

Arms and a man I sing, the first from Troy,
A fated exile to Lavinian shores
In Italy. On land and sea, divine will—
And Juno's unforgetting rage—harassed him.
War racked him too, until he set his city 5
And gods in Latium. There his Latin race rose,
With Alban patriarchs, and Rome's high walls.
Muse, tell me why. What stung the queen of heaven,
What insult to her power made her drive
This righteous hero through so many upsets 10
And hardships? Can divine hearts know such anger?
Carthage, an ancient Tyrian settlement,
Faces the Tiber's mouth in far-off Italy;
Rich, and experienced and fierce in war.
They say that it was Juno's favorite, second 15
Even to Samos. Carthage held her weapons,
Her chariot. From the start she planned that Carthage
Would rule the world—if only fate allowed!

But she had heard that one day Troy's descendants
Would pull her Tyrian towers to the ground. 20
A war-proud race with broad domains would come
To cut down Africa. The Fates ordained it.
Saturn's child feared this. She recalled the war
That she had fought at Troy for her dear Greeks—
And also what had caused her savage anger. 25
Deep in her heart remained the verdict given
By Paris, and his insult to her beauty,
And the rape and privileges of Ganymede—
A Trojan. In her rage, she kept from Italy
Those spared by cruel Achilles and the Greeks. 30
They tossed on endless seas, went wandering,
Fate-driven, year on year around the world's seas.
It cost so much to found the Roman nation.

Sicily fell from sight. They sailed with joy
Into the open, bronze prows churning foam. 35
But Juno, with her deep, unhealing heart-wound,
Muttered, "Will I give up? Have I been beaten
In keeping Italy from the Trojan king?
Fate blocks me. But then why could Pallas burn
The Argive fleet and drown the men it carried, 40
Only to punish Ajax' frenzied crime?
Out of the clouds she hurled Jove's hungry fire,
Scattered the ships and overturned the sea.
Ajax, panting his life out, pierced with flame,
She whirled away and pinioned on a sharp rock. 45
But I, parading as the queen of heaven,
Jove's wife and sister, fight a single people
For years. Will anybody now beseech me,
Bow to me, and put presents on my altar?"
Her heart aflame with all of this, the goddess 50
Went to Aeolia, land of storm clouds, teeming
With wild winds. There King Aeolus rules a vast cave

That struggling winds and howling tempests fill.
 He disciplines them, chains them in their prison.
 They shriek with rage around the bolted doors; 55
 The mountain echoes. Seated on a pinnacle,
 Aeolus holds a scepter, checks their anger—
 Without him, they would seize land, sea, and deep sky
 To carry with them in their breakneck flight.
 Fearing this, the almighty father shut them 60
 In that black cave and heaped high mountains on it,
 And set a ruler over them to slacken
 Or pull the reins in, strict in his control.
 Juno approached him now and made this plea:
 “The king of men and father of the gods 65
 Gives you the right to rouse and soothe the waves.
 A race I hate sails the Tyrrhenian sea,
 Bringing Troy’s beaten gods to Italy.
 Goad your winds into fury, swamp the ships,
 Or scatter them, strew bodies on the water. 70
 Fourteen voluptuous nymphs belong to me,
 And the most beautiful is Deiopea.
 Her I will make your own, in steadfast union,
 If you will help me. She will spend her life
 With you—the lovely children that you’ll father!” 75
 Aeolus said, “You merely must decide,
 My sovereign. I must hurry to obey.
 My power, my modest kingdom, and Jove’s favor
 You brought me. I recline at the gods’ banquets,
 I rule the stormy clouds because of you.” 80
 With his upended spear he struck a flank
 Of the hollow mountain. Like a battle charge,
 The winds pour out. They spiral through the world—
 The East and South gales, and the mass of whirlwinds
 From Africa swoop down, uproot the sea, 85
 And send enormous billows rolling shoreward.
 The men begin to shout, the ropes to squeal.

Sudden clouds snatch away the daylight sky
 From Trojan sight. Black night roosts on the sea.
 Heaven resounds, and fires dance in its heights. 90
 The world becomes a threat of instant death.
 A swift and icy terror numbed Aeneas.
 He moaned and held his hands up to the stars
 And gave a cry: “Three times and four times blessed
 Are those who perished in their fathers’ sight 95
 Beneath Troy’s walls. You, Diomedes, boldest
 Of Greeks, could you not spill my soul and let me
 Fall on the fields of Troy, like raging Hector
 Slain by Achilles’ spear, or tall Sarpedon,
 Where the Simois River churns beneath her ripples 100
 Shields, helmets, bodies of so many strong men?”
 A screaming northern gale flew past his wild words
 And slammed the sails, and pulled a wave toward heaven.
 The oars broke, the prow swerved and set the ship
 Against a looming precipice of water. 105
 Crews dangled on the crest, or glimpsed the seabed
 Between the waves. Sand poured through seething water.
 Three times the South Wind hurled them at rocks lurking
 Midway across—Italians call them Altars;
 Their massive spine protrudes—three times the East Wind 110
 Drove them toward sandy shallows—awful sight—
 And rammed them tight, and ringed them with a sand wall.
 Before Aeneas’ eyes a towering wave tipped,
 To strike head-on the ship of staunch Orontes
 And the Lycians, and whirled the helmsman out 115
 Head first. The boat was whipped in three tight circles,
 And then the hungry whirlpool swallowed it.
 The endless sea showed scatterings of swimmers.
 Planks, gear, and Trojan treasure strewed the waves.
 The storm subdued the strong ships carrying 120
 Ilioneus, Abas, brave Achates,
 And old Aletes. Deadly water pushed

Through the hulls' weakened joints, and fissures started
To gape. Now Neptune felt, with some alarm,
The roaring havoc that the storm let loose. 125
Even the still depths spurted up. He raised
His calm face from the surface and looked down.
He saw Aeneas' ships thrown everywhere,
Trojans crushed under waves, the plunging sky.
Juno's own brother knew her guile and anger. 130
He called the East and South Winds and addressed them:
"Is this the arrogance of noble birth?
Without my holy sanction, you have dared
To churn up land and sea and raise these mountains?
Which I—but first I'll calm these waves you've roused. 135
Later I'll punish you with more than words.
Get out now, fast, and tell this to your ruler:
I was allotted kingship of the sea,
And the harsh trident. In his massive stone hall—
Your home, East Wind, and all the rest—we let him 140
Swagger, but he must keep that dungeon locked."
Faster than words, he calmed the swollen sea,
Chased off the mass of clouds, brought back the sun.
Cymothoe and Triton heaved the ships
Off jagged boulders. Neptune with his trident 145
Helped them. He freed vast sandbanks, smoothed the surface,
His weightless chariot grazing the waves' peaks;
As often in a crowded gathering
Crude commoners in rage begin to riot,
Torches and stones fly, frenzy finds its weapons— 150
But if they see a stern and blameless statesman,
They all fall silent, keen for him to speak.
Then he will tame their hearts and guide their passions:
Like this, the roar of the broad sea grew quiet
Under the lord's gaze. Now beneath a clear sky, 155
He slacked the reins and flew on with the breeze.
Aeneas' worn-out group now fought to reach

The nearest shore, turning toward Libya.
 A bay runs inland, and an island makes
 A harbor with its sides; waves from the deep 160
 Break there and flutter out their separate ways.
 Mammoth cliffs flank the place, and twin stone spires
 Loom to the sky. Beneath them, smooth and safe
 The water hushes. Forests as a backdrop
 Quiver, a grove with its black shadows rises. 165
 At the bay's head, rocks dip to form a cavern
 With a clear spring and seats of natural rock.
 Nymphs live there. At the shore no rope is needed
 To hold worn ships, no hooked and biting anchor.
 Aeneas landed seven ships, regrouped 170
 From the whole fleet. The Trojans went ashore
 In great and yearning love of that dry sand.
 Still dripping with salt water, they lay down.
 To start, Achates struck a spark from flint
 And caught the flame in leaves and fed it dry twigs 175
 From all sides, till it blazed up through the tinder.
 Downheartedly they got out instruments
 Of Ceres, and the soaking grain they'd rescued;
 They had to sear it dry before they ground it.
 Meanwhile Aeneas climbed a crag to view 180
 The great expanse of sea. Where did the wind toss
 Antheus, Capys, Caicus' lofty prow
 Hung with his arms—or any Trojan vessel?
 There was no ship in sight; but three stags wandered
 The shore. Entire herds came after them, 185
 And grazed in a long column through the valley.
 Taking a stand, he snatched the bow and arrows
 That his devoted friend Achates carried.
 He brought the strutting, branching-antlered leaders
 To the ground first, and then his arrows chased 190
 The mass in havoc through the leafy groves.
 Exulting, he continued till he brought down

Seven large bodies for his seven ships,
Then went to share the meat out at the harbor,
And with it casks of wine that good Acestes
Had stashed with them when they left Sicily— 195
A noble gift. Aeneas spoke this comfort:
“Friends, we are all at home with suffering—
Some worse than this—but god will end this too.
You came near Scylla’s frenzy, and the deep roar 200
At the cliffs, you saw the rocks the Cyclops threw.
Revive your hearts, shake off your gloomy fear.
Sometime you may recall today with pleasure.
We fight through perils and catastrophes
To Latium, where divine fate promises 205
A peaceful homeland, a new Trojan kingdom.
Endure and live until our fortunes change.”
Sick with colossal burdens, he shammed hope
On his face, and buried grief deep in his heart.
Trojans around his prey prepared their feast, 210
Ripped the hide off the ribs and bared the guts.
Some of them pierced the quivering chunks with spits,
Some set out cauldrons, others tended flames.
The food restored and filled them—the old wine,
The rich game—as they stretched out on the grass. 215
After the feast, their hunger put away,
They dwelt in longing on their missing friends.
They hoped, they feared: were these men still alive,
Or past the end and deaf to any summons?
Loyal Aeneas, most of all, was groaning 220
Softly for keen Orontes, Amycus, Lycus,
For Gyas and Cloanthus—brave men, hard deaths.

The day was over. Jove looked down from heaven
At the sail-flying waters, outstretched lands
And shores, and far-flung nations. At the sky’s peak, 225
He fixed his gaze on Libyan territory.

His mind was anxious, busy. And now Venus
 Spoke these sad words to him, her shining eyes
 Filling with tears, “You, everlasting ruler
 Of gods and men and fearful lightning-thrower, 230
 What great crime did Aeneas and the Trojans
 Commit against you? They have died and died,
 But in the whole world found no Italy.
 You promised that the circling years would draw
 Teucer’s new lineage from them, Romans, chieftains, 235
 To rule an empire on the land and sea.
 Father, what new thought turns you from this purpose?
 When Troy calamitously fell, I weighed it
 Against the fate to come, to my great comfort.
 And yet the pummeling fortunes of these heroes 240
 Don’t change. When will you end their trials, great ruler?
 Antenor could escape the swarm of Greeks;
 Into Illyrian coves, into Liburnia,
 He safely voyaged, to the Timavus’ source,
 Where the sea breaks through nine mouths, and the mountain 245
 Roars, and the echoing waves oppress the fields.
 And here he founded Padua, a homeland
 For Trojans, with a Trojan name, its gateway
 Displaying Trojan arms. He has his rest there.
 But we, your children, promised heirs to heaven, 250
 Have lost our ships—obscene!—through Someone’s anger
 And treachery. We are kept from Italy.
 Is this our new realm, won through righteousness?”
 The gods’ and mortals’ father gave his daughter
 The smile that clears the sky of storms and kissed her 255
 Lightly, and this was how he answered her:
 “Take heart—no one will touch the destiny
 Of your people. You will see Lavinium
 In its promised walls, and raise your brave Aeneas
 To the stars. No new thoughts change my purposes. 260
 But since you suffer, I will tell the future,

Opening to the light fate's secret book.
 In Italy your son will crush a fierce race
 In a great war. With the Rutulians beaten,
 Three winters and three summers he'll shape walls 265
 And warrior customs, as he reigns in Latium.
 But his son Ascanius, now called Iulus too
 (He was named Ilus during Ilium's empire),
 Will rule while thirty spacious years encircle
 Their circling months, and he will move the kingdom 270
 To Alba Longa, heaving up strong ramparts.
 Three centuries the dynasty of Hector
 Will govern, until Ilia, royal priestess,
 Conceives twin boys by Mars and gives them birth.
 And the wolf's nursling (glad to wear brown wolfskin), 275
 Romulus, will then lead the race and found
 The walls of Mars for Romans—named for him.
 For them I will not limit time or space.
 Their rule will have no end. Even hard Juno,
 Who terrorizes land and sea and sky, 280
 Will change her mind and join me as I foster
 The Romans in their togas, the world's masters.
 I have decreed it. The swift years will bring
 Anchises' clan as rulers into Phthia,
 And once-renowned Mycenae, and beaten Argos. 285
 The noble Trojan line will give us Caesar—
 A Julian name passed down from the great Iulus—
 With worldwide empire, glory heaven-high.
 At ease you will receive him with his burden
 Of Eastern plunder. Mortals will send him prayers here. 290
 Then wars will end, cruel history grow gentle.
 Vesta, old Faith, and Quirinus, with Remus
 His twin, will make the laws. Tight locks of iron
 Will close War's grim gates. Inside, godless Furor,
 Drooling blood on a heap of brutal weapons, 295
 Will roar against the chains that pinion him."

Concluding, he dispatched the son of Maia
 To have the Trojans welcomed down in Carthage
 With its new fort. Dido, who was not privy
 To fate, might keep them out. The god's wings rowed him 300
 Through the vast air, to stand on Libya's shore.
 Since it was heaven's will, the fierce Phoenicians
 Peacefully yielded; most of all their queen
 Turned a calm, gentle face to meet the Trojans.
 Steadfast Aeneas had a worried night, 305
 But at the light of nurturing dawn decided
 To go and find out where the wind had brought them
 And who or what—the land looked wild—lived here,
 And bring what he could learn to his companions.
 The fleet lay hidden in a tree-lined inlet, 310
 Under a rocky overhang enclosed
 By bristling shade. He set off with Achates,
 Holding two quivering pikes with iron blades.
 Deep in the woods his mother came to him,
 A girl in face and clothes—armed, as in Sparta, 315
 Or like Harpalyce in Thrace, outracing
 The breakneck Hebrus with her harried horses—
 A huntress with a bow slung, quick to hand,
 From her shoulders, and the wind in her free hair,
 And a loosely tied-up tunic over bare knees: 320
 She greeted them and asked, “Please, have you met
 One of my sisters wandering here, or shouting,
 Chasing a foam-mouthed boar? She has a quiver,
 And wears a spotted lynx skin and a belt.”
 Venus stopped speaking, and her son began. 325
 “Young girl, I haven't seen or heard your sister.
 But I should call you—what? There's nothing mortal
 In your face or voice. No, you must be a goddess:
 Apollo's sister? Daughter of a nymph clan?
 No matter: have compassion, ease our hardship. 330
 On which of the world's shores have we been thrown?

Beneath which tract of sky? The wind and huge waves
 Drove us to this strange land in which we wander.
 I'll slaughter many victims at your altar."

She answered, "That would surely not be right. 335
 These quivers are what Tyrian girls all carry;
 We all wear purple boots, laced on our calves.
 This is the Punic realm and Agenor's city.
 Unconquerable Africans surround us.
 Dido is queen; she came here out of Tyre, 340
 Escaping from her brother's persecution.
 It's quite a story; I'll just tell the main parts.
 Her husband was Sychaeus, the Phoenician
 Richest in land—and she, poor thing, adored him.
 Her father gave her as a virgin to him 345
 In marriage. But Pygmalion her brother
 Is king, and there is no one more depraved.
 Hate rose between them. In blind lust for gold,
 And indifferent to his sister's love, Pygmalion
 Wickedly caught Sychaeus at an altar 350
 And murdered him. He dodged and made up stories,
 Cynically drawing out her anxious hope.
 But in her dreams there came to her the vision
 Of her unburied husband's strange, pale face.
 He bared his stabbed chest, told of that cruel altar, 355
 Stripped bare the monstrous crime the house had hidden.
 He urged a quick escape. To aid her journey
 Out of her country, he revealed where treasure,
 A mass of gold and silver, lay long buried.
 Alarmed, she made her plans, alerted friends— 360
 All those who also hated the cruel tyrant
 Or lived in sharp fear. Seizing ready ships,
 They loaded them with gold. The ocean carried
 Greedy Pygmalion's wealth. A woman led.
 They came here, where you now see giant walls 365
 And the rising citadel of newborn Carthage.

They purchased land, 'as much as one bull's hide
 Could reach around,' and called the place 'the Bull's Hide.'
 But who are you? What country are you from?
 Where are you going?' Answering, Aeneas 370
 Sighed and drew words out of the depths of feeling.
 "Goddess, our whole sad story, from its start,
 Would keep you here until the Evening Star
 Closed off Olympus, bringing this day rest.
 Through endless seas, we come from ancient Troy— 375
 Perhaps you've heard that name. A storm has thrust us,
 By its whim, onto these shores of Africa.
 I am devout Aeneas, known in heaven.
 I saved my household gods and now transport them
 To a home in Italy. I descend from high Jove. 380
 My goddess mother and the fates have led me.
 Of twenty ships launched on the Phrygian sea,
 Seven remain—torn by the waves and east wind.
 Europe and Asia banished me, to wander
 In empty Africa, a needy stranger." 385
 Venus cut short this grief, these grievances.
 "Whoever you might be, it's by the favor
 Of the gods, I think, that you're alive to reach
 This Tyrian city. Go straight to the queen's house.
 I have good news. Your friends and ships are safe. 390
 The north wind turned and brought them back. My parents
 Taught me to read the sky—I hope correctly.
 Look at that cheerful squadron of twelve swans.
 Jove's eagle swooped from heaven through the clear sky
 And routed them. But the long row regrouped— 395
 Those still aloft look down on those who've landed.
 Their joyful rushing wings on their return,
 Their cries, and their tight circles through the sky
 Are like the ships that carry all your people:
 Come into port or heading in with full sails. 400
 Go on, then, make your way along the road."

She turned away. Her rosy neck now shone.
Her hair's ambrosia breathed a holy fragrance.
Her belt fell loose, her robe now swept her feet.
Like a true god she walked. He recognized 405
His mother, and called after her retreat:
"I am your child—must you keep torturing me
With these illusions? Let me take your hand—
Let there be words between us, as we are!"
Bitterly he approached the city walls, 410
But Venus hid the group in murky air,
In a thick cloud draped over them like clothing.
This way no one could see or touch them. No one
Could ask why they were there or hold them back.
She soared to Paphos in a glad return home 415
To her temple's hundred altars, warm with incense
From Arabia, and fragrant with fresh garlands.
Meanwhile they hurried, following the path.
They climbed a lofty hill above the city,
And looked down at the fortress straight ahead. 420
Aeneas was amazed at those great structures
Where huts had been: the gates, paved roads—the hubbub!
Some Tyrians feverishly laid out long walls
Or rolled rocks in to raise the citadel;
Others chose sites and bordered them with trenches. 425
Laws, offices, a sacred senate formed.
A port was being dug, the high foundations
Of a theater laid, great columns carved from cliffs
To ornament the stage that would be built there:
Like bees in spring across the blossoming land, 430
Busy beneath the sun, leading their offspring,
Full grown now, from the hive, or loading cells
Until they swell with honey and sweet nectar,
Or taking shipments in, or lining up
To guard the fodder from the lazy drones; 435
The teeming work breathes thyme and fragrant honey.

“What luck they have—their walls grow high already!”
 Aeneas cried, his eyes on those great roofs.
 Still covered by the cloud—a miracle—
 He went in through the crowds, and no one saw him. 440
 Deep in the city is the verdant shade
 Where the Phoenicians, tired from stormy waves,
 Dug up the sign that Juno said would be there:
 A horse’s head, foretelling martial glory
 And easy livelihood through future ages. 445
 Dido was building Juno a vast shrine here,
 Filled with rich offerings and holy power.
 The stairs soared to a threshold made of bronze;
 Bronze joined the beams; the doors had shrill bronze hinges.
 Here a strange sight relieved Aeneas’ fear 450
 For the first time, and lured him into hope
 Of better things to follow all his torments.
 While waiting for the queen and looking over
 The whole huge temple, marveling at the wealth
 It showed, the work, the varied artistry, 455
 He saw Troy’s battles painted in their sequence—
 A worldwide story now: the sons of Atreus,
 And Priam, and Achilles, cruel to both.
 He halted, weeping: “What land isn’t full
 Of what we suffered in that war, Achates? 460
 There’s Priam! Even here is praise for valor,
 And tears of pity for a mortal world.
 Don’t be afraid. Somehow our fame will save us.”
 With steady sobbing and a tear-soaked face,
 He fed his heart on shallow images. 465
 He saw men fight around the citadel—
 Trojan troops routing Greeks, crested Achilles
 Driving his chariot at the Trojans’ backs.
 He wept to recognize, close by, the white tents
 Of Rhesus: savage Diomedes stormed 470
 And massacred the camp on its first night,

And seized the ardent horses there before
They tasted Trojan grass or drank the Xanthus.
Here Troilus, wretched boy who'd lost his armor,
And no match for Achilles, sprawled behind 475
His empty chariot and its panicked horses—
Holding the reins. His neck and long hair skidded
Over the ground. His spear point scored the dust.
The Trojan women, hair unbound, went begging
To the temple of implacable Athena. 480
They took a robe for her and beat their breasts.
She would not raise her eyes and look at them.
Three times Achilles dragged the corpse of Hector
Around Troy's walls, then traded it for gold.
Aeneas gave a soulful groan to see 485
His comrade's armor, chariot, and body,
And Priam stretching out defenseless hands.
He saw himself among Greek chieftains, fighting;
He saw black Memnon and the ranks of Dawn.
Penthesilea, leader of the Amazons 490
With their crescent shields, was storming through the throng,
Her gold belt tied beneath her naked breast—
This virgin warrior dared to fight with men.
Dardanian Aeneas gazed in wonder,
Transfixed and mesmerized—but while he stood, 495
Dido the lovely queen came to the temple,
Surrounded by a copious troop of soldiers.
Diana on the banks of the Eurotas
Or high on Cynthus, leading dances, followed
By a thousand clustering, trailing nymphs but taller 500
Than all of them, and shouldering her quiver
(Latona in her silent heart rejoices)—
Dido was like her, striding happily
Through her people, planning, urging on her kingdom.
Beneath the vault, before the goddess' doors, 505
She sat on her high throne, hemmed in by soldiers,

Made laws, gave judgments, and assigned the work
 In fair proportions or by drawing lots.
 But now Aeneas saw, among a crowd,
 Antheus, Sergestus, spirited Cloanthus, 510
 And other Trojans whom the pitch-black whirlwind
 Had scattered, driving them to distant shores.
 He and Achates both were riveted
 With fear and joy. They yearned to clasp their friends' hands,
 But didn't—they were startled and bewildered. 515
 They hung back, watching from the hollow cloud.
 What was the news, where were they moored, and why
 Had they come here? Spokesmen from every ship
 Came clamoring to the shrine with their petition.
 When they had entered and had leave to speak, 520
 The eldest, Ilioneus, calmly started:
 "Your highness, we poor Trojans plead with you:
 Jove let you found a city and bring justice
 To lawless tribes. We are sea-wandering,
 Wind-harried: save our ships from evil fires. 525
 Spare decent people—think of what we've been through.
 We have not come to plunder Libyan homes
 Or drive your herds away onto the shore.
 Arrogant crime is not for beaten men.
 There is a place Greeks call Hesperia, 530
 An ancient land—rich-loamed and strong in war.
 Oenotrians lived there, whose descendants called it
 Italy, from king Italus, as we're told.
 On our way there,
 Stormy Orion heaved the surge against us, 535
 Cruel south winds drove us far into the shallows,
 Scattered us under conquering waves and over
 Rock barriers. We few rowed here to your shores.
 What race is this? What nation would permit
 Such outrage? They have thrust us from the beach 540
 With war and yield no stopping place on land.

You scorn the human race and human weapons?
Be sure the gods remember good and evil.
Aeneas was our leader—none more just
Or faithful ever was, no better warrior. 545
If fate still lets him breathe instead of sleeping
Among the shades of death, we'd have no fear,
And you would not be sorry for competing
With him in kindness. We have towns and troops, though,
In Sicily. We are kin of great Acestes. 550
Please let us beach the fleet the winds have ruined,
And saw new planks, shape new oars in your woods.
Perhaps our friends and leader will return—
Then we can sail with joy to Italy.
If that won't save us, and our loving father 555
Lies in this sea, and there's no hope of Iulus,
We'll sail to Sicily—a king, Acestes,
A home is there for us across the strait.”
So Ilioneus spoke, and all the Trojans
Instantly roared approval. 560
Dido looked down and gave this brief reply:
“Ease your hearts, Trojans, put away your fears.
The threats to my new kingdom here have forced me
To carefully place guards on all the borders.
Who hasn't heard about Aeneas' family, 565
Or Troy—those brave men and the flames of war?
Phoenicians know the world! This town's not set
Beyond where the Sun harnesses his horses.
To Saturn's fields, the great lands of the West,
Or the kingdom of Acestes next to Eryx, 570
I'll send you off secure and well-supplied.
Or would you settle here and share my kingdom?
This town I found is yours too. Land your ships.
To me, you will be equal to my own.
I wish the storm had brought your king Aeneas 575
Himself. But I will send some trusted men

Along the shore as far as Libya reaches—
 He might be cast up, wandering woods or towns.”
 Heartened now, staunch Achates and Aeneas
 The patriarch were burning to break free 580
 From their cloud. But first Achates asked his leader:
 “Goddess’ son, what new thoughts rise up in you?
 Your fleet and followers are in safe havens.
 Save for one man our own eyes saw the waves
 Take under, it is as your mother said.” 585
 He’d scarcely finished when the cloud that veiled them
 Ripped apart and dissolved in open air.
 Aeneas stood, his godlike face and shoulders
 Flashing in clear light, since his mother breathed
 Graceful long hair, the blushing glow of youth, 590
 And happy, shining eyes onto her son—
 Like ivory beautifully carved, like silver
 Or marble that is edged with tawny gold.
 The queen, the crowd were startled. He addressed them,
 Unhesitating: “Here I am, you see— 595
 Trojan Aeneas, saved from Libyan waters.
 You are the first to pity Troy’s disasters.
 We are the scraps the Greeks left. We have nothing.
 Disasters pelted us on land and sea.
 It is not in the power of all our people— 600
 Who are world-scattered now—to thank you, Dido,
 For making us the sharers of this place.
 The gods and your own conscience must reward you.
 Surely divine powers honor selflessness,
 And justice does exist. What happy era 605
 And what outstanding parents gave you birth?
 While streams run seaward, while the shadows move
 On mountain slopes, and the stars graze in heaven,
 Your name will have unceasing praise and honor—
 Whatever country calls me.” He clasped hands 610
 With Ilioneus and Serestus, right and left,

Then others, brave Cloanthus and brave Gyas.
 Phoenician Dido was amazed to see him,
 And shocked by all his suffering. She spoke:
 “What fate has hounded you through endless dangers? 615
 What force has brought you to our savage shores?
 Are you the one born by the river Simois—
 Trojan Anchises’ and kind Venus’ son?
 Teucer in exile came to Sidon, looking
 For a new kingdom, I recall, and seeking 620
 My father Belus’ help, who was away
 Ravaging wealthy, newly conquered Cyprus.
 Since then I’ve known the tragedy of Troy,
 And the Greek kings who fought there, and your name.
 Your enemy himself admired Trojans, 625
 And claimed the ancient “Teucrian” line as his too.
 So come now, warriors, join me in my house.
 Fate dragged me through much suffering myself
 Until it let me settle in this land.
 My own experience has taught compassion.” 630
 She spoke, and led Aeneas to her palace,
 Proclaiming sacrifices in the temples.
 She sent his shore-bound comrades twenty bulls,
 A hundred giant boars with bristling backs,
 And a hundred fat lambs, and their mothers too, 635
 Gifts for a joyful day.
 Her house was now prepared luxuriously
 And regally, with a feast laid in the middle,
 With embroidered covers and imperial ivory,
 Dishes of massive silver, gold-embossed 640
 With heroism through the generations—
 The whole long story of her ancient race.
 Aeneas, with an anxious father’s love,
 Dispatched Achates swiftly to the ships,
 To give Ascanius news and bring him here. 645
 To his fond father, he was everything.

Aeneas ordered gifts brought in—the salvage
 Of Troy: a mantle stiff with gold-stitched figures,
 A veil trimmed yellow with acanthus flowers—
 Greek Helen’s finery, taken from Mycenae 650
 When she set off for Troy and lawless marriage,
 Glorious presents from her mother, Leda—
 And the scepter that was held by Ilione,
 Eldest of Priam’s daughters; a pearl necklace;
 And a crown’s double bands of gold and gems. 655
 Achates rushed to fetch them from the ships.
 But a new strategy was in the mind
 Of Venus. She sent Cupid in disguise,
 Looking like sweet Ascanius, with the gifts,
 To twist a frenzied flame around the queen’s bones. 660
 She feared this lying race, this doubtful refuge.
 At evening, too, came thoughts of ruthless Juno
 To trouble her, so she approached winged Love:
 “My son, you are my strength, I rule through you.
 You even scorn the patriarch’s lightning bolts. 665
 Humbly I come to seek your holy aid.
 You know your brother’s tortuous worldwide voyage,
 How Juno’s spite will never let him rest.
 You’ve shared my grief about this many times.
 Phoenician Dido flatters and detains him. 670
 Juno has sanctioned this; but for what purpose?
 She won’t hang back at this decisive time.
 So I’ll move quickly, shrewdly, trap the queen
 In fire—and then no heavenly will can change her.
 She will be mine, through passion for Aeneas. 675
 Now listen while I tell you how to do it.
 My darling prince, at his dear father’s call,
 Is setting out to the Phoenician city
 With gifts saved from the sea and Trojan flames.
 I’ll put the boy to sleep and hide him high 680
 On Cythera or Idalium, in my shrine.

He won't know, he won't stumble on the scheme.
 You are a boy too: for a single night
 Impersonate the features Trojans know.
 Amid the royal banquet's flowing wine, 685
 Dido will be enchanted with you, hold you
 In her lap, with doting kisses. That's your chance:
 Stealthily breathe on her your flame of poison."
 Love stripped his wings, obeying his dear mother,
 And strutted in a gleeful imitation. 690
 Venus poured deep sleep through the prince's body
 And took him in her arms to the high groves
 Of Idalium. Soft marjoram wrapped its flowers,
 Its breath of aromatic shade around him.
 Now with delight and deference Cupid went 695
 After Achates, with the royal gifts.
 He found the queen among her splendid hangings,
 Posed in the middle, on a golden couch.
 Father Aeneas and the ranks of Trojans
 Assembled and lay down on purple covers. 700
 Servants poured water on their hands, provided
 Baskets of bread and fine-spun napkins. Inside,
 Fifty maids honored household gods with hearth fires
 And made the long feast ready course by course.
 Two hundred men and women of the same age 705
 Served wine and weighed the tables down with good things.
 Phoenician guests flocked in the festive doorway
 And took their places on embroidered couches,
 Admiring Aeneas' gifts, admiring Iulus
 (Or the god's bright face and masquerading words) 710
 And the cloak and the embroidered yellow flowers.
 The Punic queen—cursed and disaster-bound—
 Was looking on with hunger in her heart,
 Enchanted by the presents and the boy.
 He put his arms around Aeneas' neck— 715
 Which gratified the duped and loving father—

Then sought the queen. Her eyes and mind were fixed
 On him. Poor thing, she held him on her lap,
 The powerful hidden god. He thought of Venus,
 His mother, and began to ease Sychaeus 720
 Out of her mind and try a living love
 Against a heart long quiet and disused.
 An interval; the tables are removed.
 They set out massive wine bowls crowned with flowers.
 A clamor rises, and their voices roll 725
 Through the wide hall. Lamps hang from golden panels,
 Blazing, and waxed-rope torches rout the darkness.
 The queen called for a bowl—massed gems and gold—
 To hold unwatered wine. From Belus onward,
 The dynasty had drunk from it. Now, silence. 730
 “Jove, your laws govern visits, as they say.
 Make this a glad day for our Trojan guests
 And us, a day our children all remember.
 Come, Bacchus, giver of joy, and kindly Juno;
 Join in this gathering with good will, Tyrians.” 735
 She poured a sacrifice onto the table
 And made a start—her lips just brushed the rim—
 And passed the bowl to Bitias with a challenge.
 He wallowed in the full, foam-brimming gold.
 The other leaders drank. Long-haired Iopas, 740
 Great Atlas’ pupil, struck his golden lyre.
 He sang the wandering moon, the sun’s eclipses,
 Fire and rain, how men and beasts were made,
 The Keeper of the Bear, the Twins, the Rain Stars;
 Why winter suns dive in the sea so quickly, 745
 What obstacle makes winter nights so slow.
 Repeated cheers rose, led by Tyrians.
 Unlucky Dido spoke of various things,
 Drawing the night out, deep in love already.
 She asked so many questions: Priam, Hector, 750
 The armor of the son of Dawn, how good

Diomedes' horses were, how tall Achilles.
“Tell it from the beginning, friend—the ambush
By the Greeks, your city's fall, your wanderings.
This is the seventh summer now that sends you
Drifting across the wide world's lands and seas.”

755