaphorically as "diadem" (κρήδεμνον, *krēdemnon*), originally meant something like a mantilla or formal veil.

from all his limbs, he never was given the least chance  
to catch his breath: on all sides trouble was piled on trouble. 110

Tell me now, you Muses, whose homes are on Olympos,  
how fire first came to be flung on the Achaians' ships!

Hektōr confronted Aias and struck his ash-wood spear  
with his own great sword, near the socket below the tip, 115  
and sheared the tip clean away, so that Aias, Telamōn's son,  
was left with a mere lopped shaft, while far from him  
the bronze spearhead clanged as it fell to the ground, and Aias  
recognized, with a shudder, in his peerless heart

the work of the gods, saw all his battle plans had been wrecked  
by loud-thundering Zeus, who wanted victory for the Trojans. 120

He backed off from the missiles; the Trojans flung weariless fire  
on the swift ship: at once unquenchable flames broke out,  
and the whole stern was set ablaze. But now Achilles  
struck both hands upon his thighs, and called out to Patroklos: 125

"Up with you now, Zeus-born Patroklos, master horseman!

I clearly see by the ships the rush of devouring fire!

Don't let them take the ships, leave us no way of escape!

Arm yourself quickly, I'll muster the men."

So he spoke,

and Patroklos accoutered himself in the gleaming bronze. 130

The greaves first he fastened on about his shins—

finely made, and fitted with silver ankle-pieces.

Next, to cover his chest, he put on the corselet,

fine-wrought and starry, of Aiakos's swift-footed grandson.

About his shoulders he slung the silver-studded sword 135

of bronze, and next grasped the shield, both huge and sturdy.

Then he set on his noble head the well-made helmet,

with its horsehair crest nodding terribly above it,

and picked out two strong spears, well fitted to his grasp;

but of Aiakos's peerless scion the spear alone he left— 140

massive and strong, that no other Achaian fighter

could wield, but only Achilles had the strength to wield it,

the Pēlian spear of ash wood, that Cheirōn had given his father,

felled on Pēlion's heights, to be the death of heroes.

The horses he ordered Automedōn to harness quickly— 145

the man whom he honored highest after Achilles the rank-breaker,

and held as most trustworthy to await his battle orders.  
 For him now Automedōn yoked up the swift horses—  
 Xanthos and Balios, fleet as the gale's blast,  
 that the storm mare Podargē conceived to the west wind 150  
 as she browsed in the meadows beside the stream of Ocean—  
 while in the side traces he harnessed unmatchable Pēdasos,  
 the horse that Achilles bore off when he took Ētīōn's city,  
 and which, though mortal, kept pace with those immortal coursers.

Meanwhile Achilles went to and fro through the huts, 155  
 getting the Myrmidons armed in their battle gear: like wolves  
 that devour raw flesh, boundless fury in their hearts,  
 and have killed a great antlered stag up in the mountains,  
 and tear at the corpse, their jaws all reddened with blood,  
 and then go off in a pack to some black-water spring 160  
 to lap with their narrow tongues at its dark flow's surface,  
 belching up blood from the killing, while in their breasts  
 the spirit is dauntless, and their bellies are gluttoned—so  
 did the Myrmidons' leaders and chieftains quickly assemble  
 around the noble henchman of Aiakos's swift-foot grandson, 165  
 while there in the midst of them stood warlike Achilles,  
 urging on both horses and shield-bearing warriors.

Fifty were the swift ships that Achilles, beloved of Zeus,  
 had brought to Troy as commander, and in each one  
 fifty men, his companions, sat at the thole-pins: 170  
 five in whom he had trust he'd made captains, to issue orders,  
 while he himself was the high commander over them all.  
 The first squadron's captain, Menesthios, he of the bright corselet,  
 was the son of Spercheios, Zeus's rain-fed river,  
 whom Pēleus's daughter, the beautiful Polydōra, bore, 175  
 to unwearied Spercheios, a woman laid by a god,  
 though in name she conceived him by Bōros, Perierēs' son,  
 who openly wed her, and paid a bride-price past reckoning.  
 Of the second squadron the captain was warlike Eudōros,  
 born, though out of wedlock, to a fine dancer, Polymēlē, 180  
 daughter of Phylas: it was the strong Argos-slayer  
 who fell in love when he saw her among the maiden singers  
 dancing for Artemis, she of the loud chase, the golden arrows.  
 No waiting: Hermēs the healer went up into her room,  
 lay with her secretly: she bore him a splendid son, 185

Eudōros, outstanding as both swift runner and warrior.

But when finally Eileithyia, goddess of childbirth, brought him  
out to the light, and he saw the sun's rays for the first time,  
Echeklos, Aktōr's son, a man of might and power,  
took him home, having paid a bride-price past reckoning, 190  
and old Phylas brought him up well, and cherished him dearly,  
giving him all the love he'd have given a son of his own.

The captain of the third squadron was warlike Peisandros,  
Maimalos's son, unrivalled among all the Myrmidons  
in spear-fighting, second only to the comrade of Pēleus's son. 195  
The fourth squadron was led by Phoinix the old horseman,  
and the fifth by Alkimedōn, Laerkēs' peerless son.

Then when Achilles had mustered them all in good order,  
them and their captains, he spoke very harshly to them:

"Let none of you Myrmidons be unmindful of those threats 200  
with which beside the swift ships you menaced the Trojans  
throughout the time of my wrath, each one of you blaming me:  
'Stubborn Achilles,' you cried, 'did your mother rear you on gall?  
Pitiless man, who hold back your comrades by the ships  
against their will! Let's go home, then, with our seafaring vessels, 205  
since this loathsome bile has so invaded your spirit!'  
With such charges you'd often assail me when you all met; but now  
a great work of war confronts you, what you once longed for,  
so let each of you with a bold heart go battle the Trojans!"

So saying he roused the passion and spirit of every man, 210  
and their ranks drew closer together when they heard their king.

As a man with close-fitting stones erects the wall  
of a tall house, builds to defy the fury of the winds—  
so closely pressed were their helmets and bossed shields,  
bucklers, helmets, and men packed so tight together 215  
that the horsehair crests on their helmets' gleaming bosses  
nudged as they bent their heads, so close were the ranks,  
while, out in front of them all, two armed warriors stood—  
Automedōn and Patroklos, each with the same intent:

to do battle before the Myrmidons. But meanwhile Achilles 220  
went into his hut, and lifted the lid of a chest—  
fine, intricately wrought, that silver-footed Thetis  
had stowed on his ship to go with him, filled it with tunics  
and cloaks to keep out the wind chill, and thick woolen rugs.

In it Achilles kept a fine-crafted cup, from which 225  
 no other man could drink the fire-bright wine,  
 and he poured libations from it to no god but Zeus the Father.  
 This cup he took from the chest, first cleansed it with sulphur,  
 then rinsed it off in fresh-flowing streams of water,  
 washed his own hands, and drew the fire-bright wine. 230  
 Now he stood in the forecourt and prayed, poured out the wine  
 gazing skyward, not unseen by Zeus who delights in thunder:  
 “Zeus, king, Pelasgian, Dōdōnean, distant-dweller,  
 ruler in wintry Dōdōna—where round you live the Selloi,  
 with unwashed feet, your interpreters, who sleep on the ground— 235  
 just as before you heard my message when I prayed,  
 and honored me by smiting the forces of the Achaians,  
 so once again for me now accomplish my desire!  
 I myself shall remain here, where the ships are drawn up,  
 but my comrade I’m sending out, with a body of Myrmidons, 240  
 to do battle: far-seeing Zeus, send out glory with him,  
 make strong the heart in his breast, that Hektōr too may know  
 whether my henchman’s skilled in the business of warfare  
 when he’s alone, or whether his hands irresistibly rage  
 only when I myself also enter the grind of battle. 245  
 And after he’s freed our vessels from the fight and its clamor,  
 then unscathed let him come back to me at the swift ships  
 with all my battle gear and my front-rank comrades.”  
  
 So he spoke in prayer, and Zeus the counselor heard him.  
 One wish the Father granted, but refused him the other: 250  
 that Patroklos from their ships should drive off warfare and  
 combat  
 he granted, but a safe return from battle he denied him.  
  
 His libation made, after praying to Zeus the Father  
 Achilles returned to his hut, put away the cup in its chest,  
 then went back outside the hut, and stood there, still determined 255  
 to watch the fearsome conflict between Trojans and Achaians.  
  
 Now those armed and ready with great-hearted Patroklos  
 marched on, till with high resolve they assailed the Trojans.  
 All at once they came charging out like a swarm of wasps  
 by the roadside that boys have a way of provoking to fury, 260  
 constantly teasing them in their nests along the highway,

as children will, creating a widespread nuisance,  
 so that if some traveller passing by should happen  
 to annoy them by accident, they with aggressive spirit  
 all come buzzing out in defense of their offspring— 265  
 like them in heart and spirit the Myrmidons now  
 streamed forth from the ships, and an endless clamor arose,  
 and Patroklos called in a carrying voice to his comrades:

“Myrmidons, comrades of Pēleus’s son Achilles,  
 be men, my friends, bear in mind your fighting spirit, 270  
 win honor for Pēleus’s son, far the best of the Argives  
 by the ships, he and his henchmen, all of them front-line fighters—  
 that Atreus’s son, wide-ruling Agamemnōn, may know his blind  
 delusion in failing to honor the best of the Achaians!”

So saying he stirred the strength and spirit of every man, 275  
 and they fell in a pack on the Trojans, while all around them  
 the ships echoed dauntingly to the Achaians’ war cries,  
 and when the Trojans saw Menoitios’s valiant son,  
 himself and his henchman, both a gleam in their armor,  
 their hearts quaked, and all their ranks were shaken: they thought 280  
 the swift-footed son of Pēleus, there by the ships,  
 had foregone his wrath and turned instead to alliance,  
 and each man looked for some way to escape sheer ruin.

Patroklos was the first to let fly his gleaming spear,  
 right into the midst, where most troops were huddled together, 285  
 by the stern of the ship of great-hearted Prōtesilaös,  
 and he hit Pyraichmēs, who’d brought his Paiōnian horsemen  
 from Amydōn, close by the wide-flowing Axios river.  
 Pyraichmēs’ right shoulder he hit, and he fell back in the dust,  
 groaning aloud, and his comrades around him panicked; 290  
 for Patroklos by killing their leader, that outstanding fighter,  
 spread terror throughout the ranks of all the Paiōnians.  
 Back from the ships he drove them and put out the blazing fire,  
 leaving the ship half-burnt there, while the Trojans retreated  
 with an astonishing outcry, the Danaäns hot on their heels 295  
 among the hollow ships: the outcry was never-ending.  
 As from the topmost peak of some lofty mountain  
 a thick cloud is moved away by lightning-gatherer Zeus,  
 and all the heights are revealed, the towering headlands  
 and glens, and from on high the infinite air shines clear— 300



so the Danaäns, when they'd thrust off devouring fire from the ships  
 got a short breathing space. Yet from warfare there was no respite,  
 for not yet were the Trojans by the warlike Achaians  
 driven in headlong rout, away from the black ships,  
 but still fought back, even when forced to give up ground. 305

Then, as the conflict spread widely, man slew man  
 among the leaders: first, Menoitios's valiant son  
 hit Areilykos in the thigh with a cast of his sharp-edged spear  
 just as he turned to run. The bronze was driven clean through,  
 the spear shattered his thighbone, he sank to the ground 310  
 face downward. Menelaös the warrior wounded Thoas

where his shield left his torso exposed and unstrung his limbs;  
 and Phyleus's son, waiting as Amphiklos made his charge,  
 got his own blow in first, at the top of the leg, where a man's  
 muscle is thickest: around the point of his spear 315  
 the tendons were sliced apart, darkness shrouded his eyes.

One son of Nestör, Antilochos, with his sharp spear wounded  
 Atymnios, drove the bronze point clean through his flank,  
 and he slumped at his feet. Then Maris from close quarters  
 faced Antilochos with his spear, enraged for his brother's sake, 320  
 standing in front of the corpse, but godlike Thrasymēdēs  
 moved in before he could strike, and did not miss,  
 but hit his shoulder: the spear point stripped away  
 the base of his arm from its muscles, shattered the bone.

He fell with a thud, and darkness shrouded his eyes. 325  
 So these two, laid low by two brothers, went on their way  
 to Erebos—noble comrades, both, of Sarpēdōn,  
 spearmen sons of Amisōdaros, who reared the monstrous  
 Chimaira to bring disaster to many a mortal.

Aias the son of Oileus now went for Kleoboulos 330  
 and took him alive, a man who'd tripped in the crush;  
 then unleashed his strength, struck with his hilted sword  
 at the man's neck: the whole blade was warmed by his blood,  
 scarlet death and all-mastering fate overpowered his eyes.

Pēneleōs and Lykōn now ran at each other—they'd both 335  
 missed with their spears, had let fly to no purpose,  
 so now they moved in with their swords: Lykōn aimed a blow  
 at the helmet's boss with its horsehair crest, but his sword  
 broke off near the hilt, while Pēnelaös struck him under

his ear on the neck—the blade sheared in so deep 340  
 that only the skin held firm: his head hung, his limbs went slack.  
 Mērionēs, striding quickly, now overtook Akamas  
 as he mounted his chariot, scored a hit on his right shoulder:  
 he slumped from the chariot, a mist obscured his eyes.  
 Idomeneus speared Erymas with his pitiless bronze 345  
 in the mouth: the bronze point sheared clean through  
 beneath the brain, split the white bones apart,  
 shook his teeth loose, while both his eyes were flooded  
 with blood, and, as he gaped, from his mouth and nostrils  
 blood spurted, and death's black cloud enshrouded him. 350

So these Danaän leaders each of them slew his man,  
 and as wolves attack lambs or kids in their ravening hunger,  
 picking them off from the flocks, when through their shepherd's  
 carelessness they're scattered up in the hills, and the wolves,  
 seeing this, promptly snatch the timorous young ones— 355  
 just so did the Danaäns fall on the Trojans, who then  
 sought refuge in ill-famed flight, forgot their fighting spirit.

Great Aias as always was eager to let fly a spear  
 at bronze-panoplied Hektōr, who, highly skilled in warfare,  
 broad shoulders protected by his bull's-hide shield, 360  
 kept alert for the whirr of arrows, the thud of spears:  
 though he recognized that the tide of victory was turning,  
 even so he remained, did his best to save his loyal comrades.  
 As from Olympos a cloud comes into the heavens  
 from the bright upper air, when Zeus deploys a tempest, 365  
 so from the ships came the sound of cheers and panic  
 as the Trojans, disordered, recrossed the ditch. Now Hektōr  
 was carried out, with his gear, by his fast horses,  
 left the Trojan troops behind, to be stopped, frustrated,  
 by the Greek-dug ditch, in which many swift horses broke 370  
 their pole at the end, abandoned their masters' chariots.  
 Patroklos, hot in pursuit, called urgently on the Danaäns,  
 planning ills for the Trojans, who, shouting and panic-stricken,  
 choked all the ways, broken-ranked, while high in the air  
 a dust storm formed under the clouds, and the whole-hoofed horses 375  
 strained hard back to the city from the ships and huts.  
 Wherever Patroklos saw men huddled the thickest,  
 there he drove, shouting: beneath his axles new victims

kept slumping down from their chariots, that then overturned;  
 and right over the trench his swift horses—those immortal 380  
 steeds that the gods gave to Pēleus, glorious gifts—  
 pressed eagerly forward; his heart now urged him against Hektōr,  
 hot to attack; but Hektōr's own swift horses saved him.  
 As under a storm cloud the whole black earth's weighed down  
 at harvest time, when rainfall from Zeus is torrential, 385  
 as he, enraged, takes punitive measures against those men  
 who in the assembly enforce their crook-backed judgments  
 and drive justice out, indifferent to the scrutiny of the gods;  
 and all their swollen rivers are overflowed, and many  
 a hillside's scored deeply by the plunging torrents 390  
 that roar headlong down from the mountains into the dark sea,  
 and men's tilled fields are ruined—so loud and grieving  
 was the neighing of those Trojan mares as they sped on their way.  
 When Patroklos had cut off the front ranks from their retreat  
 he herded them back to the ships, would not let them go on 395  
 to the city, much though they longed to, but in between  
 the ships, the high wall, and the river he ranged amongst them  
 killing, exacting requital for the deaths of many.  
 Here he hit Pronoös first with his gleaming spear,  
 in the chest, left exposed by the shield, and unstrung his limbs: 400  
 he fell with a thud. Next Patroklos charged at Thestōr,  
 Ēnops's son, who crouched there in his polished chariot,  
 out of his mind with terror, while from his hands  
 the reins slipped away. Patroklos closed in with his spear,  
 rammed the right side of his jaw, drove the spear through  
 his teeth, 405  
 dragged him over the chariot's rim, like a man who, perched  
 on a jutting rock, reels in a sacred fish from the deep  
 on his line and bright bronze hook: just so from the chariot  
 on his bright spear he hauled in the gaping Pronoös,  
 dumped him face downwards. He dropped, and life fled from him. 410  
 Next Erylaös, charging at him, he hit with a rock  
 square on the head, which split completely in two  
 inside his heavy helmet: he collapsed on the ground  
 face foremost, and death, the spirit-queller, embraced him.  
 Amphoteros next, Erymas and Epaltēs, Tlēpolemos son 415  
 of Damastōr, then Echios, Pyris, and Ipheus,

as well as Euippos, and Argeas's son Polymēlos—  
all these in turn he laid low on the nurturing earth.

When Sarpēdōn saw his comrades of the unbelted tunics  
being felled at the hands of Menoitios's son Patroklos, 420  
he cried out, addressing his words to the godlike Lycians:  
"Shame on you, Lycians! Where are you fleeing? Be keen now!  
I myself shall confront this fellow, so I may learn  
just who he is that's unmatched here, who's inflicted such hurt  
on the Trojans, who's unstrung so many fine men's limbs!" 425

So saying, he sprang, armed, from his chariot to the ground,  
and Patroklos on the other side, seeing him, sprang down too;  
and as two vultures, with hooked beaks and crooked talons,  
fight, screaming loudly, up on some lofty rock,  
so these two, shouting, charged the one at the other. 430  
When he saw them, the son of Kronos, that devious schemer,  
felt pity, and said to Hērē, his sister and wife:  
"Woe is me, that it's fate for Sarpēdōn, my best-loved mortal,  
to be laid low by Patroklos, the son of Menoitios!  
My heart is divided two ways as I debate the matter— 435  
Shall I snatch him up while he lives still, and then set him down,  
far from this grievous warfare, in Lycia's rich terrain,  
or shall I let him be vanquished by Patroklos, Menoitios's son?"

Then the ox-eyed lady Hērē replied to him, saying:  
"Most dread son of Kronos, what's this that you're telling me? 440  
Here's a man, a mortal, his fate long since determined:  
Are you minded to free such a one from sorrowful death?  
Then do it; but we other gods will not all approve.  
One other thing I will tell you, and you should take it to heart:  
If you send back Sarpēdōn alive to his own abode, 445  
think of this: that hereafter some other god may be minded  
to send his own dear son away from the grind of battle—  
for fighting round Priam's great city there now are many  
sons of immortals, in whom you'll cause serious resentment.  
But if he's so dear to you, and you're grieved at heart, 450  
then let him be vanquished in the grind of battle  
at the hands of Patroklos, the son of Menoitios;  
and when the soul and life have departed from his body,  
send Death and soothing Sleep to convey him away

till they reach the land of broad Lycia, and there  
his brothers and kinsfolk will give him due funeral rites  
with burial mound and gravestone, a dead man's entitlement." 455

So she spoke. At this the father of gods and men  
did not ignore her, but showered bloody raindrops on the earth  
in honor of his dear son, whom Patroklos was very soon 460  
to kill off in rich-soiled Troy, far away from his own country.

Now when, advancing, they finally joined battle,  
then it was that Patroklos hit illustrious Thrasymēlos,  
the valiant henchman of the lord Sarpēdōn;  
him he speared in the nether belly, unstrung his limbs. 465  
Sarpēdōn, letting fly next with his gleaming spear,  
missed the man himself, but speared the horse Pēdasos  
in its right shoulder: it screamed, gasped out its spirit,  
dropped neighing into the dust, and the breath of life fled from it.  
The other two pulled apart, the yoke creaked, and the reins 470  
were tangled, now that the trace horse lay there in the dust.  
But for this the famed spearman Automedōn found an answer:  
unsheathing the long sword from beside his sturdy thigh  
he jumped down and cut free the trace horse, wasted no time,  
and the other two were thus righted, strained at the reins, 475  
while the two fighters got back together in heart-devouring strife.

Then once more Sarpēdōn missed with his gleaming spear,  
and over Patroklos's left shoulder the spear point flew,  
not hitting him, and Patroklos in turn made play  
with the bronze, and not vainly did the shaft fly from his hand, 480  
but struck at the point where the lungs enclose the solid heart,<sup>2</sup>  
and Sarpēdōn fell like an oak tree or a white poplar,  
or a tall pine that up in the mountains shipwrights fell  
with their newly sharpened axes to serve as a ship timber:  
so there in front of his horses and chariot he lay 485  
stretched out, bellowing, hands clutching the bloody dust.  
As a lion that comes on a herd will slaughter a bull,  
tawny, great-hearted, in among the shambling cattle,

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2. Onians (26–27) is, as usual, valuable here. The φρένες (*phrenes*) are originally the lungs, not (as often, and nonsensically, supposed) the midriff or diaphragm. "Solid" or "dense" is Onians's interpretation of ἄδινόν (*hadinon*), recognized by Janko as giving "an anatomically correct description" (379). See also n. 3 to 504.

and it perishes, bellowing still, in the jaws of the lion,  
 so now, laid low by Patroklos, the Lycian spearman's leader, 490  
 dying, still struggled, and called his comrade by name:  
 "Dear Glaukos, warrior among men, today there's urgent need  
 for you to be both spearman and dauntless warrior too—  
 if you're ready, let violent warfare be your choice!  
 First, you must urge on the Lycians' warrior leaders— 495  
 checking them all—to fight for Sarpēdōn's body,  
 then join them, and battle in my defense with the bronze:  
 For even in time to come I'll be a reproach and a cause  
 of disgrace to you all your days, unendingly, should the Achaians  
 strip my gear from my fallen body by the drawn-up ships! 500  
 Now hold the line bravely, and urge on all our troops!"

As he spoke thus death's conclusion enshrouded him,  
 his eyes and his nostrils. Patroklos set one foot on his chest,  
 and tugged the spear from his flesh. The lungs followed with it.  
 Sarpēdōn's soul and the spear point he drew out together,<sup>3</sup> 505  
 as the Myrmidons reined in the snorting horses that now,  
 freed from their masters' chariot, wanted only to escape.

Terrible grief seized Glaukos as he heard Sarpēdōn's voice,  
 and his heart was wrung, since he'd not been able to help him.  
 With one hand he gripped and pressed his arm, for the wound 510  
 vexed him, that Teukros had dealt him with an arrow—  
 in support of his own comrades—as Glaukos charged the high wall.  
 Now he addressed in prayer Apollo, the deadly archer:  
 "Hear me, lord, you who may be in Lycia's rich terrain  
 or perhaps here in Troy: wherever you are, you're able 515  
 to listen to men in trouble, just as trouble's come on me now,  
 for I have this serious wound, and my arm's shot through  
 with sharp cutting pains, nor can the flow of blood  
 be stanchd, and my shoulder's a dead weight because of it.  
 I can't hold my spear in place, or join the battle against 520  
 our enemies, while our best fighter has perished—Sarpēdōn,  
 son of Zeus, who won't even save his own flesh and blood!  
 But do you, lord, now at least heal this serious wound of mine,

3. Since θυμός (*thymos*), which came to be equated with "soul" or "spirit", originally meant "breath", as the physical sign of life (Onians 44–53), it is tempting to see a neat zeugma here: "the soul is imagined as breath which escapes through the wound," as Janko (381) does.

lull my pains to sleep, and give me the strength  
to exhort my Lycian comrades to keep up the fight, 525  
and myself to join the battle for Sarpēdōn's body."

So he spoke in prayer, and Phoibos Apollo heard him.  
The pains the god stopped at once, dried up the black blood  
that flowed from his hurtful wound, put strength in his heart.  
Glaukos knew what had happened, rejoiced in silence 530  
that the great god had listened, and answered his prayer so soon.  
First he urged on the Lycians' warrior leaders,  
checking them all, to fight for Sarpēdōn's body;  
then he made his way, taking long strides, to the Trojans,  
to Poulydamas, Pánthoös's son, and noble Agēnōr, 535  
and sought out Aineias and the bronze-panoplied Hektōr,  
whom he now went up to, and addressed with winged words:  
"Hektōr, it's plain you've completely forgotten your allies,  
who on your account, far distant from friends and country  
are wasting their lives away—yet you will not help them! 540  
Sarpēdōn lies dead now, the Lycian spearmen's leader,  
whose judgments and strength were Lycia's protection:  
him brazen Arēs has vanquished through Patroklos's spear!  
My friends, stand beside him now, think shame to hold back,  
lest he be stripped of his arms and his corpse maltreated 545  
by the Myrmidons, angered at all the Danaän deaths,  
those whom we killed with our spears at the swift ships."

So he spoke,  
and the Trojans were possessed from head to foot by grief,  
uncontrollable, unendurable, for Sarpēdōn had been  
their city's prop, though a foreigner, since numerous troops 550  
came with him, and he himself was a champion warrior.  
They made straight for the Danaäns, fiercely, their leader Hektōr  
enraged for Sarpēdōn's sake. The Achaians were urged on  
by the shaggy heart<sup>4</sup> of Patroklos, Menoitios's son.  
First he addressed both Aiases, already hot for the fray: 555  
"You two needs must be keen to defend yourselves, as brave  
as you were in time past among fighters, or even braver!"

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4. Onians (28–29) reminds us that the epithet "bushy, shaggy" (λάσιος, *lasios*) is most appropriate for the heart itself, with "the multitudinous branching veins and arteries growing immediately out of it, like bushes, many through the lungs."

The man who first got beyond the wall of the Achaians,  
 Sarpēdōn, is lying there dead—let's grab him, disfigure his corpse,  
 strip the battle gear from his shoulders, with the ruthless bronze 560  
 dispatch any comrade of his who tries to defend him!"

So he spoke, and they themselves were raging to attack.  
 Then, when on both sides they'd reinforced their ranks,  
 Trojans and Lycians, Myrmidons and Achaians,  
 they clashed in battle over Sarpēdōn's corpse, 565  
 with terrible shouts, and their battered armor rang loud,  
 and Zeus spread deadly darkness over the grinding conflict,  
 to match the deadly war work centered on his dear son.

At first the Trojans forced the sharp-eyed Achaians back,  
 for a man by no means the worst of the Myrmidons was stricken— 570  
 the son of great-hearted Agaklēs, noble Epeigeus,  
 who'd formerly ruled as king in well-populated Boudeion,  
 but at this time, after he'd killed a noble kinsman,  
 came as a suppliant to Pēleus and silver-footed Thetis,  
 and they sent him to serve with Achilles, the breaker of ranks, 575  
 at Ilion, rich in foals, as a fighter against the Trojans.

Him, as he grabbed at the corpse, illustrious Hektōr  
 struck, with a rock, on the head, which split completely in two  
 inside his heavy helmet: he collapsed on the body  
 face foremost, and death, the spirit-queller, embraced him. 580

Then over Patroklos came grief for his slaughtered comrade,  
 and he charged through the front ranks like a speedy hawk  
 in pursuit of fleeing jackdaws and starlings: even so,  
 Patroklos, driver of horses, straight for the Lycians  
 and the Trojans did you charge, in your wrath for your comrade! 585  
 Sthenelaös too he struck, dear son of Ithaimenēs,  
 on the neck with a rock, and tore away the tendons.

Front-line fighters gave ground, illustrious Hektōr with them:  
 as far as is the flight of a good long hunting spear  
 thrown by a man making trial of his strength in sport, 590  
 or even in war, when hard pressed by murderous foemen,  
 so far did the Trojans retreat, and the Achaians drove them.

Glaukos, the Lycian spearmen's commander, was the first  
 to turn around, and he slew high-spirited Bathyklēs,  
 Chalkōn's dear son, who made his home in Hellas, 595  
 and ranked high among Myrmidons for wealth and prosperity.



Him Glaukos struck full on the chest with his spear,  
 turning suddenly on him when about to be overtaken,  
 and he fell with a thud, and thick grief now seized the Achaians,  
 since a good man had fallen, while the Trojans, with loud cheers, 600  
 closed and crowded round them. Yet the Achaians did not  
 forget their fighting spirit, but pitted their strength against them.  
 Mēriōnēs next took down a helmeted Trojan fighter,  
 Laogonos, Onētōr's bold son, a priest of Idaian  
 Zeus, who was honored by his people like a god. 605  
 Him he struck under the jaw and ear: at once the breath  
 of life fled his limbs, and loathsome darkness seized him.  
 Aineias then let fly his bronze spear at Mēriōnēs,  
 hoping to hit him as he advanced behind his shield;  
 but Mēriōnēs was watching, and avoided the bronze spear 610  
 by ducking down forward, so that its long shaft  
 stuck in the ground behind him, its butt end quivering,  
 and there mighty Arēs took its power away from it.  
 [And Aineias's shaft ended quivering, point first,  
 deep in the ground, flung in vain from his sturdy hand.]<sup>5</sup> 615  
 At this Aineias was angered, and spoke to him, saying:  
 "Soon enough, Mēriōnēs, dancer though you are,  
 my spear would have stopped you for ever, had I but hit you."  
  
 Mēriōnēs, famed spearman, made him this answer:  
 "Aineias, it's hard for you, however strong you may be, 620  
 to quench the strength of every man who confronts you  
 in his own defense: you too were born a mortal!  
 Should I aim and hit you squarely with my sharp bronze,  
 soon enough—strong though you are, with trust in your  
 hands—  
 you'd give glory to me, and your soul to horse-proud Hādēs." 625  
  
 So he spoke; but Menoitios's valiant son rebuked him:  
 "Mēriōnēs, you're a good man, why carry on like this?  
 Look, friend, insulting words are not what will make the Trojans  
 back off from the corpse: that would take killing most of us.  
 War's outcome rests in our hands, talk's place is the council. 630  
 No point in endless words—what we need is to fight."

5. Lines 614–15 = 13,504–5: originally they were written in the margin as a parallel, but at some point they were accidentally interpolated into the text.

So saying, he led the way, and the other, mortal but godlike,  
 followed, and from the armies—like the din made by woodcutters  
 at work in some mountain clearing, audible far away—  
 there went up off the wide-wayed earth the thud and clatter 635  
 of bronze and oxhide and cleverly fashioned shields  
 as they thrust at each other with swords and two-edged spears;  
 and no longer could any man, though he knew him well,  
 have recognized noble Sarpēdōn, now covered with blood  
 and dust and missiles, from his head to the soles of his feet. 640  
 Men crowded around the corpse the way that flies  
 in a farmyard buzz round the brimming pails of milk  
 in springtime, when the milk spurts down into the buckets:  
 just so they kept crowding around the corpse. Nor did Zeus  
 ever turn his sharp gaze away from the grind of battle, 645  
 but watched them closely, debating a problem in his mind,  
 uncertain regarding the matter of killing Patroklos—  
 was illustrious Hektōr right now, in the grind of battle  
 over godlike Sarpēdōn, to slay him too with the bronze,  
 and strip the gear off his shoulders, or rather should he, Zeus, 650  
 prolong the sheer labor of fighting for yet more men?  
 And as he debated, this struck him as being the better way:  
 that the excellent henchman of Pēleus's son Achilles  
 should once more drive the Trojans and bronze-clad Hektōr  
 back to the city, and take the breath of life from many. 655  
 In Hektōr first he aroused craven panic: Hektōr boarded  
 his chariot, turned to flight, and called upon the rest  
 of the Trojans to flee, having seen Zeus's sacred scales in action.  
 Nor did the brave Lycians stand fast, but panicked to a man  
 when they saw their king laid low, pierced through the heart, 660  
 lying in a heap of corpses, for many had fallen on him  
 since Kronos's son stretched taut the cords of powerful strife.  
 They stripped from Sarpēdōn's shoulders the gleaming  
 armor of bronze, which Menoitios's valiant son now  
 gave to his comrades, to carry back to the hollow ships. 665  
 Then Zeus the cloud-gatherer thus addressed Apollo:  
 "Go now, dear Phoibos, and wipe the dark clotted blood  
 from Sarpēdōn—first get him clear of the missiles—then take him  
 far off, find a river, wash him clean in its flowing waters,  
 spread ambrosia on him, have him clothed in immortal raiment, 670  
 then give him to fast-moving escorts, to carry him away—

Sleep and Death, twin brothers, who'll lose no time,  
 but speedily set him down in broad Lycia's rich terrain.  
 There his brother and kinsfolk will give him due funeral rites  
 with burial mound and gravestone, a dead man's entitlement." 675

So he spoke, and Apollo did not disregard his father,  
 but went down from the heights of Ida to the grim battlefield,  
 and at once raised noble Sarpēdōn, got him clear of the missiles,  
 took him far off, found a river, washed him clean in its flowing waters,  
 spread ambrosia on him, had him clothed in immortal raiment, 680  
 then gave him to fast-moving escorts, to carry away—  
 Sleep and Death, twin brothers: they lost no time,  
 but speedily set him down in broad Lycia's rich terrain.

Patroklos now commanded Automedōn as driver  
 to keep chasing the Trojans and Lycians—being blindly deluded, 685  
 the fool, since had he followed the advice of Pēleus's son  
 he'd surely have kept well clear of black death's foul spirits!  
 But the mind of Zeus is always more potent than that of men,  
 turns even a hero cowardly, steals victory from him—  
 easily, too, and as easily stirs up a man to fight. 690  
 He it was now who put spirit in Patroklos's breast.

So whom

did you slaughter first, and whom last, Patroklos, when  
 the gods thus summoned you deathward? First of all  
 was Adrēstos, and then Autonoös, Eheklos, Perimos  
 son of Megas, Epistōr, followed by Melanippos, 695  
 Elastos next, and Moullos, and Pylartēs: these he killed,  
 and the rest of them then chose flight, every last man of them.

Then the Achaians' sons would have taken high-gated Troy  
 through Patroklos's hands, so widely he raged with his spear,  
 had Phoibos Apollo not stood on the well-built ramparts 700  
 with death in mind for him, while aiding the Trojans.  
 Three times Patroklos climbed up the lofty wall's elbow-bend,  
 and three times Apollo violently beat him back,  
 thrusting against the bright shield with his immortal hands.  
 But when for the fourth time he came on like a god, 705  
 in a terrible voice Apollo addressed him with winged words:  
 "Withdraw, Patroklos, scion of Zeus! It's not fated

that the lordly Trojans' city should be laid waste by your spear,  
nor by that of Achilles, a far better man than you!"

So he spoke, and Patroklos backed off a healthy distance,  
to avoid the wrath of Apollo, the deadly archer. 710

At the Skaian Gates Hektōr reined in his whole-hoofed horses,  
in two minds: should he drive them back to the tumult and fight,  
or should he recall his forces, regroup inside the wall?  
As he pondered thus, Phoibos Apollo approached him 715  
in the form of a man both vigorous and strong—  
Asios, who was uncle to Hektōr the horse-breaker  
and Hekabē's brother, but the son of Dymas,  
who dwelt in Phrygia near the Sangarios river:  
in his likeness now Apollo, the son of Zeus, addressed him: 720  
"Hektōr, why have you quit the fight? You must not!  
If I were stronger than you, as much as I'm really weaker,  
it'd be to your instant hurt that you'd hold back from the battle!  
Come on, now! Set at Patroklos your strong-hoofed horses!  
You might kill him, and then win glory from Apollo!" 725

So he spoke, and went back, a god to the struggle of mortals,  
and to warlike Kebrionēs illustrious Hektōr gave  
the word to whip on his horses to battle. Meanwhile Apollo  
had made his way to the troops, loosed dangerous confusion  
on the Argives, thus giving glory to the Trojans and Hektōr. 730  
Other Danaāns Hektōr ignored, made no effort to slay them,  
but set his strong-hoofed horses at Patroklos alone;  
and Patroklos over against him sprang down from his chariot,  
a spear in his left hand, while the other grasped a rock,  
jagged and glinting: his hand enclosed it. With all his weight 735  
behind it he threw. The missile did not fall short;  
he did not throw in vain, but hit Hektōr's charioteer,  
Kebrionēs—a bastard of glorious Priam's, now holding  
the reins—in his forehead with the sharp rock: it crushed  
both eyebrows together, the bone did not hold firm, 740  
both eyeballs bolted out, dropped to the ground in the dust  
right in front of his feet, and he, like a diver, fell  
from the well-built chariot. The breath of life left his bones.  
Then mockingly you addressed him, horseman Patroklos:  
"Oh ho, such a nimble fellow, such an effortless tumbler!" 745

I'm sure if he were out there on the fish-breeding deep  
 this fellow would catch enough sea squirts to feed a multitude,  
 diving in from his ship, even when it's bad weather,  
 so lightly he somersaults now from his chariot on the plain!  
 It would seem that even the Trojans have their share of acrobats." 750

So saying, he went after Kebrionēs the hero  
 with the pounce of a lion that, while ravaging a farmstead,  
 is hit in the chest, and thus it's its own courage that destroys it:  
 just so at Kebrionēs, Patroklos, you sprang in your fury,  
 while on the other side Hektōr jumped down from his chariot, 755  
 and they fought over Kebrionēs like a pair of lions  
 that high up in the mountains over a slain hind—  
 both ravenous, both determined—battle it out. Just so  
 for Kebrionēs these two veterans of the war cry,  
 Patroklos son of Menoitios and illustrious Hektōr, 760  
 longed to cut up each other's flesh with the pitiless bronze.  
 Hektōr seized the corpse by the head, and would not let go,  
 while Patroklos on the other side clung to a foot, and round them  
 Trojans and Danaāns contested the grind of battle.  
 As the east and south winds compete the one with the other 765  
 at shaking some deep wood in a mountain clearing—  
 a wood of beech and ash and smooth-barked cornel,  
 their long boughs grinding together with an amazing  
 racket, along with a crackle of snapping branches—  
 so the Achaians and Trojans now went for one another, 770  
 killers all: neither side had deadly rout in mind,  
 and all round Kebrionēs many sharp-edged spears were planted,  
 and flighted arrows that had leapt from the bowstring,  
 and many large rocks that shattered against the shields  
 of the men fighting over him; but amid the swirling dust 775  
 great in his greatness he lay, his horsemanship forgotten.

As long as the sun still straddled the midpoint of the sky,  
 both sides' shots struck home, and men dropped, hit; but when  
 the sun declined to the point at which oxen are unyoked,  
 then it was the Achaians proved stronger, beyond what was destined: 780  
 the hero Kebrionēs they pulled out of the range of missiles,  
 away from the Trojans' war cries, stripped the gear from his shoulders,  
 and Patroklos with deadly intent now went after the Trojans.  
 Three times he charged them, the equal of swift Arēs,

shouting terribly: three times he slew nine men. 785  
 But when for the fourth time he came on like a god,  
 then for you, Patroklos, the end of your life showed clear,  
 for Phoibos confronted you in the grind of battle,  
 dread god—yet Patroklos missed him coming through the turmoil,  
 for he was wrapped in a thick mist when they met. 790  
 Standing behind him, Apollo slammed his back and broad shoulders  
 with the flat of one hand. His eyes turned in his head,  
 from which now Phoibos Apollo struck off the helmet,  
 and it rolled away, clattering, under the horses' hoofs  
 crest, visor, and all, its horsehair plumes besmirched 795  
 with blood and dust. Never till then had the gods  
 allowed that crested helmet to be besmirched with dust,  
 when it guarded the head and fine brow of a godlike man,  
 Achilles; but now Zeus made a present of it to Hektōr  
 to wear on his head, though his own doom was very near. 800  
 In Patroklos's hands the far-shadowing spear, so huge,  
 so solid, bronze-tipped, was all broken, and from his shoulders  
 the fringed shield with its baldric fell to the ground,  
 and his corselet the son of Zeus, Lord Apollo, now undid.  
 Delusion clouded his mind, his bright limbs were unstrung, 805  
 he stood in a daze, and was struck from behind, at close range,  
 midway between the shoulders, with a sharp-edged spear,  
 by Euphorbos, Pánthoös's son, a Dardanian, who excelled  
 all those of his age as a spearman and horseman, and at running:  
 twenty men by now he'd dislodged from driving their horses 810  
 since he first arrived with his chariot, still a novice at warfare.  
 He it was first threw his spear at you, horseman Patroklos,  
 yet did not kill you, but pulled his ash spear from your flesh  
 and ran back into the ranks, did not stay there to face  
 Patroklos, even unarmed, in hand-to-hand combat, 815  
 while Patroklos too, overcome by the god's blow and the spear,  
 turned back towards the ranks of his comrades, avoiding fate.  
  
 But Hektōr, when he perceived great-hearted Patroklos  
 backing off, after taking a hit from the sharp-edged bronze,  
 came up close to him through the ranks, and with his spear 820  
 stabbed into his nether belly, driving the bronze clean through:  
 and he fell with a thud, greatly grieving the troops of the Achaians.  
 As a lion brings down an unwearying boar in battle

when the two of them up in the mountains battle with high resolve  
 for a small spring from which both are determined to drink, 825  
 and the boar pants hard, but the lion's might prevails—  
 from Menoitios's valiant son, when he'd killed so many,  
 Priam's son Hektōr now took the life with his spear,  
 close up, and, boastfully, over him spoke winged words:  
 "Patroklos, you imagined you were going to sack our city, 830  
 and take the day of freedom from the women of Troy,  
 and carry them off in your ships to your dear fatherland.  
 You fool! It was for their protection Hektōr's swift horses  
 galloped out to battle, and with the spear I myself, 835  
 outstanding among warlike Trojans, am here to ward off  
 the day of doom from them: but you the vultures will eat here,  
 you wretch! And brave though he is, Achilles couldn't save you—  
 he stayed behind, but I'm sure he gave you marching orders—  
 'Don't you come back to me, Patroklos, master horseman,  
 at the hollow ships, before you've sliced up the tunic of Hektōr, 840  
 killer of men, round his chest, left it bloody.' That's how, I fancy,  
 he spoke to you, thus persuading your mind in its mindlessness."  
  
 Then, strength ebbing, you answered him, horseman Patroklos:  
 "Go on, boast big while you can! You were handed this triumph  
 by Apollo and Zeus, son of Kronos, who overwhelmed me 845  
 easily: they themselves removed the gear from my shoulders.  
 If twenty men such as you had confronted me, all  
 would have perished here, quelled by my spear! Oh no, it was  
 deadly fate and the son of Lētō that slew me, and of mortals  
 Euphorbos: you're only the third hand in my killing. 850  
 And another thing I'll tell you, and you lay it to heart:  
 You yourself are not for a long life: now already  
 death's moved in close beside you, your all-mastering fate  
 to be slain at the hands of Achilles, Aiakos's peerless grandson."  
  
 When he'd spoken thus, death's end enshrouded him, 855  
 and the soul fled from his limbs, fluttered down to Hādēs  
 bewailing its fate, youth and manhood all abandoned.  
 Yet still Hektōr harangued him, dead though he was:  
 "Patroklos, why do you prophesy sheer destruction for me?  
 Who knows if perhaps Achilles, fair-haired Thetis's son, 860  
 may, struck by my spear, lose his life before that happens?"

So saying, he tugged out his bronze spear from the wound,  
with one foot on Patroklos's chest, eased him backward off the spear.  
Then he and his spear were gone, pursuing Automedon,  
the godlike henchman of Aiaikos's swift-footed grandson, 865  
very zealous to hit him; but him the swift horses carried away,  
immortal steeds, that the gods gave to Peleus, glorious gifts.