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Abstract	<p>In Book 7 two key events take place: the encounter between Hektor and Aias, and the gathering of the dead. Although Book 7 clearly is not as well-engineered, moving and pivotal as Book 6, the bright velocities of the rhythm and the supple tones of the melody, which seem to alternately squeeze and let go of the language which robustly and chromatically fills out the beadlike arrays of its hexametric structure, tell us it's Homer. The Iliad generates more wonder each time one comes into contact with the magic of its poetry, for one becomes lost among the perpetually evolving and tangible beauties of its musical whirlpools and oscillating rhythms, its chiseled curves and balletic twirls. Adventuring through the 'clang tinkle boomhammer' of James Joyce's tour de force, Ulysses, one comes across the phrase, 'a chemistry of stars'. One may perceive an 'amino charm' and 'harmonic structure' in Richard Powers' musical novel, The Gold Bug Variations, where DNA, a Bach fugue and love intervolve. In one of Emily Dickinson's poems, we hear and see the dynamic and precious lines, 'The prism never held the hues, it only heard them play'. What do all of the above quotes have in common? All could, in fact, be applied to the poetry of Homer, for Homer's universe is both mysteriously remote, yet intensely intimate, bright and strident, yet tender and crepuscular, melodic and fluid, yet sudden and syncopated. One might receive an impression or notice an effect of this type in a xylograph of Ando Hiroshige from his series, Meishi Edo Hyakkei (A Hundred Famous Views of Edo). In 'Asakusagawa Shubi-no matsu Ommayagashi', we see the distant dots of stars and a proximate boat with closed green cane blinds. Between the seeming calm of river and sky twists a dragon-shaped</p>

	pine tree, one unbroken (unlike previous ones) by hurricanes. The crisp cusp of the Moon is barely visible. Did a similar slice of outer space arc over the plain of Troy more than three thousand years ago, that evening when Ajax was given the sword on which he would ultimately fall?
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The Iliad of Homer

Book VII

The Soliproelium, Single Battle, of Hektor and Aias the Greater

and the Subsuming, Taking-up, of Dead Bodies

translated by J. M. Wilcox

So spoke radiant Hektor, Clutcher, and bursting out in a bolt and a dash
he shot in a rush and a dart, from out of the double gates,—hinge-glitter
whiz-swivel swing-back—

and together with him Alexandros Man-Repeller, his brother, co-uterine,
went; and in their storming throbbing hearts

both were burning to battle and fight—helmet-clash shield-bang spear-thrust
buckler-slash sword-clang!

As a god gives to longing sailors, seamen yearning,
a favorable wind, kind and sequential, when they have weakened, toil-
tapped, sea-driving,

sea-striking, beating the unblocked sparkling blue with smooth-planed well-
polished silver-fir oars, hard-impelling, and with troubled labor,
moil-drained, their limbs are loosened underneath, unbound in buckling
dissolution, thus at once the two appeared to the longing Trojans, light
emitting.

Then, of the two, Alexandros nailed, took down, the son of King Areithoos,
 Combat-Quick,

Menesthios, Bullet-Abider, who dwells in Arne, Lambtown, whom the
 mace-man

Areithoos and boopidic ox-eyed Phulomedousa, Tribe-Warden, bore;
 and Hektor, Clutcher, missile-struck Eioneus with his pointed compound
 spear

in the neck beneath the well-wrought posh-coppered dual-projecting helmet-
 brim—glamour-circumdated—and disengaged his limbs, bones unbound.

But Glaukos, Silver Eyes, son of Hippolokhos, Horse-Ambusher, leader of
 the Lukioi, the Glowing Wolf Men,

cast his quercal spear at Iphinoos, Mighty Mind, in the course of truculent
 spiky combat,

son of Dexios, Lucky, bounding upon his breakneck 2-mare car,
 and struck him in the shoulder, humeral-hurt, and he dropped to the ground,
 humal-hit, and his brittle loosened limbs unlinked, bright-collapsed.

But when indeed the glaukopidous goddess Athene of the sea-green sky-blue
 eyes

marked and noted the Trojans destroying the Argeioi, the Gleamers, in the
 quadrant of truculent spiky combat,

she descended, stepped down, from the pinnacles of Olumpos and darted,
 swooping like a comet,

to the zone of sacred mighty Ilios; and stirred up, Apollo Decimator arose to
 meet her face to face,

after looking down from Pergamos, the nitidous citadel, and for the Trojans,
 bright-proponed, desired and wished for victory in war.

Each other the two did meet, to be sure, for combat-encounter control, by
the acorn-edible oak.

King Apollo Wrecking Ball, the son of Cobalt-Coated Zeus, addressed her
first, broke the ice:

‘Why in the world, daughter of glorious Indigo Zeus, eager indeed and
burning in turn, again

did you come from Olumpos, and why has your heart, sublime and storming,
wound you up and sent you down?

Can it be indeed to render power-shifting battle-victory—heteralkic
alterarcic—lava lamp balloon-tumble, cloud chamber rocket-glow—to the
Danaoi,—scale-slant dint-shunt teeter-totter dynocline—

since not at all do you pity, show compassion for, the Trojans as they perish,
dark-demolished.

But if you would listen to me at all, swayed and induced, this would be
better by far, to your advantage;

now let us stop their fighting, the strife and torch of trenchant conflict,—
fissile, enfurnaced—

for today; later again they can fight, contend, until the goal of Ilios,
permanent and fixed,

they gain, for so it is dear to you female immortals,—death-defying, time-
released—

preciously bending your throbbing hearts to starkly bleed and scatter-blast,
utterly gut the town.’

And to him in turn, word-exchanging, the aequor-oculous goddess spoke,
Athene of the blue-green sea-flash eyes:

‘Let it be so, far-performer; for these things having cogitated, also I in
person

came from Olumpos to infiltrate the middle of the Trojans and the Akhaioi.
Tell me, how do you plan, intend, to stop, suspend, the battle of troopers?’

And to her in turn King Apollo Decimator spoke, son of Zeus of the sparkling poles:

‘Let us stir up, strike, the spiked and robust, combustible might of mustang-taming Hektor,
so perhaps one of the Danaoi he will dare, challenge and provoke by himself to meet him alone, face to face, counter-force, single-handed,—oppotent—
in cruel and grisly, glutinous conflict—skull-splitting fire-flowing blood-swelling brain-spilling;
and slit with indignation, the stunned and astonished Akhaioi of the copper shin-guards—spear-barring shield-bumping—
might stir up, incite, someone to fight, contend, alone against Hektor, sky-reflector.’

Thus he spoke, and the goddess did not decline to comply, Athene of the blue-green iris—moon-absorbing star-shattered;
and Helenos, the beloved son of Priam the king, perceived, composed, in his buffeted mind
their scheme, their plan, which gladdened, delighted, the firebound deliberating gods;
and going up to Hektor, Clutcher, he approached and stood beside and spoke to him:
‘Hektor, son of Priam, ponder-peer—wisdom-flamed, cerebation-balanced—of Star-Enclustered Zeus,
would you now in any degree comply with me? After all, I am your brother.
Make the other Trojans and all the Akhaioi sit down,

and you yourself provoke and challenge the Akhaioi, whoever of them is the war-bold best,
to meet you alone face to face, counter-power, single-handed,—oppotent—
in grim and sticky war—skull-cleaving flame-flowing red-rilling bone-glowing.
For not yet are you tapped to die and imbue your doom,—cold unclew—
to interlock your destiny—fallen dark and designated;
for thus I heard the voice and sound of the everbeing gods’—space-dispensed time-immune.

Thus he spoke, and Hektor in turn, delighted greatly, bright-enthrilled, when he heard these mouthmade words,
and going to the center of the body of the warriors, he restrained the ranks, the troops, held back, enbarring the battalions of the Trojans, taking, 2-hand-gripping, the middle of his oaken pike-shaft; and all of them sat down,—spear-stilled beam-steered—
and Agamemnon Adamant made the dart-deflecting shield-knocking shinguarded Akhaioi sit down.
Then golden-speared Athene, violet-veiled, and silver-bowed Apollo, crocus-caped,
set themselves upon a tree like living-creature-grasping vultures,
perching birds upon a lofty luminous-looming acorn-edible oak of skypop Zeus of the snakehead goatshield,—spingle-spangle tinkle-tankle, arc-horned barking ibex!—
swad-gladdened, chevron-cheered, delighted by the warriors. The rowed ranks and filed fighters sat down close together, dense and tight,
jagged and crizzled and bristling with shields and helmets and spears—sea-choppy light-spotty silhouette.

Even as a craggy flange of Zephuros, Dark Wind, gloom-coated,—ripple-
spiked bright-absorbing, blow-crinkle suck-ruckle—pours upon the crispy
spacious ocean surface,

stirred up, fresh-arisen, and the cumbent deep below the surface blackens,
buckles, blots beneath it,

suchly sat the ordered ranks of the Akhaioi and Trojans in proleptic
oscillation

on the sandal-pounded plain; and Hektor spoke between both flanking
forces:

‘Hear me, Trojans and shin-guarded Akhaioi,—missile-bending shield-
bopping—

while I speak what the vibrating heart in my breast impels and commands
me.

The high-bleachered son of Kronos—abyss-banished—sky-scale balance-
dangle—failed to fulfill our oaths,—aborted action-blockers—

but calculating wicked things he decrees, ordains a time, inbounds, outmarks
a space, for double forces, both parties,

until you either take and grapple and crush well-towered staunch-walled
Troy,

or you yourselves are tamed and drubbed and vanquished by your sea-
crossing battle-cruisers—pontoporous ultramarine.

Take your best shot, for with you are the war-bold best, the noblest chiefs of
the whole of the corps of the Akhaioi;

now of these, whosever storming heart exhorts, commands, to fight against
me,

let him come here from out of the whole of your host, to be foremost, to
fight against Hektor, sky-bender.

Thus do I speak, and may Zeus of the iron stars, on our behalf, be a witness:

if he should take me out with tight-edged long-pointed bronze,—stretch-
metal twist-flicker—
after seizing, stripping off, my hammered armor,—body-cargo—let him bear
the spoils to the hollow ships,—ax-thonk leaf-tinkle shadow-sparkle sky-
speckle—
but my body, give back to my home, so me by final flame, quick cremation,
doom-ordained,
the Trojans and the Trojan spouses may esteem by sky injunction as I lie
upon the pyre, appareled in my designated share of fire.
But should I get the upper hand and take him out, and Apollo Body-Blaster
bestow the object of my imploration, render and respond,
after wrenching, stripping off, his welded weapons,—body-cargo—I shall
bear the gear to sacred mighty Ilios,
and I shall bring it to and hang it upon the temple of Apollo of the rocket-
launcher,
but his body I shall give back, deliver the cadaver to the beautiful-oar-
banked ships,—thwart-gorgeous deck-dazzle—
so him the hair-streaming Akhaioi may solemnly bury,
and a cairn they can for him heap up—dirt-hurl stone-click mound-mold—at
the flat and wide, unwrinkled Sea of Helle—gold-flash sea-swing sky-reel
fish-splash.
And someone in another time might say, some late-born—opsigonic—man
of future generations,
sailing in his thole-thick ship of many locking rowing-benches—brilliant
bars, oars galore!—upon the wine-toned damson-eyed wide dumb deep:
‘This is the tomb of a man who long ago died, was taken down,
whom in a former time the war-bold best in action killed, cut down,
gleaming Hektor.’

So will someday someone say, and this fame, my celebrated glory, will never perish.’

Thus he spoke, timbre-bright, and then they all became becalmed, cast in quiet;

they were shot with shame to decline, and to boot, fear-slit flight-bent, too abashed and spine-infrosted to accept and undertake the rocky task;

and then indeed finally Menelaos Brigade-Abider, sparked and assurgent, stood up and spoke among them,

rebuking them with stark abuse, impugning them with dark objections, and deeply did he groan and sigh supremely in his storming heart—bone-wail blood-moan:

‘O my stars! Idle boasters!—Hollow plumers!—Akhaian squaws! Men no longer!

Truly this will be a mutilating outrage, a crippling disgrace to be sure,—shame-garble humble-mangle—horror of horrors, terror of terrors,

if no man of the Danaoi now does not go up against,—metal-encounter—Hektor, confront him face to face.

Otherwise, may all of you become, turn into, earth and water, each man sitting idle in his spot unpepped,—inertia-locked—lacking heart, inglorious effete uncelebrated;

against him I myself shall armor up, weapon out, but from above the ends of victory dangle—tangible pending ultra-terminals—among the deathless sky-people.’

Thus he spoke, spark-toned, and donned his stunning hammered armor, slipped into his battle-tackle.

Then for you, Menelaos, the end of life would have come to light, appeared

at the hands—bellicose palms—of Hektor, for he by far was better and
braver,—ditch-deft trench-quick—
if the kings of the Akhaioi, jumping up,—motion-lucent—had not grabbed
you;
and Atreus' son himself, wide-controlling Stabilizer, Agamemnon,
grasped you by the right hand and brightly spoke a word and called your
name:

‘You’re insane, Menelaos, sky-suckled, and this frenzy,
unbeseeing mindlessness, not at all behooves you; although troubled, spare
your sorrow, grief abstain, keep back, hold up,
and be not willing, don’t be bent, out of contention to combat, duke it out,
with a man better than you,
Hektor, son of Priam, whom others too abominate though apprehend—
razored by revulsion.

Even Akhilleus Man of Pain, freezes up—frost-fused—to oppose this man
in man-ennobling—glory-gaining fame-boosting—battle,
blood-shudders,—teeth-chatters—turns to ice to encounter,—shattered
wires, crystal fires—who is better by far, more able than you.

But you now go and sit down among the companied band of your clanmates,
and against this man another prime fighter, a principal, the Akhaioi will pit.

Although he is fearless, unslakeable of silver clamor,—blood-reek bone-
wrack—unquenchable of golden glimmer,

I deem that he will gladly bend his knee for welcome rest if he should
escape

from out of the icky implacable pit of flaming destructive battle and strange
and sundering, jangling war.’

Speaking thus, the warrior won over the heart of his brother,

and prevailing indirectly, fate-accorded things he did procure, and Menelaos was induced. Then

his glad attendants, grasping, took his lucent-fashioned armor from his shoulders,

and Nestor stood up and spoke among the Argeioi, the Luminous People:

‘O my stars! Truly grief supreme and tremendous sadness has come to the land of Akhaiis.

Indeed the ancient horse-driver Peleus of the fire-dagger ferociously would wail and howl,—oimoi!—

a solid good adviser,—competent boulephore—and orator of the Murmidons, the Ant People,

who on a former occasion, greatly delighted in questioning me in his house, asking about the birth and blood-lines, families of all the Argeioi, the Brilliant People.

If he heard now all these men were crouching, frightened, quailing under Hektor, Clutcher,—power-bowed brawn-blended—

many times to the deathless ones, solemnly, would he raise, lift up, his hands,

imploping the immortals that his stormy soul be ripped from his limbs and plunge into the subterranean habitation—well-constructed wall-constricted—of Ais the Invisible.

Father Zeus and Zinc-Gowned Athene and Ray-Toned Apollo Abolisher, would that

I were in my prime, a teen again, when near quick-flowing Keladon—sounding rushing waters, caning currents, pounded pools—gush-bubble rock-clamor—fought

the gathered Pulioi, the Gate-People, and the Arkadians, javelin-crazy, beside the bounding walls of Pheia, clanging swords and banging shields on

both sides of the supple streams of Iardanos.
And among them Ereuthalion, Red Commando, stood foremost as champion,
a godlike man, sky-equal,
bearing on his shoulders, bright-sustaining, the well-built armor of King
Areithoos, Battle-Runner,
brilliant Areithoos, Combat-Spanner, whom men
and beautiful-sashed—kallizonic pulchricinct—women called the mace-
man, club-swinger,
for not with compound bow did he fight or longbeam spear,
but with an iron mace he'd shatter war-formations, break, dislocate battle-
arrays, batter brigades, baton platoons.
Him Lukoergos slew with a trick,—bobbing fish-bait—not at all by might,
to be sure,
in a narrow pass, on a puckered track—slit-eyed short-sighed—where his
iron mace did not from him ward off destruction,
or provide sufficient defense; for before he was able to take a swing, bright-
presuming, Lukoergos made the first move in anticipation,—sharp
prolepsis—overtook
and pierced him through the middle, gut-spitted, with his spear of many
grains, and pressed and pinned he fell to the ground, sky-eyed, leaning on
the earth's surface;
and the hammered armor Lukoergos stripped off, with which copper-
clanking Ares had supplied him.
This mace-gear then he wore himself, spooled in spoils, among the toil of
war, the slog of conflict—blade-shadows shield-echoes sun-nails moon-
holes;
but when Lukoergos became old—canebound silvercrowned—in his many-
room halls,

he gave the gear to Ereuthalion, Red Commando, his dear batman, to wear.
And he, appareled in splendor, in glamorous armor clad, called out and
challenged all the chiefs, the war-bold best;

but they, dread-hooked, shuddered and shook, shot with fear, and not did
anyone take up the dare.

My storm-invading heart, having endured many things,—polutlemous
multipermanent much-patient pain-magnet—prompted me to fight and
battle

with him through my hardy boldness, and by birth I was last, youngest of
all.

So I fought him tooth and nail, and Athene, violet-veiled, gave me glory,
triumph turning.

He indeed was the tallest and toughest warrior I ever killed,
for he lay stretched out, here and there, ground-sprawling, limb-tangled—
juxtapendent—everywhere—prolix-spoked brilliant sprangle, painted
pinwheel, buoyant springle.

Would that I were in my prime, as vigorous, and my vim as firm, my body-
strength well-grounded;
thereupon subito would Hektor of the moonhopping sunscotching helmet
encounter a fight.

But you who are the war-bold best, the noblest chiefs of the whole of the
corps of the Akhaioi,
not being vanminded, you do not wish and burn to encounter, go against,
Hektor, Clutcher, face to face.’

Thus the old man chewed them out, and consequently nine in all stood up.
First to arise, ahead of the rest, was man-controller Agamemnon,
and after him rose the son of Tudeus Dragon-Roarers, mighty Diomedes,

and after them the Aiantians, the Greater and Less, clad in prowess, robust
and kinetic, rushed and repelling, charged with, veiled in, fierce and
bounding energy,

and after them Idomeneus Timber-Tough, and the battle companion of
Idomeneus,

Meriones, daredevil, equal to Enualios, Red-Eyed War, man-slayer,

and after them Eurupulos Swing-Wide, the splendid son of Euaimon,

and Thoas son of Andraimon, and skybright Odusseus stood up;

all these men to be sure were willing to battle and fight with skybright
Hektor.

Then in turn among them spoke the Gerenian horseman Nestor:

‘Now cast a coded lot, one by one, in quick succession,—helmet-joggle
pebble-rattle spear-swizzle shield-clinkle—and whosever pops out, fate-
assigned, will be picked;

for he indeed will benefit and gratify the shin-guarded Akhaioi,—dart-
deflecting shield-knocking—

and he himself to boot will gratify and benefit his own cyclonic soul, if he
should escape, succeed in fleeing,

from war’s blowing wildfire, combat’s crystal drumming tears, and battle’s
bleak dissection.’

Thus he spoke, timbre-bright, and each man marked his colored token,

and one by one they tossed them in the barking helmet-liner of Agamemnon
son of Atreus;

the soldiers prayed and held up their hands to the gods and the goddesses.

And thus would someone utter, looking into stark and prolix outer space:

‘Father Zeus, please let Aias land the lot—sky-shaken fire-shogged—or
Tudeus’ son

or the king himself of gold-abounding Mukene’—polukhrusic multiauric
sparkle-crammed.

Thus they spoke, tone-tight, and the Gerenian horseman Nestor jogged
the helmet,—groove-clickle paint-clackle, swinging gimbals, ganging
gumballs!—

and the coded lot for which they wished and hoped leaped out of the canine
helmet,

that of Aias; and the sacred herald conveying the token everywhere
throughout the throng

showed it, bright-displayed, from left to right to all the war-bold best of the
Akhaioi,

but failing to spot the token, each of the chiefs denied it was his.

Yet when indeed, bearing the token, he zigged and zagged throughout the
throng and came to the one

who, having scratched and marked the chosen token, had tossed it in the
canine helmet, shining Aias,

he held out his hand, bright-sustained, and the herald drew near, facing Aias,
and put the piece in his palm,

and Aias eyed and recognized the knocked lot, and robust-exulting, rejoiced
in his heart, zest-combusting.

He cast with a fling the affair by his foot upon the ground,—humijected—
and spoke in radiant tones:

‘O dear friends, it is indeed my lot, and joy-injected, I rejoice

in my racing heart,—red-dashing white-rushing—for I deem that I shall
conquer sky-bright Hektor.

Let’s do it; while I don my well-built—lucent-welded—battle-tackle,
you meanwhile beseech and pray to Zeus the king, son of Kronos,

with silence upon you, so the Trojans, at least, may not find out what's happening,
or be unsilent if you wish, even in the open,—washed in light—echo your vows to the sky,—burning ocher, crystal cherry—since we fear no one at all.

For no one by force will chase me away, without employing effort at least, while I resist,
or drive me back with skill or craft, since not so unknowing of things, I deem, was I born, no doubt, and brought up in Salamis.'

Thus he spoke, resplendent-toned, and they prayed, beseeching Zeus the king, son of Kronos,
and thus would someone utter, looking into stark and prolix outer space:
'Father Zeus, lord of Ide, Timber Mountain, most glorious, most immense, render victory, grant success to Aias, and let him gain and hoist the splendid objects of his imploration;
but even if you also love Hektor, Clutcher, and are troubled over him, attach and bestow upon both, equivalent might and similar glory.'

Thus they spoke, lucent-timbred, and Aias, helming out, arrayed himself with flashing sword and gleaming shield of bronze;
but when indeed he circumclad his bone-frame in brilliant-built battle-gear,—body-surface bright-appareled—
then he rushed out like Ares comes out, colossal, celerous, traced in scarlet, who goes to war in quest of men—plangent-silver-plunging vengent-gold-invading—whom son of Kronos Circle-Maker
slams together to fight in the fire and passion of heart-eating strife—soul-swallow storm-absorb—steel-tap bone-tip bruise-glow blood-pit moon-

blot star-slit space-blow.

In such a way colossal astonishing Aias arose ensparked, stirred up
outdashed, combat-blocker, guardrail of the Akhaioi,
grinning with a grim-fierce face, tooothing out a savage visage; and with feet
below he made his way with long strides, spaced steps, brandishing his
shadow-stretching compound spear—blow-spray blossom-quiver.

And the Argeioi, the Luminous People, rejoiced in lustrous exultation as
they beheld him,

and a terrible trembling came under and a horrible shuddering stole over
each man's limbs in sonic subevasion,—bone-jolt shockshake!—

and Hektor's own heart, kinetic hurrricanic, in jacked-up palpitation knocked
against his breast—throbbing rubies, purling peptides, swirl-suckers
jawbreakers!

But still he could not underflee the enemy or, fear-driven fight-shunning
panic-bent, shrink back

and sink into the wound-up throng of troops, tumult-tinted, since, being war-
orexic,

he had issued a challenge, called out for some battle fun in thrilling
provocation.

And Aias Man of Sighs came close, bearing his shield, wicker-packed tower-
like,—star-cymbalic moon-riddled semi-cylinder—

copper-plated, bulked with seven bullhides, which Tukhios had built and
bent, toil-wrought,—anvil-veil hammer-arcs swing-bang blow-sparks—

far the best of leather-cutters, dwelling, enhomed, in Hule, Woodtown,
who had made for him his wicker-loaded shield, aiolous tint-mutating ray-
glancing, overstretched with seven hides

of thick-thewed full-fed bulls, and over which he hammered out a copper
sheet, making layer eight.

Bearing this before his breast, Telamonian Aias
stood quite near Hektor, Clutcher, and emanating menaces, tossing taunts,
accosted him:

‘Hektor, now indeed you, all alone, will clearly know
what kind of chieftains constitute, make up the Danaoi,
next in toughness after Akhilleus, lionhearted, man-smasher—hole-puncher
of platoons, space-breaker of brigades.

But he among his curve-keeled ultramarine sea-crossing aqua-piercing
ships—blue-buoyed swell-volleyed—

lies idle, anger-eaten,—ire-cankered fire-conquered—exacerbated, fury-
fueled, by Agamemnon Adamant, shepherd of the people;
and we are more than able and ready—cranked and sparked—to encounter,
confront you, face to face,

even quite a few of us. Now make your move and start the battle, kick off
the combat.’

Then to him in turn responded mighty Hektor, Clutcher, of the sun-scarred
moon-smeared helmet:

‘Aias, sky-born, son of Telamon,—bright and dominant—supreme
commander of troops,

don’t try to test me at all, to treat me like a feeble child
or a woman who is not familiar with war’s affairs and knows not battle
deeds.

For I know warfare well and the work of man-slaying, how it feels to kill a
man.

Well-drilled,—keen-skilled—I know how to handle a shield, to wield to
the right, to the left, how to sling a disc, in front, in back,—chasing or
chased—the dried bullhide,

which to me is tough to swing, hulking to ply close-range in martial
 operations—battle stations;
 and I know how to launch an assault, charge into fire,—bolt into battle-
 clackle, jet into combat-jangle—head-butt batteries of rapid 2-horse cars;
 and stable-abiding in flaming combat—tumble-static rumble-mobile—
 spiked and fissive—I know how to sing the lance and dance the sword to
 Limb-Expunging Ares.
 So get ready, I'll wait, for I don't wish to missile-hit you, being such a noble
 warrior,
 by having scoped you stealthily,—secret-spotting—but by aiming openly,
 rinsed in light, should I strike you with success.'

He spoke, and poising in launch mode his prolix-shadowing helical-
 pelling—dolikhoskious—compound spear, let it go with a dinical hurl and
 a flickering whirl,
 and he hit, angle-down, the turbical ominous wicker-packed metal-sheeted
 7-bullhide-hesive shield of Aias Man of Sighs, scary and tremendous,
 upon the outermost bronze, whose facing, laminated, constituted layer eight.
 And through six oxy folds enpiercing shot the stubborn undefricable
 cleaving copper,
 and in the seventh beastly hide it stopped, held tight, clandestine-clinging.
 Next in turn
 Aias sky-born cast ahead his shadow-stretching power-spun compound
 spear,
 and struck the son of Priam, angle-down, on his bullhide bronze-faced
 bright-streamered umbo shield, omnidirectional, perfectly circular.
 Through the flashing tasseled shield shot and zoomed the ponderous mighty
 compound spear,

and tooling through the poludaidalic multi-adorned rich-enchased double-buckled breastplate, it leaned into the wound, became implanted;
and racing beside the doughy flank between the rib cage and the hip bone through the disky tunic—swing-chinkle twink-dangle—mowed the 2-part pike, but he dodged the head and avoided the black-veiled doom goddess—swish-dopple swerve-dipple boom-sparkle bend-bongo.
And both of them with stout extortion wrenched away, pulled out, the long-shadow-casting spears, with their hands, at the same time,
and concurring came to blows in twin encounter, bright collision, resembling carnivorous lions
or crudimandous wild boars,—omophagic flesh-eating beasts—whose strength is not exhausted, power-drained, dyne-vain.
Then the son of Priam the king thrust and struck the middle of his ponderous oxy wicker shield—rain-catcher light-stitcher—with his spear-beam,
but the copper spearhead failed to penetrate, burst not through the shield,—lance undrilling, disc unsmashed—for its glancing point bent back;
and Aias, bounding up, enpierced his bossy orbic bullhide shield, and silent-lunging, right through
went the compound lance, and struck tight—squeeze-glass vapor-wire—as he strove, pressed on through the fire,
and it came near his neck, cut his throat,—jugular gurgle, cervical slit—and from the gash, dark blood gushed out—oozy murk, ruby spouts.
But not even thus did Hektor of the sun-winking moon-riddled helmet cease and desist from the fight, battle-abate,
but pulling back in a slow recoil he grabbed a stone with stout hand, massive, crass,
lying on the sandal-pounded plain, black and jagged and giant—lapis asperous, magma-pop, axis-tilt meteor-slam, fish-wobble bird-bob;

this with a hurl he hit the daunting concave wicker-packed 7-bullhide-layered metal-plated shield of Aias Man of Sighs,
in the middle on the umbo, and the bronze periechoed, circumclanged—
pop-dazzle ring-ripple detonation.

Next in turn Aias lifted a much larger stone,
and, whirling, released it, and in the vortical launch he applied and implanted
unlimited muscle-bound force,
and he struck and shattered the shield of Hektor, broke the plates, burst the
boss with a rock which he cast, big as a grinding millstone,
and he cumbered, disabled, his knees—popliteal topple, patellar collapse,
muscle-snap bone-drop; subsequently, down he went, dark-knocked,
stretched out on his back,
grazed, encaved,—metal contact—by the surface of his body-rubbing tilted
tattered shield, but Apollo, Solar Piston, stood him up, shook him back,
quickly propped and prepped.

And now indeed would they have started to strike with swords and thrust in
hand-to-hand,—razor-wands metal-mist—
had not the sacred heralds,—imperial umpires—messengers of sky-crowned
Zeus and earthbound men,

come, one from the Trojans and one from the Akhaioi, copper-tuniced,
khalkokhitonic,—ring-tinkle scale-sparkle—

Talthubios and Idaios Mountain Tree, wires of wisdom both, breathers of
many airs.

Between the two combatants, they held out the propy batons, naced sacred
symbols, in stark abrupt prohibition, and the holy herald, Idaios,
well-skilled and discreet in expressing things considered, bright-revolved,
uttered a word:

‘No longer, precious sons, cross swords or clang shields,

for Skyhead Zeus, cloudbumper, loves you both,
and both of you are competent spearmen, which indeed, to be sure we all
know too.

Yet night already coats the sky, and it is good to night to kowtow.’

And to him spoke, lucent-timbred, Telamonian Aias, word-exchanging:

‘Idaios, command Hektor to mouth these things,

for he himself combat-challenged, called out for battle-play the war-bold
best.

Let him be first, and certainly I shall comply with what he decides and
initiates.’

To him in turn spoke excellent Hektor of the ray-pinging beam-ponging
helmet:

‘Aias, since to you, a god did give and render height and might

and a mind discreet, and nimble and brisk with your compound spear, above
all, superior, you circumcel the Akhaioi,

now let us stop our fighting, terminate our tête-à-tête and finish our
skirmish—fissile enflamed—

for today; later again we can fight, contend, until a god

chooses between us, determines who is more distinguished, and bestows
upon one or the other, the vanquisher, to be sure, victory.

Yet night already stains the sky, and it is good to night to submit,

so you may delight and exhilarate all the Akhaioi beside their ships, cheer
their hearts,

and above all, your kin and clanlike comrades, your own people;

but I shall swoop throughout the superb and astounding city of Priam the
king

and gladden, enmerry and cheer the hearts of the Trojan men and the Trojan women of the trailing robes,—helkesipeplous traxipallic, green organza, blue charmeuse!—

and who, for my sake, with formulated vows and implorations, will enter the sacred gathering place of the assembled celestials.

But come, let us both give striking splendid—periklutic circumglorious—gifts to each other,

so that many among the Akhaioi and Trojans thus may say:

‘Both fought and battled, nettled and noosed by breath-consuming soul-gulping—thumoboric animavoric—strife,

as well as, in turn, united in friendship, bond-bolted, they parted company, harmonized, cut clean on good terms.’”

Thus having spoken, bright-timbred, he brought and gave away his nailhead-nitid silver-studded sword

with its scabbard—swish-slide tunnel-flash!—and well-cut broad and durable leather strap;

but Aias rendered, at the same time, his breastplate-bracing combat-belt, purple-red-outblazing—magenta-clickle murex-clackle.

So they parted, calmly separated, and one went to the troops encamped of the Akhaioi,

and the other left to go to the clangorous throng of the Trojans. And they rejoiced in bright jubilation

when they saw Hektor, alive and safe and sound, intact, approaching in one piece,

succeeding in escaping from, avoiding Aias’ combustible might and untouchable volatile hands;

and they led him to the city, about to abandon hope of his safety and

survival.

In turn, from the other side, the shield-bumping spear-blocking shin-guarded
Akhaioi led Aias Man of Sighs
to skybright Agamemnon, triumph-jubilating, rejoicing in his victory.

And when they indeed appeared and emerged at the slope-roofed huts of the
son of Atreus,

for them the king of men, Agamemnon Adamant, slaughtered an ox in
sacrifice,—ax and fire—

a 5-year-old male for the superflamed turbotonic hypermenic son of Kronos.
This they flayed and followed up in ritual,—immolation-mesmerized—and
boned and lined up all the sections,

and then with skill they carved and sliced up bite-size chunks and pierced
the parts with airborne spits,
and roasted everything carefully,—periphradical circumindicative—and
pulled off all the pieces.

And when they had stopped their toil, labor abating, and had prepared the
many-course meal,
they feasted, and nothing at all did their craving hearts lack, fierce and
ebullient, no part or key component of the flamed-up doled-out well-
balanced meal.

And the warrior son of Atreus, wide-ruling Agamemnon,
honored Aias Man of Sighs with the long chine, the unbroken backbone and
rib-array.

But when they dispelled—orexis releasing—and banished desire for food
and drink,

for them the antique chief, first of all, began to weave, unspool, the sparks of
wisdom,—heddle-hook loop-tunnel loom-clack pump-treadle—

Nestor, whose considered advice, now and formerly, seemed the best.

He, well-disposed,—benecogitating—addressed the gathered soldiers, and spoke among them:

‘Son of Atreus and you other chiefs, the war-bold best of the bulk of the Akhaioi,—

look around!—many streaming-haired Akhaioi—fair-dreaming—are dead, whose dark and murky blood, razored Ares, god of war, has dispersed and scattered

on both sides of the beautiful-flowing Skamandros,—ruby-bubbling beneflux—and their souls—searcrowned snowcones—have gone down—dark-devading—to Ais’ dim domain;

therefore you must stop and brake the battle of the Akhaioi at dawn,—tingle-pink solar pop, flamingo-spangle lunar drop—

and we ourselves, gathered together, let us wheel and transport here the corpses in our carts,

with mules and crankhorn oxen; and we shall burn them up

beside the beach,—ochered in vapors, debusted by breakers—a little far-off from the ships, so that each man may bring home

his comrade’s bones to his children, whenever we do in turn return to our birthland.

And around the mobile fire let us mound up, pour, a single tomb—bright-scooped rock-gushed planet-gashed communal-cast prolix ambifusion—and stretch it out

in one unbroken string of stones enshrouding indistinguishable bones from the sandal-pounded plain, and linking it let us quickly build

high and lofty towers and walls, a close-packed shelter, a shard-crammed scarp,—a brilliant barricade—for our ships and for ourselves.

And to be included in the framework let us make, bright-produced, double

gates, well-fastened robust-bolted,
so that through them there may be a 2-horse car-driven track;
and from the outside let us dig a deep ditch nearby,—bronco-tumble axle-
snap spoke-ripple trench-throttle—
which might baffle, keep back, cavalry and infantry, coming from every
direction,
lest the engagement of the noble Trojans imponder, weigh us down.’

Thus he spoke, lucent-timbred, and consequently all the kings commended
him, approved his words.

In turn, a gathered assembly of Trojans appeared in the citadel, steep and
supreme, of Ilios,

tapped with tumult, turbed and troubled, sullen-jumbled, beside the double-
door gate of Priam the king.

And among them Antenor, Man-Facer, breather of many airs, was first to
speak:

‘Hear me, Trojans and Dardanoi—Electric Stripes—and allies,
while I say what the red-storming heart in my breast commands me.

Come now, get smart! Let’s give Argive Helen, carved in light, and all the
things obtained with her,

to the sons of Atreus to lead and carry away. Now we are locked and sucked
in a fight, after cheating, breaking oath-bars, sliding over trusty pledges—
blow-garble warp-whiffle;

hence I don’t expect at this point anything will be wrapped up, brought
about,

to our advantage, or performed with leverage for our sake, where we don’t
act accordingly, and do as I suggest.’

Indeed speaking thus he then sat down, and among them stood up
 gas-bright Alexandros Man-Repeller, the chum enchanted of Helen of the
 beautiful hair,—blow-nimble honey-tumble shimmy-twirl chamois-snap—
 who, to him, word-exchanging, uttered and addressed fluttering phrases:
 ‘Antenor, you no longer speak, express, lovely, precious things to me;
 you know, too, how to devise advice, shape a speech, better than this.
 But if indeed you speak sincerely, promoting this with serious zeal, bright-
 propelled,—pressure-sparkle—
 then it’s clear the gods themselves have utterly scrapped, wiped out your
 mind—cogitation-ball unclewed—brain-buckle, skull-scuttle.
 Yet I shall address and speak among the bright-assembled mustang-taming
 Trojans—hippodamic equidomic;
 and I shall speak flat out, declare: the woman I will not give back;
 but the quantum of acquired treasure I brought from Argos, Land of Light,
 to our home,
 all of this I am willing to give, hand over, and top it off—bright-appended—
 with other things from out of my home to boot.’

Indeed thus speaking he then sat down, and among them stood up
 son of Dardanos, Amber-Born, Priam the king, a thought-guard, counselor,
 on scale with the gods—orbit-abeyant balance-bright.
 He, well-disposed,—benereflecting—addressed the gathered soldiers, and
 spoke among them:
 ‘Hear me, Trojans and Dardanoi—Electric Stripes—and allies,
 while I say what the red-ramming heart in my breast commands me.
 Now take your supper, all of you scattered throughout the city, just like on
 previous evenings,
 and turn your minds to be on guard and every man be alert, keep your eyes

peeled;
and at dawn—ocean-surfing air-invading fire-scooping sparkle-veiled—let
Idaios Mountain Tree go to the hollow ships—tunnel-tonic wave-whipped
bubble-sonic—
to utter and speak to the sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaos,
the mouthmade words of Alexandros, on account of whom strife has arisen,
and also to declare, express, this solid word, fisty and discreet,—tight-wound
dark-clenched—whether they are willing
to knock off, disengage and cease from bright-clanging thick-roaring war,—
mustang-rearing car-flipping limb-pleaching faceguard-slamming—till we
have burned
the scattered twisted bodies of the dead in group cremation; later again we
can fight, combat, until a god
chooses between us, decides who is more distinguished, and bestows upon
one or the other, the vanquisher, to be sure, victory.’

Thus he spoke, lucent-toned, and him they clearly listened to, royal-swayed,
and obeyed,
and then they took their supper throughout the patrols, configured,
encamped, in echelons;
and at dawn—sea-rumble blue-tremble lock-flick orangetwist blowpink
glowbeam—Idaios Mountain Tree, zipped to the capsular ships,—groove-
glitter shimmy-shock—
and he found the Danaoi in the place of assembly, the satellites of Body-
Blotting Ares, combat batmen,
beside the stern of Agamemnon’s ship—poop-apposed; and the loud-voiced
herald,
sacred and exclaiming, stood in the middle of the troops and, crystal-

timbred, spoke among them:

‘Son of Atreus and you other chiefs, the war-bold best of the bulk of the Akhaioi,

Priam the king and the other noble glorious Trojans ordered me to speak and utter to you—if perhaps it would be to you pleasing and sweet—

the mouthmade words of Alexandros, on account of whom strife has arisen. The quantum of acquired treasure Alexandros in his hollow ships conveyed and brought to Troy,—would that he had died before that, utterly perished!—

all of this he is willing to give, hand over, and top it off—bright-appended—with other things from out of his home to boot;

but the wedded wife—connubial bedmate—of glorious Menelaos, he says—strident-timbred—he will not give up; in fact the Trojans, to be sure, urge and order him to let her go.

And also they commanded me to send and say—relay and express—this word, whether you’re willing

to disengage, knock off and cease from sharp-sparking wide-glaring war,—gear-grinding bolt-tearing flesh-drilling bone-twinning spoke-twirling axle-vaulting—till we have burned

the scattered twisted bodies of the dead in group cremation; later again we can fight, combat, until a god

chooses between us, decides who is more distinguished, and bestows upon one or the other, the vanquisher, to be sure, victory.’

Thus he spoke, timbre-bright, and then they all were hemmed in a hush, still-pointed.

And so indeed at length among them spoke Diomedes, battle-scream-

supreme:

‘Let no one now take the acquisitions—bric-a-brac—of Alexandros Man-Repeller,
or accept the haul of Helen, Taken Girl; it is even evident and known to him
whose mouth and mind lacks knack for thought and word,
that already terminations of destruction, twisted rope-ends,—snapping
snare—are fastened to the Trojans’—crashbound crushlocked—whipfire
dinoblast swingdrill.

Thus he spoke, luminous-toned, and all the sons of the Akhaioi shouted and
whooped in radiant plosion,
astonished and dazed by the mouthmade words of Diomedes, broncobuster.
Then to Idaios Mountain Tree, King Agamemnon spoke, crystal-tonic:
‘Idaios, *indeed* the mouthed reaction of the Akhaioi you hear yourself,
how they answer and construe you,—stridently subsifting—and it thus
delights and pleases me.

Regarding the dead,—the circuit of corpses—I don't begrudge, object to
you, in any degree, to burning them up—to torch and cremate—ocher-
decending—the body-ensembles;
for there is no exemption concerning cadavers,—no dimming of demortuals
or sparing of the perished—
when the bodies are finally dead, no escape from swift and smoky
mitigation, fire-soothing bright-dissolved propitiation.
To our truce—anchored oath-bars—let Blue-Crashing Zeus be witness, the
loud-pounding spouse of Here’—lightning-fizz thunder-punch glowdome
twist-wire shimmy-boom.

Speaking thus he lifted up the baton,—bright-charmed oath-potent—the

chief-borne badge of command, to all the gods,
 and Idaios Mountain Tree, strolled back—retroflow—to holy mighty Ilios.
 Now, bright-gathered they were sitting in assembly, Trojans and
 Dardanionians,—Ambergenic, Laser-Colored—
 all men tight-trooped, grouped together, waiting for Idaios to come;
 he duly came, stood in their midst, centered between the huddled bodies,
 spoke out and declared his message; and they geared up with their tools
 quite quickly
 each to each, some to bring the dead bodies, and others to search for fuel,
 fetch firewood—stick-cluster cinder-hiss tinder-toss.
 And the Argeioi, the Radiants, from the other side, stirred up, bright-pepped,
 hastened from the well-decked ships with beautiful oar-banks,
 some to bring dead bodies, and others to search for fuel, fetch firewood—
 wind-ribbon timber-quest orange-emergence.

The sun just then was beam-dashing tilled fields, ray-striking ploughed
 earth, bright and germinated,
 rising out of tranquil-gliding typhoon-free seahorse-nodding deep-flowing
 planet-looping Ocean,
 going up into the sky—burning orange ball climbing blue vault—when face
 to face the opponents met each other.
 At that time to distinguish each man, to make him out, was difficult;
 but washing off the wound-ooze and the bloody gore with water,
 shedding hot tears, they lifted them upon the wagons.
 Yet majestic Priam did not allow them to weep aloud and wail; so they in
 silence
 piled and heaped the corpses upon the fire-kindled pyre, distressed and torn
 apart in their hearts,

and having burned them up with fire they set out on foot for holy mighty Ilios.

And thus in similar manner, from the other side, the dart-thwarting shield-bopping shin-guarded Akhaioi

piled and heaped the corpses upon the fire-kindled pyre, distressed and torn apart in their hearts,

and having burned them up with fire they wound their way on foot to the tubular scooped-out ships.

But when dawn, ocean-down, had not yet, cool-enswooning, swirled her color-tones, flexed her supple chimes, and still the night was double-rimmed, encased in twilight,

then around the fire-kindled pyre gathered together chosen soldiers, special howlers, of the Akhaioi, sifted and distinguished,

and around the mobile fire they made a sepulchral mound, erected a single tomb, and stretched it out

in one unbroken string of stones enshrouding indistinguishable bones, from the sandal-pounded plain, and linking it they built a wall

and tall and lofty towers, a jam-packed shelter, a shard-crammed scarp,—a brilliant barricade—for their ships and for themselves.

And to be included in the framework, they constructed, bright-inserted, double gates, well-fastened robust-bolted,

so that through them there may be a 2-horse car-driven track;

and from the outside they dug a deep ditch beside it,—bronco-tumble axle-snap spoke-ripple trench-throttle—

broad and deep, and thereon, ground-level, parallel, they stuck stakes,—tangle-gash puncture-mesh—a palisade implanted.

Thus were they entoiling, labor-locked, the streaming-haired Akhaioi;
 and the gods, while seated by the side of Zeus, the flinger of the lightning
 flash,—ionized downstep leader lobber—
 gazed at the great work, crizzled and shoveled, spiked and spaded, of the
 Akhaioi copper-appareled.

And among them first to speak was Poseidon planet-shaker,—enosikhthonic
 terriquatic earthjerking—king of quakes:

‘Father Zeus, sphered in blue, isn’t there any blood-tumbling mortal upon
 the boundless earth

who still will speak his mind and voice his thoughts—unveil the flames of
 cogitation—to the time-autonomous immortals?

Do you not see that truly, in turn, the streaming-haired Akhaioi
 have built a wall—bright-erected rock-stacked—to shield and block their
 ships, and around the barricade they traced a trench,
 dark-driven, but to the gods did not render lowing glorious fire-pools of
 oxen helical-horned?

Indeed the prestige of the blockade will expand as far as dawn is diffused,
 dispersing her musical mist, scattering her painted dots—beautiful pump-
 tones, blissom spin-cones;

and people will forget the wall—muffled in oblivion—that I and Phoibos
 Apollo Radiant Eradicator

built, tight-constructed, erected, energy-drained, for the warrior Laomedon
 People-Guardian.’

Sorely turbed, exacerbated, Zeus cloudcollider spoke, timbre-bright, to him:
 ‘O my stars, earthshaker, wide-powered,—meridian-bang parallel-clink!—
 what crazy words you speak!

Some other god might fear this thought,

who is much more feeble and powerless than you in strength of hands and flaming might;
but certainly your fame will expand as far as dawn is diffused, dispersing her musical mist, scattering her painted dots—beautiful pump-tones, blissom spin-cones.
Quick, up! Snap to! When, in turn, the streaming-haired Akhaioi have gone with their ships to their precious birthland,
after you break up and bust down the wall, push and brush it, punched and porous, all into the sea,—spear-swipe salt-sweep sand-smear—
and, in turn, cover the abundant beach with loose and crumbling sand,—shingle-veiled shell-sheeted—
so for you the superb wall of the Akhaioi may be bright-dissolved, softened up, dark-effaced’—violet-vanished wipeout.

Thus they spoke such things to each other,
and the sun set,—sizzle-orange echo-red dazzle-plunge stagger-splash—and the work of the Akhaioi was finished;
so they slaughtered oxen—butchered and bleeding below the moon—down throughout the sloping huts and took their evening meal.
And there were ships from Lemnos, land of volcanoes, containing wine, many vessels—buoyant-brilliant blue-balanced—which Ieson’s son Euneus had sent ahead,
whom Hupsipule bore to Ieson the Argonaut, shepherd of the people.
And set aside, reserved for the sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaos, son of Ieson ordered and gave honey-sweet wine to be conveyed, imparted:
one thousand measures—sparkle-purple magnitudes—scoop-tang tingle-fizz!
From the ship-decks did the streaming-haired Akhaioi, bright-supplied,

procure and barter for wine,
 some with bronze, and some with iron, blazing-surfaced,
 some with hides of beasts, and some with actual cattle,
 and others with captured war-slaves,—mongered shackled andrapods—
 and then they arranged a bounteous feast, a banquet exuberant, well-
 distributed.

Then all night the streaming-haired Akhaioi
 feasted by the flexible fires below the hard stars, and the Trojans and their
 allies too, throughout the city;
 and all night, for them, the craft-cranking trick-concoctor, imperious Zeus,
 was calculating evil things, cogitating wickedness,
 terribly horribly thunder-crashing lightning-jagging sky-scarring. So them
 did green-gone red-faded fear grab;
 and they poured out wine from their cups to the ground,—bumper-tilt
 sparkle-arcs—and no one dared
 to drink before he made a libation, let the ruby flow, to high-powered
 paramount wind-twisting rain-whipping fire-blowing son of Kronos.
 Then in a hush they bedded down—when light is null and dark is lull—and
 took by hand the gift of sleep.

NOTE

In Book 7 two key events take place: the encounter between Hektor and Aias, and the gathering of the dead. Although Book 7 clearly is not as well-engineered, moving and pivotal as Book 6, the bright velocities of the rhythm and the supple tones of the melody, which seem to alternately squeeze and let go of the language which robustly and chromatically fills out the beadlike arrays of its hexametric structure, tell us it's Homer. The *Iliad*

generates more wonder each time one comes into contact with the magic of its poetry, for one becomes lost among the perpetually evolving and tangible beauties of its musical whirlpools and oscillating rhythms, its chiseled curves and balletic twirls.

Adventuring through the ‘clang tinkle boomhammer’ of James Joyce’s tour de force, *Ulysses*, one comes across the phrase, ‘a chemistry of stars’. One may perceive an ‘amino charm’ and ‘harmonic structure’ in Richard Powers’ musical novel, *The Gold Bug Variations*, where DNA, a Bach fugue and love intervene. In one of Emily Dickinson’s poems, we hear and see the dynamic and precious lines, ‘The prism never held the hues, it only heard them play’. What do all of the above quotes have in common? All could, in fact, be applied to the poetry of Homer, for Homer’s universe is both mysteriously remote, yet intensely intimate, bright and strident, yet tender and crepuscular, melodic and fluid, yet sudden and syncopated.

One might receive an impression or notice an effect of this type in a xylograph of Ando Hiroshige from his series, *Meisho Edo Hyakkei* (*A Hundred Famous Views of Edo*). In ‘Asakusagawa Shubi-no matsu Ommayagashi’, we see the distant dots of stars and a proximate boat with closed green cane blinds. Between the seeming calm of river and sky twists a dragon-shaped pine tree, one unbroken (unlike previous ones) by hurricanes. The crisp cusp of the Moon is barely visible. Did a similar slice of outer space arc and pass over the plain of Troy more than three thousand years ago, that evening when Ajax was given the sword on which he would ultimately fall?