

The Iliad of Homer: Book VI

The Joining, Revolving and Unraveling of Hektor and Andromakhe

translated by J. M. Wilcox

The turbid battle-rattle and macabre combat-clangor, the strident
scarlet scrimmage of the Trojans and the Akhaioi was left to itself,
god-untouched,
and so the skirmish pushed ahead in brutal fashion, like a whiplash in
slow motion, propulsive as a planet—deviating rectitude—across the
sandal-pounded plain,
as they aimed their spear-beams, swirl-grain copper-tipped, at each other,
between the streams of Simoeis and Xanthos, Yellow River.

Telamonian Aias, body-blocker battle-bunker of the Akhaioi, was the first
to break the array, crack the formation and shatter divisions of Trojans, and
to make a slit of light for his clanlike comrades,
for he hit with a hurl a man who was trained as the war-bold best of the
Threikioi,
son of Eussoros, Akamas Indefatigable, august tall and majestic.
Him he was first to missile-hit on the metal-ridged air-rubbed blade-thrashed
plume-socket of his sleek and bushy helmet, horse-hair-oscillating,
and he stuck the stick between his eyes, and so the whizzing copper
spear-point drove right through, ultrapulsive,

penetrating bone, and darkness veiled his two eyes, color-fading
sky-reflecting.

And then Diomedes Sky-Guarded, war-scream-supreme, killed Craggy,
Axulos,
son of Teuthras, who dwelled in people-teeming well-built Arisbe,
a rich man, wealth-wound, kind and hospitable, esteemed by men;
for, dwelling in a house by a popular road he would welcome and
accommodate all.
But, from him, not one of them, now, to be sure, warded off dolorous deadly
destruction,
stepped not up to meet the attack, encounter the enemy, face to face, before
him, but Diomedes took away, soul-absuming, the blood-dashing life of
the fighting team,
Craggy himself and his batman, Kalesios, who at that time
was the rein-controlling subaltern of the 2-horse car, and both, soul-stripped,
plunged below, invaded the earth.

But Dresos and Opheltios did Eurualos Wide-Grinder, kill and spoliage,
spear snatching, shield wrenching,
and he set out on foot after Aisepos and Pedasos Bounder, whom on a former
occasion the river-maiden
Abarbaree, Inopaque, bore to blameless Boukolion, Herd-Driver.
And Boukolion was son of superb and exalted People-Guardian, Laomedon,
his oldest child, but his mother bore him hidden, dark-sparked, lacking
wedlock.
Sheep tending, cloud-shielded, Boukolion, with the maiden, mingled in love
and tumbled in bed,

and after conceiving secretly, sub-abundant, she bore twin sons.
So, of these, did son of Mekisteus, Moon-Supreme, loosen the base of their
burning might and shining limbs
in sonic subversion, bright-dissolving,—bone-clang socket-pop cockle-sparkle!
—and strip off the flash-hammered armor from their shoulders—collared
body-cargo.

Then battle-abiding Polupoites killed Astualos,
and Odusseus Hated Man killed and ravaged Pidutes the Perkisian
with his compound copper spear, and Teukros took down candent Aretaon.
And Antilokhos Ambush-Facer, son of Nestor, killed, enmarring, Ableros
with his shining whizzing spear-beam,
and Agamemnon, king of men, took out Silver Fir, Elatos;
he lived by the elevated banks of beautiful-flowing Satnioeis
in steep and lofty Pedasos, Sky-Hurdle. And Phulakos, Trench-Warder,—
star-turbed excubitor—the soldier Leitos crushed and took out
as he tried to flee in bright conation, and Eurupulos, Wide-Swinger, killed
and plundered Melanthios.

And then Adrestos, Inescapable, did Menelaos, war-scream-supreme,
take alive; for his two horses, discomposed, horror-shot, fear-infused,—
mustang-momble—coursing across the hoof-enhammered plain,
tangled and trapped in a sea-near marsh-lush scale-leafed pink-bloomed
tamarisk branch, the bright-welded moon-curved car
they broke at the end of the pole,—snap and drag—and the two themselves
took off,
kicked toward the city, where the others, agitated, fear-struck, terror-slit,
were flight-driven,—bronco-baffle—

but Adrestos himself rolled and tumbled out of the 2-man war-car beside the
 battered spinning wheel,
 headfirst facedown in the mounds of dust, earth-choked tooth-chipped. And
 stood beside him
 the son of Atreus, Brigade-Abider Menelaos, holding his
 longcut-shadow-casting spear—turbo-tonic prolux helix!
 And then Adrestos clasped his knees in imploration, low beseeching:
 ‘Take me alive, son of Atreus, and accept a proper reparation,
 well-considered remuneration—red-redeeming;
 many latent treasures, idle valuables, lie stored up in the palace of my wealthy
 father, rich, endrenched in opulence,
 bronze and gold and much-worked toil-tapped iron—bang and blow, pound
 and glow!;
 with these metals would my father favor you with countless ransom,—
 splendor-gladden—gratify with boundless compensation,
 if he should hear that I am alive beside the ships of the Akhaioi.’

Thus he spoke, bright-intoned, and was beginning to stir and sway, slowly
 induce, the plasma-throbbing heart in his breast;
 and indeed Menelaos was intending subito to turn him over to his batman
 to lead down, beach-conducting, to the high-speed ships of the Akhaioi, but
 Agamemnon
 came running up to meet him, and rebuking, reprimanding, uttered a word:
 ‘Softy, Menelaos, why indeed are you troubled thus
 over the men? To you, can it be, paragonal marvelous things have been done
 in your home
 by Trojans? Let not any one of them escape or run away in secret from steep
 and sliding ruin, sheer destruction,—quick clandestine subevasion—

and slip and wiggle through our hands, not any sheared and blushing teen
whom his mother
is accustomed to bear in her womb—embryo-butchered germ-abolished; let
him not attempt to flee, but let them all together
die, utterly perish, vanish from Ilios, unlamented, unmarked, blotted out,
forgotten.’

Speaking thus, the royal warrior turned his brother’s mind,
and prevailing indirectly, destined things he did induce, and Menelaos, with
his hand, thrust from him
the warrior, Adrestos; and him did royal Agamemnon
strike close-up, angle-down, on the slack attackable flank, between the rib
cage and the haunch bone, and he fell back, sky-turned, and the son of
Atreus
planted his foot on his chest and drew out the ashen elastic compound spear.

Then Nestor exhorted the Argeioi, the Luminous Ones, and shouted long
and far:
‘Dear Danaan warriors, batmen of Black-Caped Ares,
let no one now remain behind or hang back to pounce on plunder, bound on
boodle,
aim for loot and linger, so that he may come to the ships, armor-teeming,
bringing the most,—helmet-dangle spear-rattle shield-clangle
sword-clatter—
but let us kill the men; and then untroubled you can strip these things to boot
from the dead bodies scattered across the sandal-pounded plain’—
earth-dotted red-twisted apprehended body-cargo.
Speaking thus he stirred up, excited, the flammable might and the

turbulent soul of every soldier.

Then in turn the Trojans, by the battle-loving Akhaioi,
 would have been pressed, war-car-chased, driven back to Ilios, retropelled
 and overpowered, vanquished in their soft defense, loose and porous,
 if the son of Priam, Helenos, the best by far of bird-rangers,
 had not then approached and stood beside Aineias Man of Fame and Hektor,
 Clutcher, and expressed his thoughts:

‘Aineias and Hektor, since the labor of the Trojans and the sticky toil of the
 Lukioi,

the Glowing Wolf People, leans on you especially, because
 in every enterprise upright and straight intention—rectitude-injected—you
 are the best in battle and counsel,

make a stand right here, zigzag through the troops and keep them back
 before the double gates—

glory-snapping omni-rangers—before they try to flee in turn and flutter and
 fall

in the hands and arms of women, and become a source of joy and delight to
 their fire-minded enemies.

But when you two have excited all the echelons, stirred up all the ranks,
 we shall dig in here and fight with shield and spear against the Danaoi, on
 the spot,—ground-adhering planet-clinging—

even though supremely rubbed, combat-raded, drained and fashed by battle
 friction, for choking necessity pushes and presses us—skirmish-squeeze
 battle-throttle;

but you, Hektor, go to the city, and thereupon speak
 to the mother of you and me, and tell her to gather the women together,
 ancient, aetatic,

to the temple of Athene of the blue-green eyes—spear-sparkle shield-echo—

in the citadel,
and open the double doors of the sacred bright-built edifice, bar unthonging,
bolt unlatching, key inserting;
a multicolored sparkle-veil—maiden-made battle-embroidered—which
seems to her to be the loveliest and most stupendous—grace-crowned
charm-charged—
in her colossal oracular chamber and most cherished and precious by far to
her herself,
tell her to set and place upon the knees of Athene of the beautiful hair,—
comet-quiver fire-gyre ocher-twinkle amber-tumble—
and make a pledge, vow to her—word-sustaining—that in her temple, twelve
heifers,
she will slice and sacrifice, goad-untouched yearlings,—head-bang
sky-shriek neck-slit blood-drain—unprofaned and marvelous, if she
would show pity, feel compassion
for the city and the spouses of the Trojans and their not-yet-speaking
children,
and would hold back, keep away, the son of Tudeus from Ilios, sacred and
glorious,
a wild savage spearman and a stark and supreme planner of panic, a hardy
deviser of fear-driven flight,
whom indeed I deem to be the strongest of the Akhaioi.
Not even Akhilleus Man of Pain did we fear thus, to be sure, a leader of men,
—fruit-tree-radiant—
whom they say is goddess-born; but *this man* rages off the grid,
exorbitant-storming, and no one can match him in flammable might, no one
robust and combustive in balance.’

Thus he spoke, and Hektor, Clutcher, not at all did disobey his brother.
Subito down to the ground he bound in his hammered armor from his sound
and bright-built car,
and flashing, brandishing, two sharp river-grain spear-beams, ardent-pacing,
went everywhere throughout the battalions,
stirring them up to fight, and he woke up grim battle-din, macabre
combat-clamor.
Coiled up, they whirled around, perked up and rallied, a mobilized
magnitude,—spark-twirl fizz-twist sun-blast moon-mist—and stood face
to face with the Akhaioi.
The Argeioi subhumed, receded, baby-stepped back, and ceased from
slaughter,
and they thought that one of the deathless ones from out of the concave sky
—time-squeezing space-whizzing—
had come down to support, help out, the Trojans, for thus did they roll up
and rally.
And Hektor called to the Trojans, shouting long and wide:
‘High-hearted Trojans and far-famed allies,
be men, my friends, and turn your minds to bounding fending boldness,
leaping warding prowess,
while I go to Ilios and tell
the ancient counselors and our wives
to pray to the gods and promise them oxen firepools’—screw-horn
immolations.

Thus he spoke, lambent-timbred, and departed, Hektor of the
hue-changing ray-pinging eye-shadowed cheek-blocking helmet,—
beam-bounce plume-blow!—

and the black flayed hide beat and bobbed about his ankles and neck,
the outermost rim which ran around the knobbed and bullhide metal-plated
tassel-tossing shoulder-slung figure-8 body-shield.

But Glaukos, Turquoise Man, son of Hippolokhos, Horse-Ambusher, and
the son of Tudeus
came together in the space between both hosts, enflamed to fight—
head-hammer brain-batter—keen collision, bright encounter.
And when indeed they approached each other and were shield to shield,
Diomedes, war-scream-supreme, was the first to address his foe:
‘Who are you, most dauntless one, of death-bound death-down men?
For never have I noticed you in man-exalting battle
until today; but now, to be sure, you have stepped ahead of all, advancing
far,
in your boldness, in that you do brook and abide my long-shadow-casting
javelin-beam.
Soon despondent are the ones whose children face my flaming might—
turbo-torched crisp convergence.
But if you are one of the deathless celestials who has come down from
the rotating sky,—declining micatic empyreal—hurricane crystals,
palpitating pixels!—
then I, to be sure, shall not fight with the gods enskied in superior space.
No, for even the son of Druas Robust, mighty Lukoergos,
did not live long, who chronically strove and tangled with the gods enskied
in luminous space,
who, on a former occasion, chased across supernuminous Nusa the nurses,—
bright-propelled—
of shrieking intoxic Dionusus, jaguar-delirious—googoo-gaagaa

tickle-suckle—cheery galactic candy stripers!; and all the girls, at the
 same time,
 cast down their immolating tools to the ground, the torches and wands,
 pine-cone-crowned, ivy-wreathed, struck with an ox-ax, face-bashed,
 by man-killing Lukoergos; but shrieking Dionusos, fear-struck, flight-driven,
 down he went into the wave, lucent-swollen,—plunge-bubble—of the sea,
 submerged into expanding blue,—crystal-crested, germinal—and Thetis
 did receive him in her bosom,
 fear-shot, for a vultic quaking held him, tremble-gripped, by the basting of
 the man—grill-quiver jaw-jar.
 Then against Lukoergos were the gods who live at ease enraged,
 and the child of Kronos made him blind,—rings of Saturn, springs of smoke,
 spoke-sparks vapor-veils—and not for long did he exist,
 since, somber-abominated, he incurred serious hatred from all the immortal
 gods;
 not even I would wish to take on the blessed blissful gods.
 But if you're of the human race, who eat the fruit of the arable earth,—
 blow-stars plow-bars—soil-spinner cereal-sumer—
 come closer,—throttle-propic—so that quicker you can reach the ultra-limits
 of destruction'—bane-bounds bone-bonds.

To him in turn did speak the radiant son of Hippolokhos:
 'Soul-supreme son of Tudeus, *why* do you ask about my descent, probe my
 birth?
 Even as are the seasons of leaves,—splendid-generated—such too are the
 tribes of men—tint-teem hue-burst dream-abound passion-twist!
 The scattering leaves the wind does pour and chute to the ground,—
 blue-blow jewels, red-flow gyres, yellow-glow newels—but the forest,

blooming, hue-exuberating, burgeons, and the season of spring,
luminous-spawned, is subsequent-born;
so of men, one generation burgeons and swells and another abates in a
beautiful burst and a mystical blast, brilliant-diminished—space-knocked
time-kicked—in transitive twirled succession.

But if you will, learn this too, so you may know well, apprehend,
my blood-line, and many a man know what it is.

There is a city Ephure, lush and majestic, in the innermost eye-shut nook of
horse-feeding Argos, Glowtown,
and there abided Sisuphos, Crafty, who was the trickiest of men,
Sisuphos, son of Aiolos, Shifty—wind-wiggle space-spangle; and he sired a
son, Glaukos, Silver Eyes,
and Glaukos sired superb and blameless Bellerophon.

To him the gods gave beauty and lovely virility,—
charm-enteamed glamour-engaged valor-clung—but against him Proitos
schemed and charted evil in his stirred and smoky heart,
and drove him out of the land of the Argeioi, since he was much more
powerful;

for Indigo Zeus by his proppey baton, the badge of command, governed and
controlled them.

Now the wife of Proitos, scintillous Anteia, was crazy for him,
gaga to mingle and rabid to meld in cloaked and clandestine love, but not at
all

did she induce him, being moral-minded, sparkle-souled Bellerophon.

So she spoke and lied to Proitos the king:

‘Die, Proitos, or kill Bellerophon, cut him down,
who wished to mix in love with me, disinclined, unwilling.’

Thus she spoke, and bitter anger, boiling, bilious, grabbed the king at what

he heard.

He avoided killing him, for his throbbing heart was shot with fear,
 wonder-struck, wary of *that* to be sure,
 but he sent him to Lukia, and he furnished him with damaging doomy
 pictorial tokens,
 having scratched on a folded tablet many mind-infecting things,—brain-taint
 heart-mar—
 and ordered him to show them, bright-exhibited, to his father-in-law, so he
 would utterly perish, purple-murdered.
 Now he wound his way to Lukia, Glowing Woltown, under the blameless
 benevolent escort of the gods, celestial-sent, sky-convoyed.
 But when indeed he came to Lukia and flowing bubble-tumbling Xanthos,
 Amber Stream,
 zealously, van-minded, did the lord of wide blue-green capacious Lukia,
 honor and esteem him;
 nine days straight he entertained and tabled him, and did slaughter and
 enflame nine striking oxen.
 But when indeed the tenth aurora, supple-blossomed hue-perfumed,
 appeared, rosy-fingered dawn in her veil of many colors, sea-unprisoned
 sky-imprised,
then he questioned him and asked to see the grooved and painted tablet,
 whatever index—constellated code—from Proitos, his son-in-law, he bore.
 So when indeed he received the carved and colored evil token from his
 son-in-law,
 first he commanded and ordered him to slay the improelious unbeatable
 Khimaira.
 Now, her line was divine, of sky stock, not of man-faced creatures:
 in front a lion, in back a dragon, clanking-scaled and coruscating, and in the

middle a she-goat, winter-fending, snow-surviving,
terribly breathing out the flaming might of lurid fire—shocking potent
orange ignition—glowing helix, pink volcano, viper-kick vapor-crackle!
And Bellerophon slew her, cut her down, trusting in the portents of the gods.
Next in turn he duked it out with the glorious notable Solumoi;
indeed this was the mightiest fight among men, he said, into which he had
plunged—bright-invaded brutal battle.
Third in turn he slew, cut down, the man-equivalent Amazons—
smooth-busted rainbow-quivered supple-thighed beautiful-shaped.
And then against him coming back the king entwove a thick trick, loomed out
a packed bait, worked up a stratagem;
he picked out of sky-wide Lukia the best men,
and set up an ambush, but these in no degree did come back home,
for supreme and blameless Bellerophon cut them down, slew them all.
Yet when indeed the king perceived that he was the child, noble and brave,
of a god,
he detained him there on the spot, and he offered his daughter to him,
and gave to him, royal-rendered, half of all his kingly office and honor;
also for him the Lukioi cut out a precinct, marked off a domain, extra-tribal,
preeminent above all in bright exhibition,
a beautiful sector of opulent orchards and plowable fields, so he would enjoy
and possess purple-distributed germinal fruit and wheat-bearing zones.
Alkimedousa, Warden Queen, bore three children to sparkle-souled
spike-minded Bellerophon,
Isandros and Hippolokhos and Laodameia, Man-Tamer.
With Laodameia lay brain-inflamed passion-pushed pulse-pressured Zeus,
and she bore godlike Sarpedon, sky-mirror, bronze-harnessed.
However when even Bellerophon incurred hatred among all the gods,

indeed down over the hoof-pounded Aleian Table, the Plain of Wandering,
 he roamed alone,
 devouring his storm-subsuming soul, eating up his spooming spirit, shunning
 the path of men;
 but Isandros his son, Blood-Spurtled Ares, war-insatiable battle-unpallable,
 cut down, killed, while fighting against the notable glorious Solumoi,
 and his daughter, beautiful Artemis of the golden reins, exacerbated, slew—
 flicker-snap tinkle-whip!
 But Hippolokhos sired me, and I declare I come from him—gene chain,
 colored body, bright mutation;
 now, he sent me to Troy, and me above all he expressly ordered, precisely
 charged,
 to always be the war-bold best and sublime and super-eminent beyond all
 others,
 and not to scar and disgrace, smear and deface, the race of my fathers, who
 were the war-bold best by far
 in lush and majestic Ephure and in spacious Lukia.
 Truly of this line and blood I declare and proclaim to be.’

Thus he spoke, timbre-bright, and Diomedes, war-scream-supreme,
 jubilated;
 his balmed and beamy spear he stuck in the many-feeding bounteous earth,
 —planet-jab poke-down orbit-tap bosco-pop!—
 and with mild gentle words he addressed the shepherd of the people:
 ‘Now indeed you are my father’s former long-ago guest and friend;
 for splendid Oineus on a prior occasion entertained blameless—sterling and
 aerial—Bellerophon
 in his many-room halls and kept and detained him twenty days—bright

dilation;

and they furnished each other with beautiful guest-host gifts.

Oineus conferred a combat-belt beaming with crimson,—purple-red-radiant—
and Bellerophon offered a golden reversible double-dipped cup,
which I left behind and relinquished, coming here, in my splendid-erected
palace.

But I don't remember Tudeus, since I was still little
when he left me, delinquished, when in Thebai expired and perished the
platoons of the Akhaioi.

Therefore to you now, I'm a dear host-friend, if ever perhaps you come to
the heart of Argos,
and you are to me in Lukia, whenever I happen to come to the land of the
Lykians.

So let us avoid each other's spears even throughout the throng;
for there are many Trojans for me and famous allies
to kill, whomever a god should furnish and cede, to be sure, and I overtake
with my feet,
and in turn, for you, many Akhaioi, whomever you're able to slay—
spoil-snap booty-twist.

Now let us exchange our well-built armor with each other, so these men too
will know that we declare and proclaim to be hereditary guest-friends due to
our fathers.'

Thus both spoke, timbre-bright, and the two darted down from their
horsepowered cars,
and clasped each other's hands and traded pledges, oathbound credent and
cemented;
then, in turn, Indigo Zeus, son of Kronos, took out, removed, the mind of

Glaukos, brain-adeemed,
 who switched, commuted, well-built armor with the son of Tudeus,
 Diomedes,
 trading gold for copper, the equivalent of bartering a hundred head of kine
 for nine.

Now when Hektor came to the Skaian Gate, double-swinging
 sunset-coated, and the acorn-edible oak-tree,
 then the bedmates and the daughters, ambicurrent, of the Trojans, ran up to,
 beflanked, him,
 asking about their sons and brothers and cousins
 and spouses; and then he commanded and urged them to pray to the gods,
 all in sequence, but troubles and sorrows were bolted and bound to many.

Now when he arrived at the beauty-bound well-built palace of King Priam,
 —perikallic circumpulchrous gorgeous complex—
 made and arrayed with a polished and planed sun-catching ray-kindled
 colonnade, fashioned and furnished with moon-matching beam-dandled
 corridors,—
 and in it were fifty rear inner chambers of scraped and polished stone,
 erected near each other, there the sons
 of Priam the king were hushed in sleep, dream-stretching by their wives to
 whom they turned their minds;
 and for his daughters on the other side, opposite, within the open-air court,
 were twelve roof-proximate inner chambers of filed and polished stone,
 constructed near each other, and there the sons-in-law
 of Priam the king were hushed in sleep, dream-stretching by their tender
 adored wives—

there his bounteous boon-balming mother came to meet him, face to face,
leading in Laodike, of her daughters best and most robust in cast—
shape-en shifting hourglass—day-glo bangles, helical tangles, bulging
cheekbones, whizzing toptones;
and then she clasped his hand enclinging,—manual implantation—grabbed
his arm embracing, spoke a word, timbre-beaming, and addressed him:
‘Child, why, I wonder, leaving bold audacious war, have you come?
Indeed do the doom-named sons of the Akhaioi superbly rub, supremely rade
you
as they battle about the city,—circumdimiting—quirk-crackle
quark-sparkle!; and your heart, bright-charged hard-storming, prompted
your advent,
pricked you to come here to lift up your hands in sublimative love to Indigo
Zeus from the luminous crown of the citadel.
But stay where you are, until I have brought you soul-sweetening cinnabar
wine,
so you may make a libation—fiery rainbow, tonic parabola—to father Zeus
of the moon and the stars, and the other immortals
first, and then you yourself will profit and benefit, should you partake and
drink.
For a man fatigued, toil-drained, wine supremely increases and swells his
combustible strength,—power-boosted—
even as you are fatigued defending your clansmen, repelling the enemy.’

And then to her, word-exchanging, responded volted Hektor of the
beam-bouncing ray-dancing plume-jolting helmet:
‘Do not bring or offer me—brightly prohibited—honey-breasted cinnabar
wine, majestic mother queen,

lest you might enfeeble me, make me minimal-limbed and lumbered, and I
 leak and let escape my flaming might and fending prowess;
 with hands unwashed I stand abashed, stickle and blench, shot with awe, to
 make a libation—pour and flow—of burning-eyed wine to Indigo Zeus—
 cool cochineal candescent curves;
 nor is it any way permissible to pray to, beseech, the black-clouded son of
 Kronos,—kelainephic atrinubic—
 spattered and spoiled, tattered and tainted,—disk-flicker plasma-pop—with
 blood and gore—depleted particles, bright-drained dots.
 But you make your way and go to the temple of Athene Raider Maiden,
 plunder-driver,
 go with flaming immolations after you gather together the ancient women;
 and the robe which is the loveliest, most favorable and amplest to you—
 charm-charged grace-groomed—sea-supple sky-ripple—
 in your spacious chamber, and the most precious and dearest by far to you
 yourself,
 this gently set and tenderly place upon the knees of Athene of the beautiful
 hair,—rhythm-braided color-beaded—
 and vow to her to sacrifice twelve heifers—solemn-subhibiting—in her
 temple,
 unwhipped yearlings, unprofane and wonderful, if she would show
 compassion
 for the city and the spouses of the Trojans and their not-yet-speaking
 children,
 if she would hold back, keep away, the son of Tudeus from sacred Ilios,
 a wild ferocious spearman and a mighty contriver of panic, a hardy deviser
 of fear-driven flight.
 But you make your way and go to the temple of Athene Raider Maiden,

plunder-driver,
and I shall seek out and go after Paris in order to summon him,—convoke
and metaquest—
if only he would hear and heed my words. I wish the earth would yawn on
the spot for him,—
ground-gape—for brutally and mightily did the Olympian bring him up,—
noxiously concrescent—fostered and reared as a bane—exotic battered
unpropitious—dragon acid, drone disaster—
to the Trojans and majestic-hearted Priam and his children.
If I should see him, to be sure, going down to Ais the Invisible Sphere,
I might think my heart, strident-shadowed, had utterly forgotten—oi! oi!—
its wailing woe.’

Thus he spoke, and she did go to the spacious palace and summoned and
called her close-engaging handmaidens—color-coded vacuum-rangers;
and then they assembled and gathered together the ancient women—
silver-tressed cave-eyed—throughout the city.
But she herself, stepping down, descended to the fragrant interior
incense-hovering treasure-chamber,—violet-vapored basement—and
stood beside the trunks,
wherein were stored her cool recumbent brilliant-tumbling robes,—
pampoikilic omniadorned—parti-colored rich-embroidered daidal-needed
subtle-spoiled woven work of Sidonian
women, whom Alexandros himself, Man-Repeller, god-cast,
brought from Sidon, when he sailed—spars spangling—over the wide and
scopious sea,
on the journey on which he brought back noble-sired *Helen, Taken Girl*—
murex-loaded purple-packed pit stop.

Of these did Hekabe remove one, uplifted, and bore it as a gift to
 Bright-Built Athene,
 the one which was shapeliest, most beautiful and many-colored,
 bright-embroidered, lovely-woven, most abundant in brocade,
 and beamed out like a star, extreme, and lay idle, super-precious, underneath
 the other garments.
 Then she set out to go, and many ancient women—silver-locked clear-boned
 —hastened after her.

Now when they came to the temple of Athene Loom Queen on the
 luminous crown of the citadel,
 Theano of the beautiful cheekbones—kallipareic pulchrigenic—
 pump-sparkle shimmy-bomp orbit-twinkle bubble-pink—opened for them
 the double doors,
 daughter of Kisses Ivy-Crowned, wife of hippodamic equidomic
 broncobusting Antenor, Man-Facer;
 for the Trojans made her, splendid-designated, priestess of Athene of the
 whirling veil.
 Then all of the women with loud and glad voices and cheer-encharged cries
 —ritual shrieks—held up their hands, lifted in prayer to Athene of the
 violet veil;
 and then Theano of the beautiful cheekbones took and grasped the
 tumble-bubble garment,
 tenderly placed and gently set it upon the knees of Athene of the beautiful
 hair,—comet-cancan bebop-combustion—
 and making a vow she prayed to the daughter of towering Zeus of the
 colorized stars:
 ‘Majestic Athene, Javelin Queen, city-redeemer, undimmed among

goddesses, sky-candescent,
break now and shiver the compound and air-piercing spear of Diomedes, and
grant in addition that he
will trip up and fall—anteportal—facedown, pommeled and prone, in
front of the Skaian Gate,—amber-limber sunset-nestled—hinge-twinkle
shadow-swing double-clang prism-swivel!—
so that to you, subito, now, we may slice and sacrifice twelve heifers in your
temple,
unwhipped yearlings, unprofane and wonderful, if you would show
compassion
for the city and the spouses of the Trojans and their not-yet-speaking
children.’

Thus she spoke, lambent-timbred, bright-beseeching, but Pallas Athene
Missile Maiden, threw her head back, nodded up and hard denied the
imploration.
Thus were they praying to the daughter of towering Zeus of the musical
stars,
and Hektor made his way on foot to the beautiful well-built palace of
Alexandros Man-Repeller,
a striking structure he had fashioned and raised with men that then were the
best
who worked with wood, master carpenters, in loam-lumpy big-clodded—
eribolaxic—lush-soiled Troy.
They for him produced and made a chamber and a well-based wall and an
open-air court
near the digs of Priam the king and Hektor, Clutcher, in the paramount
citadel.

There Hektor, sky-precious, blue-sustained, came in, and in his hand
 he held a compound thrusting-spear, eleven forearms, swirl-grain, and before
 him shone the beam's
 quiet copper point, around which ran a golden hoop—socket-tight
 circumcurrent ring-sparkle.
 And Paris he found in his chamber engaged in his gorgeous well-hammered
 war-gear,
 his bright-streamered shield and double-snapped breastplate, and handling
 his curvy compound bright-buffed target-pumping bow—double-horn
 dell-cling twang-twink;
 and Argive Helen, carved in light, among the war-broken chambermaids, the
 blade-conquered slave women,
 was sitting still, and the vacuum-rangers, she commanded to perform
 and execute their loom-built work—periklusic circumnoble—
 lightning-resonant thunder-splendid rainbow-glorious!
 And when Hektor saw him, he reproached and blistered him, chewed him
 out with abusive shaming words—jaw-water spitfire:
 'Fissile louse, it's not good, not beautiful, to lodge this anger, to bank bile,—
 sulk and dort—in your black-dyed heart—passion-battered.
 Our people, our troops, are perishing—plangent-fading body-dwindle,
 bright-inspiraled dragon-spindle—around the city and the steep and lofty
 ring-wall
 hooked in fighting; and because of you the shout of battle and torch of war—
 the spark and bong of combat's tom-tom—
 are blazing about the city—ambi-accendent urban ignition; and you would
 even wrangle and bicker with another,
 whomever anywhere you should see abandoning, letting go of, retreating
 from, abominable battle—drifting redshift, pale postmission.

Now *up*, lest rapidly the city burn—heat-ramped—with destructive
bright-consuming battle-kindled wildfire’—crown-glow chiton-crack
peplos-sizzle torso-tumble.

Then to him in turn did speak celestial-seeming Alexandros:
‘Hektor, since you’ve duly chewed me out, but not out of bounds to a dizzy
degree,
on account of this I’ll speak to you, so compone and listen to me.
Not indeed so much because of acid rage and dealt-out indignation against
the Trojans
did I sit, thumb-twiddling, in my chamber, but I was bent to turn and crash
into the wall of pain—double-depressed woe-impelled throe-adverse.
But now my bedmate won me over, swayed, induced me, uttering soft and
pulpy words
and tried to push and ram me into war—slingback socket-shock rocket-vapor
blowpop!; and this also seems to me myself
to be more desirable, for battle-victory alternates from man to man—combat
conquest, swerving triumph, bright mutation.
Come now, stay here, let me don my sound impeccable battle-tackle;
or go ahead, and I will follow, and I deem I shall attain and overtake you.’

Thus he spoke, yet to him, not at all did Hektor of the ray-dancing
beam-bouncing helmet counter-speak—shimmy-shadow light-squiggle;
but him did Helen, shaped and shot with splendor, address, mouthing
soothing syllables:
‘O brother-in-law of me, kakomechanical bane-plotting snowconic ice-bitch,
would that on the day when my mother first bore me, shrilly ushered, into
the world,

a wicked rushing hurricane—stormblow windrattle!—had whisked me away to be carried ahead—fang-swipe claw-snatch!—swept away in dark objection—

to mountain or wave of the poluphloisbous multicopious fish-lush shell-clinking bioluminous whiptail-stingrayed tom-tom cowbelled coral-singing sea,

where the swelling blue of the pregnant wave might have swept me away in a panding and permanent, indigo mist, before these things arose, enloomed. But since these bad and baleful things, no doubt, the gods ordained, supreme-decreed—cloud-bound sky-marked time-fixed space-primed—would that, therefore, I had been a bedmate to a better man and braver, who might have known indignation, seen livid anger, red-hot-dealt-out, and many disgraces and shaming abuses of men.

But the heart of this man is not well-grounded, not now steadfast, nor will it be in the eye-back future; therefore even he, I deem, will criminally partake of and luridly share in poisonous fruits, rancid vintage.

But over here, come in and sit down on this sofa,—double-cushioned—brother-in-law, since toil-whipped trouble encases your heart, you above all, —vivid-squeezed, ambivened—twinge-striddle strain-sprangle—on account of me, a bold bald bitch, and the boobyiness and bunk and damage of Alexandros Man-Repeller, upon whom Zeus of outer space set and placed an evil and appointed doom, that even in the time to come—the eye-back future—we may be lovely-chanted, melodied by men to be, and remain in their minds and move through their dreams under vanished and mutated stars.’

And then to her, exchanging words, responded splendid Hektor of the

ray-dinging beam-donging plume-bobbing helmet:
‘Don’t induce me to sit down, Helen, moon-beautiful, a loving gesture
though it be, since you will not sway me;
for already my heart, smoking, turbatic, is flamed, supercharged, to repel and
ward off the Greeks and defend and succor
the Trojans, who fiercely yearn for and miss me while I am away.
But you, to be sure, stir up this man, and let him push and spur himself too,
so he can catch me—deprehended—up within the city.
For I shall go and aim for home to see
my household and dear wife and infant son;
for I know not if I shall still come back to them again,—hypotropic
parashielded socket-bright subverse—
or me too soon the gods will strike and crush beneath the hands of the
Akhaioi.’

After speaking thus, Hektor of the amber-glancing umber-smeared
rim-glinting motley-dented helmet took off;
and thereupon he came to, reached straightway, his cozy prosperous
well-constructed house,
but he failed to find leukolenic Andromakhe, white-armed Man-Fighter, in
the echoing redolent halls,
for *she* with her child and brisk and bustling handmaiden, lovely-mantled,—
benetotic satellite—
stood upon the tower weeping, bone-howling blood-wailing, melting into
tears.
So when Hektor did not light upon or come across his blameless unblushable
spouse within,
he went and stood upon the threshold, and spoke among the war-broken

blade-conquered female slaves:

‘Come now, chambermaids, tell me things that do not miss the mark;
which way did white-armed Andromakhe go from out of the hall?
Has she gone from here to the house of one of my sisters or beautiful-robed
brothers’ wives,
or to the temple of Athene of the glittering beads, right where other
gleaming-braided Trojan women are endeavoring to propitiate the frightening
dazzling goddess?’—bulging cheekbones, gibbous moons, turquoise eyes,
tidal pools, twilight tones—

To him in turn a nimble bustling keen-engaging housekeeper spoke a
word:

‘Hektor, since you starkly command us to mouth the truth,—scope-inescapable,
eyeball-inoblivious—
neither has she gone from here to the house of one of your sisters or
beautiful-robed brothers’ wives,
nor to the temple of Athene of the glittering beads, right where other
gleaming-braided Trojan women are endeavoring to propitiate the frightening
dazzling goddess,
but she made her way up to the great projecting fortified tower of Ilios,
because she heard
that the Trojans were rubbed hard, terse and soured, dominated, and
great was the power and force encroaching—spiky subsuming punchy
enlooming—of the Akhaioi.
Indeed having come from her chamber, onpressing she’s gone to the
ring-wall,
like a madwoman, and together with her the suckling nurse is bringing the child.’

So spoke the housemaid, duster-clad, and Hektor rushed from the
tight-framed home
the same way back, steps retracing—solarized track—along the well-built
streamlined streets.
When he arrived at the double-winged gate after passing through,
bright-pervading, the majestic city,
the sun-rinsed Skaian Gate, from where he intended to go out onto the
sandal-pounded plain,
there his bounteous spouse, multi-endowed, tower-descended, came running
to meet him face to face,
Andromakhe, Man-Fighter, daughter of great-hearted Eetion,
dauntless Eetion, who dwelled below wooded Plakos, Flat-Top,
in Subplakian Thebe, governing the Kilikian people;
indeed his daughter was married and bound to bronze-accoutered Hektor.
She then came to meet him, and together with her the brisk and bustling
handmaid went,
holding the child, tender-hearted, in her bosom, a mere speechless infant,
the beloved son of Hektor, Clutcher, charming like a lucky star,
whom Hektor called Skamandrios, but other men
Astuanax, City Chief, for only Hektor was attempting to guard, redeem,
Ilios.
Truly did he smile as he gazed upon the child in silence.
Andromakhe stood beside him shedding a tear,
and then, enclinging, clasped his hand, and embracing, grabbed his arm,
spoke a word, timbre-beaming, and addressed him:
‘O wonderful man, your kindled might will dwindle you, your gritty attitude
will retrograde you, and neither do you pity, show compassion for,
your little speechless infant nor doom-dealt me, who soon will be your

widow,
 black-enveiled, plight-caught; for soon the Akhaioi will kill and cut you
 down
 as they all attack, impete you. It were better for me,
 deprived of you, swerving, unquivered, to enter the earth—plunging through
 tectonic plates—for no more will there be
 any consolation, no soft relief to warm me, when you to be sure have met
 your fate,—lot-enlocked, doom-encountering, lost in the ineluctable—
 but only the chain of pain will remain. And neither do I have a father nor a
 queenly mother.

For indeed my father, burnished Akhilleus cut off, killed,
 and he utterly ravaged, blotted out, the well-dwelled city of Kilikians,—
 smoking shambles, buzzard trembles, twirless tops, battered thimbles—
 high-gated Thebe; and he cut down and killed Eetion,
 but did not despoil him, strip off his armor, for his storming mind absorbed
 and felt the holy shock of *that* at least,
 but he burned him up, decandescent, in his war apparel, marvel-made,
 wonder-built,
 and he poured and mounded up a tomb upon him; and the mountain maidens
 planted elms around him,—arch-branched saw-leafed—circumdrilled
 germ-crowned—daughters of Zeus of the dragon-flashing stormcape.

And my seven brothers were in our redolent echoing halls,
 all who in one day, invading, went into Ais the Invisible Sphere—molten
 tunnels, burrows swooning, frozen funnels, axis tuning, crystal rainbows,
 cool volcanoes;
 for shimmering Akhilleus, turbo-tarsaled, mowed them down, slew them all,
 while in charge of, precious-tending, their rolling-gaited mobile-huddled
 cattle—shamble-shanked shuffle-hoofed—and white shining ruminating

neckbelled knockhorn sheep.
But my mother, who governed and reigned as queen under woody Plakos,
Flat-Top,
when he brought her here together with the other screaming gain and
arrogated baubles,
he indeed unbound, released, her, taking, absuming, countless carmine coin
redeeming,
but in her father's echoing redolent halls iokheairous dart-delighting
arrow-rainer Artemis missile-hit her—cloud-drilled tight-toned
spark-veiled moonglow.
Hektor, you, however, to me are my father and queenly mother
and brother, and you are my lifesaver spouse, blossom and bedmate;
but come now, show compassion and stay here upon the tower,
lest you make your child an orphan and wife a widow.
And post your troops by the wild fig-tree, where most of all
the city is scalable and circuit-wall stormable.
For three times at this spot the war-bold best came and endeavored to
penetrate,
flanking the two Aiantians, the Greater and Less, and super-famous
Idomeneus,
and flanking the sons of Atreus and the valorous succoring son of Tudeus;
either, perhaps, someone informed them, well-skilled in oracles,—
sun-shimmer moon-shimmy, goddess-vapor god-clangor—
or it may be their own throbbing spirit stirs them up and spurs them on,
surging, urgent.'

Now to her in turn spoke stupendous Hektor of the sun-battered
moon-buffered sky-beaded helmet:

‘Indeed to me too all these things are objects of concern, woman; but above
 all, terribly, too too much,
 I’d be ashamed to face the Trojans, both the men and the trailing-robed women
 —helkesipeplous—rainbow tulle-tumble, crinoline crush-bubble—
 if like a coward, vile and base, I flee afar from war,—skulk and shunt—
 shirk the hack and gouge of combat, wander from its spark and blow;
 nor does my red-drumming turbulent heart command me to flee, for,
 well-trained, I learned to be brave and noble,
 always able, valorous, and to fight among the foremost Trojans, engage in
 the frontline,
 seeking, attempting, to gain and uplift—brilliant-elevated—my father’s
 paramount mighty glory and my own.
 Yet I know this well in my heart and soul:
 there will be a day when mighty Ilios will be blotted out, destroyed, and
 perish,
 and Priam and the people of Priam of the lovely ashen—robust-elastic—
 spear.
 But not so much to me is the pain and grief of the Trojans an object of care,
 in the eye-back future,
 nor that of Hekabe, nor of King Priam,
 nor of my brothers, who, many and brave,
 will fall down, slowly sink in mounds of dust—dark-enswirling hoof-kicked
 wheel-grooved hard-unfurling—beneath the clashing inflammable enemy,
 as much as the pain and sorrow of you, when some bronze-appareled
 Akhaian
 will take and lead you weeping, away, and wild-wrenching, rob you of your
 state of freedom.
 And stuck in Argos, Flashtown, you’d weave the web, ply the loom,—

beam-loop warp-
work—at the beck and wave of another woman,
and you'd be compelled to bear water from Messeis, Middle Spring, or
Hupereie, Upper Spring,
much reluctant, and stark necessity—torque-throttle trope-rattle—will be
laid upon you.

And then someone may say, beholding you cascading tears—turbulent chutes
in blurred defusion, plangent seismic prism-spasm:

‘This is the wife of Hektor, who was in fighting and weapon collision—
bolt-tilt belt-jolt—the war-bold best
of the horse-busting Trojans, when tandem nations contended and clashed
around Ilios’.

So will someone say then, and you will have in turn new pain, fresh grief,
in need of, craving, such a man to ward off and repel a state of bondage.
But may the scattered soil mounded, heaped-up earth, cover, enseat me,
when I am dead,—chthonic deceleration—
before, to be sure, I hear of your loud impiercing crying and screaming in
any degree, and you being forcibly dragged away’—powered scratching
violent traction.

Thus speaking, radiant Hektor reached out to his child;
but the child leaned back against the bosom of the euzonic suckling nurse,
beautiful-belted firm-sashed,
canted back crying, sloped back shrieking, startled and stunned at the sight
of his own dear father,
frightened and shocked by the bronze and horsehair-shaggy crest, the long
and flowing, vibrant-billowing plume-stream,—air-rubbed blow-threshed
—wind-rind whiffle-husk—

as he peeked and marked it nodding dreadfully, bobbing terribly, from the helmet-tiptop.

And his loving father and queenly mother laughed and smiled.

Immediately radiant Hektor took the helm from his head,
and set it down, bright-deponed, all-shining—pamphanoic omnilucent—
upon the ground;

but when he kissed his dear son, and dandled and bounced him in his arms,
he spoke in prayer to Indigo Zeus and the other gods:

‘Zeus and you other gods, grant indeed this child, my son, to become,
turn out, as well as *I*, distinguished candescent, among the Trojans,
thus superb and surpassing in might—splendor-crammed, seemly sublime—
and guide him to govern Ilios with muscular dint;

and sometime in the future someone might say, ‘He indeed is better, braver,
than his father,’

when from war he comes back; and may he bring back blood-boltered booty,
spoliated metal,—wound-welled-rend-rilled-gore-hardened plunder—
having slain the battle-bent headflaming enemy, and may his mother rejoice
in her heart.’

Thus speaking, he placed in the arms of his precious spouse
his child, and she received him in her warm and fragrant bosom
as she laughed and smiled through tears; he felt compassion as he fixed his
eyes upon her,

and light-caressing, stroked her hair, soft, demulcent, with his hand, and
spoke a word and addressed her:

‘Angel, do not at all, for my sake, rack and crick—excessively flict—your
pulsing heart;

for no man beyond the things ordained will send me forth, cast ahead in dark

permission, to Ais the Invisible Sphere;
and doom I deem no man has fled, escaped his span of space or spin of time
evaded,
not base poltroon or valorous man, when once he has been born.
But go to the house and handle, betackle, your tasks, attend and achieve your
own chores,
the vertical loom and flax-wound staff, and command your ambi-nimble
handmaids
to ply their work, shuttle-engage, loop the loombeam; war and the affairs of
war will be be an object of care to men,
all men, and especially me, who were born and reared in Ilios.’

So spoke keenly radiant Hektor, and he took up and grabbed his helmet,
horsetail-decked, plume-adorned; and his precious bedmate, supple-stepping,
aimed for home,
turning round repeatedly, bright-revolving, raining down abounding
tears, crystal chains of blossom-drops in undulous defusion, tinkling in
compassion and compunction.
And straightway then she came to, reached, her cozy prosperous well-built
palace
of man-killing Hektor, Clutcher, and found within, encountering, many
nimble handmaidens, pre-engaged vacuum-rangers, and among them all she
stirred up rounds of wails and howls, inciting lamentation.
They wept for Hektor, still alive, plangent-moaning in his proprious palace;
for they thought that he would not return from war,
would not come back again in bright subversion, failing to dodge and escape
the flammable might and hands of the Akhaioi.

Nor did Paris tarry, linger, in his lofty chamber,
 but not whiffling, disinclined, when he had donned his stunning armor,
 flash-hammered multi-glittered copper-glorious,
 then he scurried through the city, trusting in his spurting feet.
 Even as when a stalled horse, having champed on barley at a feeding-box,
 snaps asunder, severing, his binding halter, scampers stamping, gallops
 glamorous, across the hoof-imprinted plain,—earth-rumble moon-rattle—
 accustomed to bathe in the tranquil twirls and buoyant purls of a
 beautiful-flowing drinking river,
 auto-glorious, over-groomed; high he holds his head, and his streaming mane
 tender-tumbling, limber-rippling around his shoulders, and trusting in his
 splendor,
 hurlingly his knees convey him to the inveterate haunts and scattered
 pastures of mares;
 thus the son of Priam, Paris, dainty-stepping, descended from the citadel, the
 top of Pergamos,
 all-engleaming,—carnival-colored—in his hammered armor like Elektor,
 Sun-Ray, glowing swirling—amber-beaming orbital-popping—quark-congo
 hula-bongo!—
 laughing loudly, cachinnating, loose unlashed, and his rapid feet propelled
 him; then straightway
 he reached and overtook his brother, sky-mirror, refulgent Hektor, on the brink
 of turning back from the place where he fondly conversed with his wife.
 Celestial-seeming Alexandros broke the ice and addressed him first:
 ‘Honorable brother, indeed I hold you up, detain you quite, thwart your dash to
 combat, due to my primping and dawdling, by not coming promptly, aptly,
 as you ordered.’

And him addressed, word-exchanging, Hektor of the astronitent
menemicant star-sparked moon-hued colorfast helmet:
‘Strange one, there is no man indeed upright and probic, fate-harmonic,
who could disesteem your battle-work, since you do repel and succor;
but you dally deliberately, let things go, and disengaged, deny your will to
act; and this dearth my heart
in pain begrieves and hurts in my troubled and buffeted breast, when I hear
regarding you abusive things, base and shaming,
from the Trojans, who are toil-torn trench-spent spear-drilled blood-drained
—space-swell time-swoon, star-mill moon-bone—on account of you.
Now let’s go, and these things in the eye-back future we shall put together,
tighten up, make good, reconcile, if ever Zeus of the tonic orbits
should grant us to set up in a feast of celebration, a mixing-bowl of freedom
in our lavender-redolent halls,
for the gods supernal and celestial goddesses, aiegenetic, time-detached,
after we drive, power-thrust, from out of Troy, the shield-tapped-spear-blocked-
shin-guarded Akhaioi.’

NOTE

In ILIAD VI we see a string of small-scale skirmishes, the encounter between Diomedes and Glaukos, the return of Hektor to Troy, and the culminating meeting of Hektor and Andromakhe, a profoundly moving scene due to the forboding sense of permanent separation between husband and wife.

In Ernesto Cardinal's epic poem, *Cosmic Canticle* (tr. by John Lyons), the poet asks the question, 'Do we know the universe's metabolism?' If it is possible to FEEL the metabolism of the universe, I say letting the poetry of Homer flow through one's spirit may provide the opportunity, for the music of the Iliad is quantic like the twilight flashes of fireflies, and its rhythms push and pull and twist throughout its beautiful adamantine structure like the colored planets in their invisible orbits.

Taking a look at one of Ando Hiroshige's ukiyoe xylographs (floating world woodblock prints) from *One Hundred Views of Edo*, 'View from the Massaki Shrine of the Uchigawa Sekiya-no sato Village and the Suijin-no mori Shrine', one can also feel a potent and expansive rhythm, a supreme invisible flow. A kind of fragile sadness subsumes the scene, punctuated by the male and female twin peaks of Tsukubayama, with the crepuscular light washing over the blue mountain and the green grove girded by the disintegrating red paste-like horizon. Yet, unlike Andromakhe and Hektor, we know the eastern and western peaks will be together forever.