

Ovid

The Metamorphoses



Translated by A.S.Kline

ILLUSTRATED EDITION

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Map of Ancient Greece and the Aegean

Book I



Bk I:1-20 The Primal Chaos

I want to speak about bodies changed into new forms. You, gods, since you are the ones who alter these, and all other things, inspire my attempt, and spin out a continuous thread of words, from the world's first origins to my own time.

Before there was earth or sea or the sky that covers everything, Nature appeared the same throughout the whole world: what we call chaos: a raw confused mass, nothing but inert matter, badly combined discordant atoms of things, confused in the one place. There was no **Titan** yet, shining his light on the world, or waxing Phoebe renewing her white horns, or the earth hovering in surrounding air balanced by her own weight, or watery **Amphitrite** stretching out her arms along the vast shores of the world. Though there was land and sea and air, it was unstable land, unswimmable water, air needing light. Nothing retained its shape, one thing obstructed another, because in the one

body, cold fought with heat, moist with dry, soft with hard, and weight with weightless things.

Bk I:21-31 Separation of the elements

This conflict was ended by a god and a greater order of nature, since he split off the earth from the sky, and the sea from the land, and divided the transparent heavens from the dense air. When he had disentangled the elements, and freed them from the obscure mass, he fixed them in separate spaces in harmonious peace. The weightless fire, that forms the heavens, darted upwards to make its home in the furthest heights. Next came air in lightness and place. Earth, heavier than either of these, drew down the largest elements, and was compressed by its own weight. The surrounding water took up the last space and enclosed the solid world.

Bk I:32-51 The earth and sea. The five zones.

When whichever god it was had ordered and divided the mass, and collected it into separate parts, he first gathered the earth into a great ball so that it was uniform on all sides. Then he ordered the seas to spread and rise in waves in the flowing winds and pour around the coasts of the encircled land. He added springs and standing pools and lakes, and contained in shelving banks the widely separated rivers, some of which are swallowed by the earth itself, others of which reach the sea and entering the expanse of open waters beat against coastlines instead of riverbanks. He ordered the plains to extend, the valleys to subside, leaves to hide the trees, stony mountains to rise: and just as the heavens are divided into two zones to the north and two to the south, with a fifth and hotter between them, so the god carefully marked out the enclosed matter with the same number, and described as many regions on the earth. The equatorial zone

is too hot to be habitable; the two poles are covered by deep snow; and he placed two regions between and gave them a temperate climate mixing heat and cold.

Bk I:52-68 The four winds

Air overhangs them, heavier than fire by as much as water's weight is lighter than earth. There he ordered the clouds and vapours to exist, and thunder to shake the minds of human beings, and winds that create lightning-bolts and flashes.

The world's maker did not allow these, either, to possess the air indiscriminately; as it is they are scarcely prevented from tearing the world apart, each with its blasts steering a separate course: like the discord between brothers. **Eurus**, the east wind, drew back to the realms of **Aurora**, to Nabatea, Persia, and the heights under the morning light: Evening, and the coasts that cool in the setting sun, are close to **Zephyrus**, the west wind. Chill **Boreas**, the

north wind, seized **Scythia** and the seven stars of the **Plough**: while the south wind, **Auster**, drenches the lands opposite with incessant clouds and rain. Above these he placed the transparent, weightless heavens free of the dross of earth.

Bk I:68-88 Humankind

He had barely separated out everything within fixed limits when the constellations that had been hidden for a long time in dark fog began to blaze out throughout the whole sky. And so that no region might lack its own animate beings, the stars and the forms of gods occupied the floor of heaven, the sea gave a home to the shining fish, earth took the wild animals, and the light air flying things.

As yet there was no animal capable of higher thought that could be ruler of all the rest. Then Humankind was born. Either the creator god, source of a better world, seeded it from the divine, or the newborn earth just drawn from

the highest heavens still contained fragments related to the skies, so that **Prometheus**, blending them with streams of rain, moulded them into an image of the all-controlling gods. While other animals look downwards at the ground, he gave human beings an upturned aspect, commanding them to look towards the skies, and, upright, raise their face to the stars. So the earth, that had been, a moment ago, uncarved and imageless, changed and assumed the unknown shapes of human beings.

Bk I:89-112 The Golden Age

This was the Golden Age that, without coercion, without laws, spontaneously nurtured the good and the true. There was no fear or punishment: there were no threatening words to be read, fixed in bronze, no crowd of suppliants fearing the judge's face: they lived safely without protection. No pine tree felled in the mountains had yet reached the flowing waves to travel to other lands: human beings only knew

their own shores. There were no steep ditches surrounding towns, no straight war-trumpets, no coiled horns, no swords and helmets. Without the use of armies, people passed their lives in gentle peace and security. The earth herself also, freely, without the scars of ploughs, untouched by hoes, produced everything from herself. Contented with food that grew without cultivation, they collected mountain strawberries and the fruit of the strawberry tree, wild cherries, blackberries clinging to the tough brambles, and acorns fallen from **Jupiter's** spreading oak-tree. Spring was eternal, and gentle breezes caressed with warm air the flowers that grew without being seeded. Then the untilled earth gave of its produce and, without needing renewal, the fields whitened with heavy ears of corn. Sometimes rivers of milk flowed, sometimes streams of nectar, and golden honey trickled from the green holm oak.

Bk I:113-124 The Silver Age

When **Saturn** was banished to gloomy **Tartarus**, and **Jupiter** ruled the world, then came the people of the age of silver that is inferior to gold, more valuable than yellow bronze. Jupiter shortened spring's first duration and made the year consist of four seasons, winter, summer, changeable autumn, and brief spring. Then parched air first glowed white scorched with the heat, and ice hung down frozen by the wind. Then houses were first made for shelter: before that homes had been made in caves, and dense thickets, or under branches fastened with bark. Then seeds of corn were first buried in the long furrows, and bullocks groaned, burdened under the yoke.

Bk I:125-150 The Bronze Age

Third came the people of the bronze age, with fiercer natures, readier to indulge in savage warfare, but not yet vicious. The harsh iron age was last. Immediately every kind of wickedness erupted into this age of baser

natures: truth, shame and honour vanished; in their place were fraud, deceit, and trickery, violence and pernicious desires. They set sails to the wind, though as yet the seamen had poor knowledge of their use, and the ships' keels that once were trees standing amongst high mountains, now leaped through uncharted waves. The land that was once common to all, as the light of the sun is, and the air, was marked out, to its furthest boundaries, by wary surveyors. Not only did they demand the crops and the food the rich soil owed them, but they entered the bowels of the earth, and excavating brought up the wealth it had concealed in **Stygian** shade, wealth that incites men to crime. And now harmful iron appeared, and gold more harmful than iron. War came, whose struggles employ both, waving clashing arms with bloodstained hands. They lived on plunder: friend was not safe with friend, relative with relative, kindness was rare between brothers. Husbands longed for the death of their wives, wives for the death of their husbands.

Murderous stepmothers mixed deadly aconite, and sons inquired into their father's years before their time. Piety was dead, and virgin **Astraea**, last of all the immortals to depart, herself abandoned the blood-drenched earth.

Bk I:151-176 The giants

Rendering the heights of heaven no safer than the earth, they say the giants attempted to take the Celestial kingdom, piling mountains up to the distant stars. Then the all-powerful father of the gods hurled his bolt of lightning, fractured **Olympus** and threw Mount **Pelion** down from **Ossa** below. Her sons' dreadful bodies, buried by that mass, drenched Earth with streams of blood, and they say she warmed it to new life, so that a trace of her children might remain, transforming it into the shape of human beings. But these progeny also despising the gods were savage, violent, and eager for slaughter, so that you might know they were born from blood.

When Saturn's son, the father of the gods, saw this from his highest citadel, he groaned, and recalling the vile feast at **Lycaon**'s table, so recent it was still unknown, his mind filled with a great anger fitting for Jupiter, and he called the gods to council, a summons that brooked no delay.

There is a high track, seen when the sky is clear, called the Milky Way, and known for its brightness. This way the gods pass to the palaces and halls of the mighty Thunderer. To right and left are the houses of the greater gods, doors open and crowded. The lesser gods live elsewhere. Here the powerful and distinguished have made their home. This is the place, if I were to be bold, I would not be afraid to call high heaven's **Palatine**.

Bk I:177-198 Jupiter threatens to destroy humankind

When the gods had taken their seats in the marble council chamber their king, sitting high

above them, leaning on his ivory sceptre, shook his formidable mane three times and then a fourth, disturbing the earth, sea and stars. Then he opened his lips in indignation and spoke. ‘I was not more troubled than I am now concerning the world’s sovereignty than when each of the snake-footed giants prepared to throw his hundred arms around the imprisoned sky. Though they were fierce enemies, still their attack came in one body and from one source. Now I must destroy the human race, wherever **Nereus** sounds, throughout the world. I swear it by the infernal streams, that glide below the earth through the **Stygian** groves. All means should first be tried, but the incurable flesh must be excised by the knife, so that the healthy part is not infected. Mine are the demigods, the wild spirits, **nymphs**, **fauns** and **satyrs**, and sylvan deities of the hills. Since we have not yet thought them worth a place in heaven let us at least allow them to live in safety in the lands we have given them. Perhaps you gods believe they will be safe, even when **Lycaon**, known for his

savagery, plays tricks against me, who holds the thunderbolt, and reigns over you.'

Bk I:199-243 Lycaon is turned into a wolf

All the gods murmured aloud and, zealously and eagerly, demanded punishment of the man who committed such actions. When the impious band of conspirators were burning to drown the name of Rome in Caesar's blood, the human race was suddenly terrified by fear of just such a disaster, and the whole world shuddered with horror. Your subjects' loyalty is no less pleasing to you, Augustus, than theirs was to **Jupiter**. After he had checked their murmuring with voice and gesture, they were all silent. When the noise had subsided, quieted by his royal authority, Jupiter again broke the silence with these words: 'Have no fear, he has indeed been punished, but I will tell you his crime, and what the penalty was. News of these evil times had reached my ears. Hoping it false I left **Olympus**'s heights, and travelled the

earth, a god in human form. It would take too long to tell what wickedness I found everywhere. Those rumours were even milder than the truth. I had crossed **Maenala**, those mountains bristling with wild beasts' lairs, **Cyllene**, and the pinewoods of chill **Lycaeus**. Then, as the last shadows gave way to night, I entered the inhospitable house of the Arcadian king. I gave them signs that a god had come, and the people began to worship me. At first **Lycaon** ridiculed their piety, then exclaimed 'I will prove by a straightforward test whether he is a god or a mortal. The truth will not be in doubt.' He planned to destroy me in the depths of sleep, unexpectedly, by night. That is how he resolved to prove the truth. Not satisfied with this he took a hostage sent by the **Molossi**, opened his throat with a knife, and made some of the still warm limbs tender in seething water, roasting others in the fire. No sooner were these placed on the table than I brought the roof down on the household gods, with my avenging flames, those gods worthy of such a master. He

himself ran in terror, and reaching the silent fields howled aloud, frustrated of speech. Foaming at the mouth, and greedy as ever for killing, he turned against the sheep, still delighting in blood. His clothes became bristling hair, his arms became legs. He was a wolf, but kept some vestige of his former shape. There were the same grey hairs, the same violent face, the same glittering eyes, the same savage image. One house has fallen, but others deserve to also. Wherever the earth extends the avenging furies rule. You would think men were sworn to crime! Let them all pay the penalty they deserve, and quickly. That is my intent.'

Bk I:244-273 Jupiter invokes the floodwaters

When he had spoken, some of the gods encouraged **Jupiter**'s anger, shouting their approval of his words, while others consented silently. They were all saddened though at this destruction of the human species, and

questioned what the future of the world would be free of humanity. Who would honour their altars with incense? Did he mean to surrender the world to the ravages of wild creatures? In answer the king of the gods calmed their anxiety, the rest would be his concern, and he promised them a people different from the first, of a marvellous creation.

Now he was ready to hurl his lightning-bolts at the whole world but feared that the sacred heavens might burst into flame from the fires below, and burn to the furthest pole: and he remembered that a time was fated to come when sea and land, and the untouched courts of the skies would ignite, and the troubled mass of the world be besieged by fire. So he set aside the weapons the **Cyclopes** forged, and resolved on a different punishment, to send down rain from the whole sky and drown humanity beneath the waves.

Straight away he shut up the north winds in **Aeolus**'s caves, with the gales that disperse the gathering clouds, and let loose the south wind,

he who flies with dripping wings, his terrible aspect shrouded in pitch-black darkness. His beard is heavy with rain, water streams from his grey hair, mists wreath his forehead, and his feathers and the folds of his robes distil the dew. When he crushes the hanging clouds in his outstretched hand there is a crash, and the dense vapours pour down rain from heaven. **Iris**, **Juno**'s messenger, dressed in the colours of the rainbow, gathers water and feeds it back to the clouds. The cornfields are flattened and saddening the farmers, the crops, the object of their prayers, are ruined, and the long year's labour wasted.

Bk I:274-292 The Flood

Jupiter's anger is not satisfied with only his own aerial waters: his brother the sea-god helps him, with the ocean waves. He calls the rivers to council, and when they have entered their ruler's house, says 'Now is not the time for long speeches! Exert all your strength. That

is what is needed. Throw open your doors, drain the dams, and loose the reins of all your streams!’ Those are his commands. The rivers return and uncurb their fountains’ mouths, and race an unbridled course to the sea.

Neptune himself strikes the ground with his trident, so that it trembles, and with that blow opens up channels for the waters. Overflowing, the rivers rush across the open plains, sweeping away at the same time not just orchards, flocks, houses and human beings, but sacred temples and their contents. Any building that has stood firm, surviving the great disaster undamaged, still has its roof drowned by the highest waves, and its towers buried below the flood. And now the land and sea are not distinct, all is the sea, the sea without a shore.

Bk I:293-312 The world is drowned

There one man escapes to a hilltop, while another seated in his rowing boat pulls the oars over places where lately he was ploughing. One

man sails over his cornfields or over the roof of his drowned farmhouse, while another man fishes in the topmost branches of an elm. Sometimes, by chance, an anchor embeds itself in a green meadow, or the curved boats graze the tops of vineyards. Where lately lean goats browsed shapeless seals play. The **Nereids** are astonished to see woodlands, houses and whole towns under the water. There are dolphins in the trees: disturbing the upper branches and stirring the oak-trees as they brush against them. Wolves swim among the sheep, and the waves carry tigers and tawny lions. The boar has no use for his powerful tusks, the deer for its quick legs, both are swept away together, and the circling bird, after a long search for a place to land, falls on tired wings into the water. The sea in unchecked freedom has buried the hills, and fresh waves beat against the mountaintops. The waters wash away most living things, and those the sea spares, lacking food, are defeated by slow starvation.

Bk I:313-347 Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha

Phocis, a fertile country when it was still land, separates **Aonia** from **Oeta**, though at that time it was part of the sea, a wide expanse of suddenly created water. There Mount **Parnassus** lifts its twin steep summits to the stars, its peaks above the clouds. When **Deucalion** and his **wife** landed here in their small boat, everywhere else being drowned by the waters, they worshipped the **Corycian** nymphs, the mountain gods, and the goddess of the oracles, prophetic **Themis**. No one was more virtuous or fonder of justice than he was, and no woman showed greater reverence for the gods. When **Jupiter** saw the earth covered with the clear waters, and that only one man was left of all those thousands of men, only one woman left of all those thousands of women, both innocent and both worshippers of the gods, he scattered the clouds and mist, with the north wind, and revealed the heavens to the earth and the earth to the sky. It was no longer an angry

sea, since the king of the oceans putting aside his three-pronged spear calmed the waves, and called sea-dark **Triton**, showing from the depths his shoulders thick with shells, to blow into his echoing conch and give the rivers and streams the signal to return. He lifted the hollow shell that coils from its base in broad spirals, that shell that filled with his breath in mid-ocean makes the eastern and the western shores sound. So now when it touched the god's mouth, and dripping beard, and sounded out the order for retreat, it was heard by all the waters on earth and in the ocean, and all the waters hearing it were checked. Now the sea has shorelines, the brimming rivers keep to their channels, the floods subside, and hills appear. Earth rises, the soil increasing as the water ebbs, and finally the trees show their naked tops, the slime still clinging to their leaves.

Bk I:348-380 They ask Themis for help

The world was restored. But when **Deucalion** saw its emptiness, and the deep silence of the desolate lands, he spoke to **Pyrrha**, through welling tears. ‘Wife, cousin, sole surviving woman, joined to me by our shared race, our family origins, then by the marriage bed, and now joined to me in danger, we two are the people of all the countries seen by the setting and the rising sun, the sea took all the rest. Even now our lives are not guaranteed with certainty: the storm clouds still terrify my mind. How would you feel now, poor soul, if the fates had willed you to be saved, but not me? How could you endure your fear alone? Who would comfort your tears? Believe me, dear wife, if the sea had you, I would follow you, and the sea would have me too. If only I, by my father’s arts, could recreate earth’s peoples, and breathe life into the shaping clay! The human race remains in us. The gods willed it that we are the only examples of mankind left behind.’ He spoke and they wept, resolving to appeal to the sky-god, and ask his help by

sacred oracles. Immediately they went side by side to the springs of **Cephisus** that, though still unclear, flowed in its usual course. When they had sprinkled their heads and clothing with its watery libations, they traced their steps to the temple of the sacred goddess, whose pediments were green with disfiguring moss, her altars without fire. When they reached the steps of the sanctuary they fell forward together and lay prone on the ground, and kissing the cold rock with trembling lips, said ‘If the gods wills soften, appeased by the prayers of the just, if in this way their anger can be deflected, **Themis** tell us by what art the damage to our race can be repaired, and bring help, most gentle one, to this drowned world!’

Bk I:381-415 The human race is re-created

The goddess was moved, and uttered oracular speech: ‘Leave the temple and with veiled heads and loosened clothes throw behind you the bones of your great mother!’ For a long

time they stand there, dumbfounded. **Pyrrha** is first to break the silence: she refuses to obey the goddess's command. Her lips trembling she asks for pardon, fearing to offend her mother's spirit by scattering her bones. Meanwhile they reconsider the dark words the oracle gave, and their uncertain meaning, turning them over and over in their minds. Then **Prometheus**'s son comforted **Epimetheus**'s daughter with quiet words: 'Either this idea is wrong, or, since oracles are godly and never urge evil, our great mother must be the earth: I think the bones she spoke about are stones in the body of the earth. It is these we are told to throw behind us.'

Though the **Titan**'s daughter is stirred by her husband's thoughts, still hope is uncertain: they are both so unsure of the divine promptings; but what harm can it do to try? They descended the steps, covered their heads and loosened their clothes, and threw the stones needed behind them. The stones, and who would believe it if it were not for ancient tradition, began to lose their rigidity and

hardness, and after a while softened, and once softened acquired new form. Then after growing, and ripening in nature, a certain likeness to a human shape could be vaguely seen, like marble statues at first inexact and roughly carved. The earthy part, however, wet with moisture, turned to flesh; what was solid and inflexible mutated to bone; the veins stayed veins; and quickly, through the power of the gods, stones the man threw took on the shapes of men, and women were remade from those thrown by the woman. So the toughness of our race, our ability to endure hard labour, and the proof we give of the source from which we are sprung.

Bk I:416-437 Other species are generated

Earth spontaneously created other diverse forms of animal life. After the remaining moisture had warmed in the sun's fire, the wet mud of the marshlands swelled with heat, and the fertile seeds of things, nourished by life-

giving soil as if in a mother's womb, grew, and in time acquired a nature. So, when the seven-mouthed **Nile** retreats from the drowned fields and returns to its former bed, and the fresh mud boils in the sun, farmers find many creatures as they turn the lumps of earth. Amongst them they see some just spawned, on the edge of life, some with incomplete bodies and number of limbs, and often in the same matter one part is alive and the other is raw earth. In fact when heat and moisture are mixed they conceive, and from these two things the whole of life originates. And though fire and water fight each other, heat and moisture create everything, and this discordant union is suitable for growth. So when the earth muddied from the recent flood glowed again heated by the deep heaven-sent light of the sun she produced innumerable species, partly remaking previous forms, partly creating new monsters.

Bk I:438-472 Phoebus kills the Python and sees Daphne

Indeed, though she would not have desired to, she then gave birth to you, great **Python**, covering so great an area of the mountain slopes, a snake not known before, a terror to the new race of men. The archer god, with lethal shafts that he had only used before on fleeing red deer and roe deer, with a thousand arrows, almost emptying his quiver, destroyed the creature, the venom running out from its black wounds. Then he founded the sacred **Pythian** games, celebrated by contests, named from the serpent he had conquered. There the young winners in boxing, in foot and chariot racing, were honoured with oak wreaths. There was no laurel as yet, so **Phoebus** crowned his temples, his handsome curling hair, with leaves of any tree.

Phoebus's first love was **Daphne**, daughter of **Peneus**, and not through chance but because of **Cupid**'s fierce anger. Recently the **Delian** god, exulting at his victory over the serpent, had seen him bending his tightly strung bow and said 'Impudent boy, what are you doing with a

man's weapons? That one is suited to my shoulders, since I can hit wild beasts of a certainty, and wound my enemies, and not long ago destroyed with countless arrows the swollen Python that covered many acres with its plague-ridden belly. You should be intent on stirring the concealed fires of love with your burning brand, not laying claim to my glories!' **Venus**'s son replied 'You may hit every other thing **Phoebus**, but my bow will strike you: to the degree that all living creatures are less than gods, by that degree is your glory less than mine.' He spoke, and striking the air fiercely with beating wings, he landed on the shady peak of **Parnassus**, and took two arrows with opposite effects from his full quiver: one kindles love, the other dispels it. The one that kindles is golden with a sharp glistening point, the one that dispels is blunt with lead beneath its shaft. With the second he transfixed **Peneus**'s daughter, but with the first he wounded **Apollo** piercing him to the marrow of his bones.

Bk I: 473-503 Phoebus pursues Daphne

Now the one loved, and the other fled from love's name, taking delight in the depths of the woods, and the skins of the wild beasts she caught, emulating virgin **Phoebe**, a careless ribbon holding back her hair. Many courted her, but she, averse to being wooed, free from men and unable to endure them, roamed the pathless woods, careless of **Hymen** or **Amor**, or whatever marriage might be. Her father often said 'Girl you owe me a son-in-law', and again often 'Daughter, you owe me grandsons.' But, hating the wedding torch as if it smacked of crime she would blush red with shame all over her beautiful face, and clinging to her father's neck with coaxing arms, she would say 'Dearest father, let me be a virgin for ever! **Diana**'s father granted it to her.' He yields to that plea, but your beauty itself, **Daphne**, prevents your wish, and your loveliness opposes your prayer.

Phoebus loves her at first sight, and desires to wed her, and hopes for what he desires, but his own oracular powers fail him. As the light stubble of an empty cornfield blazes; as sparks fire a hedge when a traveller, by mischance, lets them get too close, or forgets them in the morning; so the god was altered by the flames, and all his heart burned, feeding his useless desire with hope. He sees her disordered hair hanging about her neck and sighs ‘What if it were properly dressed?’ He gazes at her eyes sparkling with the brightness of starlight. He praises her wrists and hands and fingers, and her arms bare to the shoulder: whatever is hidden, he imagines more beautiful. But she flees swifter than the lightest breath of air, and resists his words calling her back again.

Bk I:504-524 Phoebus begs Daphne to yield to him

‘Wait nymph, daughter of **Peneus**, I beg you! I who am chasing you am not your enemy.

Nymph, Wait! This is the way a sheep runs from the wolf, a deer from the mountain lion, and a dove with fluttering wings flies from the eagle: everything flies from its foes, but it is love that is driving me to follow you! Pity me! I am afraid you might fall headlong or thorns undeservedly scar your legs and I be a cause of grief to you! These are rough places you run through. Slow down, I ask you, check your flight, and I too will slow. At least enquire whom it is you have charmed. I am no mountain man, no shepherd, no rough guardian of the herds and flocks. Rash girl, you do not know, you cannot realise, who you run from, and so you run. **Delphi**'s lands are mine, **Claros** and **Tenedos**, and **Patara** acknowledges me king. **Jupiter** is my father. Through me what was, what is, and what will be, are revealed. Through me strings sound in harmony, to song. My aim is certain, but an arrow truer than mine, has wounded my free heart! The whole world calls me the bringer of aid; medicine is my invention; my power is in

herbs. But love cannot be healed by any herb,
nor can the arts that cure others cure their lord!’

Bk I:525-552 Daphne becomes the laurel bough

He would have said more as timid **Peneüs** ran, still lovely to see, leaving him with his words unfinished. The winds bared her body, the opposing breezes in her way fluttered her clothes, and the light airs threw her streaming hair behind her, her beauty enhanced by flight. But the young god could no longer waste time on further blandishments, urged on by **Amor**, he ran on at full speed. Like a hound of **Gaul** starting a hare in an empty field, that heads for its prey, she for safety: he, seeming about to clutch her, thinks now, or now, he has her fast, grazing her heels with his outstretched jaws, while she uncertain whether she is already caught, escaping his bite, spurts from the muzzle touching her. So the virgin and the god: he driven by desire, she by fear. He ran faster,

Amor giving him wings, and allowed her no rest, hung on her fleeing shoulders, breathed on the hair flying round her neck. Her strength was gone, she grew pale, overcome by the effort of her rapid flight, and seeing Peneus's waters near cried out 'Help me father! If your streams have divine powers change me, destroy this beauty that pleases too well!' Her prayer was scarcely done when a heavy numbness seized her limbs, thin bark closed over her breast, her hair turned into leaves, her arms into branches, her feet so swift a moment ago stuck fast in slow-growing roots, her face was lost in the canopy. Only her shining beauty was left.

Bk I:553-567 Phoebus honours Daphne

Even like this **Phoebus** loved her and, placing his hand against the trunk, he felt her heart still quivering under the new bark. He clasped the branches as if they were parts of human arms, and kissed the wood. But even the wood shrank from his kisses, and the god said

‘Since you cannot be my bride, you must be my tree! Laurel, with you my hair will be wreathed, with you my lyre, with you my quiver. You will go with the Roman generals when joyful voices acclaim their triumph, and the Capitol witnesses their long processions. You will stand outside Augustus’s doorposts, a faithful guardian, and keep watch over the crown of oak between them. And just as my head with its uncropped hair is always young, so you also will wear the beauty of undying leaves.’ **Paeon** had done: the laurel bowed her newly made branches, and seemed to shake her leafy crown like a head giving consent.

Bk I:568-587 Inachus mourns for Io

There is a grove in **Haemonia**, closed in on every side by wooded cliffs. They call it Tempe. Through it the river **Peneus** rolls, with foaming waters, out of the roots of **Pindus**, and in its violent fall gathers clouds, driving the smoking mists along, raining down spray onto

the tree tops, and deafening remoter places with its roar. Here is the house, the home, the innermost sanctuary of the great river. Seated here, in a rocky cavern, he laid down the law to the waters and the nymphs who lived in his streams. Here the rivers of his own country first met, unsure whether to console with or celebrate **Daphne**'s father: **Spercheus** among poplars, restless **Enipeus**, gentle **Amphrysus**, **Aeas** and ancient **Apidanus**; and then later all the others that, whichever way their force carries them, bring down their weary wandering waters to the sea. Only **Inachus** is missing, but hidden in the deepest cave he swells his stream with tears, and in utter misery laments his lost daughter, **Io**, not knowing if she is alive or among the shades. Since he cannot find her anywhere, he imagines her nowhere, and his heart fears worse than death.

Bk I:587-600 Jupiter's rape of Io

Jupiter first saw her returning from her father's stream, and said 'Virgin, worthy of Jupiter himself, who will make some unknown man happy when you share his bed, while it is hot and the sun is at the highest point of its arc, find shade in the deep woods! (and he showed her the woods' shade). But if you are afraid to enter the wild beasts' lairs, you can go into the remote woods in safety, protected by a god, and not by any lesser god, but by the one who holds the sceptre of heaven in his mighty hand, and who hurls the flickering bolts of lightning. Do not fly from me!' She was already in flight. She had left behind **Lerna**'s pastures, and the **Lyrcean** plain's wooded fields, when the god hid the wide earth in a covering of fog, caught the fleeing girl, and raped her.

Bk I:601-621 Jupiter transforms Io to a heifer

Meanwhile **Juno** looked down into the heart of **Argos**, surprised that rapid mists had

created night in shining daylight. She knew they were not vapours from the river, or breath from the damp earth. She looked around to see where her husband was, knowing by now the intrigues of a spouse so often caught in the act. When she could not find him in the skies, she said 'Either I am wrong, or being wronged' and gliding down from heaven's peak, she stood on earth ordering the clouds to melt. **Jupiter** had a presage of his wife's arrival and had changed **Inachus**'s daughter into a gleaming heifer. Even in that form she was beautiful. **Saturnia** approved the animal's looks, though grudgingly, asking, then, whose she was, where from, what herd, as if she did not know. Jupiter, to stop all inquiry, lied, saying she had been born from the earth. Then Saturnia claimed her as a gift. What could he do? Cruel to sacrifice his love, but suspicious not to. **Shame** urges him to it, **Amor** urges not. Amor would have conquered Shame, but if he refused so slight a gift as a heifer to the companion of his race and bed, it might appear no heifer!

Bk I:622-641 Juno claims Io and Argus guards her

Though her rival was given up the goddess did not abandon her fears at once, cautious of **Jupiter** and afraid of his trickery, until she had given **Io** into **Argus**'s keeping, that son of **Arestor**. Argus had a hundred eyes round his head, that took their rest two at a time in succession while the others kept watch and stayed on guard. Wherever he stood he was looking at Io, and had Io in front of his eyes when his back was turned. He let her graze in the light, but when the sun sank below the earth, he penned her, and fastened a rope round her innocent neck. She grazed on the leaves of trees and bitter herbs. She often lay on the bare ground, and the poor thing drank water from muddy streams. When she wished to stretch her arms out to Argus in supplication, she had no arms to stretch. Trying to complain, a lowing came from her mouth, and she was alarmed and

frightened by the sound of her own voice. When she came to **Inachus**'s riverbanks where she often used to play and saw her gaping mouth and her new horns in the water, she grew frightened and fled terrified of herself.

Bk I:642-667 Inachus finds Io and grieves for her

The **naiads** did not know her: **Inachus** himself did not know her, but she followed her father, followed her sisters, allowing herself to be petted, and offering herself to be admired. Old Inachus pulled some grasses and held them out to her: she licked her father's hand and kissed his palm, could not hold back her tears, and if only words could have come she would have begged for help, telling her name and her distress. With letters drawn in the dust with her hoof, instead of words, she traced the sad story of her changed form. 'Pity me!' said her father Inachus, clinging to the groaning heifer's horns and snow-white neck, 'Pity me!' he sighed;

‘Are you really my daughter I searched the wide world for? There was less sadness with you lost than found! Without speech, you do not answer in words to mine, only heave deep sighs from your breast, and all you can do is low in reply to me. Unknowingly I was arranging marriage and a marriage-bed for you, hoping for a son-in-law first and then grandchildren. Now you must find a mate from the herd, and from the herd get you a son. I am not allowed by dying to end such sorrow; it is hard to be a god, the door of death closed to me, my grief goes on immortal for ever.’ As he mourned, Argus with his star-like eyes drove her to distant pastures, dragging her out of her father’s arms. There, sitting at a distance he occupied a high peak of the mountain, where resting he could keep a watch on every side.

Bk I:668-688 Jupiter sends Mercury to kill Argus

Now the king of the gods can no longer stand **Phoronis**’s great sufferings, and he calls

his son, born of the shining **Pleiad**, and orders him to kill **Argus**. **Mercury**, quickly puts on his winged sandals, takes his sleep-inducing wand in his divine hand, and sets his cap on his head. Dressed like this the son of **Jupiter** touches down on the earth from his father's stronghold. There he takes off his cap, and doffs his wings, only keeping his wand. Taking this, disguised as a shepherd, he drives she-goats, stolen on the way, through solitary lanes, and plays his reed pipe as he goes. **Juno's** guard is captivated by this new sound. 'You there, whoever you are' Argus calls 'you could sit here beside me on this rock; there's no better grass elsewhere for your flock, and you can see that the shade is fine for shepherds.'

The descendant of **Atlas** sits down, and passes the day in conversation, talking of many things, and playing on his reed pipe, trying to conquer those watching eyes. Argus however fights to overcome gentle sleep, and though he allows some of his eyes to close, the rest stay

vigilant. He even asks, since the reed pipe has only just been invented, how it was invented.

Bk I:689-721 Mercury tells the story of Syrinx

So the god explained ‘On **Arcadia**’s cold mountain slopes among the wood nymphs, the hamadryads, of Mount **Nonacris**, one was the most celebrated: the nymphs called her **Syrinx**. She had often escaped from the **satyrs** chasing her, and from others of the demi-gods that live in shadowy woods and fertile fields. But she followed the worship of the **Ortygian** goddess in staying virgin. Her dress caught up like **Diana** she deceives the eye, and could be mistaken for **Leto**’s daughter, except that her bow is of horn, and the other’s is of gold. Even so she is deceptive. **Pan**, whose head is crowned with a wreath of sharp pine shoots, saw her, coming from Mount **Lycaeus**, and spoke to her.’ Now Mercury still had to relate what Pan said, and how the nymph, despising

his entreaties, ran through the wilds till she came to the calm waters of sandy **Ladon**; and how when the river stopped her flight she begged her sisters of the stream to change her; and how Pan, when he thought he now had Syrinx, found that instead of the nymph's body he only held reeds from the marsh; and, while he sighed there, the wind in the reeds, moving, gave out a clear, plaintive sound. Charmed by this new art and its sweet tones the god said 'This way of communing with you is still left to me' So unequal lengths of reed, joined together with wax, preserved the girl's name.

About to tell all this, **Cyllenian** Mercury saw that every eye had succumbed and their light was lost in sleep. Quickly he stops speaking and deepens their rest, caressing those drowsy eyes with touches of his magic wand. Then straightaway he strikes the nodding head, where it joins the neck, with his curved sword, and sends it bloody down the rocks, staining the steep cliff. **Argus**, you are overthrown, the light

of your many eyes is extinguished, and one dark sleeps under so many eyelids.

Bk I:722-746 Io is returned to human form

Saturnia took his eyes and set them into the feathers of her own bird, and filled the tail with star-like jewels. Immediately she blazed with anger, and did not hold back from its consequences. She set a terrifying **Fury** in front of the eyes and mind of that ‘slut’ from the **Argolis**, buried a tormenting restlessness in her breast, and drove her as a fugitive through the world. You, **Nile**, put an end to her immeasurable suffering. When she reached you, she fell forward onto her knees on the riverbank and turning back her long neck with her face upwards, in the only way she could, looked to the sky, and with groans and tears and sad lowing seemed to reproach **Jupiter** and beg him to end her troubles. Jupiter threw his arms round his wife’s neck and pleaded for an end to vengeance, saying ‘Do not fear, in future she

will never be a source of pain' and he called the **Stygian** waters to witness his words.

As the goddess grows calmer, **Io** regains her previous appearance, and becomes what she once was. The rough hair leaves her body, the horns disappear, the great eyes grow smaller, the gaping mouth shrinks, the shoulders and hands return, and the hooves vanish, each hoof changing back into five nails. Nothing of the heifer is left except her whiteness. Able to stand on two feet she raises herself erect and fearing to speak in case she lows like a heifer, timidly attempts long neglected words.

Bk I:747-764 Phaethon's parentage

Now she is worshipped as a greatly honoured goddess by crowds of linen clad acolytes. In due time she bore a son, **Epaphus**, who shared the cities' temples with his mother, and was believed to have been conceived from mighty Jupiter's seed. He had a friend, **Phaethon**, child of the **Sun**, equal to him in

spirit and years, who once boasted proudly that **Phoebus** was his father, and refused to concede the claim, which **Inachus**'s grandson could not accept. 'You are mad to believe all your mother says, and you have an inflated image of your father.' Phaethon reddened but, from shame, repressed his anger, and went to his mother **Clymene** with Inachus's reproof. 'To sadden you more, mother, I the free, proud, spirit was silent! I am ashamed that such a reproach can be spoken and not answered. But if I am born at all of divine stock, give me some proof of my high birth, and let me claim my divinity!' So saying he flung his arms round his mother's neck, entreating her, by his own and her husband **Merops**'s life, and by his sisters' marriages, to reveal to him some true sign of his parentage.

Bk I:765-779 Phaethon sets out for the Palace of the Sun

Clymene, moved perhaps by **Phaethon**'s entreaties or more by anger at the words

spoken, stretched both arms out to the sky and looking up at the sun's glow said 'By that brightness marked out by glittering rays, that sees us and hears us, I swear to you, my son, that you are the child of the Sun; of that being you see; you are the child of he who governs the world; if I lie, may he himself decline to look on me again, and may this be the last light to reach our eyes! It is no great effort for you yourself to find your father's house. The place he rises from is near our land. If you have it in mind to do so, go and ask the sun himself!' Immediately Phaethon, delighted at his mother's words, imagining the heavens in his mind, darts off and crosses **Ethiopia** his people's land, then India, land of those bathed in radiant fire, and with energy reaches the East.

Book II



Bk II:1-30 The Palace of the Sun

The palace of the **Sun** towered up with raised columns, bright with glittering gold, and gleaming bronze like fire. Shining ivory crowned the roofs, and the twin doors radiated light from polished silver. The work of art was finer than the material: on the doors **Mulciber** had engraved the waters that surround the earth's centre, the earthly globe, and the overarching sky. The dark blue sea contains the gods, melodious **Triton**, shifting **Proteus**, **Aegaeon** crushing two huge whales together, his arms across their backs, and **Doris** with her daughters, some seen swimming, some sitting on rocks drying their sea-green hair, some riding the backs of fish. They are neither all alike, nor all different, just as sisters should be. The land shows men and towns, woods and creatures, rivers and nymphs and other rural gods. Above them was an image of the glowing sky, with six signs of the zodiac on the right hand door and the same number on the left.

As soon as **Clymene**'s son had climbed the steep path there, and entered the house of this parent of whose relationship to him he was uncertain, he immediately made his way into his father's presence, but stopped some way off, unable to bear his light too close. Wearing a purple robe, **Phoebus** sat on a throne shining with bright emeralds. To right and left stood the Day, Month, and Year, the Century and the equally spaced **Hours**. Young Spring stood there circled with a crown of flowers, naked Summer wore a garland of ears of corn, Autumn was stained by the trodden grapes, and icy Winter had white, bristling hair.

Bk II:31-48 Phaethon and his father

The **Sun**, seated in the middle of them, looked at the boy, who was fearful of the strangeness of it all, with eyes that see everything, and said 'What reason brings you here? What do you look for on these heights, **Phaethon**, son that no father need deny?'

Phaethon replied ‘Universal light of the great world, **Phoebus**, father, if you let me use that name, if **Clymene** is not hiding some fault behind false pretence, give me proof father, so they will believe I am your true offspring, and take away this uncertainty from my mind!’ He spoke, and his father removed the crown of glittering rays from his head and ordered him to come nearer. Embracing him, he said ‘It is not to be denied you are worthy to be mine, and Clymene has told you the truth of your birth. So that you can banish doubt, ask for any favour, so that I can grant it to you. May the **Stygian** lake, that my eyes have never seen, by which the gods swear, witness my promise.’ Hardly had he settled back properly in his seat when the boy asked for his father’s chariot and the right to control his wing-footed horses for a day.

Bk II:49-62 The Sun’s admonitions

His father regretted his oath. Three times, and then a fourth, shaking his bright head, he said ‘Your words show mine were rash; if only it were right to retract my promise! I confess my boy I would only refuse you this one thing. It is right to dissuade you. What you want is unsafe. **Phaethon** you ask too great a favour, and one that is unfitting for your strength and boyish years. Your fate is mortal: it is not mortal what you ask. Unknowingly you aspire to more than the gods can share. Though each deity can please themselves, within what is allowed, no one except myself has the power to occupy the chariot of fire. Even the lord of mighty **Olympus**, who hurls terrifying lightning-bolts from his right hand, cannot drive this team, and who is greater than **Jupiter**?’

Bk II:63-89 His further warnings

‘The first part of the track is steep, and one that my fresh horses at dawn can hardly climb. In mid-heaven it is highest, where to look down

on earth and sea often alarms even me, and makes my heart tremble with awesome fear. The last part of the track is downwards and needs sure control. Then even **Tethys** herself, who receives me in her submissive waves, is accustomed to fear that I might dive headlong. Moreover the rushing sky is constantly turning, and drags along the remote stars, and whirls them in rapid orbits. I move the opposite way, and its momentum does not overcome me as it does all other things, and I ride contrary to its swift rotation. Suppose you are given the chariot. What will you do? Will you be able to counter the turning poles so that the swiftness of the skies does not carry you away? Perhaps you conceive in imagination that there are groves there and cities of the gods and temples with rich gifts. The way runs through ambush, and apparitions of wild beasts! Even if you keep your course, and do not steer awry, you must still avoid the horns of **Taurus** the Bull, **Sagittarius** the **Haemonian** Archer, raging **Leo** and the Lion's jaw, **Scorpio**'s cruel pincers

sweeping out to encircle you from one side, and **Cancer**'s crab-claws reaching out from the other. You will not easily rule those proud horses, breathing out through mouth and nostrils the fires burning in their chests. They scarcely tolerate my control when their fierce spirits are hot, and their necks resist the reins. Beware my boy, that I am not the source of a gift fatal to you, while something can still be done to set right your request!

Bk II:90-110 Phaethon insists on driving the chariot

‘No doubt, since you ask for a certain sign to give you confidence in being born of my blood, I give you that sure sign by fearing for you, and show myself a father by fatherly anxiety. Look at me. If only you could look into my heart, and see a father’s concern from within! Finally, look around you, at the riches the world holds, and ask for anything from all of the good things in earth, sea, and sky. I can

refuse you nothing. Only this one thing I take exception to, which would truly be a punishment and not an honour. **Phaethon**, you ask for punishment as your reward! Why do you unknowingly throw your coaxing arms around my neck? Have no doubt! Whatever you ask will be given, I have sworn it by the **Stygian** streams, but make a wiser choice!’

The warning ended, but Phaethon still rejected his words, and pressed his purpose, blazing with desire to drive the chariot. So, as he had the right, his father led the youth to the high chariot, **Vulcan**’s work. It had an axle of gold, and a gold chariot pole, wheels with golden rims, and circles of silver spokes. Along the yoke chrysolites and gemstones, set in order, glowed with brilliance reflecting **Phoebus**’s own light.

Bk II:111-149 The Sun’s instructions

Now while brave **Phaethon** is gazing in wonder at the workmanship, see, **Aurora**,

awake in the glowing east, opens wide her bright doors, and her rose-filled courts. The stars, whose ranks are shepherded by **Lucifer** the morning star, vanish, and he, last of all, leaves his station in the sky.

When **Titan** saw his setting, as the earth and skies were reddening, and just as the crescent of the vanishing moon faded, he ordered the swift **Hours** to yoke his horses. The goddesses quickly obeyed his command, and led the team, sated with ambrosial food and breathing fire, out of the tall stables, and put on their ringing harness. Then the father rubbed his son's face with a sacred ointment, and made it proof against consuming flames, and placed his rays amongst his hair, and foreseeing tragedy, and fetching up sighs from his troubled heart, said 'If you can at least obey your father's promptings, spare the whip, boy, and rein them in more strongly! They run swiftly of their own accord. It is a hard task to check their eagerness. And do not please yourself, taking a path straight through the five zones of heaven!

The track runs obliquely in a wide curve, and bounded by the three central regions, avoids the southern pole and the **Arctic north**. This is your road, you will clearly see my wheel-marks, and so that heaven and earth receive equal warmth, do not sink down too far or heave the chariot into the upper air! Too high and you will scorch the roof of heaven: too low, the earth. The middle way is safest.

Nor must you swerve too far right towards writhing **Serpens**, nor lead your wheels too far left towards sunken **Ara**. Hold your way between them! I leave the rest to **Fortune**, I pray she helps you, and takes better care of you than you do yourself. While I have been speaking, dewy night has touched her limit on **Hesperus**'s far western shore. We have no time for freedom! We are needed: Aurora, the dawn, shines, and the shadows are gone. Seize the reins in your hand, or if your mind can be changed, take my counsel, do not take my horses! While you can, while you still stand on solid ground, before unknowingly you take to

the chariot you have unluckily chosen, let me light the world, while you watch in safety!

Bk II:150-177 The Horses run wild

The boy has already taken possession of the fleet chariot, and stands proudly, and joyfully, takes the light reins in his hands, and thanks his unwilling father.

Meanwhile the sun's swift horses, **Pyrois**, **Eois**, **Aethon**, and the fourth, **Phlegon**, fill the air with fiery whinnying, and strike the bars with their hooves. When **Tethys**, ignorant of her grandson's fate, pushed back the gate, and gave them access to the wide heavens, rushing out, they tore through the mists in the way with their hooves and, lifted by their wings, overtook the East winds rising from the same region. But the weight was lighter than the horses of the Sun could feel, and the yoke was free of its accustomed load. Just as curved-sided boats rock in the waves without their proper ballast, and being too light are unstable at sea, so the

chariot, free of its usual burden, leaps in the air and rushes into the heights as though it were empty.

As soon as they feel this the team of four run wild and leave the beaten track, no longer running in their pre-ordained course. He was terrified, unable to handle the reins entrusted to him, not knowing where the track was, nor, if he had known, how to control the team. Then for the first time the chill stars of the **Great and Little Bears**, grew hot, and tried in vain to douse themselves in forbidden waters. And the Dragon, **Draco**, that is nearest to the frozen pole, never formidable before and sluggish with the cold, now glowed with heat, and took to seething with new fury. They say that you **Bootës** also fled in confusion, slow as you are and hampered by the **Plough**.

Bk II:178-200 Phaethon lets go of the reins

When the unlucky **Phaethon** looked down from the heights of the sky at the earth far, far

below he grew pale and his knees quaked with sudden fear, and his eyes were robbed of shadow by the excess light. Now he would rather he had never touched his father's horses, and regrets knowing his true parentage and possessing what he asked for. Now he wants only to be called **Merops**'s son, as he is driven along like a ship in a northern gale, whose master lets go the ropes, and leaves her to prayer and the gods. What can he do? Much of the sky is now behind his back, but more is before his eyes. Measuring both in his mind, he looks ahead to the west he is not fated to reach and at times back to the east. Dazed he is ignorant how to act, and can neither grasp the reins nor has the power to loose them, nor can he change course by calling the horses by name. Also, alarmed, he sees the marvellous forms of huge creatures everywhere in the glowing sky. There is a place where **Scorpio** bends his pincers in twin arcs, and, with his tail and his curving arms stretched out to both sides, spreads his body and limbs over two star signs.

When the boy saw this monster drenched with black and poisonous venom threatening to wound him with its arched sting, robbed of his wits by chilling horror, he dropped the reins.

Bk II:201-226 The mountains burn

When the horses feel the reins lying across their backs, after he has thrown them down, they veer off course and run unchecked through unknown regions of the air. Wherever their momentum takes them there they run, lawlessly, striking against the fixed stars in deep space and hurrying the chariot along remote tracks. Now they climb to the heights of heaven, now rush headlong down its precipitous slope, sweeping a course nearer to the earth. The **Moon**, amazed, sees her brother's horses running below her own, and the boiling clouds smoke. The earth bursts into flame, in the highest regions first, opens in deep fissures and all its moisture dries up. The meadows turn white, the trees are consumed with all their

leaves, and the scorched corn makes its own destruction. But I am bemoaning the lesser things. Great cities are destroyed with all their walls, and the flames reduce whole nations with all their peoples to ashes. The woodlands burn, with the hills. Mount **Athos** is on fire, **Cilician Taurus**, **Tmolus**, **Oete** and **Ida**, dry now once covered with fountains, and **Helicon** home of the **Muses**, and **Haemus** not yet linked with King **Oeagrius**'s name. **Etna** blazes with immense redoubled flames, the twin peaks of **Parnassus**, **Eryx**, **Cynthus**, **Othrys**, **Rhodope** fated at last to lose its snow, **Mimas** and **Dindyma**, **Mycale** and **Cithaeron**, ancient in rites. Its chilly climate cannot save **Scythia**. The **Caucasus** burn, and **Ossa** along with **Pindus**, and **Olympos** greater than either, and the lofty **Alps** and cloud-capped **Apennines**.

Bk II:227-271 The rivers are dried up

Then, truly, **Phaethon** sees the whole earth on fire. He cannot bear the violent heat, and he

breathes the air as if from a deep furnace. He feels his chariot glowing white. He can no longer stand the ash and sparks flung out, and is enveloped in dense, hot smoke. He does not know where he is, or where he is going, swept along by the will of the winged horses.

It was then, so they believe, that the **Ethiopians** acquired their dark colour, since the blood was drawn to the surface of their bodies. Then **Libya** became a desert, the heat drying up her moisture. Then the nymphs with dishevelled hair wept bitterly for their lakes and fountains. **Boeotia** searches for **Dirce's** rills, **Argos** for **Amydone's** fountain, **Corinth** for the **Pirenian** spring. Nor are the rivers safe because of their wide banks. The **Don** turns to steam in mid-water, and old **Peneus**, and **Mysian Caicus** and swift-flowing **Ismenus**, **Arcadian Erymanthus**, **Xanthus** destined to burn again, golden **Lycormas** and **Maeander** playing in its watery curves, **Thracian Melas** and **Laconian Eurotas**. **Babylonian Euphrates** burns. **Orontes** burns and quick **Thermodon**, **Ganges**,

Phasis, and **Danube**. **Alpheus** boils. **Spercheos**'s banks are on fire. The gold that the River **Tagus** carries is molten with the fires, and the swans for whose singing **Maeonia**'s riverbanks are famous, are scorched in **Cayster**'s midst. The **Nile** fled in terror to the ends of the earth, and hid its head that remains hidden. Its seven mouths are empty and dust-filled, seven channels without a stream.

The same fate parches the **Thracian** rivers, **Hebrus** and **Strymon**, and the western rivers, **Rhine**, **Rhone**, **Po** and the **Tiber** who had been promised universal power. Everywhere the ground breaks apart, light penetrates through the cracks down into **Tartarus**, and terrifies the king of the underworld and his queen. The sea contracts and what was a moment ago wide sea is a parched expanse of sand. Mountains emerge from the water, and add to the scattered **Cyclades**. The fish dive deep, and the dolphins no longer dare to rise arcing above the water, as they have done, into the air. The lifeless bodies of seals float face upwards on the deep. They

even say that **Nereus** himself, and **Doris** and her daughters drifted through warm caves. Three times **Neptune** tried to lift his fierce face and arms above the waters. Three times he could not endure the burning air.

Bk II:272-300 Earth complains

Nevertheless, kindly **Earth**, surrounded as she was by sea, between the open waters and the dwindling streams that had buried themselves in their mother's dark womb, lifted her smothered face. Putting her hand to her brow, and shaking everything with her mighty tremors, she sank back a little lower than she used to be, and spoke in a faint voice 'If this pleases you, if I have deserved it, O king of the gods, why delay your lightning bolts? If it is right for me to die through the power of fire, let me die by your fire and let the doer of it lessen the pain of the deed! I can hardly open my lips to say these words' (the heat was choking her). Look at my scorched hair and the ashes in my

eyes, the ashes over my face! Is this the honour and reward you give me for my fruitfulness and service, for carrying wounds from the curved plough and the hoe, for being worked throughout the year, providing herbage and tender grazing for the flocks, produce for the human race and incense to minister to you gods?

Even if you find me deserving of ruin, what have the waves done, why does your brother deserve this? Why are the waters that were his share by lot diminished and so much further from the sky? If neither regard for me or for your brother moves you pity at least your own heavens! Look around you on either side: both the poles are steaming! If the fire should melt them, your own palace will fall! **Atlas** himself is suffering, and can barely hold up the white-hot sky on his shoulders! If the sea and the land and the kingdom of the heavens are destroyed, we are lost in ancient chaos! Save whatever is left from the flames, and think of our common interest!

Bk II:301-328 Jupiter intervenes and Phaethon dies

So the **Earth** spoke, and unable to tolerate the heat any longer or speak any further, she withdrew her face into her depths closer to the caverns of the dead. But the all-powerful father of the gods climbs to the highest summit of heaven, from where he spreads his clouds over the wide earth, from where he moves the thunder and hurls his quivering lightning bolts, calling on the gods, especially on him who had handed over the sun chariot, to witness that, unless he himself helps, the whole world will be overtaken by a ruinous fate. Now he has no clouds to cover the earth, or rain to shower from the sky. He thundered, and balancing a lightning bolt in his right hand threw it from eye-level at the charioteer, removing him, at the same moment, from the chariot and from life, extinguishing fire with fierce fire. Thrown into confusion the horses, lurching in different

directions, wrench their necks from the yoke and throw off the broken harness. Here the reins lie, there the axle torn from the pole, there the spokes of shattered wheels, and the fragments of the wrecked chariot are flung far and wide.

But **Phaethon**, flames ravaging his glowing hair, is hurled headlong, leaving a long trail in the air, as sometimes a star does in the clear sky, appearing to fall although it does not fall. Far from his own country, in a distant part of the world, the river god **Eridanus** takes him from the air, and bathes his smoke-blackened face. There the Italian nymphs consign his body, still smoking from that triple-forked flame, to the earth, and they also carve a verse in the rock:

HERE PHAETHON LIES WHO THE SUN'S
JOURNEY MADE
**DARED ALL THOUGH HE BY
WEAKNESS WAS BETRAYED**

Bk II:329-343 Phaethon's sisters grieve for him

Now the father, pitiful, ill with grief, hid his face, and, if we can believe it, a whole day went by without the sun. But the fires gave light, so there was something beneficial amongst all that evil. But **Clymene**, having uttered whatever can be uttered at such misfortune, grieving and frantic and tearing her breast, wandered over the whole earth first looking for her son's limbs, and then failing that his bones. She found his bones already buried however, beside the riverbank in a foreign country. Falling to the ground she bathed with tears the name she could read on the cold stone and warmed it against her naked breast. The **Heliads**, her daughters and the **Sun's**, cry no less, and offer their empty tribute of tears to the dead, and, beating their breasts with their hands, they call for their brother night and day, and lie down on his tomb, though he cannot hear their pitiful sighs.

Bk II:344-366 The sisters turned into poplar trees

Four times the moon had joined her crescent horns to form her bright disc. They by habit, since use creates habit, devoted themselves to mourning. Then **Phaethüsa**, the eldest sister, when she tried to throw herself to the ground, complained that her ankles had stiffened, and when radiant **Lampetia** tried to come near her she was suddenly rooted to the spot. A third sister attempting to tear at her hair pulled out leaves. One cried out in pain that her legs were sheathed in wood, another that her arms had become long branches. While they wondered at this, bark closed round their thighs and by degrees over their waists, breasts, shoulders, and hands, and all that was left free were their mouths calling for their mother. What can their mother do but go here and there as the impulse takes her, pressing her lips to theirs where she can? It is no good. She tries to

pull the bark from their bodies and break off new branches with her hands, but drops of blood are left behind like wounds. ‘Stop, mother, please’ cries out whichever one she hurts, ‘Please stop: It is my body in the tree you are tearing. Now, farewell.’ and the bark closed over her with her last words. Their tears still flow, and hardened by the sun, fall as amber from the virgin branches, to be taken by the bright river and sent onwards to adorn Roman brides.

Bk II:367-380 Cycnus

Cycnus, the son of **Sthenelus** witnessed this marvel, who though he was kin to you Phaethon, through his mother, was closer still in love. Now, though he had ruled the people and great cities of **Liguria**, he left his kingdom, and filled **Eridanus**’s green banks and streams, and the woods the sisters had become part of, with his grief. As he did so his voice vanished and white feathers hid his hair, his long neck

stretched out from his body, his reddened fingers became webbed, wings covered his sides, and a rounded beak his mouth. So Cycnus became a new kind of bird, the swan. But he had no faith in **Jupiter** and the heavens, remembering the lightning bolt the god in his severity had hurled. He looked for standing water, and open lakes hating fire, choosing to live in floods rather than flames.

Bk II:381-400 The Sun returns to his task

Meanwhile **Phaethon**'s father, mourning and without his accustomed brightness, as if in eclipse, hated the light, himself and the day. He gave his mind over to grief, and to grief added his anger, and refused to provide his service to the earth. 'Enough' he says 'since the beginning my task has given me no rest and I am weary of work without end and labour without honour! Whoever chooses to can steer the chariot of light! If no one does, and all the gods acknowledge they cannot, let **Jupiter** himself

do it, so that for a while at least, while he tries to take the reins, he must put aside the lightning bolts that leave fathers bereft! Then he will know when he has tried the strength of those horses, with hooves of fire, that the one who failed to rule them well did not deserve to be killed.’

All the gods gather round **Sol**, as he talks like this, and beg him not to shroud everything with darkness. Jupiter himself tries to excuse the fire he hurled, adding threats to his entreaties as kings do. Then **Phoebus** rounds up his horses, maddened and still trembling with terror, and in pain lashes out at them with goad and whip (really lashes out) reproaching them and blaming them for his son’s death.

Bk II:401-416 Jupiter sees Callisto

Now the all-powerful father of the gods circuits the vast walls of heaven and examines them to check if anything has been loosened by the violent fires. When he sees they are as solid

and robust as ever he inspects the earth and the works of humankind. Arcadia above all is his greatest care. He restores her fountains and streams, that are still hardly daring to flow, gives grass to the bare earth, leaves to the trees, and makes the scorched forests grow green again.

Often, as he came and went, he would stop short at the sight of a girl from **Nonacris**, feeling the fire take in the very marrow of his bones. She was not one to spin soft wool or play with her hair. A clasp fastened her tunic, and a white ribbon held back her loose tresses. Dressed like this, with a spear or a bow in her hand, she was one of **Diana**'s companions. No nymph who roamed **Maenalus** was dearer to **Trivia**, goddess of the crossways, than she, **Callisto**, was. But no favour lasts long.

Bk II:417-440 Jupiter rapes Callisto

The sun was high, just past the zenith, when she entered a grove that had been

untouched through the years. Here she took her quiver from her shoulder, unstrung her curved bow, and lay down on the grass, her head resting on her painted quiver. **Jupiter**, seeing her there weary and unprotected, said ‘Here, surely, my wife will not see my cunning, or if she does find out it is, oh it is, worth a quarrel! Quickly he took on the face and dress of **Diana**, and said ‘Oh, girl who follows me, where in my domains have you been hunting?’

The virgin girl got up from the turf replying ‘Greetings, goddess greater than Jupiter: I say it even though he himself hears it.’ He did hear, and laughed, happy to be judged greater than himself, and gave her kisses unrestrainedly, and not those that virgins give. When she started to say which woods she had hunted he embraced and prevented her and not without committing a crime. Face to face with him, as far as a woman could, (I wish you had seen her Juno: you would have been kinder to her) she fought him, but how could a girl win, and who is more powerful than Jove? Victorious, Jupiter made

for the furthest reaches of the sky: while to **Callisto** the grove was odious and the wood seemed knowing. As she retraced her steps she almost forgot her quiver and its arrows, and the bow she had left hanging.

Bk II:441-465 Diana discover's Callisto's shame

Behold how **Diana**, with her band of huntresses, approaching from the heights of **Maenalus**, magnificent from the kill, spies her there, and seeing her calls out. At the shout she runs, afraid at first in case it is **Jupiter** disguised, but when she sees the other nymphs come forward she realises there is no trickery and joins their number. Alas! How hard it is not to show one's guilt in one's face! She can scarcely lift her eyes from the ground, not as she used to be, wedded to her goddess's side or first of the whole company, but is silent and by her blushing shows signs of her shame at being attacked. Even if she were not herself virgin,

Diana could sense her guilt in a thousand ways. They say all the nymphs could feel it.

Nine crescent moons had since grown full when the goddess faint from the chase in her brother's hot sunlight found a cool grove out of which a murmuring stream ran, winding over fine sand. She loved the place and tested the water with her foot. Pleased with this too she said 'Any witness is far away, let's bathe our bodies naked in the flowing water.' The **Arcadian** girl blushed: all of them took off their clothes: one of them tried to delay: hesitantly the tunic was removed and there her shame was revealed with her naked body. Terrified she tried to conceal her swollen belly. Diana cried 'Go, far away from here: do not pollute the sacred fountain!' and the Moon-goddess commanded her to leave her band of followers.

Bk II:466-495 Callisto turned into a bear

The great Thunderer's wife had known about all this for a long time and had held back her severe punishment until the proper time. Now there was no reason to wait. The girl had given birth to a boy, **Arcas**, and that in itself enraged **Juno**. When she turned her angry eyes and mind to thought of him she cried out 'Nothing more was needed, you adulteress, than your fertility, and your marking the insult to me by giving birth, making public my **Jupiter**'s crime. You'll not carry this off safely. Now, insolent girl, I will take that shape away from you, that pleased you and my husband so much!' At this she clutched her in front by the hair of her forehead and pulled her face forwards onto the ground. **Callisto** stretched out her arms for mercy: those arms began to bristle with coarse black hairs: her hands arched over and changed into curved claws to serve as feet: and her face, that Jupiter had once praised, was disfigured by gaping jaws: and so that her prayers and words of entreaty might not attract him her power of speech was taken from her.

An angry, threatening growl, harsh and terrifying, came from her throat. Still her former feelings remained intact though she was now a bear. She showed her misery in continual groaning, raising such hands as she had left to the starry sky, feeling, though she could not speak it, Jupiter's indifference. Ah, how often she wandered near the house and fields that had once been her home, not daring to sleep in the lonely woods! Ah, how often she was driven among the rocks by the baying hounds, and the huntress fled in fear from the hunters! Often she hid at the sight of wild beasts forgetting what she was, and though a bear she shuddered at the sight of other bears on the mountains and feared the wolves though her father **Lycaon** ran with them.

Bk II:496-507 Arcas and Callisto become constellations

And now **Arcas**, grandson of **Lycaon**, had reached his fifteenth year ignorant of his

parentage. While he was hunting wild animals, while he was finding suitable glades and penning up the **Erymanthian** groves with woven nets, he came across his mother, who stood still at sight of Arcas and appeared to know him. He shrank back from those unmoving eyes gazing at him so fixedly, uncertain what made him afraid, and when she quickly came nearer he was about to pierce her chest with his lethal spear. All-powerful **Jupiter** restrained him and in the same moment removed them and the possibility of that wrong, and together, caught up through the void on the winds, he set them in the heavens and made them similar constellations, the **Great** and **Little Bear**.

Bk II:508-530 Juno complains to Tethys and Oceanus

Juno was angered when she saw his *inamorato* shining among the stars, and went down into the waters to white-haired **Tethys**

and old **Oceanus** to whom the gods often make reverence. When they asked her the reason for her visit she began ‘You ask me why I, the queen of the gods, have left my home in the heavens to be here? Another has taken my place in the sky! I tell a lie, if you do not see, when night falls and the world darkens, newly exalted stars to wound me, set in the sky, where the remotest and shortest orbit circles the uttermost pole. Why should anyone wish to avoid wounding Juno or dread my enmity if I only benefit those I harm? Oh what a great achievement! Oh what marvellous powers I have! I stopped her being human and she becomes a goddess! This is the punishment I inflict on the guilty! This is my wonderful sovereignty! Let him take away her animal form and restore her former beauty as he did before with that **Argive** girl, **Io**. Why not divorce **Juno**, install her in my place, and let **Lycaon** be his father-in-law? If this contemptible insult to your foster-child moves you, shut out the seven stars of the **Bear** from

your dark blue waters, repulse this constellation set in the heavens as a reward for her defilement, and do not let my rival dip in your pure flood!’

Bk II:531-565 The Raven and the Crow

The gods of the sea nodded their consent. Then **Saturnia**, in her light chariot drawn by painted peacocks, drove up through the clear air. These peacocks had only recently been painted, when **Argus** was killed, at the same time that your wings, **Corvus**, croaking Raven, were suddenly changed to black, though they were white before. He was once a bird with silver-white plumage, equal to the spotless doves, not inferior to the geese, those saviours of the Capitol with their watchful cries, or the swan, the lover of rivers. His speech condemned him. Because of his ready speech he, who was once snow white, was now white’s opposite.

Coronis of **Larissa** was the loveliest girl in all **Thessaly**. Certainly she pleased you, god of **Delphi**. Well, as long as she was faithful, or not caught out. But that bird of **Phoebus** discovered her adultery and, merciless informer, flew straight to his master to reveal the secret crime. The garrulous Crow followed with flapping wings, wanting to know everything, but when he heard the reason, he said ‘This journey will do you no good: don’t ignore my prophecy! See what I was, see what I am, and search out the justice in it. Truth was my downfall.

Once upon a time **Pallas** hid a child, **Erichthonius**, born without a human mother, in a box made of **Actaeon** osiers. She gave this to the three virgin daughters of two-natured **Cecrops**, who was part human part serpent, and ordered them not to pry into its secret. Hidden in the light leaves that grew thickly over an elm-tree I set out to watch what they might do. Two of the girls, **Pandrosus** and **Herse**, obeyed without cheating, but the third **Aglauros** called her sisters cowards and undid the knots with her

hand, and inside they found a baby boy with a snake stretched out next to him. That act I betrayed to the goddess. And this is the reward I got for it, no longer consecrated to **Minerva**'s protection, and ranked below the Owl, that night-bird! My punishment should be a warning to all birds not to take risks by speaking out.

Bk II:566-595 The Crow's story

And just think, not only had I not asked for her favour, she had sought me out, of her own accord! – Ask **Pallas** herself: though she is angry, she will not deny it even in anger. The famous **Coroneus** was my father, in the land of **Phocis** (it is said to be well known) and I was a royal virgin and wealthy princes courted me (so do not disparage me). But my beauty hurt me. Once when I was walking slowly as I used to do along the crest of the sands by the shore the sea-god saw me and grew hot. When his flattering words and entreaties proved a waste of time, he tried force, and chased after me. I

ran, leaving the solid shore behind, tiring myself out uselessly in the soft sand. Then I called out to gods and men. No mortal heard my voice, but the virgin goddess feels pity for a virgin and she helped me. I was stretching out my arms to the sky: those arms began to darken with soft plumage. I tried to lift my cloak from my shoulders but it had turned to feathers with roots deep in my skin. I tried to beat my naked breast with my hands but found I had neither hands nor naked breast.

I ran, and now the sand did not clog my feet as before but I lifted from the ground, and soon sailed high into the air. So I became an innocent servant of **Minerva**. But what use was that to me if **Nyctimene**, who was turned into an Owl for her dreadful sins, has usurped my place of honour? Or have you not heard the story all **Lesbos** knows well, how Nyctimene desecrated her father's bed? Though she is now a bird she is conscious of guilt at her crime and flees from human sight and the light, and hides her shame

in darkness, and is driven from the whole sky by all the birds.’

Bk II:596-611 Coronis is betrayed and Phoebus kills her

To all this, the Raven replied ‘I pray any evil be on your own head. I spurn empty prophecies’ and, completing the journey he had started, he told his master he had seen **Coronis** lying beside a **Thessalian** youth. The laurel fell from the lover’s head on hearing of the charge, his expression and colour and the tone of his lyre changed, and his mind boiled with growing anger. He seized his usual weapons, strung his bow bending it by the tips, and, with his unerring arrow, pierced the breast that had so often been close to his own. She groaned at the wound, and as the arrow was drawn out her white limbs were drenched with scarlet blood and she cried out ‘ Oh **Phoebus** it was in your power to have punished me, but to have let me give birth first: now two will die in one.’ She

spoke, and then her life flowed out with her blood. A deathly cold stole over her body, emptied of being.

Bk II:612-632 Phoebus repents and saves Aesculapius

Alas! Too late the lover repents of his cruel act, and hates himself for listening to the tale that has so angered him. He hates the bird that has compelled him to know of the fault that brought him pain. He hates the bow, his hand, and the hastily fired arrow as well as that hand. He cradles the fallen girl and attempts to overcome fate with his healing powers. It is too late, and he tries his arts in vain. Later, when all efforts had failed, seeing the funeral pyre prepared to consume her body, then indeed the god groaned from the depths of his heart (since the faces of the heavenly gods cannot be touched by tears), groans no different from those of a young bullock, seeing the hammer

poised at the slaughterer's right ear, crash down on the hollow forehead of a suckling calf.

Even though she cannot know of it, the god pours fragrant incense over her breast, and embraces her body, and unjustly, performs the just rites. He could not let a child of **Phoebus** be destroyed in the same ruin, and he tore his son, **Aesculapius**, from its mother's womb and from the flames, and carried him to the cave of **Chiron** the Centaur, who was half man and half horse. But he stopped the Raven, who had hoped for a reward for telling the truth, from living among the white birds.

Bk II:633-675 Chiron and Chariclo's prophecies

The semi-human was pleased with this foster-child of divine origin, glad at the honour it brought him, when his daughter suddenly appeared, her shoulders covered with her long red hair, whom the nymph **Chariclo** called **Ocyrhoë**, having given birth to her on the

banks of that swift stream. She was not content merely to have learned her father's arts, she also chanted the secrets of the **Fates**.

So when she felt the prophetic frenzy in her mind, and was on fire with the god enclosed in her breast, she looked at the infant boy and cried out 'Grow and thrive, child, healer of all the world! Human beings will often be in your debt, and you will have the right to restore the dead. But if ever it is done regardless of the god's displeasure you will be stopped, by the flame of your grandfather's lightning bolt, from doing so again. From a god you will turn to a bloodless corpse, and then to a god who was a corpse, and so twice renew your fate.

You also, dear father, now immortal, and created by the law of your birth to live on through all the ages, will long for death, when you are tormented by the terrible venom of the Serpent, **Hydra**, absorbed through your wounded limbs. But at last the gods will give you the power to die, and the **Three Goddesses** will sever the thread.' Other prophecies

remained to tell: but she sighed deeply, distressed by the tears welling from her eyes, and cried ‘The **Fates** prevent me, and forbid me further speech. My throat is constricted. These arts are not worth the cost if they incur the gods’ anger against me. Better not to know the future! Now I see my human shape being taken away, now grass contents me for food, now my impulse is to race over the wide fields. I am changing to a mare, the form of my kindred. But why am I completely so? Surely my father is still half human.’ Even as she spoke, the last part of her complaint was hard to understand and her words were troubled. Soon they seemed neither words nor a horse’s neighs, but the imitation of a horse. In a little while she gave out clear whinnying noises, and her arms moved in the grass. Then her fingers came together and one thin solid hoof of horn joined her five fingernails. Her head and the length of her neck extended, the greater part of her long gown became a tail, and the loose hair thrown over her neck hung down as a mane on her right

shoulder. Now she was altered in both voice and features, and from this marvelous happening she gained a new name.

Bk II:676-707 Mercury, Battus and the stolen cattle

The demi-god, son of **Philyra**, wept, and called to you for help in vain, O lord of **Delphi**. You could not re-call mighty **Jupiter**'s command, and, if you had been able to, you were not there. You lived in **Elis** and the **Messenian** lands. That was the time when you wore a shepherd's cloak, carried a wooden crook in your left hand, and in the other a pipe of seven disparate reeds. And while your thoughts were of love, while you played sweetly on your pipe, your cattle, unguarded, strayed, it is said, into the **Pylia**n fields. There, Mercury **Atlantiades**, son of **Maia**, saw them and by his arts drove them into the woods and hid them there. Nobody saw the theft except one old man, well known in that country, whom

they called **Battus**. He served as guardian of a herd of pedigree mares, for a rich man **Neleus**, in the rich meadows and woodland pastures. **Mercury** found him and drawing him away with coaxing hand said ‘Whoever you are, friend, if anyone asks if you have seen any of these cattle, say no, and so that the favour is not unrewarded, you can take a shining heifer for your prize!’ and he handed it over.

The fellow accepted it and replied ‘Go on, you are safe. That stone would betray you quicker than I’ and he even pointed out a stone. **Jupiter**’s son pretended to go, but soon returned in another form and voice, saying ‘Countryman, if you have seen any cattle going this way, help me, and don’t be silent, they were stolen! I’ll give you a reward of a bull and its heifer.’ The old man, hearing the prize doubled said ‘They were at the foot of the mountain, and at the foot of the mountain is where they are.’ Atlantiades laughed. ‘Would you betray me to myself, you rascal? Betray me to myself? And he turned that deceitful body to

solid flint, that even now is called ‘touchstone’, the ‘informer’, and unjustly the old disgrace clings to the stone.

Bk II:708-736 Mercury sees Herse

The god with the caduceus lifted upwards on his paired wings and as he flew looked down on the **Munychian** fields, the land that **Minerva** loves, and on the groves of the cultured **Lyceum**. That day happened to be a festival of Pallas, when, by tradition, innocent girls carried the sacred mysteries to her temple, in flower-wreathed baskets, on their heads. The winged god saw them returning and flew towards them, not directly but in a curving flight, as a swift kite, spying out the sacrificial entrails, wheels above, still fearful of the priests crowding round the victim, but afraid to fly further off, circling eagerly on tilted wings over its hoped-for prey. So agile **Mercury** slanted in flight over the **Athenian** hill, spiraling on the same winds. As **Lucifer** shines more brightly

than the other stars, and golden **Phoebe** outshines Lucifer, so **Herse** was pre-eminent among the virgin girls, the glory of that procession of her comrades. Jupiter's son was astonished at her beauty, and, even though he hung in the air, he was inflamed. Just as when a lead shot is flung from a **Balearic** sling it flies on and becomes red hot, discovering heat in the clouds it did not have before. He altered course, leaving the sky, and heading towards earth, without disguising himself, he was so confident of his own looks. Nevertheless, even though it is so, he takes care to enhance them. He smooths his hair, and arranges his robe to hang neatly so that the golden hem will show, and has his polished wand, that induces or drives away sleep, in his right hand, and his winged sandals gleaming on his trim feet.

Bk II:737-751 Mercury elicits the help of Aglauros

There were three rooms deep inside the house, decorated with tortoiseshell and ivory. **Pandrosus** had the right hand room, **Aglauros** the left, and **Herse** the room between. She of the left hand room first saw the god's approach and dared to ask his name and the reason for his visit. The grandson of **Atlas** and **Pleione** replied 'I am the one who carries my father's messages through the air. My father is Jupiter himself. I won't hide the reason. Only be loyal to your sister and consent to be called my child's aunt. Herse is the reason I am here. I beg you to help a lover.' Aglauros looked at him with the same rapacious eyes with which she had lately looked into golden **Minerva's** hidden secret, and she demanded a heavy weight of gold for her services. Meanwhile she compelled him to leave the house.

Bk II:752-786 Minerva calls on Envy

Now the warrior goddess turned angry eyes on her, and in her emotion drew breath from

deep inside so that both her strong breast and the aegis that covered her breast shook with it. She remembered that this girl had revealed her secret with profane hands, when, breaking her command, she had seen **Erichthonius**, son of **Vulcan**, the **Lemnian**, the child born without a mother. Now the girl would be dear to the god, and to her own sister, and rich with the gold she acquired, demanded by her greed. Straightaway the goddess made for **Envy**'s house that is filthy with dark decay. Her cave was hidden deep among valleys, sunless and inaccessible to the winds, a melancholy place and filled with a numbing cold. Fire is always absent, and fog always fills it.

When the feared war goddess came there, she stood outside the cave, since she had no right to enter the place, and struck the doors with the butt of her spear. With the blow they flew open. Envy could be seen, eating vipers' meat that fed her venom, and at the sight the goddess averted her eyes. But the other got up slowly from the ground, leaving the half-eaten snake flesh, and

came forward with sluggish steps. When she saw the goddess dressed in her armour and her beauty, she moaned and frowned as she sighed. Pallor spreads over her face, and all her body shrivels.

Her sight is skewed, her teeth are livid with decay, her breast is green with bile, and her tongue is suffused with venom. She only smiles at the sight of suffering. She never sleeps, excited by watchful cares. She finds men's successes disagreeable, and pines away at the sight. She gnaws and being gnawed is also her own punishment. Though she hated her so, nevertheless **Tritonia** spoke briefly to her. 'Poison one of **Cecrops**'s daughters with your venom. That is the task. **Aglauros** is the one.' Without more words she fled and with a thrust of her spear sprang from the earth.

Bk II:787-811 Envy poisons Aglauros's heart

Envy, squinting at her as she flees, gives out low mutterings, sorry to think of **Minerva**'s

coming success. She takes her staff bound with strands of briar, and sets out, shrouded in gloomy clouds. Wherever she passes she tramples the flower-filled fields, withers the grass, blasts the highest treetops and poisons homes, cities and peoples with her breath. At last she sees **Athens**, **Tritonia**'s city, flourishing with arts and riches and leisured peace. She can hardly hold back her tears because she sees nothing tearful. But after entering the chamber of **Cecrops**'s daughter, she carried out her command and touched her breast with a hand tinted with darkness and filled her heart with sharp thorns. Then she breathed poisonous, destructive breath into her and spread black venom through her bones and the inside of her lungs. And so that the cause for pain might never be far away she placed **Aglauros**'s sister before her eyes, in imagination, her sister's fortunate marriage, and the beauty of the god, magnifying it all.

Cecrops's daughter, tormented by this, is eaten by secret agony, and troubled by night

and troubled by light, she moans and wastes away in slow, wretched decay, like ice eroded by the fitful sun.

Bk II:812-832 Aglauros is turned to stone

Often she longed to die so that she need not look on, often to tell her stern father of it as a crime. Finally she sat down at her sister's threshold to oppose the god's entrance when he came. When he threw compliments, prayers and gentlest words at her, she said 'Stop now, since I won't go from here until I have driven you away.' 'We'll hold to that contract' **Cyllenius** quickly replied, and he opened the door with a touch of his heavenly wand. At this the girl tried to rise, but found her limbs, bent from sitting, unable to move from dull heaviness. When she tried to lift her body, her knees were rigid, cold sank through her to her fingernails, and her arteries grew pale with loss of blood.

As an untreatable cancer slowly spreads more widely bringing disease to still

undamaged parts so a lethal chill gradually filled her breast sealing the vital paths and airways. She no longer tried to speak, and if she had tried, her voice had no means of exit. Already stone had gripped her neck, her features hardened, and she sat there, a bloodless statue. Nor was she white stone: her mind had stained it.

Bk II:833-875 Jupiter's abduction of Europa

When **Mercury** had inflicted this punishment on the girl for her impious words and thoughts, he left **Pallas**'s land behind and flew to the heavens on outstretched wings. There his father calls him aside, and without revealing love as the reason, says 'Son, faithful worker of my commands, go, quickly in your usual way, fly down to where, in an eastern land, they observe **your mother**'s star, among the **Pleiades**, (the inhabitants give it the name of **Sidon**). There drive the herd of royal cattle, that you will see some distance off, grazing the

mountain grass, towards the sea shore!’ He spoke, and immediately, as he commanded, the cattle, driven from the mountain, headed for the shore, where the great king’s daughter, **Europa**, used to play together with the **Tyrian** virgins. Royalty and love do not sit well together, nor stay long in the same house. So the father and ruler of the gods, who is armed with the three-forked lightning in his right hand, whose nod shakes the world, setting aside his royal sceptre, took on the shape of a bull, lowed among the other cattle, and, beautiful to look at, wandered in the tender grass.

In colour he was white as the snow that rough feet have not trampled and the rain-filled south wind has not melted. The muscles rounded out his neck, the dewlaps hung down in front, the horns were twisted, but one might argue they were made by hand, purer and brighter than pearl. His forehead was not fearful, his eyes were not formidable, and his expression was peaceful. **Agenor**’s daughter marvelled at how beautiful he was and how

unthreatening. But though he seemed so gentle she was afraid at first to touch him. Soon she drew close and held flowers out to his glistening mouth. The lover was joyful and while he waited for his hoped-for pleasure he kissed her hands. He could scarcely separate then from now. At one moment he frolicks and runs riot in the grass, at another he lies down, white as snow on the yellow sands. When her fear has gradually lessened he offers his chest now for virgin hands to pat and now his horns to twine with fresh wreaths of flowers. The royal virgin even dares to sit on the bull's back, not realising whom she presses on, while the god, first from dry land and then from the shoreline, gradually slips his deceitful hooves into the waves. Then he goes further out and carries his prize over the mid-surface of the sea. She is terrified and looks back at the abandoned shore she has been stolen from and her right hand grips a horn, the other his back, her clothes fluttering, winding, behind her in the breeze.

Book III



Bk III:1-49 Cadmus searches for his sister Europa

And now the god, dispensing with the deceptive image of the bull, confessed who he was, and made for the fields of **Crete**. Meanwhile **Europa**'s father, in ignorance of this, orders his son **Cadmus** to search for the stolen girl, and adds that exile is his punishment if he fails to find her, showing himself, by the same action, both pious and impious. Roaming the world (for who can discover whatever **Jupiter** has taken?) **Agenor**'s son, the fugitive, shuns his native land and his parent's anger and as a suppliant consults **Apollo**'s oracle and asks in what land he might settle. **Phoebus** replies 'A heifer will find you in the fields, that has never submitted to the yoke and is unaccustomed to the curved plough. Go where she leads, and where she finds rest on the grass build the walls of **Thebes**, your city, and call the land **Boeotia**.'

Cadmus had scarcely left the **Castalian** cave when he saw an unguarded heifer, moving slowly, and showing no mark of the yoke on her neck. He follows close behind and chooses his steps by the traces of her course, and silently thanks Phoebus, his guide to the way. Now he had passed the fords of **Cephisus** and the fields of **Panope**: the heifer stopped, and lifting her beautiful head with its noble horns to the sky stirred the air with her lowings. Then looking back, to see her companion following, she sank her hindquarters on the ground and lowered her body onto the tender grass. Cadmus gave thanks, pressing his lips to the foreign soil and welcoming the unknown hills and fields.

Intending to offer a sacrifice to Jupiter, he ordered his attendants to go in search of water from a running stream for a libation. There was an ancient wood there, free from desecration, and, in the centre of it, a chasm thick with bushes and willow branches, framed in effect by stones making a low arch, and rich with

copious springs. There was a snake sacred to **Mars** concealed in this cave, with a prominent golden crest. Fire flickered in its eyes, its whole body was swollen with venom, its three-forked tongue flickered, and its teeth were set in a triple row.

After the people of **Tyre**, setting out, a fatal step, reached the grove, and let their pitchers down into the water, it gave out a reverberation. The dark green snake thrust his head out of the deep cavern, hissing awesomely. The pitchers fell from their hands, the blood left their bodies, and, terrified, a sudden tremor took possession of their limbs. The snake winds his scaly coils in restless writhings, and, shooting upwards, curves into a huge arc. With half its length raised into thin air, it peers down over the whole wood, its body as great, seen in its entirety, as that **Dragon** that separates the twin constellations of the **Bear**. Without pause he takes the Phoenicians, whether they prepare to fight, run, or are held by fear itself. Some he

kills in his deep embraces, others with the corrupting putrefaction of his venomous breath.

Bk III:50-94 Cadmus kills the Dragon

The sun had reached the heights of the sky, and driven away the shadows. And now the son of **Agenor**, wondering what has delayed his friends, searches for the men. He is covered with the pelt stripped from a lion. His sword is tipped with glittering iron. He has a spear, and better still a spirit superior to all. When he enters the wood and sees the dead bodies, and over them the victorious enemy, with its vast body, licking at their sad wounds with a bloody tongue, he cries out ‘Faithful hearts, I shall either be the avenger of your deaths, or become your companion’.

So saying he lifted a massive rock with his right hand and with great effort hurled the huge weight. Steep walls with their high turrets, would have been shattered by the force of the blow, but the snake remained unwounded,

protected by its scales like a breastplate, and its dark, hard skin repelled the powerful stroke.

But that same hardness cannot keep out the spear that defeats it, that is fixed in a curve of its pliant back, and sinks its whole iron blade into its entrails. The creature maddened with pain twists its head over its back, sees the wound, and bites at the shaft lodged there. Even when the snake had loosened its hold all round by its powerful efforts, it could scarcely rip it from its flesh and the iron stayed fixed in its spine. Then indeed new purpose was added to its usual wrath: its throat swells, the veins fill, and white spume flecks its baleful jaws. The earth resounds to its scaly scraping and a black breath like that from the mouth of the **Styx** fouls the corrupted air. At one instant it coils in vast spiraling circles, at another rears up straighter than a high tree. Again it rushes on like a rain-filled river and knocks down all the trees obstructing it in front. The son of **Agenor** gives way a little withstanding its attacks by means of the lion's skin and keeps back the

ravening jaws by thrusting forward the point of his sword. The snake is maddened and bites uselessly at the hard iron and only drives the sharp point between its teeth.

Now the blood begins to drip from its venomous throat and soak the green grass with its spattering. But the wound is slight, because the serpent draws back from the thrust, pulling its wounded neck away, and, conceding its wound, keeps back the sword, and does not let it sink deeper. But the son of **Agenor** following it all the time presses the embedded iron into its throat, until an oak-tree blocks its backward course and neck and tree are pinned together. The tree bends under the serpent's weight and the trunk of the oak groans with the lashing of its tail.

Bk III:95-114 Cadmus sows the Dragon's teeth

While the conqueror stares at the vast bulk of his conquered enemy, suddenly a voice is

heard. It is not easy to imagine where it comes from, but it is heard. ‘Why gaze, son of **Agenor**, at the serpent you have killed? You too shall be a serpent to be gazed on.’ For a long time he stands there quaking, and at the same time loses colour in his face, and his hair stands on end in cold terror. Then, behold, **Pallas**, the hero’s guardian approaches, sinking down through the upper air, and orders him to turn the earth and sow the dragon’s teeth, destined to generate a people. He obeys, and opening the furrows with a slice of his plough, sows the teeth in the ground, as human seed. Then, almost beyond belief, the cultivated earth begins to move, and first spear points appear among the furrows, next helmets nodding their painted crests, then chests and shoulders spring up, and arms weighed down with spears, and the field is thick with the round shields of warriors. Just as at festivals in the theatre, when the curtain is lifted at the end, designs rise in the air, first revealing faces and then gradually the rest, until, raised gently and steadily, they

are seen whole, and at last their feet rest on the lower border.

Bk III:115-137 Cadmus founds Thebes

Alarmed by this new enemy **Cadmus** was about to take up his weapons: ‘Keep away’ one of the army, that the earth had produced, cried at him ‘and take no part in our internal wars!’ So saying he raised his sharp sword against one of his earth-born brothers nearby, then, himself, fell to a spear thrown from far off. But the one who killed him lived no longer than he did and breathed out the air he had just breathed in. This example stirred them all equally, as if at a storm-wind, and, in their warring, these brothers of a moment were felled by mutual wounds. And now these youths, who were allowed such brief lives, were drumming on their mother’s breast hot with their blood. Five were still standing, one of whom was **Echion**. He, at a warning from **Pallas**, threw his weapons on the ground and sought assurances

of peace from his brothers, and gave them in return. The **Sidonian** wanderer had these men as companions in his task when he founded the city commanded by **Apollo**'s oracle.

Now **Thebes** stands, and now you might be seen as happy, in your exile, Cadmus. You have **Mars** and **Venus** as your **bride**'s parents, and added to this the children of so noble a wife, so many sons and daughters, and dearly loved descendants, your grandchildren, who now are young men. But in truth we should always wait for a man's last day, for that time when he has paid his last debt, and we should call no man's life happy until he is dead.

Bk III:138-164 Actaeon returns from the hunt

Actaeon, one of your grandsons, was your first reason for grief, in all your happiness, **Cadmus**. Strange horns appeared on his forehead, and his hunting dogs sated themselves on the blood of their master. But if you look

carefully, you will find that it was the fault of chance and not wickedness: what wickedness is there in error? It happened on a mountain, stained with the blood of many creatures, and midday had contracted every shadow and the sun was equidistant from either end of his journey. Then Actaeon, the young **Boeotian**, with a quiet expression, spoke to his companions in the hunt as they wandered through the solitary wilds ‘Friends, our spears and nets are drenched with the blood of our victims, and the day has been fortunate enough. When **Aurora** in her golden chariot brings another day we will resume our purpose. Now **Phoebus** is also between the limits of his task, and is splitting open the earth with his heat. Finish your present task and carry home the netted meshes’ The men obeyed his order and left off their labour.

There was a valley there called **Gargaphie**, dense with pine trees and sharp cypresses, sacred to **Diana** of the high-girded tunic, where, in the depths, there is a wooded cave, not

fashioned by art. But ingenious nature had imitated art. She had made a natural arch out of native pumice and porous tufa. On the right, a spring of bright clear water murmured into a widening pool, enclosed by grassy banks. Here the woodland goddess, weary from the chase, would bathe her virgin limbs in the crystal liquid.

Bk III:165-205 Actaeon sees Diana naked and is turned into a stag

Having reached the place, she gives her spear, quiver and unstrung bow to one of the nymphs, her weapon-bearer. Another takes her robe over her arm, while two unfasten the sandals on her feet. Then, more skilful than the rest, **Theban Crocale** gathers the hair strewn around her neck into a knot, while her own is still loose. Nephele, Hyale, Rhanis, Psecas and Phiale draw water, and pour it over their mistress out of the deep jars.

While **Titania** is bathing there, in her accustomed place, **Cadmus**'s grandson, free of his share of the labour, strays with aimless steps through the strange wood, and enters the sacred grove. So the fates would have it. As soon as he reaches the cave mouth dampened by the fountain, the naked nymphs, seeing a man's face, beat at their breasts and filling the whole wood with their sudden outcry, crowd round Diana to hide her with their bodies. But the goddess stood head and shoulders above all the others. **Diana**'s face, seen there, while she herself was naked, was the colour of clouds stained by the opposing shafts of sun, or **Aurora**'s brightness.

However, though her band of nymphs gathered in confusion around her, she stood turning to one side, and looking back, and wishing she had her arrows to hand. She caught up a handful of the water that she did have, and threw it in the man's face. And as she sprinkled his hair with the vengeful drops she added these words, harbingers of his coming ruin, 'Now you

may tell, if you can tell that is, of having seen me naked!’ Without more threats, she gave the horns of a mature stag to the head she had sprinkled, lengthening his neck, making his ear-tips pointed, changing feet for hands, long legs for arms, and covering his body with a dappled hide. And then she added fear. **Autonoë**’s brave son flies off, marvelling at such swift speed, within himself. But when he sees his head and horns reflected for certain in the water, he tries to say ‘Oh, look at me! but no voice follows. He groans: that is his voice, and tears run down his altered face. Only his mind remains unchanged. What can he do? Shall he return to his home and the royal palace, or lie hidden in the woods? Shame prevents the one, and fear the other.

Bk III:206-231 Actaeon is pursued by his hounds

While he hesitates his dogs catch sight of him. First ‘*Black-foot*’, Melampus, and keen-

scented Ichnobates, '*Tracker*', signal him with baying, Ichnobates out of **Crete**, Melampus, **Sparta**. Then others rush at him swift as the wind, '*Greedy*', Pamphagus, Dorceus, '*Gazelle*', Oribasos, '*Mountaineer*', all out of **Arcady**: powerful '*Deerslayer*', Nebrophonos, savage Theron, '*Whirlwind*', and Laelape, '*Hunter*'.

Then swift-footed Pterelas, '*Wings*', and trail-scenting Agre, '*Chaser*', fierce Hylaeus, '*Woody*', lately gored by a boar, the wolf-born Nape, '*Valley*', Poemenis, the trusty '*Shepherd*', and Harpyia, '*Snatcher*', with her two pups. There is thin-flanked Sicyonian Ladon, '*Catcher*', Dromas, '*Runner*', '*Grinder*', Canache, Sticte '*Spot*', Tigris '*Tigress*', Alce, '*Strong*', and white-haired Leucon, '*Whitey*', and black-haired Asbolus, '*Soot*'.

Lacon, '*Spartan*', follows them, a dog well known for his strength, and strong-running Aëllō, '*Storm*'. Then Thoos, '*Swift*', and speedy Lycisce, '*Wolf*', with her brother Cyprius

‘*Cyprian*’. Next ‘*Grasper*’, Harpalos, with a distinguishing mark of white, in the centre of his black forehead, ‘*Black*’, Melaneus, and Lachne, ‘*Shaggy*’, with hairy pelt, Labros, ‘*Fury*’, and Argiodus, ‘*White-tooth*’, born of a Cretan sire and Spartan dam, keen-voiced Hylactor, ‘*Barker*’, and others there is no need to name. The pack of them, greedy for the prey follow over cliffs and crags, and inaccessible rocks, where the way is hard or there is no way at all. He runs, over the places where he has often chased, flying, alas, from his own hounds. He longs to shout ‘I am Actaeon! Know your own master!’ but words fail him, the air echoes to the baying.

Bk III:232-252 Actaeon is killed by the dogs

First ‘*Black-hair*’, Melanchaetes, wounds his back, then ‘*Killer*’, Theridamas, and Oresitrophos, the ‘*Climber*’, clings to his shoulder. They had set out late but outflanked the route by a shortcut over the mountains.

While they hold their master the whole pack gathers and they sink their teeth in his body till there is no place left to wound him. He groans and makes a noise, not human, but still not one a deer could make, and fills familiar heights with mournful cries. And on his knees, like a suppliant begging, he turns his wordless head from side to side, as if he were stretching arms out towards them.

Now his friends, unknowingly, urge the ravening crowd of dogs on with their usual cries, looking out for Actaeon, and shouting, in emulation, for absent Actaeon (he turning his head at the sound of his name) complaining he is not there, and through his slowness is missing the spectacle offered by their prey. He might wish to be absent it's true, but he is here: he might wish to see and not feel the fierce doings of his own hounds. They surround him on every side, sinking their jaws into his flesh, tearing their master to pieces in the deceptive shape of the deer. They say **Diana** the Quiver-bearer's

anger was not appeased, until his life had ended in innumerable wounds.

Bk III:253-272 Juno sets out to punish Semele

The debate is undecided: to some the punishment is more violent than just, merely for seeing the face of a goddess, others approve it and call it fitting because of her strict vow of virginity, and both can make a case. Only Jupiter's **wife** was saying nothing, neither of praise or blame. She was glad of the disaster that had come down on the house of **Agenor**, and had transferred her hatred from **Europa**, to those who were allied to the **Tyrian** girl by birth. Then there was a fresh wrong added to the first. She was grieved by the fact that **Semele** was pregnant, with the seed of mighty **Jove**. Swallowing words of reproach, she said 'What, in truth, have I gained from frequent reproaches? I must attack her. If I am rightly to be called most powerful Juno, if it is right for

me to hold the jewelled sceptre in my hand, if I am queen, and sister and wife of Jove, sister at least, then it is her I must destroy. Yet I think she is content with her secret, and the injury to my marriage will be brief. But she has conceived – and that damages me – and makes her crime visible in her swollen belly, and wants, what I have barely achieved, to be confirmed as the mother of Jupiter’s child, so great is her faith in her beauty. I will render that faith hollow. I am not **Saturnia** if she does not plunge into the **Stygian** waters, overwhelmed by Jove himself.’

Bk III:273-315 Semele is consumed by Jupiter’s fire

At this she rose from her seat and cloaked in a dark cloud she came to **Semele**’s threshold. But before she removed the cloud she disguised herself as an old woman, ageing her hair, ploughing her skin with wrinkles, and walking with bowed legs and tottering steps. She made

her voice sound old and was herself **Beroë**, Semele's **Epidaurian** nurse. So, when they came to **Jupiter**'s name, in the midst of their lengthy gossiping, she sighed, and said 'I hope, for your sake, that it really is Jupiter, 'but I am suspicious of all that sort of thing. Many men have entered the bedrooms of chaste women in the name of the gods. It's not good enough for him merely to be Jove: he must give a proof of his love if it truly is him. Beg him to assume all his powers before he embraces you, and be just as glorious as when Juno welcomes him on high.

With such words **Juno** gulled the unsuspecting daughter of **Cadmus**. Semele asked Jupiter for an unspecified gift. 'Choose!' said the god, 'Nothing will be refused, and, so that you may believe it more firmly, I swear it by the Stygian torrent, that is the divine conscience, the fear, and god, of all the gods.' Pleased by her misfortune, too successful, and doomed to be undone by her lover's indulgence, Semele said 'As **Saturnia** is used

to your embrace, when you enter into the pact of **Venus**, give yourself to me!’ The god would have stopped her lips as she spoke: but her voice had already rushed into the air.

He groans, since she cannot un-wish it or he un-swear it. So, most sorrowfully, he climbs the heights of heaven, and, with a look, gathered the trailing clouds, then added their vapours to lightning mixed with storm-winds, and thunder and fateful lightning bolts. Still, he tries to reduce his power in whatever way he can, and does not arm himself with that lightning with which he deposed hundred-handed **Typhoeus**: it is too savage in his grasp. There is a lighter dart to which the **Cyclops**’s hands gave a less violent fire, a lesser anger. The gods call these his secondary weapons. Taking these he enters **Agenor**’s house. But still Semele’s mortal body could not endure the storm, and she was consumed, by the fire of her nuptial gift.

The infant **Bacchus**, still unfinished, is torn from the mother’s womb, and (if it can be

believed) is sewn into his father's thigh to complete his full term. **Ino**, his mother's sister reared him secretly, in infancy, and then he was given to the nymphs of Mount **Nysa** who hid him in their cave and fed him on milk.

Bk III:316-338 The judgement of Tiresias

While these things were brought about on earth because of that fatal oath, and while twice-born **Bacchus**'s cradle remained safe, they say that **Jupiter**, expansive with wine, set aside his onerous duties, and relaxing, exchanging pleasantries, with **Juno**, said ' You gain more than we do from the pleasures of love.' She denied it. They agreed to ask learned **Tiresias** for his opinion. He had known **Venus** in both ways.

Once, with a blow of his stick, he had disturbed two large snakes mating in the green forest, and, marvellous to tell, he was changed from a man to a woman, and lived as such for seven years. In the eighth year he saw the same

snakes again and said ‘Since there is such power in plaguing you that it changes the giver of a blow to the opposite sex, I will strike you again, now.’ He struck the snakes and regained his former shape, and returned to the sex he was born with.

As the arbiter of the light-hearted dispute he confirmed Jupiter’s words. **Saturnia**, it is said, was more deeply upset than was justified and than the dispute warranted, and damned the one who had made the judgement to eternal night. But, since no god has the right to void what another god has done, the all-powerful father of the gods gave Tiresias knowledge of the future, in exchange for his lost sight, and lightened the punishment with honour.

Bk III:339-358 Echo sees Narcissus

Famous throughout all the **Aonian** cities, **Tiresias** gave faultless answers to people who consulted him. Dusky **Liriope**, the **Naiad**, was the first to test the truth and the accuracy of his

words, whom once the river-god **Cephisus** clasped in his winding streams, and took by force under the waves. This loveliest of nymphs gave birth at full term to a child whom, even then, one could fall in love with, called **Narcissus**. Being consulted as to whether the child would live a long life, to a ripe old age, the seer with prophetic vision replied ‘If he does not discover himself’.

For a long time the augur’s pronouncement appeared empty words. But in the end it proved true: the outcome, and the cause of his death, and the strangeness of his passion. One year the son of Cephisus had reached sixteen and might seem both boy and youth. Many youths, and many young girls desired him. But there was such intense pride in that delicate form that none of the youths or young girls affected him. One day the nymph **Echo** saw him, driving frightened deer into his nets, she of the echoing voice, who cannot be silent when others have spoken, nor learn how to speak first herself.

Bk III:359-401 How Juno altered Echo's speech

Echo still had a body then and was not merely a voice. But though she was garrulous, she had no other trick of speech than she has now: she can repeat the last words out of many. **Juno** made her like that, because often when she might have caught the nymphs lying beneath her **Jupiter**, on the mountain slopes, Echo knowingly held her in long conversations, while the nymphs fled. When **Saturnia** realised this she said 'I shall give you less power over that tongue by which I have been deluded, and the briefest ability to speak' and what she threatened she did. Echo only repeats the last of what is spoken and returns the words she hears.

Now when she saw **Narcissus** wandering through the remote fields, she was inflamed, following him secretly, and the more she followed the closer she burned with fire, no differently than inflammable sulphur, pasted round the tops of torches, catches fire, when a

flame is brought near it. O how often she wants to get close to him with seductive words, and call him with soft entreaties! Her nature denies it, and will not let her begin, but she is ready for what it will allow her to do, to wait for sounds, to which she can return words.

By chance, the boy, separated from his faithful band of followers, had called out ‘Is anyone here?’ and ‘*Here*’ Echo replied. He is astonished, and glances everywhere, and shouts in a loud voice ‘Come to me!’ She calls as he calls. He looks back, and no one appearing behind, asks ‘Why do you run from me?’ and receives the same words as he speaks. He stands still, and deceived by the likeness to an answering voice, says ‘Here, let us meet together’. And, never answering to another sound more gladly, Echo replies ‘*Together*’, and to assist her words comes out of the woods to put her arms around his neck, in longing. He runs from her, and running cries ‘Away with these encircling hands! May I die before what’s

mine is yours. She answers, only '*What's mine is yours!*'

Scorned, she wanders in the woods and hides her face in shame among the leaves, and from that time on lives in lonely caves. But still her love endures, increased by the sadness of rejection. Her sleepless thoughts waste her sad form, and her body's strength vanishes into the air. Only her bones and the sound of her voice are left. Her voice remains, her bones, they say, were changed to shapes of stone. She hides in the woods, no longer to be seen on the hills, but to be heard by everyone. It is sound that lives in her.

Bk III:402-436 Narcissus sees himself and falls in love

As **Narcissus** had scorned her, so he had scorned the other nymphs of the rivers and mountains, so he had scorned the companies of young men. Then one of those who had been mocked, lifting hands to the skies, said 'So may

he himself love, and so may he fail to command what he loves!’ **Rhamnusia**, who is the goddess **Nemesis**, heard this just request.

There was an unclouded fountain, with silver-bright water, which neither shepherds nor goats grazing the hills, nor other flocks, touched, that no animal or bird disturbed not even a branch falling from a tree. Grass was around it, fed by the moisture nearby, and a grove of trees that prevented the sun from warming the place. Here, the boy, tired by the heat and his enthusiasm for the chase, lies down, drawn to it by its look and by the fountain. While he desires to quench his thirst, a different thirst is created. While he drinks he is seized by the vision of his reflected form. He loves a bodiless dream. He thinks that a body, that is only a shadow. He is astonished by himself, and hangs there motionless, with a fixed expression, like a statue carved from **Parian** marble.

Flat on the ground, he contemplates two stars, his eyes, and his hair, fit for **Bacchus**, fit

for **Apollo**, his youthful cheeks and ivory neck, the beauty of his face, the rose-flush mingled in the whiteness of snow, admiring everything for which he is himself admired. Unknowingly he desires himself, and the one who praises is himself praised, and, while he courts, is courted, so that, equally, he inflames and burns. How often he gave his lips in vain to the deceptive pool, how often, trying to embrace the neck he could see, he plunged his arms into the water, but could not catch himself within them! What he has seen he does not understand, but what he sees he is on fire for, and the same error both seduces and deceives his eyes.

Fool, why try to catch a fleeting image, in vain? What you search for is nowhere: turning away, what you love is lost! What you perceive is the shadow of reflected form: nothing of you is in it. It comes and stays with you, and leaves with you, if you can leave!

Bk III:437-473 Narcissus laments the pain of unrequited love

No care for **Ceres's** gift of bread, or for rest, can draw him away. Stretched on the shadowed grass he gazes at that false image with unsated eyes, and loses himself in his own vision. Raising himself a little way and holding his arms out to the woods, he asks, 'Has anyone ever loved more cruelly than I? You must know, since you have been a chance hiding place for many people. Do you remember in your life that lasts so many centuries, in all the long ages past, anyone who pined away like this? I am enchanted and I see, but I cannot reach what I see and what enchants me' – so deep in error is this lover – 'and it increases my pain the more, that no wide sea separates us, no road, no mountains, no walls with locked doors.

We are only kept apart by a little water! Whenever I extend my lips to the clear liquid, he tries to raise his lips to me. He desires to be held. You would think he could be touched: it is

such a small thing that prevents our love. Whoever you are come out to me! Why do you disappoint me, you extraordinary boy? Where do you vanish when I reach for you? Surely my form and years are not what you flee from, and I am one that the nymphs have loved! You offer me some unknown hope with your friendly look, and when I stretch my arms out to you, you stretch out yours. When I smile, you smile back. And I have often seen your tears when I weep tears. You return the gesture of my head with a nod, and, from the movements of your lovely mouth, I guess that you reply with words that do not reach my ears!

I am he. I sense it and I am not deceived by my own image. I am burning with love for myself. I move and bear the flames. What shall I do? Surely not court and be courted? Why court then? What I want I have. My riches make me poor. O I wish I could leave my own body! Strange prayer for a lover, I desire what I love to be distant from me. Now sadness takes away my strength, not much time is left for me

to live, and I am cut off in the prime of youth. Nor is dying painful to me, laying down my sadness in death. I wish that him I love might live on, but now we shall die united, two in one spirit.'

Bk III:474-510 Narcissus is changed into a flower

He spoke, and returned madly to the same reflection, and his tears stirred the water, and the image became obscured in the rippling pool. As he saw it vanishing, he cried out ' Where do you fly to? Stay, cruel one, do not abandon one who loves you! I am allowed to gaze at what I cannot touch, and so provide food for my miserable passion!' While he weeps, he tears at the top of his clothes: then strikes his naked chest with hands of marble. His chest flushes red when they strike it, as apples are often pale in part, part red, or as grapes in their different bunches are stained with purple when they are not yet ripe.

As he sees all this reflected in the dissolving waves, he can bear it no longer, but as yellow wax melts in a light flame, as morning frost thaws in the sun, so he is weakened and melted by love, and worn away little by little by the hidden fire. He no longer retains his colour, the white mingled with red, no longer has life and strength, and that form so pleasing to look at, nor has he that body which **Echo** loved. Still, when she saw this, though angered and remembering, she pitied him, and as often as the poor boy said ‘Alas!’ she repeated with her echoing voice ‘*Alas!*’ and when his hands strike at his shoulders, she returns the same sounds of pain. His last words as he looked into the familiar pool were ‘Alas, in vain, beloved boy!’ and the place echoed every word, and when he said ‘Goodbye!’ Echo also said ‘*Goodbye!*’

He laid down his weary head in the green grass, death closing those eyes that had marvelled at their lord’s beauty.

And even when he had been received into the house of shadows, he gazed into the **Stygian** waters. His sisters the **Naiads** lamented, and let down their hair for their brother, and the **Dryads** lamented. Echo returned their laments. And now they were preparing the funeral pyre, the quivering torches and the bier, but there was no body. They came upon a flower, instead of his body, with white petals surrounding a yellow heart.

**Bk III:511-527 Tiresias prophecies
Pentheus's fate**

When all this became known it spread the **prophet's** fame throughout the cities of **Achaia**, and his reputation was high. Still, **Pentheus**, the son of **Echion**, in scorn of the gods, alone amongst all of them, rejected the seer, laughed at the old man's words of augury, and taunted him with the darkness, and the ruin of his lost sight. He, shaking his white head in warning, said 'How happy you would be if

these dispossessed orbs were yours, so as not to see the sacred rites of **Bacchus**! Now the day approaches, and I see it is not far off, when the new god, **Liber**, son of **Semele** will come, and unless you think him worthy to be done honour in your sanctuaries, you will be scattered, torn, in a thousand pieces, and stain your mother, and her sisters and the woods themselves with your blood. It will be! You will not think the god worthy of being honoured, and you will lament of me, that in my darkness I have seen too far.’ Even as he speaks, Echion’s son thrusts him away. The truth of his words followed, the oracles of the prophet were performed.

Bk III:528-571 Pentheus rejects the worship of Bacchus

Liber has come, and the festive fields echo with cries. The crowd all run, fathers, mothers, young girls, princes and people, mixed together, swept towards the unknown rites. **Pentheus** shouts ‘What madness has stupefied your

minds, children of the serpent, people of **Mars**? Can the clash of brazen cymbals, pipes of curved horn, and magical tricks be so powerful that men, who were not terrified by drawn swords or blaring trumpets or ranks of sharp spears, are overcome by the shrieks of women, men mad with wine, crowds of obscenities, and empty drumming? Should I admire you, elders, who, sailing the deep seas, sited your **Tyre** here, your exiled **Penates**, and now let them be taken without a fight? Or you younger men, of fresher age, nearer my own, for whom it was fitting to carry weapons and not the *thyrsus*, your heads covered with helmets not crowns of leaves? Remember, I beg you, from what roots you were created, and show the spirit of the serpent, who, though one alone, killed many. He died for his spring and pool, but you should conquer for your own glory! He put brave men to death, but you should make craven men run, and maintain the honour of your country! If it is **Thebe**'s fate to stand for only a short time, I wish her walls might be destroyed by men and

siege engines, that fire and iron might sound against her! Then we would be miserable but not sinful, we would lament our fate not try to hide it, our tears would be free from shame. But now Thebes will be taken by an unarmed boy, who takes no pleasure in fighting, or weapons, or the use of horses, but in myrrh-drenched hair, soft wreathes of leaves, and embroidered robes woven with gold. But, if you stand aside, I will quickly force him to confess that his pretended parentage and religion are inventions. Should Pentheus and the rest of Thebes be terrified of his arrival, when **Acrisius** had courage enough to defy a false god, and shut the gates of **Argos** at his coming? ‘Go quickly’, he ordered his attendants ‘bind him and drag him here, this conqueror! Don’t be slow in carrying out your orders!’

His grandfather, **Cadmus**, his uncle, **Athamas**, and the rest of his advisors reprove his words, and try in vain to restrain him. He is only made more eager by their warning, and his rage is maddened and grows with restraint, and

he is provoked by their objections. So I have seen a river, where nothing obstructs its passage, flow calmly and with little noise, but rage and foam wherever trees and obstacles of stone held it back, fiercer for the obstruction.

Bk III:572-596 Acoetes is captured and interrogated

See now, they return, stained with blood, and when their lord queries where **Bacchus** is, they deny having seen Bacchus, but reply, ‘We have captured this companion of his, a priest of his sacred rites’ and they hand over a man of **Tyrrhenian** stock, with his hands bound behind his back, a follower of the worship of the god. **Pentheus** looks at him, with eyes made terrible by anger, and although he can scarcely wait for the moment of punishment, he says ‘O you who are about to die, and, by your death, teach the others a lesson, tell me your name, your parents’ name and your country, and why you follow the customs of this new religion!’

Without fear, he answers ‘My name is **Acoetes**, and **Maeonia** is my country, my parents humble ordinary people. My father did not leave me fields for sturdy oxen to work, no flocks of sheep, nor any cattle. I am poor as he himself was, and he used to catch fish in the streams with a rod and line and a hook to snare them. His skill was his wealth, and when he bequeathed it to me, he said ‘Take what I have. Apply yourself to the work as my successor and heir.’ Dying, he left me nothing but water. The only thing I can call my inheritance.

Soon, so that I was not stuck for ever to the same rocks, I learned how to guide boats, steering oar in hand, and to observe **Capella** and the rainy stars of the **Olenian** Goat, **Taygete** among the **Pleiades**, the **Hyades**, and the **Arctic Bears**, the houses of the winds, and the havens for ships.

Bk III:597-637 Acoetes’s story – the beautiful boy

Heading for **Delos**, and being driven by chance onto the coast of the island of **Chios**, making shore by skilful use of the oars, giving a gentle leap, and landing on the wet sand, there we passed the night. As soon as the dawn began to redden, I ordered the getting in of fresh water, and showed the path that lead to a spring. I myself commanded the view from a high hill to find what wind promised, called my comrades and went back to the boat. ‘See, we are here’ said **Opheltes**, the foremost of my friends, and led a boy, with the beauty of a virgin girl, along the shore, a prize, or so he thought, that he had found in a deserted field. The boy seemed to stumble, heavy with wine and sleep, and could scarcely follow. I examined his clothing, appearance and rank, and I saw nothing that made me think him mortal. And I felt this and said it to my companions ‘I do not know what god is in that body, but there is a god within! Whoever you are, O favour and assist our efforts, and forgive these men!’ ‘Don’t pray for us’ said **Dictys**,

who was the quickest at climbing to the highest yard and sliding down grasping the rigging. So said **Libys**, and yellow-haired **Melanthus**, the forward look-out, and **Alcimedon** agreed, and **Epopheus**, who with his voice gave the measure and the pauses for the oarsmen to urge on their purpose. All the others said the same, so blind was their greed for gain.

‘I still will not allow this ship to be cursed by a sacred victim to whom violence has been done’ I said. ‘Here I have the greatest authority’. And I prevented them boarding. Then **Lycabas** the most audacious of them all began to rage at me, he who had been thrown out of **Tuscany**, and was suffering the punishment of exile from his city for a terrible murder. While I held him off, he punched me in the throat with his strong young fists, and would have thrown me semi-conscious into the sea, if I had not clung on, almost stunned, held back by the rigging. The impious crew cheered on the doer of it. Then, at last, Bacchus (for it was indeed Bacchus) was freed from sleep, as if

by the clamour, and the sense returned to his drunken mind. ‘What are you doing? Why this shouting?’ he said. ‘Tell me, you seamen, how I came here? Where do you intend to take me?’ ‘Have no fear’, said **Proreus**, ‘and, whatever port you wish to touch at, you will be set down in the country you demand!’ ‘**Naxos**’ said **Liber**, ‘set your course for there! That is my home: it will be a friendly land to you!’

Bk III:638-691 Acoetes’s ship and crew are transformed

The treacherous men swore, by the sea and all the gods, it would be so, and told me to get the painted vessel under sail. **Naxos** was to starboard, but as I trimmed the sails on a starboard tack, they, each one, asked me ‘What are you doing, O madman? **Acoetes**, what craziness has got into you? Take the port tack!’ most of them letting me know what they intended with a nod of the head, the others in a whisper. I was horrified. ‘Someone else can

steer' I said, and distanced myself from the wickedness and deception. There were cries against me from all sides, the whole crew murmured against me. And one of them, **Aethalion**, cried 'You seem to think that all our lives depend on you alone! Then he took my place himself, discharged my office, and abandoning Naxos took the opposite course.

Then the god, playfully, as though he had just realised their deceit, looked at the sea over the curve of the stern, and as though he were weeping said 'Sailors, these are not the shores you promised me, and this is not the land I chose for myself? What have I done to merit punishment? Where's the glory in men cheating a boy, or many cheating just one?' I was already weeping, but the impious crew laughed at my tears, and drove the ship quickly through the water.

Now I swear by the god himself (since there is no god more certainly present than he is) that what I say to you is the truth, though that truth beggars belief. The ship stands still in

the waves, just as if it were held in dry dock. Amazed, the crew keep flogging away at the oars, and unfurling the sails, try to run on with double power. But ivy impedes the oars, creeping upwards, with binding tendrils, and drapes the sails with heavy clusters. The god himself waves a rod twined with vine leaves, his forehead wreathed with bunches of grapes. Around him lie insubstantial phantom lynxes, tigers, and the savage bodies of spotted panthers. The men leap overboard, driven to it either by madness or by fear. And **Medon** is the first to darken all over his body, and his spine to be bent into an arched curve.

Lycabas cries out to him ‘What monster are you turning into?’ And in speaking his jaws widen, his nose becomes hooked, and his skin becomes hard and scaly. But **Libys** hampered when he wishes to turn the oars sees his hands shrink suddenly in size, and now they are not hands, but can only be called fins. Another, eager to grasp at the tangled ropes, no longer has arms, and goes arching backwards limbless

into the sea. His newest feature is a scythe-shaped tail, like the curved horns of a fragmentary moon. The dolphins leap everywhere drenched with spray. They emerge once more, only to return again to the depths, playing together as if they were in a troupe, throwing their bodies around wantonly, and blowing out the seawater drawn in through their broad nostrils.

Of a group of twenty (that was how many the ship carried) I alone was left. The god roused me with difficulty, my body shaking with cold and terror, and barely myself, saying ‘Free your heart from fear, and hold off for **Naxos!** And consigned to that island, I have adopted its religion, and celebrate the **Bacchic** rites.

Bk III:692-733 Pentheus is killed by the Maenads

‘We have only listened to this winding tale’, said **Pentheus**, ‘so that our anger might

spend its strength in delay. ‘You, attendants, remove this man, quickly, and let his body be tortured in greatest anguish, and send him down to **Stygian** night!’ **Acoetes**, the **Tyrrhenian**, was dragged out, straightaway, and shut in a deep dungeon. But while the instruments of cruelty, the irons and the fire, were being prepared to kill him as had been ordered, the doors flew open by themselves, the chains loosening without any effort, so tradition holds.

The son of **Echion** persisted in his purpose, not ordering others to go, but now going himself, to where Mount **Cithaeron**, chosen for performing the rites, was sounding with the chants and shrill cries of the **Bacchantes**. As a brave horse snorts and shows his love for the fight, when the trumpeter’s brass gives the signal for attack, so the heavens pulsating from the long drawn-out cries stirred Pentheus, and, hearing the clamour, his anger flared again.

Near the middle of the mountainside, was a clearing surrounded with remote woods, free of trees, and visible from all sides. Here as he

watched the mysteries, with profane eyes, his mother was the first to see Pentheus, the first roused to run at him madly, the first to wound him, hurling her **thyrsus**. She shouted ‘O you two, sisters, come! That huge boar, who is straying in our fields, that boar is my sacrifice.’ They all rush on him in one maddened crowd: they converge together pursuing the frightened man, frightened now, speaking words free of violence now, cursing himself now, realising his own offence. Stricken, he still shouts ‘Help me, aunt **Autonoë**! Let **Actaeon**’s shade move your spirit!

She, not remembering Actaeon, tears away the suppliant’s right arm. **Ino**, in frenzy, rips off the other. Now the unhappy man has no limbs to hold out to his mother, but, showing his wounded trunk shorn of its members, he cries ‘Mother, see!’. **Agave** howls, and twists her neck about, and thrashes her hair in the air, and tearing off his head, holding it in her bloody hands, shouts ‘Behold, sisters, this act marks our victory!’

The wind does not strip the leaves clinging there, from the high tree touched by an autumn frost, more quickly than this man's limbs are torn by those terrible hands. Warned by such an example, the **Theban** women throng to the new religion, burn incense, and worship at the sacred altars.

Book IV



Bk IV:1-30 The Festival of Bacchus

But **Alcithoë**, daughter of **Minyas**, will not celebrate the Bacchic rites, in acceptance of the god. She is rash enough to deny that **Bacchus** is the son of **Jupiter**, and her sisters share in her impiety.

The priest had ordered the observation of the festival, asking for all female servants to be released from work, they and their mistresses to drape animal skins across their breasts, free their headbands, wreath their hair, and carry an ivy-twined *thyrsus* in their hand. And he prophesied that the god's rage would be fierce if he was angered. The young women and mothers obey, leaving their baskets and looms, and their unfinished tasks, and burn incense, calling on Bacchus, on **Bromius**, 'the noisy one', **Lyaeus**, 'deliverer from care', on the child of the lightning, the twice-born, the son of two mothers, and adding to these calls **Nyseus**, 'he of **Heliconian Nysa**', **Thyoneus**, 'the unshorn' who is **Semele's** son, **Lenaeus**, the

planter of joy-giving vines, **Nyctelius**, ‘the nightcomer’, father **Eleleus**, of the howls, **Iacchus**, of the shouts, and **Euhan**, of the cries, and all of the other names you have, **Liber**, among the peoples of Greece.

Unfading youth is yours, you boy eternal, you, **the most beautiful sight** in the depths of the morning and evening sky, your face like a virgin’s when you stand before us without your horns. The Orient calls you its conqueror, as far as darkest India, dipped in the remote **Ganges**. You, the revered one, punished **Pentheus**, and **Lycurgus**, king of **Thrace**, who carried the double-headed axe, and you sent the **Tyrrhenians** into the waves. You yoke together two lynxes with bright reins decorating their necks, **Bacchantes** and **Satyrs** follow you, and that drunken old man, **Silenus**, who supports his stumbling body with his staff, and clings precariously to his bent-backed mule. Wherever you go the shouts of youths ring out, and the chorus of female voices, hands beating on

tambourines, the clash of cymbals, and the shrill piping of the flute.

Bk IV:31-54 The daughters of Minyas reject Bacchus

The **Ismenides** pray to **Bacchus** ‘Be satisfied with us, be gentle’ and they celebrate the rites ordained. Only the daughters of **Minyas** remain inside, disturbing the festival, with the untimely arts of **Minerva**, drawing out strands of wool, twisting the threads with their fingers, or staying at their looms, and plying their servants with work. Then one of them, **Arsippe**, speaks, spinning the thread lightly with her thumb. ‘While the others are leaving their work, and thronging to this false religion, let us, restrained by **Pallas**, a truer goddess, lighten the useful work of our hands, and take turns in recalling a story to our idle minds, so that the time will not seem so long! Her sisters are pleased with this, and beg her to begin first. She wondered which of many she should tell

(since she knew very many), and hesitated whether to tell about you, Babylonian **Dercetis**, who, as the Syrians of **Palestine** believe, with altered shape, your lower limbs covered with scales, swam in the waters, or how your **daughter**, assuming wings, lived her earliest years out among the white dove-cotes. Or how a **Naiad**, with incantations, and all too powerful herbs, changed the bodies of youths into dumb fishes, until the same thing happened to her. Or how the mulberry tree that bore white berries now bears dark red ones, from the stain of blood. This one pleases her. She begins to spin this tale, which is not yet well known, as she spins her woollen thread.

Bk IV:55-92 Arsippe tells the story of Pyramus and Thisbe

‘**Pyramus** and **Thisbe**, he the loveliest youth, and she the most sought after girl, the East held, lived in neighbouring houses, in the towering city of **Babylon**, that **Semiramis** is

said to have enclosed with walls of brick. Their nearness and their first childhood steps made them acquainted and in time love appeared. They would have agreed to swear the marriage oath as well, but their parents prevented it. They were both on fire, with hearts equally captivated, something no parent can prevent. They had no one to confide all this to: nods and signs were their speech, and the more they kept the fire hidden, the more it burned.

There was a fissure, a thin split, in the shared wall between their houses, which traced back to when it was built. No one had discovered the flaw in all those years – but what can love not detect? – You lovers saw it first, and made it a path for your voices. Your endearments passed that way, in safety, in the gentlest of murmurs. Often, when they were in place, Thisbe here, and Pyramus there, and they had each caught the sound of the other's breath, they said 'Unfriendly wall, why do you hinder lovers? How hard would it be for you to let our whole bodies meet, or if that is too much

perhaps, to open to the kisses we give each other? Not that we are not grateful. We confess that we owe it to you that words are allowed to pass to loving ears' So they talked, hopelessly, sitting opposite, saying, as night fell, 'Farewell', each touching the wall with kisses that could not reach the other side.

One morning when Aurora had quenched the fires of night, and the sun's rays had thawed the frosty grass, they came to their usual places. Then they decided, first with a little murmur of their great sorrows, to try, in the silence of night, to deceive the guards, and vanish outside. Once out of the house they would leave the city as well, and they agreed, in case they went astray crossing the open country, to meet by the grave of Ninus, and hide in the shelter of a tree. There was a tall mulberry tree there, dense with white berries, bordering a cool fountain. They were satisfied with their plan, and the light, slow to lose its strength, was drowned in the waters, and out of the same waters the night emerged.'

Bk IV:93-127 The death of Pyramus

‘Carefully opening the door, Thisbe, slipped out, deceiving her people, and came to the tomb, her face veiled, and seated herself under the tree they had agreed on. Love made her brave. But a lioness fresh from the kill, her jaws foaming, smeared with the blood of cattle, came to slake her thirst at the nearby spring. In the moonlight, **Babylonian** Thisbe sees her some way off, and flees in fear to a dark cave, and as she flees, she leaves behind her fallen veil. When the fierce lioness has drunk deeply, returning towards the trees, she chances to find the flimsy fabric, without its owner, and rips it in her bloodstained jaws. Leaving the city a little later, **Pyramus** sees the creature’s tracks in the thick dust, and his face is drained of colour. When he also discovers the veil stained with blood, he cries, “Two lovers will be lost in one night. She was the more deserving of a long life. I am the guilty spirit. I have killed you,

poor girl, who told you to come by night to this place filled with danger, and did not reach it first. O, all you lions, that live amongst these rocks, tear my body to pieces, and devour my sinful flesh in your fierce jaws! Though it is cowardly to ask for death”

He picks up Thisbe’s veil, and carries it with him to the shadow of the tree they had chosen. Kissing the token, and wetting it with tears, he cries, “Now, be soaked in my blood too.” Having spoken he drove the sword he had been wearing into his side, and, dying, pulled it, warm, from the wound. As he lay back again on the ground, the blood spurted out, like a pipe fracturing at a weak spot in the lead, and sending long bursts of water hissing through the split, cutting through the air, beat by beat. Sprinkled with blood, the tree’s fruit turned a deep blackish-red, and the roots, soaked through, also imbued the same overhanging mulberries with the dark purplish colour.’

Bk IV:128-166 The death of Thisbe

‘Now **Thisbe** returns, not yet free of fear, lest she disappoint her lover, and she calls for him with her eyes and in her mind, eager to tell him about the great danger she has escaped. Though she recognises the place and the shape of the familiar tree, the colour of the berries puzzles her. She waits there: perhaps this is it. Hesitating, she sees quivering limbs writhing on the bloodstained earth, and starts back, terrified, like the sea, that trembles when the slightest breeze touches its surface, her face showing whiter than boxwood. But when, staying a moment longer, she recognises her lover, she cries out loud with grief, striking at her innocent arms, and tearing at her hair. Cradling the beloved body, she bathes his wounds with tears, mingling their drops with blood. Planting kisses on his cold face, she cries out ‘Pyramus, what misfortune has robbed me of you? Pyramus, answer me! Your dearest Thisbe calls to you: obey me, lift your fallen head!’ At

Thisbe's name, Pyramus raised his eyes, darkening with death, and having looked at her, buried them again in darkness.'

'When she recognised her veil and saw the ivory scabbard without its sword, she said, "Unhappy boy, your own hand, and your love, have destroyed you! I too have a firm enough hand for once, and I, too, love. It will give me strength in my misfortune. I will follow you to destruction, and they will say I was a most pitiful friend and companion to you. He, who could only be removed from me by death, death cannot remove. Nevertheless I ask this for both of us, in uttering these words, O our poor parents, mine and his, do not deny us the right to be laid in one tomb, we whom certain love, and the strangest hour have joined. And you, the tree, that now covers the one poor body with your branches, and soon will cover two, retain the emblems of our death, and always carry your fruit darkened in mourning, a remembrance of the blood of us both."

Saying this, and placing the point under her heart, she fell forward onto the blade, still warm with his blood. Then her prayer moved the gods, and stirred her parents' feelings, for the colour of the berry is blackish-red, when fully ripened, and what was left from the funeral pyres rests in a single urn.'

Bk IV:167-189 Leuconoë's story: Mars and Venus

Arsippe ceased. There was a short pause and then **Leuconoë** began to speak, while her sisters were quiet.

'Love even takes **Sol** prisoner, who rules all the stars with his light. I will tell you about his *amours*. He was the first god they say to see the adulteries of **Venus** and **Mars**: he sees all things first. He was sorry to witness the act, and he told her husband **Vulcan**, son of **Juno**, of this bedroom intrigue, and where the intrigue took place. Vulcan's heart dropped, and he dropped in turn the craftsman's work he held in

his hand. Immediately he began to file thin links of bronze, for a net, a snare that would deceive the eye. The finest spun threads, those the spider spins from the rafters, would not better his work. He made it so it would cling to the smallest movement, the lightest touch, and then artfully placed it over the bed. When the wife and the adulterer had come together on the one couch, they were entangled together, surprised in the midst of their embraces, by the husband's craft, and the new method of imprisonment he had prepared for them.

The **Lemnian**, Vulcan, immediately flung open the ivory doors, and let in the gods. There the two lay shamefully bound together, and one of the gods, undismayed, prayed that he might be shamed like that. And the gods laughed. And for a long time it was the best-known story in all the heavens.'

Bk IV:190-213 Leuconoë's story: Venus's revenge

‘But **Cytherea**, remembering the informer, exacted punishment, and took revenge on him. He who harmed her secret affair, was equally harmed by love. Son of **Hyperion**, what use to you now, are beauty, lustre, and radiant light? Surely, you who make all countries burn with your fires, burn with a new fire. You, who should discern everything, contemplate **Leucothoë**, and your eyes, that ought to be fixed on the whole earth, are fixed on one virgin girl. Sometimes you rise too early in the dawn sky. Sometimes you sink too late into the waves. Thinking of her, you lengthen the winter hours. Sometimes you vanish, your mind’s defect affecting your light, and, obscured, terrify men’s hearts. It is not because the moon’s shadow, closer to the earth, eclipses you, that you fade. It is that love of yours that determines your aspect. You only love her.

You forget **Clymene**, Phaethon’s mother, and the nymph **Rhode**, and Perse, the most beautiful mother of Aeaean **Circe**, and **Clytie**, although despised, seeks union with you, and,

even now, suffers its deep wounds. Leucothoë makes you forget them all, she whom loveliest **Eurynome** gave birth to, among the people who produce sweet-smelling incense. But when the daughter grew to womanhood, she outshone her mother, as her mother surpassed all others. Her father **Orchamus** ruled the Achaemenian Cities of Persia, seventh in line from ancient **Belus**, the founder.’

Bk IV:214-255 The transformation of Leucothoë

‘Under western skies are the fields of the horses of the **Sun**: they have ambrosia to crop not grass. It nourishes their weary legs after the day’s work, and refreshes them for their labours. While his horses browse on celestial food and while night carries out her role, the god enters his loved one’s room, taking on the shape of her mother, **Eurynome**. There he finds **Leucothoë** in the lamplight, amongst her twelve maids, drawing out fine threads,

winding them on her spindle. So he gives her a kiss, just as a mother her dear daughter, and says “This is secret: servants, depart, and don’t rob a mother of the power to speak in private.” They obey, and when there are no witnesses left in the room, the god speaks.

“ Who measures the long year, I am he. I see all things, earth sees all things by me, I, the world’s eye. Trust me, you please me.” She is afraid, and, in her fear, distaff and spindle fall from her lifeless fingers. Her fear enhances her, and he, waiting no longer, resumes his true form, and his accustomed brightness. And, though the girl is alarmed by this sudden vision, overwhelmed by his brightness, suppressing all complaint, she submits to the assault of the god.’

Clytie was jealous (there were no bounds to her love for Sol), and goaded by anger at her rival, she broadcast the adultery, and maligning the girl, betrayed her to her father. He in his pride and savagery, buried her deep in the earth, she praying, stretching her hands out towards

Sol's light, crying "He forced me, against my will", and he piled a heavy mound of sand over her.

Poor nymph, **Hyperion**'s son dispersed this with shafts of light, and gave you a way to show your buried face, but you could not lift your head, crushed by the weight of earth, and lay there, a pale corpse. They say the god of the winged horses had seen nothing more bitter than this, since **Phaethon**'s fiery death. He tried to see if he could recall life to those frozen limbs, with his powerful rays. But since fate opposed such efforts, he sprinkled the earth, and the body itself, with fragrant nectar, and, after much lamenting, said "You will still touch the air". Immediately the body, soaked through with heavenly nectar, dissolved, steeping the earth in its perfume. Tentatively, putting out roots, the shoot of a tree, resinous with incense, grew through the soil, and pierced the summit of the mound.

Bk IV:256-273 Clytie is transformed into the heliotrope

The god of light no longer visited **Clytie**, nor found anything to love in her, even though love might have been an excuse for her pain, and her pain for her betrayal. She wasted away, deranged by her experience of love. Impatient of the nymphs, night and day, under the open sky, she sat dishevelled, bareheaded, on the bare earth. Without food or water, fasting, for nine days, she lived only on dew and tears, and did not stir from the ground. She only gazed at the god's aspect as he passed, and turned her face towards him. They say that her limbs clung to the soil, and that her ghastly pallor changed part of her appearance to that of a bloodless plant: but part was reddened, and a flower like a violet hid her face. She turns, always, towards the sun, though her roots hold her fast, and, altered, loves unaltered.'

She finished speaking: the wonderful tale had charmed their ears. Part of them denies it could

have happened, part says that the true gods can do anything. Though **Bacchus** is not one of those.

Bk IV:274-316 Alcithoë tells the story of Salmacis

When the sisters are silent, **Alcithoë** is called on next. Standing there, running her shuttle through the threads on her loom, she said ‘I will say nothing of that well-known story, the love of **Daphnis**, the **Idaeon** shepherd-boy, whom a nymph, angered by a rival, turned to stone: so great is the pain that inflames lovers. Neither will I tell you how, the laws of nature conspiring to alter, **Sithon** became of indeterminate sex, now man, now woman: how **Celmis**, you too, now changed to steel, were a most loyal friend to the infant **Jupiter**: how the **Curetes** were born from vast showers of rain: how **Crocus** and **Smilax** were turned into tiny flowers. I will reject all those,

and charm your imaginations with a sweet, new story.

Now you will hear where the pool of **Salmacis** got its bad reputation from, how its enervating waters weaken, and soften the limbs they touch. The cause is hidden, but the fountain's effect is widely known. The **Naiads** nursed a child born of **Hermes**, and a goddess, **Cytherean** Aphrodite, in **Mount Ida**'s caves. His features were such that, in them, both mother and father could be seen: and from them he took his name, **Hermaphroditus**.

When he was fifteen years old, he left his native mountains and Ida, his nursery, delighted to wander in unknown lands, and gaze at unknown rivers, his enthusiasm making light of travel. He even reached the **Lycian** cities, and the **Carians** by Lycia. Here he saw a pool of water, clear to its very depths. There were no marsh reeds round it, no sterile sedge, no spikes of rushes: it is crystal liquid. The edges of the pool are bordered by fresh turf, and the grass is always green. A nymph lives there, but she is

not skilled for the chase, or used to flexing the bow, or the effort of running, the only Naiad not known by swift-footed Diana.

Often, it's said, her sisters would tell her "Salmacis, take up the hunting-spear or the painted quiver and vary your idleness with some hard work, hunting!" But she takes up neither the hunting spear nor the painted quiver, and will not vary her idleness with the hardship of hunting. She only bathes her shapely limbs in the pool, often combs out her hair, with a comb that is made of boxwood from **Cytorus**, and looks in the water to see what suits it best. Then draped in a translucent robe, she lies down on the soft leaves, or in the soft grass. Often she gathers flowers. And she was also busy gathering them, then, when she saw the boy, and what she saw she longed to have.'

Bk IV:317-345 Salmacis falls for Hermaphroditus

‘She did not go near him yet, though she was quick to go to him, waiting until she had calmed herself, checked her appearance, composed her expression, and merited being seen as beautiful. Then she began to say “Youth, O most worthy to be thought a god, if you are a god, you must be **Cupid**, or, if you are mortal, whoever engendered you is blessed, and any brother of yours is happy, any sister fortunate, if you have sisters, and even the nurse who suckled you at her breast. But far beyond them, and far more blessed is she, if there is a she, promised to you, whom you think worthy of marriage. If there is someone, let mine be a stolen pleasure, if not, I will be the one, and let us enter into marriage together.”

After this the naiad was silent. A red flush branded the boy’s face. He did not know what love was: though the blush was very becoming. Apples are tinged with this colour, hanging in a sunlit tree, or ivory painted with red, or the moon, eclipsed, blushing in her brightness, while the bronze shields clash, in vain, to

rescue her. The nymph begged endlessly, at least a sister's kiss, and, about to throw her arms round his ivory-white neck, he said "Stop this, or shall I go, and leave this place, and you?" **Salmacis**, afraid, turning away, pretended to go, saying, "I freely surrender this place to you, be my guest." But she still looked back, and hid herself among bushes in the secluded woods, on her bended knees. But he, obviously at leisure, as if unobserved, walks here and there on the grass and playfully, at the end of his walk, dips his feet and ankles in the pool. Then, quickly captured by the coolness of the enticing water, he stripped the soft clothes from his slender body.

Bk IV:346-388 Salmacis and Hermaphroditus merge

Then she was truly pleased. And **Salmacis** was inflamed with desire for his naked form. The nymph's eyes blazed with passion, as when **Phoebus**'s likeness is reflected from a mirror,

that opposes his brightest unclouded orb. She can scarcely wait, scarcely contain her delight, now longing to hold him, now unable to keep her love to herself. He, clapping his open palms to his side, dives into the pool, and leading with one arm and then the other, he gleams through the pure water, as if one sheathed an ivory statue, or bright lilies behind clear glass. “I have won, he is mine”, the naiad cries, and flinging aside all her garments, she throws herself into the midst of the water.

She held him to her, struggling, snatching kisses from the fight, putting her hands beneath him, touching his unwilling breast, overwhelming the youth from this side and that. At last, she entwines herself face to face with his beauty, like a snake, lifted by the king of birds and caught up into the air, as Hermaphroditus tries to slip away. Hanging there she twines round his head and feet and entangles his spreading wings in her coils. Or as ivy often interlaces tall tree trunks. Or as the

cuttlefish holds the prey, it has surprised, underwater, wrapping its tentacles everywhere.

The descendant of **Atlas** holds out, denying the nymph's wished-for pleasure: she hugs him, and clings, as though she is joined to his whole body. "It is right to struggle, perverse one," she says, "but you will still not escape. Grant this, you gods, that no day comes to part me from him, or him from me." Her prayer reached the gods. Now the entwined bodies of the two were joined together, and one form covered both. Just as when someone grafts a twig into the bark, they see both grow joined together, and develop as one, so when they were mated together in a close embrace, they were not two, but a two-fold form, so that they could not be called male or female, and seemed neither or either.

When he saw now that the clear waters which he had penetrated as a man, had made him a creature of both sexes, and his limbs had been softened there, **Hermaphroditus**, stretching out his hands, said, but not in a man's

voice, “Father and mother, grant this gift to your son, who bears both your names: whoever comes to these fountains as a man, let him leave them half a man, and weaken suddenly at the touch of these waters!” Both his parents moved by this, granted the prayer of their twin-formed son, and contaminated the pool with a damaging drug.’

Bk IV:389-415 The daughters of Minyas become bats

The story was finished, and the daughters of **Minyas** still pressed on with their work, spurning the god and profaning his festival, when suddenly harsh sounds sprang up from unseen drums, pipes with curved horns sounded, and cymbals clashed. Saffron and myrrh perfumed the air, and unbelievably their looms began to grow like greenwood, the cloth they were weaving put out leaves of hanging ivy, part altered to vines, and what were once threads changed into tendrils: vine shoots came

out of the warp, and clusters of dark-coloured grapes took on the splendour of the purple fabric.

Now the day was past, and the time had come when you could not say that it was light or darkness, but a borderland of light and uncertain night. Suddenly the ceiling shook, the oil lamps seemed to brighten, and the house to shine with glowing fires, and fill with the howling of fierce creatures' deceptive phantoms. Quickly the sisters hide in the smoke-filled house, and, in various places, shun the flames and light. While they seek the shadows, a thin membrane stretches over their slender limbs, and delicate wings enfold their arms. The darkness prevents them knowing how they have lost their former shape. They do not rise on soft plumage, but lift themselves on semi-transparent wings, and trying to speak emit the tiniest squeak, as befits their bodies, and tell their grief in faint shrieks. They frequent rafters, rather than woods, and, hating the light, they fly at night, and derive their

name, ‘*vespertiliones*’, from ‘*vesper*’, the evening.

Bk IV:416-463 Juno is angered by Semele’s sister Ino

Then indeed **Bacchus**’s divinity was spoken of throughout **Thebes**, and **Ino**, his mother’s sister, told about the new god’s great powers, everywhere. Of all her sisters she was the only one free from trouble, except that which her sisters made. **Juno** considered this woman, and the lofty pride she had in her sons, her marriage to King **Athamas**, and her foster-child Bacchus, and could not bear it. She said, to herself, ‘That son of my rival could change the **Maeonian** sailors, and immerse them in the sea, and give the flesh of a child to be torn in pieces, by his own mother, and enfold the three daughters of **Minyas** in strange wings. Can Juno do nothing except lament her troubles, unavenged? Is that enough for me? Is that my only power? He teaches me what to do (it is

possible to learn from the enemy): he has shown enough, and more than enough, of the power madness has, by the killing of **Pentheus**. Why should Ino not be tormented, and follow her relatives' example in her madness?'

There is a downward path, gloomy with fatal yew trees: it leads through dumb silence to the infernal regions. The sluggish **Styx** exhales vapour, and, by that way, the shadows of the newly dead descend, entombed with full rites, and the ghosts of those, at last, given proper burial. The wide, thorny waste is cold and pallid, and the newly arrived shades are ignorant of the road that leads to the Stygian city, where black **Dis** has his cruel palace. The roomy city has a thousand entrances, and open gates on every side, and as the ocean accepts the rivers of all the world, so this place accepts all the souls, and is never too small for any populace, nor notices the crowds that come. There the bloodless shadows wander without flesh or bone. Some crowd the forum, some the house of the ruler of the depths, others follow

their trades, imitating their previous lives, and still others incur punishment.

Leaving her place in heaven, Saturnian Juno endured the journey there, giving in to such a degree to anger and hatred. As soon as she entered and the threshold sighed at the touch of her sacred body, **Cerberus** lifted his triple head and let out his threefold baying. She called out for the dread, implacable **Furies**, the Sisters, the children of Night. They sat in front of the prison gates, closed with steel, combing out their hair, of black snakes. The goddesses rose together, recognising her shadow in the darkness. The place is called Accursed. Here **Tityos** offers up his innards to be torn, stretched out over nine fields. You, **Tantalus**, cannot catch the drops of water, and the tree you grasp at, eludes you. You, **Sisyphus**, attack or pursue the stone that always returns. **Ixion** turns, and follows after himself and flees, and the forty-nine **Belides**, who dared to plot the destruction of their cousins, their husbands, fetch again, with incessant labour, the water they have lost.

Bk IV:464-511 Tisiphone maddens Athamas and Ino

After **Saturnia** had looked grimly, glancing fiercely, at all these, and at **Ixion** above all, looking back from him to **Sisyphus**, she asks the **Furies** ‘Why does this son of **Aeolus**, suffer perpetual torment, while his brother **Athamas**, who, with his wife, scorns me, lives, in his pride, in a rich palace?’ And she expounds the causes of her hatred, her journey, and what it is she wishes. What she wished was that the House of **Cadmus** should no longer stand, and that the Sisters should drive Athamas mad. She urged the goddesses help, mingling promises, commands and prayers together. When **Juno** had finished speaking, **Tisiphone**, grey-haired as she was, shook her locks, flinging back the snakes that concealed her face, and said ‘It does not need all these words: consider it done, whatever you have ordered. Leave this unlovely kingdom, and go back to heaven with its

sweeter air.’ Juno returned happily, and **Iris**, her messenger, the daughter of **Thaumus**, purified her, as she was about to enter heaven, with drops of dew.

Without delay, Tisiphone, the troubler, grasped a torch soaked with blood, put on a dripping red robe, coiled a writhing serpent round her waist, and left the spot. Grief went as her companion, and Panic, and Terror, and Madness with agitated face. She took up her position on the threshold, and they say the pillars of the doorway of Aeolus’s palace shook, the doors of maple-wood were tainted with whiteness, and the sun fled the place. Athamas and his wife, Ino, were terrified at these portents of doom, and they tried to escape the palace. The baleful **Erinys** obstructed them, and blocked the way. Stretching out her arms, wreathed with knots of vipers, she flailed her hair, and the snakes hissed at her movements. Some coiled over her shoulders, some slid over her breast, giving out whistling noises, vomiting blood, and flickering their tongues.

Then she pulls two serpents from the midst of her hair, and hurls what she has snatched with a deadly aim. They slither over Ino and Athamas, and blow their oppressive breath into them. Their limbs are not wounded: it is the mind that feels the dreadful stroke. She had brought foul poisonous liquids too, spume from the jaws of **Cerberus**, **Echidna**'s venom, those that cause vague delusions, dark oblivions of the mind, wickedness and weeping, rage and love of murder, all seethed together. She had boiled them, mixed with fresh blood, in hollow bronze, stirred with a stalk of green hemlock.

While they stood trembling, she poured this venom of the Furies over the breasts of the two of them, and sent it into the depths of their minds. Then, brandishing her torch, encircled them with fire, by fire's swift movement, whirling it round in repeated orbit. So having conquered them, and carried out her orders, she returned to the wide kingdom of mighty **Dis**, and unloosed the serpent she had wrapped around her.

Bk IV:512-542 Ino becomes the goddess Leucothoë

Then **Athamas**, raving through the centre of his palace, cries out ‘ Friends, spread the nets through these woods! I have just seen a lioness here, with her two cubs’ and in his madness he followed his wife’s steps as if she were a wild beast. Then he snatched his son **Learchus**, who was laughing and waving his little arms, from his mother’s protection, and whirled him round, two or three times, in the air, in the manner of a sling, and dashed the infant’s head fiercely against the solid rock. Then the mother, roused at last by the pain this caused, or by reason of the poison sprinkled on her, howled like an animal, and fled, insanely, tearing at her hair. In her naked arms she carried you, **Melicertes**, and cried out ‘Euhoe, **Bacchus**’. **Juno** laughed aloud at Bacchus’s name, saying ‘Such help as this may your foster-son give you!’

A cliff overhung the water, carved out at its base by the breakers, and it sheltered the waves it hid, from the rain. Its summit reared up and stretched out, in front, over the water, into empty space. **Ino** climbed up there (madness had lent her strength) and unrestrained by fear threw herself and her burden into the sea: the wave foamed white where she fell. **Venus**, pitying her granddaughter's undeserved sufferings, coaxed her uncle, saying 'O **Neptune**, god of the waters, whose power only ceases near heaven, it's true that what I ask is great, but take pity on those who are mine, whom you see, fallen into the vast **Ionian** waters, and add them to your sea-gods. Some kindness is due me from the sea, if once I was made from the spume in the midst of the deep, and from that my Greek name, '*foam-born*' Aphrodite, remains.' Neptune accepted her prayer, and taking from them what was mortal, gave them greatness, giving them at the same time new names and forms, calling the god

Palaemon, and his mother, **Leucothoë**, the white goddess.

Bk IV:543-562 Juno transforms the Theban women

Ino's Sidonian attendants followed the marks of her feet as best they could, only to see her last leap from the pinnacle of rock. Not doubting that she was dead, they mourned for the House of **Cadmus**, beating their breasts, tearing at their clothes and hair, saying that the goddess had shown too little justice, and too much cruelty, to the rival who had made her jealous. **Juno** could not bear their protests, and said 'I will make you the best monument to my cruelty'. What she said was done. Now the one who had been most faithful cried 'I will follow the queen into the sea', and starting her leap could not move at all, and stuck fast, fixed to the cliff. Another felt her raised arms grow rigid, when she tried to beat her breasts, as she had been doing. Another chanced to stretch her

hands out to the waves of the sea, but now hands made of stone were extended over the same waves. One, as she tore at the crown of her head to pull out her hair, you might see, suddenly with stiffened fingers amongst her hair. Whatever gesture they were caught in, there they remained. Others, **Theban women**, changed to birds, also, now, skim the surface of those depths with their wings.

Bk IV:563-603 Cadmus and Harmonia become serpents

The son of **Agenor, Cadmus**, did not know that his daughter and little grandson were now sea-gods. Conquered by the pain of this run of disasters, and daunted by all he had seen, the founder departed his city, as if the misfortunes of the place and not himself were oppressing him. Driven to wandering, at length his journey carried him and his wife to the borders of **Illyria**. Now, weighed down by age and sadness, they thought of the original destiny of

their house, and in talk reviewed their sufferings. Cadmus said ‘Surely that snake, my spear pierced, must have been sacred, when, fresh from **Sidon**, I scattered the serpent’s teeth, a strange seed, over the earth? If that is what the gods have been avenging with such sure anger, may I myself stretch out as a long-bellied snake.’ And, so speaking, he did extend into a long-bellied snake, and felt his skin hardening as scales grew there, while dark green patches checkered his black body. He lay prone on his breast, and gradually his legs fused together thinning out towards a smooth point. Still his arms were left to him, and what was left of his arms he stretched out, and, with tears running down his still human cheeks, he said ‘Come here, **wife**, come here, most unfortunate one, and while there is still something left of me, touch me, and take my hand, while it is still a hand, while the snake does not yet have all of me.’

He wanted to say so much more, but suddenly his tongue was split in two, and

though he wished for words none came, and whenever he started on some plaintive sound, he hissed: this was the voice that Nature bequeathed him. Then, striking her naked breast with her hands, his wife cried out ‘Cadmus, wait, unhappy one, tear away this monstrous thing! Cadmus, what is it? Where are your feet? Where are your hands, shoulders, face, colour, everything – while I speak? Why do you not change me as well, you gods, into this same snake’s form? She spoke. His tongue flickered over his wife’s face, he slid between her beloved breasts as if known there, and clasped her, and searched about for the neck he knew so well. Everyone who was there (their comrades were present) was horrified, but she stroked the gleaming neck of the crested serpent, and suddenly there were two snakes there, with intertwining coils, until they sought the shelter of the neighbouring woods. Even now they do not avoid human beings or wound them, quiet serpents, remembering what they once were.

Bk IV:604-662 Perseus and Atlas

Nevertheless even in their altered form, their grandson **Bacchus** gave them great consolation, whom conquered India worshipped, to whose newly created temples the **Achaians** thronged. Only **Acrisius**, son of **Abas**, born from the same roots (through **Belus** brother of **Agenor**), was an exception, who closed **Argos** within its walls, took up arms against the god, and did not consider him a child of **Jupiter**. Nor did he consider, as a child of Jupiter, his grandson **Perseus**, whom **Danaë** conceived of a shower of gold. Though later (such is truth's power) Acrisius repented of outraging the god, and of not acknowledging his grandson. One had taken his place in the heavens, but the other was travelling through the gentle air, on beating wings, bringing back an amazing, monstrous prize, and as the victor hung above the **Lybian** sands, bloody drops fell from the **Gorgon**'s head. The earth caught them

and gave them life, as species of snakes, and so that country is infested with deadly serpents.

He was driven from there by conflicting winds, carried this way and that, through vast spaces, like a raincloud. He flew over the whole world, looking down, through the air, from a great height, at remote countries. Three times he saw the frozen constellations of the **Bears**, three times the **Crab**'s pincers. Often he was forced below the west, often into the east, and now as the light died, afraid to trust to night, he put down in the western regions of **Hesperus**, in the kingdom of **Atlas**. He looked to rest there a while, till **Lucifer** summoned up **Aurora**'s fires, and Aurora the chariot of dawn. Here was Atlas, son of **Iapetus**, exceeding all men by the size of his body.

The most remote land was under Atlas's rule, and the ocean, into which **Sol**'s panting horses plunged, and where his straining axle was welcomed. He had a thousand flocks, and as many herds of cattle straying through the grass, and no neighbouring soil was richer than

his. The leaves of the trees, bright with radiant gold, covered branches of gold, and fruit of gold. Perseus said to him ‘Friend, if high birth impresses you, Jupiter is responsible for my birth. Or if you admire great deeds, you will admire mine. I ask for hospitality and rest.’

Atlas remembered an ancient prophecy. **Themis** on **Parnassus** had given that prophecy. ‘Atlas, the time will come when your tree will be stripped of its gold, and he who steals it will be called the son of Jupiter.’ Fearful of this, Atlas had enclosed his orchard with solid walls, and set a huge dragon to guard it, and kept all strangers away from his borders. To **Perseus**, he said ‘Go far away, lest the glory of the deeds, that you lie about, and Jupiter himself, fail you!’ He added weight to his threats, and tried to push him away with his great hands, Perseus delaying resolutely, and combining that with calm words. Inferior in strength (who could equal Atlas in strength?), he said, ‘Well now, since you show me so little kindness, accept a gift’ and turning away himself, he held

out **Medusa**'s foul head, on his left hand side. Atlas became a mountain, as huge as he himself had been. Now his hair and beard were changed into trees, his shoulders and hands into ridges. What had been his head before was the crest on the mountain summit. His bones became stones. Then he grew to an immense height in every part (so you gods determined) and the whole sky, with its many stars, rested on him.

Bk IV:663-705 Perseus offers to save Andromeda

Aeolus, son of **Hippotas**, had confined the winds in their prison under Mount **Etna**, and **Lucifer**, who exhorts us to work, shone brightest of all in the depths of the eastern sky. **Perseus** strapped the winged sandals, he had put to one side, to his feet, armed himself with his curved sword, and cut through the clear air on beating pinions. Leaving innumerable nations behind, below and around him, he came in sight of the **Ethiopian** peoples, and the fields

of **Cepheus**. There **Jupiter Ammon** had unjustly ordered the innocent **Andromeda** to pay the penalty for her mother **Cassiopeia's** words.

As soon as Perseus, great-grandson of **Abas**, saw her fastened by her arms to the hard rock, he would have thought she was a marble statue, except that a light breeze stirred her hair, and warm tears ran from her eyes. He took fire without knowing it and was stunned, and seized by the vision of the form he saw, he almost forgot to flicker his wings in the air. As soon as he had touched down, he said 'O, you do not deserve these chains, but those that link ardent lovers together. Tell me your name, I wish to know it, and the name of your country, and why you are wearing these fetters. At first she was silent: a virgin, she did not dare to address a man, and she would have hidden her face modestly with her hands, if they had not been fastened behind her. She used her eyes instead, and they filled with welling tears. At his repeated insistence, so as not to seem to be

acknowledging a fault of her own, she told him her name and the name of her country, and what faith her mother had had in her own beauty.

Before she had finished speaking, all the waves resounded, and a monster menaced them, rising from the deep sea, and covered the wide waters with its breadth. The girl cried out: her grieving father and mother were together nearby, both wretched, but the mother more justifiably so. They bring no help with them, only weeping and lamentations to suit the moment, and cling to her fettered body. Then the stranger speaks ‘There will be plenty of time left for tears, but only a brief hour is given us to work. If I asked for this girl as Perseus, son of Jupiter and that **Danaë**, imprisoned in the brazen tower, whom Jupiter filled with his rich golden shower; Perseus conqueror of the **Gorgon** with snakes for hair, he who dared to fly, driven through the air, on soaring wings, then surely I should be preferred to all other suitors as a son-in-law. If the gods favour me, I will try to add further

merit to these great gifts. I will make a bargain. Rescued by my courage, she must be mine.' Her parents accept the contract (who would hesitate?) and, entreating him, promise a kingdom, as well, for a dowry.

Bk IV:706-752 Perseus defeats the sea-serpent

See how the creature comes parting the waves, with surging breast, like a fast ship, with pointed prow, ploughing the water, driven by the sweat-covered muscles of her crew. It was as far from the rock as a **Balearic** sling can send a lead shot through the air, when suddenly the young hero, pushing his feet hard against the earth, shot high among the clouds. When the shadow of a man appeared on the water's surface, the creature raged against the shadow it had seen. As Jupiter's eagle, when it sees a snake, in an open field, showing its livid body to the sun, takes it from behind, and fixes its eager talons in the scaly neck, lest it twists back

its cruel fangs, so **the descendant of Inachus** hurling himself headlong, in swift flight, through empty space, attacked the creature's back, and, as it roared, buried his sword, to the end of the curved blade, in the right side of its neck. Hurt by the deep wound, now it reared high in the air, now it dived underwater, or turned now, like a fierce wild boar, when the dogs scare him, and the pack is baying around him. **Perseus** evades the eager jaws on swift wings, and strikes with his curved sword wherever the monster is exposed, now at the back encrusted with barnacles, now at the sides of the body, now where the tail is slenderest, ending fishlike. The beast vomits seawater mixed with purplish blood. The pinions grow heavy, soaked with spray. Not daring to trust his drenched wings any further, he sees a rock whose highest point stands above quiet water, hidden by rough seas. Resting there, and holding on to the topmost pinnacle with his left hand, he drives his sword in three or four times, repeatedly.

The shores, and the high places of the gods, fill with the clamor of applause. **Cassiope** and **Cepheus** rejoice, and greet their son-in-law, acknowledging him as the pillar of their house, and their deliverer. Released from her chains, the girl comes forward, the prize and the cause of his efforts. He washes his hands, after the victory, in seawater drawn for him, and, so that **Medusa**'s head, covered with its snakes, is not bruised by the harsh sand, he makes the ground soft with leaves, and spreads out plants from below the waves, and places the head of that **daughter of Phorcys** on them. The fresh plants, still living inside, and absorbent, respond to the influence of the Gorgon's head, and harden at its touch, acquiring a new rigidity in branches and fronds. And the ocean nymphs try out this wonder on more plants, and are delighted that the same thing happens at its touch, and repeat it by scattering the seeds from the plants through the waves. Even now corals have the same nature, hardening at a touch of

air, and what was alive, under the water, above water is turned to stone.

Bk IV:753-803 Perseus tells the story of Medusa

To the three gods, he builds the same number of altars out of turf, to you **Mercury** on the left, to you **Minerva**, warlike virgin, on the right, and an altar of **Jupiter** in the centre. He sacrifices a cow to Minerva, a calf to the wing-footed god, and a bull to you, greatest of the gods. Then he claims **Andromeda**, without a dowry, valuing her as the worthiest prize. **Hymen** and **Amor** wave the marriage torch, the fires are saturated with strong perfumes, garlands hang from the rafters, and everywhere flutes and pipes, and singing, sound out, the happy evidence of joyful hearts. The doors fold back to show the whole of the golden hall, and the noble **Ethiopian** princes enter to a richly prepared banquet already set out for them.

When they have attacked the feast, and their spirits are cheered by wine, the generous

gift of **Bacchus**, **Perseus** asks about the country and its culture, its customs and the character of its people. At the same time as he instructed him about these, one of the guests said ‘Perseus, I beg you to tell us by what prowess and by what arts you carried off that head with snakes for hair.’ The descendant of **Agenor** told how there was a cave lying below the frozen slopes of **Atlas**, safely hidden in its solid mass. At the entrance to this place the sisters lived, the **Graeae**, daughters of Phorcys, similar in appearance, sharing only one eye between them. He removed it, cleverly, and stealthily, cunningly substituting his own hand while they were passing it from one to another. Far from there, by hidden tracks, and through rocks bristling with shaggy trees, he reached the place where the **Gorgons** lived. In the fields and along the paths, here and there, he saw the shapes of men and animals changed from their natures to hard stone by Medusa’s gaze. Nevertheless he had himself looked at the dread form of Medusa reflected in a circular shield of

polished bronze that he carried on his left arm. And while a deep sleep held the snakes and herself, he struck her head from her neck. And the swift winged horse **Pegasus** and his brother the warrior **Chrysaor**, were born from their mother's blood.

He told of his long journeys, of dangers that were not imaginary ones, what seas and lands he had seen below from his high flight, and what stars he had brushed against with beating wings. He still finished speaking before they wished. Next one of the many princes asked why Medusa, alone among her sisters, had snakes twining in her hair. The guest replied 'Since what you ask is worth the telling, hear the answer to your question. She was once most beautiful, and the jealous aspiration of many suitors. Of all her beauties none was more admired than her hair: I came across a man who recalled having seen her. They say that **Neptune**, lord of the seas, violated her in the temple of Minerva. Jupiter's daughter turned away, and hid her chaste eyes behind her aegis.

So that it might not go unpunished, she changed the Gorgon's hair to foul snakes. And now, to terrify her enemies, numbing them with fear, the goddess wears the snakes, that she created, as a breastplate.

Book V



Bk V:1-29 Phineus seeks revenge for the loss of his bride

While the hero, the son of **Danae**, is recalling this succession of events, amongst the **Ethiopians**, the royal halls suddenly fill with a riot of complaints. It is not the sound of a wedding feast that rings out, but that which presages the use of arms. The festivities, turned to sudden confusion, could be likened to a calm sea that the fierce raging of the wind churns into rising waves. **Phineus**, the king's brother, is first mover in this, a rash stirrer-up of strife, shaking his ashen spear tipped with bronze. 'See,' he shouted 'See, I come here as an avenger for the carrying off of my bride. Your wings won't help you escape me, nor even **Jupiter**, changed to a shower of fool's gold!'

As he prepared to throw the spear, Cepheus cried 'What are you doing? Brother, what mad feelings drive you to crime? Are these the thanks you return for such service? Is this the gift with which you pay compensation for a life

restored? If you want the truth it was not **Perseus** who took her from you, but **Neptune**, the stern god of the **Nereids**, and horned **Jupiter Ammon**, and that monster that came from the sea to glut itself on my own flesh and blood. It was then she was taken from you, when she was about to die: but perhaps, hard-hearted one, that is what you want, for her to die, and you to take comfort from my grief. Of course, it is not enough that you saw her fastened there, and brought her no help, you her uncle and her intended. Are you grieved that she was saved by someone else, and would you take away his prize? If it seemed so great a prize to you, you should have sought her among the rocks where she was chained. Now let the man who did seek it, take what he has earned and what was promised, since, thanks to him, I shall not have a childless old age. Realise that it is not Perseus, but the prospect of certain death that has displaced you.'

Bk V:30-73 The fight: the death of Athis

Phineus said nothing, but turned his face alternately from **Perseus** to his brother, not knowing whether to aim at the one or the other. Hesitating for a while he hurled his spear, throwing it with the energy of anger, but uselessly, at Perseus. Only when it had stuck fast in the bench, did Perseus leap up from where he was lying. Returning the weapon, fiercely, he would have pierced his enemy's chest, if Phineus had not dodged behind the altars: and (shamefully) the wretch found safety in that refuge. Nevertheless the javelin was not without effect, and struck **Rhoetus** full face, who immediately fell, and, when the weapon had been pulled out of the bone, he kicked out and sprayed the laden tables with his blood. Then the crowd of men was truly ablaze with anger, and they hurled their spears, and there were those who said **Cepheus** deserved to die with his son-in-law. But Cepheus had already crossed the threshold, calling on justice, good

faith, and on the gods of friendship, to witness that what was being done was forbidden. Warlike **Pallas** came and protected her brother, Perseus, with her shield, the aegis, and gave him courage.

There was a youth from India, **Athis**, whom **Limnaee**, a nymph of the River **Ganges** is said to have given birth to, under its glassy waters. He was of outstanding beauty, his sixteen years unimpaired, enhanced by his rich robes, wearing his military cloak of **Tyrian** purple, fringed with gold. A gold collar ornamented his neck, and a curved coronet his myrrh-drenched hair. He was skilled at piercing anything with the javelins he launched, however distant, but was even more skilled at shooting with the bow. While he was bending the pliant tips in his hands, Perseus struck him, with a log that had been smouldering in the middle of the altar, and shattered his face to splintered bone.

When **Lycabas**, the **Assyrian**, closest to him, as a friend, and, most probably, a lover, saw his much praised features masked with

blood, he wept bitterly for Athis, breathing out his life through that sad wound. He caught up the bow Athis had strung and said ‘Now match yourself with me! You will not have long to rejoice over the death of a child, an act which holds more shame than praise.’ He had not finished speaking when the sharp arrow shot from the bowstring, but Perseus avoided it, and it was left hanging from a fold of his clothes. The grandson of **Acrisius** turned against him that scimitar, tried and proven in his killing of **Medusa**, driving it into his chest. But even in death, his eyes failing, he looked round for Athis, in that gloomy night, and fell next to him, taking for his solace, to the shadows, the fact of being joined with him in death.

Bk V:74-106 The fight: The deaths of Idas, Chromis and others

Phorbas of **Syene**, the son of **Metion**, and **Libyan Amphimedon**, eager to commit to the fight, fell, having slipped on the ground, warm

and drenched with blood on every side. Rising, they were stopped by the sword, piercing Phorbas's throat, and Amphimedon's ribs. But Perseus did not challenge **Eurytus**, son of **Actor**, who had a battle-axe, with his scimitar, instead, lifting a mixing bowl, embossed with decorations and very heavy in weight, high in the air, with both hands, he dashed it down on the man, who vomited bright red blood, and, lying on his back, beat the earth with his head. Then **Perseus** overthrew **Polydegmon**, born of the blood of Queen **Semiramis**, **Abaris** from **Caucasia**, **Lycetus** from the River **Spercheos** region, **Helices** with flowing hair, **Clytus** and **Phlegyas**, and trod on a mounting pile of the dying.

Phineus did not dare to fight hand to hand with his enemy, but threw his spear, which felled **Idas**, by mistake, who, though unavailingly, had no part in the fight, and was a follower of neither side. He, looking fiercely at Phineus, and said 'Since I have been forced to take part, then, Phineus, acknowledge the

enemy you have made, and repay me wound for wound!’ He was about to hurl back the javelin he had pulled from his body when he collapsed dying, his limbs drained of blood.

Then **Hodites**, the greatest of the **Ethiopians** next to the king, was killed by **Clymenus**’s sword. **Hypseus** struck **Prothoënor**, and **Lyncides** struck Hypseus. One very old man, **Emathion**, was there who upheld justice, and feared the gods. He stepped forward, and since his age prevented him fighting, he warred in words, cursing their sinful weapons. **Chromis** decapitated him with his sword, as he clung to the altar with trembling hands, and the head fell straight on to the hearth, and there the half living tongue still uttered imprecations, and its life expired in the midst of the flames.

Bk V:107-148 The fight: Lampetides, Dorylas and others

Then two brothers fell at the hands of **Phineus**. They were **Broteas**, and **Ammon** the famous boxers, who would have been able to overcome anything, if boxing gloves were able to overcome swords, and **Ampycus**, priest of **Ceres**, his forehead wreathed with white fillets. And you **Lampetides**, summoned, but not for this purpose, who played the lute and sang, the work of peace, ordered to help celebrate the feast, and recite the bridal songs. **Pedasus**, mockingly shouted to him, as he stood to one side holding his unwarlike plectrum, ‘Go and sing the rest to the **Stygian** shades!’ and pierced his left temple with his blade. He fell, and tried to pluck the lyric strings again, with dying fingers, and, falling, struck a plaintive note.

Lycormas, angered, did not allow him to die without taking revenge. Grasping a heavy bar from the door on his right, he struck **Pedasus**, in the middle of his neck-bones, and he fell dead to the ground, like a bullock at the sacrifice. **Pelates**, from the banks of **Cinyps**, tried to take the bar from the left door, and,

while attempting to do so, his right hand was transfixed by the spear of **Corythus**, from **Marmarica**, and pinned to the wood. **Abas** pierced him in the side as he was fastened there, and he did not fall, but hung there, dying, from the post to which his hand was nailed. **Melaneus**, a follower of **Perseus**'s cause, was also killed, and **Dorylas**, the wealthiest man in the fields of **Nasamonia**, Dorylas whose wealth was in fields, than whom no man held a greater tract, nor could pile up as many heaps of spices. A missile thrown from the side stuck in his groin, that fatal place. When **Halcyoneus** of **Bactria**, the perpetrator of the wound, saw him gasping for life, his eyes rolling, he said 'Of all your lands you shall have only this earth you lie on!' and left his bloodless corpse. But Perseus, the avenger, the descendant of **Abas**, turned against him the spear, pulled hot from the wound. Catching the nose, it went through the middle of the neck, jutting out front and back.

While Fortune aided his hand, Perseus killed **Clytius** and **Clanis**, born of one mother,

with different wounds. An ashen spear, from his strong arm, went through both Clytius's thighs, while Clanis's jaw bit on a javelin. **Mendesian Celadon** was killed, **Astreus**, of unknown father and **Syrian** mother, **Aethion**, once skilled in telling the future, now deceived by lack of foresight, **Thoactes**, the armour-bearer of the king, and **Agyrtes**, notorious for murdering his own father.

Bk V:149-199 Perseus uses the Gorgon's head

There is yet more to be done, despite what he has endured: the purpose of all is to overwhelm this one man. The bands of conspirators oppose him on all sides, in a cause opposed to justice, and good faith. His father, with helpless loyalty, and his new bride and her mother, support him to the best of their abilities, filling the palace with their cries. But the clash of weapons and the groans of the fallen, drown them out, and at the same time

Bellona, goddess of war, pollutes and drenches the *penates*, the household gods, with blood, and stirs renewed conflict.

Phineus and a thousand followers of Phineus, surround the one man. Spears to the right of him, spears to the left of him, fly thicker than winter hail, past his eyes and ears. He sets his back and shoulders against a massive stone column, and protected behind, turns towards the opposing crowd of men, and withstands their threat. The **Chaonian**, **Molpeus**, presses him on the left, and on the right **Ethemon**, a **Nabatean**. Like a tiger, goaded by hunger, that hears the bellowing of two herds of cattle in separate valleys, and does not know which it would rather rush at, fired up to rush at either, so **Perseus** hesitates whether to strike right or left. He drives Molpeus off, piercing him with a wound to the leg, and is content to let him go: but Ethemon allows him no time, and raging and eager to give him a wound high on the neck, flails at him, incautiously and violently, and fractures his

sword, striking it on the extreme edge of the column. The blade is detached, and fixes itself in its owner's throat. The wound it gives him is not serious enough to cause his death, but as he stands there, quivering, and uselessly stretching out his defenceless arms, Perseus stabs him with **Cyllenian Mercury**'s curved sword.

When Perseus saw indeed that, his efforts would succumb to the weight of numbers, he said 'Since you plan it like this, I will ask help of the enemy. If there are any friends here, turn your face away!' and he held up the **Gorgon**'s head. 'Find others, who might be worried by your marvel' said **Thesculus**, but as he prepared to throw his deadly javelin, he was frozen, like a marble statue, in the act. **Ampyx**, next to him, thrust his sword straight at the heart of the courageous **descendant of Lynceus**, and, in thrusting, his right hand stiffened, without movement this way or that. But **Nileus** who falsely claimed that he was born of the **Nile** with its seven mouths, his shield engraved with its seven streams, part

gold, part silver, cried ‘Perseus, see, the sources of my people: it will be a great consolation to you to take with you, in death, to the silent shadows, the knowledge of having fallen to so noble a man’. The last echo of his voice was cut off in mid-flight, and you might believe his mouth still wished to speak, though it was no longer pervious to words.

Eryx rebuked them, saying, ‘Lack of courage, not the power of the Gorgon, freezes you. Rush in with me and knock this youth and his magic weapon to the ground!’ He had started his rush, but the floor held his feet fast, and there he stayed, unmoving stone, a fully-armed statue.

Bk V:200-249 Phineus is turned to stone

They all deserved the punishment they suffered, except one of **Perseus**’s warriors. While he was fighting on his side, **Aconteus**, saw the **Gorgon**’s head, and took the shape of hardened stone. **Astyages** struck him with his

long sword thinking he was still alive, and the blade gave a high-pitched ringing noise. While Astyages stood there amazed, the same power transformed him, and he remained there with a wondering look on his marble face. It would take a long time to tell the names of the middle ranks of men: two hundred bodies survived the fight, two hundred bodies were turned to stone, at sight of the Gorgon's head.

Now, at last, **Phineus** regrets the unjust fight, but what can he do? He sees the figures in diverse attitudes, and recognises the men, and calling on each by name, asks his help. Disbelieving, he touches the bodies nearest to him. They are marble. He averts his gaze from Perseus, and in supplication, he stretches out his hands in acknowledgement, his arms still held out towards him. 'Perseus', he cries, 'you have won! Take away that monstrous thing of yours: remove your head of the **Medusa**, whoever she may be, that turns men to stone. Take it away, I beg you! It was not hate, or desire for power, that drove me to war. I took up arms to win a

bride! Your claim was greater by merit, but mine by precedence. I do not regret ending it. Give me nothing, except my life, most resolute of men, the rest is yours!’ So speaking, not daring to look towards him to whom he directed his request, Perseus replied ‘Have no fear, most cowardly Phineus, I will grant both what I can grant, and what is a great gift to the fearful! You will not suffer the sword. Rather I will cause you to be an enduring monument through the ages, and you will always be seen in my father-in-law’s palace, so that my wife may find solace in the statue of her intended.’ He spoke, and carried the head of **Phorcys’s daughter** to where Phineus had turned his frightened face. As Phineus tried to avert his gaze, his neck hardened, and the tears on his cheeks were turned to stone. Now the frightened face, the suppliant expression, the submissive hands, and the slavish appearance, remained, in marble.

The victorious descendant of **Abas**, with his bride, enters **Argos**, his ancestral city, and as the champion and vindicator of his

grandfather **Acrisius**, who little deserves it, he attacks **Proetus**, who has made his brother a fugitive by force of arms, and seized his stronghold. But neither by force of arms, nor by possession of the stronghold he had taken in his wickedness, could he overcome the fierce gaze of the snake-wreathed monster.

Still, you, O **Polydectes**, king of tiny **Seriphos**, softened neither by the young man's virtue, visible in all his efforts, nor by his suffering, nursed a harsh and unrelenting hatred, and there was no limit to your baseless anger. You disparaged the praise given him, and accused his account of the killing of Medusa of being a lie. 'I will give you evidence of its truth. Friends, protect your eyes!' cried Perseus, and with the face **of Medusa** he turned the face of the king to bloodless stone.

Bk V:250-293 Minerva on Helicon

Up to this point **Tritonian Minerva** had given her time, freely, in friendship, to this

brother of hers, conceived in a shower of gold, but now, surrounded by vaulted cloud, she vanished from the island of **Seriphos**, and leaving **Cythnus** and **Gyarus** behind on her right, she headed for **Thebes**, and **Mount Helicon**, home of the virgin **Muses**, crossing the sea by whichever way seemed quickest. Reaching it, she alighted there, and spoke to the sisters, learned in song, saying ‘Talk of a new fountain has reached my ears, that gushed out from under the hard hoof of winged **Pegasus**, born of **Medusa**. That is the reason for my journey. I wanted to see this wonderful creation. He himself I saw born from his mother’s blood.’

Urania replied ‘Whatever reason brings you here, to see our home, goddess, you are dear to our hearts. But the tale is true: Pegasus is the source of our fountain’, and she led her to the sacred waters. Pallas, having looked in wonder, for a long time, at this stream, made by the blow of the horses hoof, gazed around her at the groves of ancient trees, the caves, and the

grass, embroidered with innumerable flowers, and said that the **daughters of Mnemosyne** were equally happy in their home and their pursuits. At which one of the sisters answered, ‘O, Tritonia, who would have been one of our choir, if your virtues had not formed you for greater things, what you say is true, and you rightly approve our arts and our haunts. Our life is happy, if only it were safe. But (nothing is sacred to the wicked), all things frighten virgin minds. Dread **Pyreneus**’s destruction is in front of my eyes, and my mind has not yet recovered fully.

That fierce man had captured **Daulis** and the **Phocian** fields, with his Thracian warriors, and wrongly held the kingdom. We were heading for the shrine on **Parnassus**. He saw us going by, and his face showing apparent reverence for our divinity, he said (knowing us), “**Mnemonides**, wait, don’t be afraid, I beg you, to shelter from the rain and the lowering skies” (it was raining): “The gods have often entered humbler homes”. Responding to his

words, and the weather, we gave the man our assent, and went into the entrance hall of the palace. The rain stopped, the north wind overcame the south, and the dark clouds fled from the clearing sky. We wished to go. Pyreneus closed the doors, and prepared for violence, and we escaped that only by taking to our wings. He stood on the highest summit, as if he would follow us, saying “Whatever is your way, is also mine”, and foolishly threw himself from the roof of the main tower. He fell headlong, breaking his skull, hammering the ground in dying, and staining the earth with his evil blood.’

Bk V:294-331 The contest between the Pierides and the Muses

The Muse was speaking: wings sounded in the air, and voices in greeting came out of the high branches. The daughter of Jupiter looked up, and questioned where the sound came from, that was so much like mouths speaking, and thought it human, though it was birdsong. Nine

of them, magpies, that imitate everything, had settled in the branches, bemoaning their fate. While she wondered, the other began speaking, goddess to goddess, ‘Defeated in a contest, they have been added only recently to the flocks of birds. **Pierus** of **Pella**, rich in fields, was their father, and **Paeonian Euipe** was their mother. Nine times, while giving birth, she called, nine times, to powerful **Lucina**. Swollen with pride in their numbers, this crowd of foolish sisters came here, to us, through the many cities of **Achaia** and **Haemonia**, and challenged us to a singing competition, saying “Stop cheating the untutored masses with your empty sweetness. If you have faith in yourselves, contend with us, you goddesses of **Thespieae**. We cannot be outdone in voice or art, and we are your equals in numbers. If you want, if you are defeated, you can grant us the **Heliconian** fountains, **Hippocrene**, of **Medusa**’s offspring, and **Boeotian Aganippe**. Or we will grant you the Emathian plains as far as snow-covered **Paeonia**! Let the nymphs decide the outcome.”

It was shameful to compete with them, but it seemed more shameful to concede. The nymphs were elected, and swore on their streams to judge fairly, and sat on platforms of natural rock. Then, without drawing lots, the one who had first declared the contest sang, of the war with the gods, granting false honours to the giants, and diminishing the actions of the mighty deities. How **Typhoeus**, issued forth from his abode in the depths of the earth, filling the heavenly gods with fear, and how they all turned their backs in flight, until **Egypt** received them, and the **Nile** with its seven mouths. She told how earth-born Typhoeus came there as well, and the gods concealed themselves in disguised forms. “**Jupiter**” she said, “turned himself into a ram, the head of the flock, and even now **Libyan Ammon** is shown with curving horns. **Delian Apollo** hid as a crow, **Bacchus**, **Semele’s child**, as a goat, **Diana**, the sister of **Phoebus**, a cat, **Saturnian Juno** a white cow, **Venus** a fish, and **Cyllenian Mercury** the winged ibis.”

Bk V:332-384 Calliope sings: Cupid makes Dis fall in love

‘This much she played on her lute, with singing voice. Then called on us, - but perhaps you are not at leisure, or free to listen to a repetition of our music?’ ‘Do not stop’ said **Pallas**, ‘but sing your song again as you arranged it!’ and she sat amongst the light shadows of the grove. The Muse renewed her tale ‘We gave our best singer to the contest. **Calliope**, who rose, with her loose hair bound with ivy, tried out the plaintive strings with her fingers, then accompanied the wandering notes with this song.

“**Ceres** first turned the soil with curving plough, first ripened the crops and produce of the earth, first gave us laws: all things are Ceres’s gift. My song is of her. If only I could create a song in any way worthy of the goddess! This goddess is truly a worthy subject for my song.

Trinacris, the vast isle of **Sicily**, had been heaped over the giant's limbs, and with its great mass oppressed buried **Typhoeus**, he who had dared to aspire to a place in heaven. He struggles it's true and often tries to rise, but his right hand is held by the promontory of **Ausonian Pelorus**, and his left hand by you, **Pachynus**. **Lilybaeum** presses on his legs, **Etna** weighs down his head, supine beneath it, Typhoeus throws ash from his mouth, and spits out flame. Often, a wrestler, he throws back the weight of earth, and tries to roll the high mountains and the cities from his body, and then the ground trembles, and even the lord of the silent kingdom is afraid lest he be exposed, and the soil split open in wide fissures, and the light admitted to scare the anxious dead.

Fearing this disaster, the king of the dark had left his shadowy realm, and, drawn in his chariot by black horses, carefully circled the foundations of the Sicilian land. When he had checked and was satisfied that nothing was collapsing, he relinquished his fears. Then

Venus, at Eryx, saw him moving, as she sat on the hillside, and embraced her winged son, **Cupid**, and said ‘My child, my hands and weapons, my power, seize those arrows, that overcome all, and devise a path for your swift arrows, to the heart of that god to whom the final share of the triple kingdom fell. You conquer the gods and **Jupiter** himself, the lords of the sea, and their very king, who controls the lords of the sea. Why is **Tartarus** excepted? Why not extend your mother’s kingdom and your own? We are talking of a third part of the world. And yet, as is evident to me, I am scorned in heaven, and **Love**’s power diminishes with mine.

Don’t you see how **Pallas**, and the huntress **Diana**, forsake me? And **Ceres’s daughter** too, Proserpine, will be a virgin if we allow it, since she hopes to be like them. But you, if you delight in our shared kingdom, can mate the goddess to her uncle.’ So Venus spoke: he undid his quiver, and at his mother’s bidding took an arrow, one from a thousand, and none

was sharper, more certain, or better obeyed the bow. Then he bent the pliant tips against his knee, and with his barbed arrow struck **Dis** in the heart.”

Bk V:385-424 Calliope sings: Dis and the rape of Proserpine

“Not far from the walls of **Enna**, there is a deep pool. **Pergus** is its name. **Caÿster** does not hear more songs than rise from the swans on its gliding waves. A wood encircles the waters, surrounds them on every side, and its leaves act as a veil, dispelling **Phoebus**’s shafts. The branches give it coolness, and the moist soil, **Tyrian** purple flowers: there, it is everlasting Spring. While **Proserpine** was playing in this glade, and gathering violets or radiant lilies, while with girlish fondness she filled the folds of her gown, and her basket, trying to outdo her companions in her picking, **Dis**, almost in a moment, saw her, prized her, took her: so swift as this, is love. The frightened

goddess cries out to her mother, to her friends, most of all to her mother, with piteous mouth. Since she had torn her dress at the opening, the flowers she had collected fell from her loosened tunic, and even their scattering caused her virgin tears. The ravisher whipped up his chariot, and urged on the horses, calling them by name, shaking out the shadowy, dark-dyed, reins, over their necks and manes, through deep pools, they say, and the sulphurous reeking swamps of the **Palici**, vented from a crevice of the earth, to Syracuse where the **Bacchiadae**, a people born of **Corinth** between two seas, laid out their city between unequal harbours.

Between **Cyane** and **Pisaeon Arethusa**, there is a bay enclosed by narrow arms. Here lived **Cyane**, best known of the Sicilian nymphs, from whom the name of the spring was also taken. She showed herself from the pool as far as her waist, and recognising the goddess, cried out to Dis, ‘No’, and ‘Go no further!’ ‘You cannot be **Ceres**’s son against her will: the girl should have been asked, and

not abused. If it is right for me to compare small things with great, **Anapis** prized me and I wedded him, but I was persuaded by talk and not by terror.’ Speaking, she stretched her arms out at her sides, obstructing him. The **son of Saturn** could scarcely contain his wrath, and urging on the dread horses, he turned his royal sceptre with powerful arm, and plunged it through the bottom of the pool. The earth, pierced, made a road to **Tartarus**, and swallowed the headlong chariot, into the midst of the abyss.”

Bk V:425-486 Calliope sings: Ceres searches for Proserpine

“**Cyane**, mourning the rape of the goddess, and the contempt for the sanctities of her fountain, nursed an inconsolable grief in her silent heart, and pined away wholly with sorrow. She melted into those waters whose great goddess she had previously been. You might see her limbs becoming softened, her

bones seeming pliant, her nails losing their hardness. First of all the slenderest parts dissolve: her dusky hair, her fingers and toes, her feet and ankles (since it is no great transformation from fragile limbs to cool waters). Next her breast and back, shoulders and flanks slip away, vanishing into tenuous streams. At last the water runs in her ruined veins, and nothing remains that you could touch.

Meanwhile **the mother**, fearing, searches in vain for the maid, through all the earth and sea. Neither the coming of dewy-haired **Aurora**, nor **Hesperus**, finds her resting. Lighting pine torches with both hands at **Etna**'s fires, she wanders, unquiet, through the bitter darkness, and when the kindly light has dimmed the stars, she still seeks her child, from the rising of the sun till the setting of the sun.

She found herself thirsty and weary from her efforts, and had not moistened her lips at any of the springs, when by chance she saw a hut with a roof of straw, and she knocked on its

humble door. At that sound, an old woman emerged, and saw the goddess, and, when she asked for water, gave her something sweet made with malted barley. While she drank what she had been given a rash, foul-mouthed boy stood watching, and taunted her, and called her greedy. The goddess was offended, and threw the liquid she had not yet drunk, mixed with the grains of barley, in his face. His skin, absorbing it, became spotted, and where he had once had arms, he now had legs. A tail was added to his altered limbs, and he shrank to a little shape, so that he has no great power to harm. He is like a lesser lizard, a newt, of tiny size. The old woman wondered and wept, and, trying to touch the creature, it ran from her and searched out a place to hide. It has a name fitting for its offence, *stellio*, its body starred with various spots.

It would take too long to tell through what lands and seas the goddess wandered. Searching the whole earth, she failed to find her daughter: she returned to Sicily, and while crossing it

from end to end, she came to **Cyane**, who if she had not been changed would have told all. But though she wished to, she had neither mouth nor tongue, nor anything with which to speak. Still she revealed clear evidence, known to the mother, and showed **Persephone**'s ribbon, fallen, by chance, into the sacred pool. As soon as she recognised it, the goddess tore her dishevelled hair, and beat her breast again and again with her hands, as if she at last comprehended the rape. She did not know yet where Persephone was, but condemned all the lands, and called them thankless and unworthy of her gift of corn, Sicily, that **Trinacria**, above all, where she had discovered the traces of her loss.

So, in that place, with cruel hands, she broke the ploughs that turned up the soil, and, in her anger, dealt destruction to farmers, and the cattle in their fields, alike, and ordered the ever-faithful land to fail, and spoiled the sowing. The fertility of that country, acclaimed throughout the world, was spoken of as a

fiction: the crops died as young shoots, destroyed by too much sun, and then by too much rain. Wind and weather harmed them, and hungry birds gathered the scattered seed. Thistles and darnel and stubborn grasses ruined the wheat harvest.”

Bk V:487-532 Calliope sings: Ceres asks Jupiter’s help

“Then **Arethusa**, once of **Elis**, whom **Alpheus** loved, lifted her head from her pool, and brushed the wet hair from her forehead, saying ‘O great goddess of the crops, mother of that virgin sought through all the earth, end your fruitless efforts, and do not anger yourself so deeply against the faithful land. The land does not deserve it: it opened to the rape against its will. It is not my country, I pray for: I came here as a stranger. **Pisa** is my country, and Elis is my source. I am a foreigner in **Sicily**, but its soil is more to me than other lands. Here is my home: here are my **household gods**. Most

gentle one, preserve it. A fitting time will come for me to tell you, how I moved from my country, and came to **Ortygia**, over such a great expanse of sea, when you are free of care, and of happier countenance. The fissured earth showed me a way, and slipping below the deepest caverns, here, I lifted up my head, and saw the unfamiliar stars.

So, while I glided underground down there, among **Stygian** streams, with these very eyes, I saw your Proserpine. She was sad indeed, but, though her face was fearful still, she was nevertheless a queen, the greatest one among the world of shadows, the powerful consort, nevertheless, of the king of hell!’ **The mother** was stunned to hear these words, as if petrified, and was, for a long time, like someone thunderstruck, until the blow of deep amazement became deep indignation. She rose, in her chariot, to the realms of heaven. There, her whole face clouded with hate, she appeared before **Jove** with dishevelled hair.

Jupiter I have come to you in entreaty for my child and for your own' she cried. 'If the mother finds no favour with you, let the daughter move you, and do not let your concern for her be less, I beg you, because I gave her birth. See, the daughter I have searched for so long, has been found, if you call it finding to lose her more surely, if you call it finding merely to know where she is. I can bear the fact that she has been raped, if he will only return her! A spoiler is not worthy to be the husband of your daughter, even if she is no longer my daughter.' Jupiter replied 'Our child is a pledge and a charge, between us, you and I. But if only we are willing to give things their right names, the thing is not an insult in itself: the truth is it is love. He would not be a shameful son-in-law for us, if only you would wish it, goddess. How great a thing it is to be Jupiter's brother, even if all the rest is lacking! Why, what if there is nothing lacking at all, except what he yielded to me by lot? But if you have such a great desire to separate them, **Proserpine** shall return to

heaven, but on only one condition, that no food has touched her lips, since that is the law, decreed by the **Fates**.’ ”

Bk V:533-571 Calliope sings: Persephone's fate

“He spoke, and **Ceres** felt sure of regaining her daughter. But the Fates would not allow it, for the girl had broken her fast, and wandering, innocently, in a well-tended garden, she had pulled down a reddish-purple pomegranate fruit, hanging from a tree, and, taking seven seeds from its yellow rind, squeezed them in her mouth. **Ascalaphus** was the only one to see it, whom, it is said, **Orphe** bore, to her **Acheron**, in the dark woods, she not the least known of the nymphs of **Avernus**. He saw, and by his cruel disclosure, prevented Proserpine's return. Then the queen of **Erebus** grieved, and changed the informant into a bird of ill omen: she sprinkled his head with water from the **Phlegethon**, and changed him to a beak,

plumage, and a pair of huge eyes. Losing his own form he is covered by his tawny wings, and looks like a head, and long, curving claws. He scarcely stirs the feathers growing on his idle wings. He has become an odious bird, a messenger of future disaster, the screech owl, torpid by day, a fearful omen to mortal creatures.

He indeed can be seen to have deserved his punishment, because of his disclosure and his words. But why have you, **Sirens**, skilled in song, **daughters of Acheloüs**, the feathers and claws of birds, while still bearing human faces? Is it because you were numbered among the companions, when **Proserpine** gathered the flowers of Spring? When you had searched in vain for her on land, you wanted, then, to cross the waves on beating wings, so that the waters would also know of your trouble. The gods were willing, and suddenly you saw your limbs covered with golden plumage. But, so that your song, born, sweetly, in our ears, and your rich

vocal gift, might not be lost with your tongues, each virgin face and human voice remained.

Now **Jupiter**, intervening, between his brother and grieving sister, divides the turning year, equally. And now the goddess, Persephone, shared divinity of the two kingdoms, spends so many months with her mother, so many months with her husband. The aspect of her face and mind alters in a moment. Now the goddess's looks are glad that even **Dis** could see were sad, a moment ago. Just as the sun, hidden, before, by clouds of rain, wins through and leaves the clouds."

Bk V:572-641 Calliope sings: Arethusa's story

"**Ceres**, kindly now, happy in the return of her daughter, asks what the cause of your flight was, **Arethusa**, and why you are now a sacred fountain. The waters fall silent while their goddess lifts her head from the deep pool, and wringing the water from her sea-green tresses, she tells of the former love of that river of **Elis**.

‘I was one of the nymphs, that lived in **Achaia**,’ she said ‘none of them keener to travel the woodland, none of them keener to set out the nets. But, though I never sought fame for my beauty, though I was wiry, my name was, the beautiful. Nor did my looks, praised too often, give me delight. I blushed like a simpleton at the gifts of my body, those things that other girls used to rejoice in. I thought it was sinful to please.

Tired (I remember), I was returning, from the **Stymphalian** woods. It was hot, and my efforts had doubled the heat. I came to a river, without a ripple, hurrying on without a murmur, clear to its bed, in whose depths you could count every pebble: you would scarce think it moving. Silvery willows and poplars, fed by the waters, gave a natural shade to the sloping banks. Approaching I dipped my toes in, then as far as my knees, and not content with that I undressed, and draped my light clothes on a hanging willow, and plunged, naked, into the stream. While I gathered the water to me and

splashed, gliding around in a thousand ways, and stretching out my arms to shake the water from them, I thought I heard a murmur under the surface, and, in fear, I leapt for the nearest bank of the flood.

‘What are you rushing for, Arethusa?’ **Alpheus** called from the waves. ‘Why are you rushing?’ He called again to me, in a strident voice. Just as I was, I fled, without my clothes (I had left my clothes on the other bank): so much the more fiercely he pursued and burned, and being naked, I seemed readier for him. So I ran, and so he wildly followed, as doves fly from a hawk on flickering wings, as a hawk is used to chasing frightened doves. Even beyond **Orchemenus**, I still ran, by **Psophis**, and **Cyllene**, and the ridges of **Maenalus**, by chill **Erymanthus**, **Elis**, he no quicker than I. But I could not stay the course, being unequal in strength: he was fitted for unremitting effort. Still, across the plains, over tree-covered mountains, through rocks and crags, and where there was no path, I ran. The sun was at my

back. I saw a long shadow stretching before my feet, unless it was my fear that saw it, but certainly I feared the sound of feet, and the deep breaths from his mouth stirred the ribbons in my hair. Weary with the effort to escape him, I cried out ‘Help me: I will be taken. **Diana**, help the one who bore your weapons for you, whom you often gave your bow to carry, and your quiver with all its arrows!’ The goddess was moved, and raising an impenetrable cloud, threw it over me.

The river-god circled the concealing fog, and in ignorance searched about the hollow mist. Twice, without understanding, he rounded the place, where the goddess had concealed me, and twice called out ‘**Arethusa**, O Arethusa!’ What wretched feelings were mine, then? Perhaps those the lamb has when it hears the wolves, howling round the high fold, or the hare, that, hidden in the briars, sees the dogs hostile muzzles, and does not dare to make a movement of its body? He did not go far: he could see no signs of my tracks further on: he

observed the cloud and the place. Cold sweat poured down my imprisoned limbs, and dark drops trickled from my whole body. Wherever I moved my foot, a pool gathered, and moisture dripped from my hair. And indeed the river-god saw his love in the water, and putting off the shape of a man he had assumed, he changed back to his own watery form, and mingled with mine. The **Delian** goddess split the earth, and plunging down into secret caverns, I was brought here to **Ortygia**, dear to me, because it has the same name as my goddess, the ancient name, for Delos, where she was born, and this was the first place to receive me, into the clear air.’ ”

**Bk V:642-678 Calliope sings: Triptolemus.
The Fate of the Pierides**

“That was as far as Arethusa went. The goddess of all that is fertile, fastened twin dragons to her chariot, curbing them with the bit, between their teeth, and was carried through the air, between heaven and earth. Reaching

Eleusis, by **Athens**, city of **Tritonian Minerva**, she gave her swift chariot to **Triptolemus**, and ordered him to scatter the seeds she gave, partly in untilled soil, partly in fields reclaimed, after lying for a long time fallow.

Now the youth was carried high over Europe and Asia. He turned his face towards **Scythia** where, **Lyncus** was king. He stood before the king's **household gods**. He was asked how he had come there, and the reason for his journey, his name and his country. He said 'Athens, the famous city, is my home, Triptolemus, my name. I came not by ship, on the sea, or by foot, over land. The clear air parted for me. I bring you the gifts of **Ceres**. If you scatter them through the wide fields, they will give you back fruitful harvests, and ripening crops.' The barbarian was jealous. So that he might be the author, of so great a gift, he received him like a guest, but attacked Triptolemus, with a sword, while he was in deep sleep. As he attempted to pierce the

youth's breast, Ceres turned the king into a lynx, then ordered the youth, of Athens, the city of **Mopsopus**, to drive the sacred team back through the air."

'So ended the singing, from **the greatest** of our singers, and the nymphs, with one harmonious voice, said that **the goddesses** of **Helicon** had taken the honours. When the losers hurled abuse at us, I said "Seeing that you deserve punishment enough for your challenge, and now add profanities to your offence, and since our patience is not unlimited, we will move on to sentence you, and follow where anger prompts us." The **Emathides** laughed and ridiculed these threatening words, but as they tried to speak, and, attack us with insolent hands, making a great clamour, they saw feathers spring from under their nails, and plumage cover their arms. Each one saw the next one's mouth harden to a solid beak, and a new bird enter the trees. When they wanted to beat their breasts in sorrow, they hung in the air, lifted by the movement of their arms,

magpies now, the slanderers of the woods. Even now, as birds, their former eloquence remains, their raucous garrulity, and their monstrous capacity for chatter.'

Book VI



BkVI:1-25 Arachne rejects Minerva

Tritonian Minerva had listened to every word, and approved of the **Aonian Muses**'s song, and their justified indignation. Then she said, to herself, 'To give praise is not enough, let me be praised as well, and not allow my divine powers to be scorned without inflicting punishment.' Her thoughts turned to **Arachne**, of **Maeonia**, whom she had heard would not give her due credit, in the art of spinning. The girl was not known for her place of birth, or family, but for her skill. Her father, **Idmon** of **Colophon**, dyed the absorbent wool purple, with **Phocaeon** murex. Her mother was dead. She too had been of humble birth, and the father the same. Nevertheless, though she lived in a modest home, in little **Hypaepa**, Arachne had gained a name for artistry, throughout the cities of **Lydia**.

Often the nymphs of Mount **Tmolus** deserted their vine-covered slopes, and the nymphs of the River **Pactolus** deserted their

waves, to examine her wonderful workmanship. It was not only a joy to see the finished cloths, but also to watch them made: so much beauty added to art. Whether at first she was winding the rough yarn into a new ball, or working the stuff with her fingers, teasing out the clouds of wool, repeatedly, drawing them into long equal threads, twirling the slender spindle with practised thumb, or embroidering with her needle, you could see she was taught by **Pallas**. Yet she denied it, and took offense at the idea of such a teacher. ‘Contend with me’ she said ‘I will not disagree at all if I am beaten’.

Bk VI:26-69 Pallas Minerva challenges Arachne

Pallas Minerva took the shape of an old woman: adding grey hair to her temples, and ageing her limbs, which she supported with a stick. Then she spoke, to the girl, as follows. ‘Not everything old age has is to be shunned: knowledge comes with advancing years. Do not

reject my advice: seek great fame amongst mortals for your skill in weaving, but give way to the goddess, and ask her forgiveness, rash girl, with a humble voice: she will forgive if you will ask.’ **Arachne** looked fiercely at her and left the work she was on: scarcely restraining her hands, and with dark anger in her face. Pallas, disguised it is true, received this answer. ‘Weak-minded and worn out by tedious old age, you come here, and having lived too long destroys you. Let your daughter-in-law if you have one, let your daughter if you have one, listen to your voice. I have wisdom enough of my own. You think your advice is never heeded: that is my feeling too. Why does she not come herself? Why does she shirk this contest?’

The goddess said ‘She is here!’ and, relinquishing the old woman’s form, revealed Pallas Minerva. The nymphs and the **Phrygian** women worshipped her godhead: the girl alone remained unafraid, yet she did blush, as the sky is accustomed to redden when **Aurora** first

stirs, and, after a while, to whiten at the sun from the east. She is stubborn in her attempt, and rushes on to her fate, eager for a worthless prize. Now, **Jupiter**'s daughter does not refuse, and does not give warning, or delay the contest a moment. Immediately they both position themselves, in separate places, and stretch out the fine threads, for the warp, over twin frames. The frame is fastened to the cross-beam; the threads of the warp separated with the reed; the thread of the weft is inserted between, in the pointed shuttles that their fingers have readied; and, drawn through the warp, the threads of the weft are beaten into place, struck by the comb's notched teeth. They each work quickly, and, with their clothes gathered in tight, under their breasts, apply skilful arms, their zeal not making it seem like work. There, shades of purple, dyed in **Tyrian** bronze vessels, are woven into the cloth, and also lighter colours, shading off gradually. The threads that touch seem the same, but the extremes are distant, as when, often, after a rainstorm, the expanse of

the sky, struck by the sunlight, is stained by a rainbow in one vast arch, in which a thousand separate colours shine, but the eye itself still cannot see the transitions. There, are inserted lasting threads of gold, and an ancient tale is spun in the web.

Bk VI:70-102 Pallas weaves her web

Pallas Athene depicts the hill of **Mars**, and the court of the Aeropagus, in **Cecrops's** Athens, and the old dispute between **Neptune** and herself, as to who had the right to the city and its name. There the twelve gods sit in great majesty, on their high thrones, with **Jupiter** in the middle. She weaves the gods with their familiar attributes. The image of Jupiter is a royal one. There she portrays the Ocean god, standing and striking the rough stone, with his long trident, and seawater flowing from the centre of the shattered rock, a token of his claim to the city. She gives herself a shield, a sharp pointed spear, and a helmet for her head, while

the aegis protects her breast. She shows an olive-tree with pale trunk, thick with fruit, born from the earth at a blow from her spear, the gods marvelling: and Victory crowns the work.

Then she adds four scenes of contest in the four corners, each with miniature figures, in their own clear colours, so that her rival might learn, from the examples quoted, what prize she might expect, for her outrageous daring. One corner shows **Thracian** Mount **Rhodope** and Mount **Haemus**, now icy peaks, once mortal beings who ascribed the names of the highest gods to themselves. A second corner shows the miserable fate of the queen of the **Pygmies**: how **Juno**, having overcome her in a contest, ordered her to become a crane and make war on her own people. Also she pictures **Antigone**, whom Queen Juno turned into a bird for having dared to compete with **Jupiter**'s great consort: neither her father **Laomedon**, nor her city **Ilium** were of any use to her, but taking wing as a white stork she applauds herself with clattering beak. The only corner left shows

Cinyras, bereaved: and he is seen weeping as he clasps the stone steps of the temple that were once his daughters' limbs. Minerva surrounded the outer edges with the olive wreaths of peace (this was the last part) and so ended her work with emblems of her own tree.

Bk VI:103-128 Arachne weaves hers in reply

The **Maeonian** girl depicts **Europa** deceived by the form of the bull: you would have thought it a real bull and real waves. She is seen looking back to the shore she has left, and calling to her companions, displaying fear at the touch of the surging water, and drawing up her shrinking feet. Also **Arachne** showed **Asterie**, held by the eagle, struggling, and **Leda** lying beneath the swan's wings. She added **Jupiter** who, hidden in the form of a satyr, filled **Antiope, daughter of Nycteus** with twin offspring; who, as **Amphitryon**, was charmed by you, **Alcmena**, of Tiryns; by **Danaë**, as a golden shower; by **Aegina**, daughter of **Asopus**, as a flame; by **Mnemosyne**, as a

shepherd; by **Proserpine**, **Ceres**'s daughter, as a spotted snake.

She wove you, **Neptune**, also, changed to a fierce bull for **Canace**, **Aeolus**'s daughter. In **Enipeus**'s form you begot the **Aloidae**, and deceived **Theophane** as a ram. The golden-haired, gentlest, **mother of the cornfields**, knew you as a horse. The **snake-haired mother** of the **winged horse**, knew you as a winged bird. **Melantho** knew you as a dolphin. She gave all these their own aspects, and the aspects of the place. Here is **Phoebus** like a countryman, and she shows him now with the wings of a hawk, and now in a lion's skin, and how as a shepherd he tricked **Isse**, **Macareus**'s daughter. She showed how **Bacchus** ensnared **Erigone** with delusive grapes, and how **Saturn** as the double of a horse begot **Chiron**. The outer edge of the web, surrounded by a narrow border, had flowers interwoven with entangled ivy.

Bk VI:129-145 Arachne is turned into a spider

Neither **Pallas** nor Envy itself could fault that work. The golden-haired warrior goddess was grieved by its success, and tore the tapestry, embroidered with the gods' crimes, and as she held her shuttle made of boxwood from Mount **Cytorus**, she struck **Idmonian Arachne**, three or four times, on the forehead. The unfortunate girl could not bear it, and courageously slipped a noose around her neck: Pallas, in pity, lifted her, as she hung there, and said these words, 'Live on then, and yet hang, condemned one, but, lest you are careless in future, this same condition is declared, in punishment, against your descendants, to the last generation!' Departing after saying this, she sprinkled her with the juice of **Hecate's** herb, and immediately at the touch of this dark poison, Arachne's hair fell out. With it went her nose and ears, her head shrank to the smallest size, and her whole body became tiny. Her slender fingers stuck to her sides as legs, the

rest is belly, from which she still spins a thread,
and, as a spider, weaves her ancient web.

Bk VI:146-203 Niobe rejects the worship of Latona

All of **Lydia** murmurs: the tale goes through the towns of **Phrygia**, and fills the whole world with talk. **Niobe** had known **Arachne**. As a girl, before her marriage, she had lived in **Maeonia**, near Mount **Sipylyus**. Nevertheless she was not warned by her countrywoman's fate, to give the gods precedence, and use more modest words. Many things swelled her pride, but neither her husband **Amphion**'s marvellous art in music, nor both of their high lineages, nor the might of their great kingdom of **Thebes**, pleased her, though they did please her, as much as her children did. And Niobe would have been spoken of as the most fortunate of mothers, if she had not seemed so to herself.

Now **Manto**, the daughter of **Tiresias**, prescient of the future, stirred by divine

impulse, went through the middle of the streets, declaiming. ‘Women of Thebes, **Ismenides**, go, as a crowd, and wreath your hair with laurel, and bring incense with holy prayer to **Latona**, and **Latona’s children**, Diana and Apollo. Latona commands it through my mouth.’

They obey: all the **Theban women**, as commanded, dress their temples with sweet-bay, and bring incense and words of prayer to the sacred flames.

Look, Niobe comes, followed by a crowded throng, visible, in her Phrygian robes woven with gold, and as beautiful as anger will let her be. Turning her lovely head with the hair falling loose over both her shoulders, she pauses, and looks around with pride in her eyes, from her full height, saying ‘What madness, to prefer the gods you are told about to the ones you see? Why is Latona worshipped at the altars, while as yet my godhead is without its incense? **Tantalus** is my father, who is the only man to eat the food of the gods. My mother is one of the seven sisters, the **Pleiades**. Great **Atlas**,

who carries the axis of the heavens on his shoulders, is one of my grandfathers. Jupiter is the other, and I glory in having him as my father-in-law as well. The peoples of Phrygia fear me. Cadmus's royal house is under my rule: and the walls, built to my husband's lyre, and Thebes's people, will be ruled by his power and mine. Whichever part of the palace I turn my eyes on, I look at immense wealth. Augment it with my beauty, worthy of a goddess, and add to this my seven daughters, as many sons, and soon my sons- and my daughters-in-law! Now, ask what the reason is for my pride, and then dare to prefer Latona to me, that **Titaness**, daughter of **Coeus**, whoever he is. Latona, whom the wide earth once refused even a little piece of ground to give birth on.

Land, sea, and sky were no refuge for your goddess. She was exiled from the world, until **Delos**, pitying the wanderer, gave her a precarious place, saying 'Friend, you wander the earth, I the sea.' There she gave birth to

twins, only a seventh of my offspring. I am fortunate (indeed, who can deny it?) and I will stay fortunate (and who can doubt that too?). My riches make me safe. I am greater than any whom Fortune can harm, and though she could take much away, she would leave me much more. Surely my comforts banish fear. Imagine that some of this host of children could be taken from me, I would still not, bereaved, be reduced to the two of Latona's family. In that state, how far is she from childlessness? Go home – enough of holy things – and take those laurel wreaths from your hair!' They relinquish them, and leave the rite unfinished, except what is their right, reverencing the goddess in a secret murmur.

Bk VI:204-266 The gods' vengeance: Niobe's sons are killed

The goddess was deeply angered, and on the summit of Mount **Cynthus** she spoke to her twin children. 'See, it will be doubted whether

I, your mother, proud to have borne you, and giving way to no goddess, except Juno, am a goddess, and worship will be prevented at my altars through all the ages, unless you help me, my children. Nor is this my only grief. This **daughter of Tantalus** has added insult to injury, and has dared to put her children above you, and has called me childless, may that recoil on her own head, and has shown she has her father's tongue for wickedness.' **Latona** would have added her entreaties to what she had related, but **Phoebus** cried 'Enough! Long complaint delays her punishment! **Phoebe** said the same, and falling swiftly through the air, concealed by clouds, they reached the house of **Cadmus**.

There was a broad, open plain near the walls, flattened by the constant passage of horses, where many wheels and hard hooves had levelled the turf beneath them. There, a number of **Amphion's** seven sons mounted on their strong horses, and sitting firmly on their backs, bright with **Tyrian** purple, guided them using

reins heavy with gold. While **Ismenus**, one of these, who had been the first of his mother's burdens, was wheeling his horse's path around in an unerring circle, and hauling at the foaming bit, he cried out 'Oh, I am wounded!' and revealed an arrow fixed in his chest, and loosing the reins from his dying hands, slipped gradually, sideways, over his mount's right shoulder.

Next **Sipylus**, hearing the sound of a quiver in the empty air, let out the reins, just as a shipmaster sensing a storm runs for it when he sees the cloud, and claps on all sail, so that not even the slightest breeze is lost. Still giving full rein, he was overtaken, by the arrow none can avoid, and the shaft stuck quivering in his neck, and the naked tip protruded from his throat. Leaning forward, as he was, he rolled down over the mane and the galloping hooves, and stained the ground with warm blood.

Unlucky **Phaedimus**, and **Tantalus**, who carried his grandfather's name, at the end of the usual task imposed on them, had joined the

exercise of the young men, and were gleaming with oil in the wrestling match. And now they were fully engaged, in a tight hold, chest to chest, when an arrow, loosed from the taut bow, pierced them both, as they were. They groaned as one, and fell as one, their limbs contorted with pain. As they lay there, they cast a last dying look, as one, and, as one, gave up the ghost. **Alphenor** saw them die, and striking at his breast in anguish, he ran to them to lift their cold bodies in his embrace. In this filial service he also fell, for **Delian Apollo** tore at his innermost parts with deadly steel. As the shaft was removed, a section of his lung was drawn with it, caught on the barbs, and with his life's blood his spirit rushed out into the air.

But it was not a simple wound that longhaired **Damasichthon** suffered. He was hit where the shin begins, and where the sinews of the knee leave a soft place between. While he was trying to pull out the fatal shaft with his hand, another arrow was driven into his throat as far as the feathers. The rush of blood expelled it, and

gushing out, spurted high in the air, in a long jet. The last son, **Ilioneus**, stretched out his arms in vain entreaty. ‘O you company of all the gods, spare me!’ he cried, unaware that he need not ask them all. The archer god Apollo was moved, though already the dart could not be recalled: yet only a slight wound killed the boy, the arrow not striking deeply in his heart.

**Bk VI:267-312 Niobe’s daughters are killed:
Her fate.**

The rumour of trouble, the people’s sorrow, and the tears of her own family, confirming sudden disaster to the mother, left her astounded that the gods could have done it, and angered that they had such power, and dared to use it. Now, she learned that the father, **Amphion**, driving the iron blade through his heart, had, in dying, ended pain and life together. Alas, how different this **Niobe** from that Niobe, the one, who a moment ago chased the people from **Latona**’s altar, and made her

way through the city with head held high, enviable to her friends, and now more to be pitied by her enemies. She threw herself on the cold bodies, and without regard for due ceremony, gave all her sons a last kiss. Turning from them she lifted her bruised arms to the sky, and cried out 'Feed your heart, cruel one, Latona, on my pain, feed your heart, and be done! Be done, savage spirit! I am buried seven times. Exult and triumph over your enemy! But where is the victory? Even in my misery I have more than you in your happiness. After so many deaths, I still outdo you!'

She spoke, and the twang of a taut bowstring sounded, terrifying all of them, except Niobe. Pain gave her courage. The sisters, with black garments, and loosened hair, were standing by their brothers' bodies. One, grasping at an arrow piercing her side, falling, fainted in death beside her brother's face. A second, attempting to comfort her grieving mother, fell silent, and was bent in agony with a hidden wound. She pressed her lips together,

but life had already fled. One fell trying in vain to run, and her sister fell across her. One tried to hide, while another trembled in full view. Now six had been dealt death, suffering their various wounds: the last remained. The mother, with all her robes and with her body, protected her, and cried out 'Leave me just one, the youngest! I only ask for one, the youngest of all!' While she prayed, she, for whom she prayed, was dead. Childless, she sat among the bodies of her sons, her daughters, and her husband, frozen in grief.

The breeze stirs not a hair, the colour of her cheeks is bloodless, and her eyes are fixed motionless in her sad face: nothing in that likeness is alive. Inwardly her tongue is frozen to the solid roof of her mouth, and her veins cease their power to throb. Her neck cannot bend, nor her arms recall their movement, nor her feet lead her anywhere. Inside, her body is stone. Yet she weeps, and, enclosed in a powerful whirlwind, she is snatched away to her own country: there, set on a mountain top,

she wears away, and even now tears flow from the marble.

Bk VI:313-381 The story of Latona and the Lycians

Now all men and women are indeed afraid of the anger manifested by divine being, and all pay more respect to the great power of the goddess, the mother of the twins. As often happens, because of recent events they tell old stories, and one says ‘In **Lycia**’s fertile fields, in ancient times, also, the farmers spurned the goddess, and not without suffering for it. The thing is not well known, it is true, because the men were unknown, nevertheless, it was wonderful. I myself saw the place, and the lake made notable by the strangeness of it, since my father, getting old, and unable to endure the journey, had ordered me to collect some choice cattle from there, and one of the men of that country had offered himself as a guide. While I crossed the pastureland with him, there was an

old altar, black with ashes, standing in the middle of a lake, surrounded by trembling reeds. My guide stopped and, shivering with fear, said in a murmur ‘Have mercy on me!’ and I, similarly, said in a murmur ‘Have mercy!’

Then I asked him whether it was an altar to the **Naiads**, **Faunus**, or a local god, and my friend replied ‘Young man, it is no mountain spirit in this altar. She calls it hers, whom the queen of heaven once banned from the world, and whom vagrant **Delos**, a lightly floating island, would barely accept, at her prayer. There, between **Pallas**’s olive tree and a date-palm, **Latona** bore her twins, against their step-mother **Juno**’s will. Having endured her labour, even then she fled Juno, carrying the divine twins clasped to her breast.

Then, inside the borders of Lycia, home of the **Chimaera**, as the fierce sun scorched the fields, the goddess, weary from her long struggle, and parched by the radiant heat, felt her thirst: also her hungry children had drunk

all her rich milk. By chance she saw a smallish lake in a deep valley. Countrymen were there, gathering bushy osiers, rushes, and the fine marsh sedges. The **Titan's daughter** approached, and putting her knee to the ground, rested, to enjoy a drink of the cool water. The group of rustics denied it to her. The goddess, denied, spoke. 'Why do you forbid me your waters? The use of water is everyone's right. Nature has not made the sun, or the air, or the clear waves, private things. I come for a public gift, and yet I beg you to grant it to me as a suppliant. I was not preparing to bathe my limbs and my weary body here, only to quench my thirst. My mouth lacks moisture from speaking, my throat is dry, and there's scarcely a path here for speech. A drink of water would be nectar to me, and I would bear witness to accepting life from it, as well: you will be giving life from your waves. Let these children move you, also, who stretch their little arms out from my breast.'

And it chanced that they did stretch out their arms. Who would not have been moved by the goddess's winning words? Yet, despite her prayers they persisted in denying her, with threats, if she did not take herself off, and added insults besides. Not content with that, they also stirred the pool with their hands and feet, and churned up the soft mud from the depths, by leaping about, maliciously. Anger forgot thirst, for now the daughter of **Coeus** could not bear to beg from the unworthy, nor speak in words inferior to those of a goddess, and stretching her palms to the heavens, she said 'Live in that swamp for ever!' It happened as the goddess wished: It is their delight to be under the water, now to submerge their bodies completely in the deep pool, now to show their heads, now to swim on the surface. Often they squat on the edges of the marsh, often retreat to the cool lake, but now as before they employ their ugly voices in quarrelling, and shamefully, even though they are under the water, from under the water they try out their abuse. Now their voices

are also hoarse, their inflated throats are swollen, and their croaking distends their wide mouths. Their shoulders and heads meet, and their necks appear to have vanished. Their backs are green; their bellies, the largest part of their body, are white, and, as newly made frogs, they leap in their muddy pool.

Bk VI:382-400 The tale of Marsyas

When whoever it was had finished relating the ruin of the men of Lycia, another storyteller remembered the **satyr, Marsyas**, whom **Apollo, Latona's son**, had defeated, playing on the **flute**, that Tritonian **Minerva** invented. He had exacted punishment. Marsyas cried 'Why do you peel me out of myself? 'Aah! I repent', he screamed in agony. 'Aah! Music is not worth this pain!' As he screams, the skin is flayed from the surface of his body, no part is untouched. Blood flows everywhere, the exposed sinews are visible, and the trembling veins quiver, without skin to hide them: you can

number the internal organs, and the fibres of the lungs, clearly visible in his chest. The woodland gods, and the fauns of the countryside, wept, and his brother satyrs, Olympus his friend and pupil, still dear to him then, and the nymphs, and all who pastured their fleecy sheep and horned cattle on those mountains. The fertile soil was drenched, and the drenched earth caught the falling tears, and absorbed them into its deep veins. It formed a stream then, and sent it into the clear air. From there it ran within sloping banks, quickly, to the sea, the clearest river of **Phrygia**, taking Marsyas's name.

Bk VI:401-438 The marriage of Procne and Tereus

From such tales as these the company turns immediately to the present, and mourns the loss of **Amphion** and his children. The mother was blamed, though even then one man, her brother **Pelops**, is said to have wept for her and, after taking off his tunic, to have shown the ivory, of his left shoulder. This was of flesh, and the

same colour as his right shoulder, at the time of his birth. Later, when he had been cut in pieces, by his father, it is said that the gods fitted his limbs together again. They found the pieces, but one was lost, between the upper arm and the neck. Ivory was used in place of the missing part, and by means of that Pelops was made whole.

The princes, of countries to the southwest, near neighbours of **Thebes**, gathered, and the cities related to Thebes urged their kings to go and offer sympathy. **Argos** and **Sparta**, and **Peloponnesian Mycenae**, **Calydon** not yet cursed for rejecting **Diana**, fertile **Orchomenos**, and **Corinth** famous for bronze; warlike **Messene**, **Patrae**, and low-lying **Cleonae**, **Nelean Pylos**, and **Troezen** not yet ruled by **Pittheus**; and whichever of the other cities were southwest of the **Isthmus**, lying between its two seas, or seen to the northeast of the Isthmus, lying between its two seas. But who can believe this? **Athens**, alone, did nothing. War prevented them doing so. A

Barbarian army had crossed the sea and brought terror to the walls of the city of **Mopsopius**.

Tereus of **Thrace** routed these Barbarians, with his army of auxiliaries, and won a great name by his victory. Since Tereus was a master of men and riches, and happened to trace his descent from mighty **Mars** himself, **Pandion**, king of Athens, made them allies, by giving him his daughter **Procne** in marriage. Neither **Juno**, who attends on brides, nor **Hymen**, nor the three **Graces**, was there. The **Eumenides**, the **Furies**, held torches snatched from a funeral. The Eumenides, the Furies, prepared their marriage bed, and the unholy screech owl brooded over their house, and sat on the roof of their chamber. By this bird-omen, Procne and Tereus were joined. By this bird-omen, they were made parents. Thrace of course rejoiced with them, and they themselves gave thanks to the gods, and the day when Pandion's daughter married her illustrious king, and the day on which **Itys** their son was born, they commanded

to be celebrated as festivals: so, always, our real advantages escape us.

Bk VI:438-485 Tereus's passion for Procne's sister Philomela

Now, **Titan**, the sun, had guided the turning year through five autumns when **Procne** said, coaxingly to her husband, 'If any thanks are due me, either send me to see my sister, or let my sister come here. You can promise my father she will return after a brief stay. It would be worth a great deal to me, if you allowed me to see **Philomela**.' **Tereus** ordered his ship to sea, and with sail and oar reached the harbour of **Cecrops**, and landed on the shore of **Piraeus**.

As soon as he gained access to his father-in-law, right hand was joined to right hand, and they began by wishing each other favourable omens. Tereus had started to tell of the reason for his visit, his wife's request, and promise a speedy return if she were sent back with him, when, see, Philomela entered, dressed in rich

robes, and richer beauty, walking as we are used to being told the naiads and dryads of the deep woods do, if only one were to give them like her culture and dress. Seeing the girl, Tereus took fire, just as if someone touched a flame to corn stubble, or burned the leaves, or hay stored in a loft. Her beauty was worthy of it, but he was driven by his natural passion, and the inclination of the people of his region is towards lust: he burnt with his own vice and his nation's. His impulse was to erode her attendants care, and her nurse's loyalty, even seduce the girl herself with rich gifts, to the extent of his kingdom, or rape her and defend the rape in savage war. There was nothing he would not dare, possessed by unbridled desire, nor could he contain the flame in his heart.

Now he suffered from impatience, and eagerly returned to Procne's request, pursuing his own wishes as hers. Desire made him eloquent, and whenever he petitioned more strongly than was seemly, he would make out that Procne wished it so. He even embellished

his speeches with tears, as though she had commissioned him to do that too. You gods, what secret darkneses human hearts hide! Due to his efforts, Tereus is viewed as faithful, in his deceit, and is praised for his crime. Moreover Philomela wishes his request granted, and resting her forearms on her father's shoulders, coaxing him to let her go to visit her sister, she urges it, in her own interest, and against it. Tereus gazes at her, and imagining her as already his, watching her kisses, and her arms encircling her father's neck, it all spurs him on, food and fuel to his frenzy. Whenever she embraces her father, he wishes he were that father: though of course his intentions would be no less wicked. The father is won over by the twin entreaties. The girl is overjoyed, and thanks her father, and thinks, poor wretch, that what will bring sorrow to both sisters is actually a success for both.

Bk VI:486-548 Tereus forces Philomela

Now little was left of **Phoebus**'s daily labour, and his horses were treading the spaces of the western **sky**. A royal feast was served at Pandion's table, with **wine** in golden goblets. Then their bodies sated, they gave themselves to quiet sleep. But though the **Thracian** king retired to bed, he was disturbed by thoughts of her, and remembering her features, her gestures, her hands, he imagined the rest that he had not yet seen, as he would wish, and fuelled his own fires, in sleepless restlessness. Day broke, and **Pandion**, clasping his son-in-law's right hand, in parting, with tears welling in his eyes, entrusted his daughter to him. 'Dear son, since affectionate reasons compel it, and both of them desire it (you too have desired it, **Tereus**), I give her over to you, and by your honour, by the entreaty of a heart joined to yours, and by the gods above, I beg you, protect her with a father's love, and send back to me, as soon as is possible (it will be all too long a wait for me), this sweet comfort of my old age. You too, as soon as is possible (it is enough that your sister

is so far away), if you are at all dutiful, **Philomela**, return to me!’

So he commanded his daughter and kissed her, and soft tears mingled with his commands. As a token of their promise he took their two right hands and linked them together, and asked them, with a prayer, to remember to greet his absent daughter, and grandson, for him. His mouth sobbing, he could barely say a last farewell, and he feared the forebodings in his mind.

As soon as Philomela was on board the brightly painted ship, and the sea was churned by the oars, and the land left behind them, the barbarian king cried ‘I have won! I carry with me what I wished for! He exults, and his passion can scarcely wait for its satisfaction. He never turns his eyes away from her, no differently than when **Jupiter’s eagle** deposits a hare, caught by the curved talons, in its high eyrie: there is no escape for the captive, and the raptor gazes at its prize.

Now they had completed their journey, and disembarked from the wave-worn ship, on the shores of his country. The king took her to a high-walled building, hidden in an ancient forest, and there he locked her away, she, pale and trembling, fearing everything, in tears now, begging to know where her sister was. Then, confessing his evil intent, he overcame her by force, she a virgin and alone, as she called out, again and again, in vain, to her father, her sister, and most of all to the great gods. She quivered like a frightened lamb, that fails to realise it is free, wounded and discarded by a grey wolf, or like a dove trembling, its feathers stained with its blood, still fearing the rapacious claws that gripped it. After a brief while, when she had come to her senses, she dragged at her dishevelled hair, and like a mourner, clawed at her arms, beating them against her breasts. Hands outstretched, she shouted ‘Oh, you savage. Oh, what an evil, cruel, thing you have done. Did you care nothing for my father’s trust, sealed with holy tears, my sister’s

affection, my own virginity, your marriage vows? You have confounded everything. I have been forced to become my sister's rival. You are joined to both. Now Procne will be my enemy! Why not rob me of life as well, you traitor, so that no crime escapes you? If only you had done it before that impious act. Then my shade would have been free of guilt. Yet, if the gods above witness such things, if the powers of heaven mean anything, if all is not lost, as I am, then one day you will pay me for this! I, without shame, will tell what you have done. If I get the chance it will be in front of everyone. If I am kept imprisoned in these woods, I will fill the woods with it, and move the stones, that know of my guilt, to pity. The skies will hear of it, and any god that may be there!'

Bk VI:549-570 Philomela is mutilated

The king's anger was stirred by these words, and his fear also. Goaded by both, he

freed the sword from its sheath by his side, and seizing her hair gathered it together, to use as a tie, to tether her arms behind her back. **Philomela**, seeing the sword, and hoping only for death, offered up her throat. But he severed her tongue with his savage blade, holding it with pincers, as she struggled to speak in her indignation, calling out her father's name repeatedly. Her tongue's root was left quivering, while the rest of it lay on the dark soil, vibrating and trembling, and, as though it were the tail of a mutilated snake moving, it writhed, as if, in dying, it was searching for some sign of her. They say (though I scarcely dare credit it) that even after this crime, he still assailed her wounded body, repeatedly, in his lust.

He controlled himself sufficiently to return to **Procne**, who, seeing him returned, asked where her sister was. He, with false mourning, told of a fictitious funeral, and tears gave it credence. Procne tore her glistening clothes, with their gold hems, from her shoulders, and

put on black robes, and built an empty tomb, and mistakenly brought offerings, and lamented the fate of a sister, not yet due to be lamented in that way.

Bk VI:571-619 The truth is revealed

The sun-god has circled the twelve signs, and a year is past. What can **Philomela** do? A guard prevents her escape; the thick walls of the building are made of solid stone; her mute mouth can yield no token of the facts. Great trouble is inventive, and ingenuity arises in difficult times. Cleverly, she fastens her thread to a barbarian's loom, and weaves purple designs on a white background, revealing the crime. She entrusts it, when complete, to a servant, and asks her, by means of gestures, to take it to her mistress. She, as she is asked, takes it to **Procne**, not knowing what it carries inside. The wife of the savage king unrolls the cloth, and reads her sister's terrible fate, and by a miracle keeps silent. Grief restrains her lips,

her tongue seeking to form words adequate to her indignation, fails. She has no time for tears, but rushes off, in a confusion of right and wrong, her mind filled with thoughts of vengeance.

It was the time when the young **Thracian** women used to celebrate the triennial festival of **Bacchus**. (Night knew their holy rites: by night, Mount **Rhodope** rang with the high-pitched clashing of bronze). By night the queen left her palace, prepared herself for the rites of the god, and took up the weapons of that frenzied religion. Tendrils of vine wreathed her head; a deerskin was draped over her left side; a light javelin rested on her shoulder. Hurling through the woods with a crowd of her companions, terrifying, driven by maddening grief, Procne embodies you, Bacchus. She comes at last to the building in the wilderness, and howls out loud, giving the ecstatic cry of *Euhoe*, breaks the door down, seizes her sister, disguises her with the tokens of a wild Bacchante, hides her face with ivy leaves, and dragging her along

with her, frightened out of her wits, leads her inside the palace walls.

When Philomela realised that she had reached that accursed house, the wretched girl shuddered in horror, and her whole face grew deathly pale. Procne, once there, took off the religious trappings; uncovered the downcast face of her unhappy sister, and clutched her in her arms. But Philomela could not bear to lift her eyes, seeing herself as her sister's betrayer. With her face turned towards the ground, wanting to swear by the gods, and call them to witness, that her shame had been visited on her by force, she made signs with her hands in place of speech. Procne burned, and could not control her anger, reproaching her sister for weeping, saying 'Now is not the time for tears, but for the sword, or for what overcomes the sword, if you know of such a thing. I am prepared for any wickedness, sister; to set the palace alight with a torch, and throw Tereus, the author of this, into the midst of the flames; or to cut out his eyes and tongue, and the parts

which brought shame to you; or to force out his guilty spirit through a thousand wounds! I am ready for any enormity: but what it should be, I still do not know yet.'

Bk VI:619-652 The pitiless feast

While **Procne** was going over these things, **Itys** came to his mother. His arrival suggested what she might do, and regarding him with a cold gaze, she said 'Ah! How like your father you are!' Without speaking further, seething in silent indignation, she began to conceive her tragic plan. Yet, when the boy approached, and greeted his mother, and put his little arms round her neck, and kissed her with childish endearments, she was moved, her anger was checked, and her eyes were wet with the tears that gathered against her will. But, realising that her mind was wavering through excess affection, she turned away from him, and turned to look at her sister's face again, till, gazing at both in turn, she said 'Why should the one be

able to speak his endearments, while the other is silent, her tongue torn out?’

Though he calls me mother, why can she not call me sister? Look at the husband you are bride to, **Pandion**’s daughter! This is unworthy of you! Affection is criminal in a wife of **Tereus**’

Without delay, she dragged Itys off, as a tigress does an unweaned fawn, in the dark forests of the **Ganges**. As they reached a remote part of the great palace, Procne, with an unchanging expression, struck him with a knife, in the side close to the heart, while he stretched out his hands, knowing his fate at the last, crying out ‘Mother! Mother!’, and reaching out for her neck. That one wound was probably enough to seal his fate, but **Philomela** opened his throat with the knife. While the limbs were still warm, and retained some life, they tore them to pieces. Part bubble in bronze cauldrons, part hiss on the spit: and the distant rooms drip with grease.

The wife invites the unsuspecting Tereus to the feast, and giving out that it is a sacred rite, practised in her country, where it is only lawful for the husband to be present, she sends away their followers and servants. Tereus eats by himself, seated in his tall ancestral chair, and fills his belly with his own child. And in the darkness of his understanding cries 'Fetch Ithys here'.

Bk VI:653-674 They are transformed into birds

Procne cannot hide her cruel exultation, and now, eager to be, herself, the messenger of destruction, she cries 'You have him there, inside, the one you ask for.' He looks around and questions where the boy is. And then while he is calling out and seeking him, **Philomela**, springs forward, her hair wet with the dew of that frenzied murder, and hurls the bloodstained head of **Itys** in his father's face. Nor was there a time when she wished more strongly to have

the power of speech, and to declare her exultation in fitting words.

The Thracian king pushed back the table with a great cry, calling on the **Furies**, the snake-haired sisters of the vale of **Styx**. Now if he could, he would tear open his body, and reveal the dreadful substance of the feast, and his half-consumed child. Then he weeps, and calls himself the sepulchre of his unhappy son, and now pursues, with naked sword, the daughters of Pandion.

You might think the Athenian women have taken wing: they have taken wings. One of them, a nightingale, Procne, makes for the woods. The other, a swallow, Philomela, flies to the eaves of the palace, and even now her throat has not lost the stain of that murder, and the soft down bears witness to the blood. **Tereus** swift in his grief and desire for revenge, is himself changed to a bird, with a feathered crest on its head. An immoderate, elongated, beak juts out, like a long spear. The name of the bird is the hoopoe, and it looks as though it is armed.

Bk VI:675-721 Boreas and Orithyia

This tragedy sent **Pandion** down to the shadows of Tartarus before his time, before the last years of old age. His rule over the kingdom, and his wealth passed to **Erectheus**, whose ability for sound government, and superiority in warfare, was never in doubt. He had four sons and the same number of daughters, and two of the daughters were rivals in beauty. Of these two, **Procris** made you happy in marriage, **Cephalus, grandson of Aeolus**. But you, **Boreas**, god of the north wind, were long denied your beloved, **Orithyia**, harmed by your origins, with **Tereus**, among the **Thracians**.

This was so while Boreas wooed her, and preferred prayers to force. But when charm got him nowhere, he bristled with anger, which is his usual mood for too much of the time, and said ‘I deserve it! Why have I relinquished my own weapons, force and ferocity, and anger and menacing moods, and turned to prayers, that are

unbecoming for me to use? Force is fitting for me. By force, I drive forward the mists, by force move the sea. I overturn knotted oaks, harden the snow, and strike earth with hail. And, when I meet my brothers under the open sky (since that is my battleground) I struggle so fiercely with them that the midst of the heavens echoes with our collisions, and lightnings leap, hurled from the vaulted clouds. So, when I penetrate the hollow openings of the earth, and apply my proud back to the deepest cave roofs, I trouble the shades, and the whole world with the tremors. That is how I should have sought a wife, and not become Erectheus's son-in-law by prayer but by action.'

With these, or other equally forceful words, Boreas unfurled his wings, by whose beating the whole world is stirred, and made the wide ocean tremble. Trailing his cloak of dust over the mountain summits, he swept the land, and, shrouded in darkness, the lover embraced his Orythia, with his dusky wings, as she shivered with fear. As he flew, his own flames of passion

were fanned, and burned fiercer. Nor did the thief halt in his flight through the air, till he reached the walls of the city and people of Thrace, the **Cicones**.

There the girl from **Attica** married the chilly tyrant, and became a mother, giving birth to twin brothers, who took after their mother, in everything else but their father's wings. Yet they say the wings were not present, on their bodies, when they were born, but while they still were lacking beards, to match their red hair, **Calais**, and **Zetes**, as boys, were wingless. But both alike, soon after, began to sprout the pinions of birds on their shoulders, and both their jaws and cheeks grew tawny. And, when their boyhood was over, the youths sailed, as **Argonauts**, with the **Minyans**, in that first ship, through unknown seas, to seek the glittering wool of a golden fleece.

Bk VII:1-73 Medea agonises over her love for Jason

And now the **Argonauts** were ploughing through the sea in their ship, built in Thessalian **Pagasae**. They had visited **Phineus**, king of Thracian Salmydessus, living out a useless old age in perpetual blindness, and **the winged sons of Boreas** had driven the birdlike **Harpies** from the presence of the unhappy, aged man. At last, after enduring many trials, under their famous leader, **Jason**, they reached the turbulent river-waters of the muddy **Phasis**, in the land of Colchis. While they were standing before King **Aeetes**, of Aea, requesting the return of **the Golden Fleece**, taken from the divine ram that carried **Phrixus**, and while extreme terms were being imposed, involving daunting tasks, **Medea**, the daughter of the king, conceived an overwhelming passion for Jason. She fought against it for a time, but when reason could not overcome desire, she debated with herself.

‘Medea, you struggle in vain: some god, I do not know which, opposes you. I wonder if this, or something, like this, is what people indeed call love? Or why would the tasks my father demands of Jason seem so hard? They are more than hard! Why am I afraid of his death, when I have scarcely seen him? What is the cause of all this fear? Quench, if you can, unhappy girl, these flames that you feel in your virgin heart! If I could, I would be wiser! But a strange power draws me to him against my will. Love urges one thing: reason another. I see, and I desire the better: I follow the worse. Why do you burn for a stranger, royal virgin, and dream of marriage in an alien land? This earth can also give you what you can love. Whether he lives or dies, is in the hands of the gods. Let him live! I can pray for this even if I may not love him: what is Jason guilty of? Who, but the heartless, would not be touched by Jason’s youth, and birth, and courage? Who, though the other qualities were absent, could not be stirred by his beauty?

He has stirred my heart, indeed. And unless I offer my help, he will feel the fiery breath of the bronze-footed bulls; have to meet that enemy, sprung from the soil, born of his own sowing; or be given as captured prey to the dragon's greed. If I allow this, then I am born of the tigress: then I show I have a heart of stone and iron! Why can I not watch him die, and shame my eyes by seeing? Why do I not urge the bulls on, to meet him, and the wild earth-born warriors, and the unsleeping dragon? Let the gods also desire the better! Though it is not for me to pray for, but to bring about.

Shall I betray my father's country? Shall some unknown be saved by my powers, and unhurt because of me, without me, set his sails to the wind, and be husband to another, leaving Medea to be punished? If he could do that, if he could set another woman above me, let him die, the ungrateful man! But his look, his nobility of spirit, and his graceful form, do not make me fear deceit or forgetfulness of my kindness. And he will give me his word beforehand, and I

will gather the gods to witness our pledge. Why fear when it is certain? Prepare yourself, and dispel all delay: Jason will be for ever in your debt, take you to himself in sacred marriage, and through the cities of **Pelasgian** Greece, the crowds of women will glorify you as his saviour.

Carried by the winds, shall I leave my native country, my sister, my brother, my father, and my gods? Well then, my father is barbarous, and my country is savage, and my brother is still a child: my sister's prayers are for me, and the greatest god is within! I will not be leaving greatness behind, but pursuing greatness: honour as a saviour of these Achaean people, familiarity with a better land and with cities whose fame is flourishing even here, the culture and arts of those places, and the man, the son of **Aeson**, for whom I would barter those things that the wide world owns, joined to whom I will be called fortunate, dear to the gods, and my head will be crowned with the stars.

What of the stories of mountains that clash together in mid-ocean, and **Charybdis** the bane of sailors, now sucking in, now spewing out the sea, and rapacious dog-headed **Scylla**, yelping over the **Sicilian** deeps? Well, holding what I love, clinging to Jason's breast, I shall be carried over the wide seas: in his arms, I will fear nothing, or if I am afraid, I will only be afraid for him.

But do you call that marriage, **Medea**, and clothe your fault with fair names? Consider instead, how great a sin you are near to, and while you can, shun the crime!' She spoke, and in front of her eyes, were rectitude, piety, modesty: and now, **Cupid**, defeated, was turning away.

Bk VII:74-99 Jason promises to marry Medea

She went to the ancient altars of **Hecate**, **daughter of the Titan Perses**, that the shadowy grove conceals, in the remote forest.

And now she was strong and her passion, now conquered, had ebbed, when she saw the **son of Aeson** and the flame, that was dead, relit. Her cheeks flushed, and then her whole face became pallid. Just as a tiny spark that lies buried under the ashes, takes life from a breath of air, and grows and, living, regains its previous strength, so now her calmed passion, that you would have thought had dulled, when she saw the young hero, flared up at his visible presence.

It chanced that **Aeson**'s son was more than usually handsome that day: you could forgive her for loving him. She gazed at him, and fixed her eyes on him as if she had never looked at him before, and in her infatuation, seeing his face, could not believe him mortal, nor could she turn away. So that when, indeed, the stranger grasped her right hand, and began to speak, and in a submissive voice asked for her help, promising marriage, she replied in a flood of tears. 'I see what I am doing: it is not ignorance of the truth that ensnares me, but

love. Your salvation is in my gift, but being saved, remember your promise!’

He swore by the sacred rites of **the Triple Goddess**, by the divine presence of the grove, by the all-seeing **Sun**, who was the father of King **Aeetes**, his father-in-law to be, and by his own good fortune, and by his great danger. Immediately, as he was now trusted, he accepted the magic herbs from her, and learnt their use, and returned to the palace, joyfully.

Bk VII:100-158 Jason wins the Golden Fleece

The next day’s dawn dispelled the glittering stars. Then the people gathered on the sacred field of **Mars** and took up their position on the ridge. The king was seated in the middle, clothed in purple, and distinguished by his ivory sceptre. Behold, the bronze-footed bulls, breathing **Vulcan**’s fire from nostrils of steel. At the touch of their heat the grass shrivels, and as stoked fires roar, or as broken limestone, that

has absorbed the heat inside an earthen furnace, hisses explosively, when cool water is scattered over it, so the flames sounded, pent up in their heaving chests and burning throats. Still the son of **Aeson** went out to meet them.

As he came to them, the fierce creatures, with their iron-tipped horns, turned their terrible gaze towards him, pawed the dusty ground with their cloven feet, and filled the air with the steam of their bellowing. The **Minyans** were frozen in fear. He went up to the bulls, not feeling their fiery breath (so great is the power of magic drugs!), and stroking their hanging dewlaps, with a bold hand, yoked them together, and forced them to pull the heavy blade, and till the virgin field with the iron plough. The **Colchians** were stunned, but the **Argonauts** increased their shouting, and heightened his courage.

Then he took the dragon's teeth from the bronze helmet, and scattered them over the turned earth. The soil softened the seeds that had been steeped in virulent poison, and they

sprouted, and the teeth, freshly sown, produced new bodies. As an embryo takes on human form in the mother's womb, and is fully developed there in every aspect, not emerging to the living air until it is complete, so when those shapes of men had been made in the bowels of the pregnant earth, they surged from the teeming soil, and, what is even more wonderful, clashed weapons, created with them. The **Pelasgians**' faces fell in fear, and their courage failed them, when they saw these warriors preparing to hurl their sharp spears, at the head of the **Haemonian** hero. She also, who had rendered him safe, was afraid. When she saw the solitary youth attacked by so many enemies, she grew pale, and sat there, suddenly cold and bloodless. And in case the herbs she had given him had not been potent enough, she chanted a spell to support them, and called on her secret arts.

He threw a boulder into the midst of his enemies, and this turned their attack, on him, against themselves. The earth-born brothers

died at each other's hands, and fell as in civil war. The **Achaean**s cheered, and clung to the victor, and hugged him in eager embraces. You also, princess among the Barbarians, longed to hold the victorious man: but modesty prevented it. Still, you might have held him, but concern for your reputation stopped you from doing so. What you might fittingly do you did, rejoicing silently, giving thanks, for your incantations, and the gods who inspired them.

The final task was to put the dragon to sleep with the magic drugs. Known for its crest, its triple tongues and curved fangs, it was the dread guardian of the tree's gold. But when **Jason** had sprinkled it with the **Lethian** juice of a certain herb, and three times repeated the words that bring tranquil sleep, that calm the rough seas and turbulent rivers, sleep came to those sleepless eyes, and the heroic son of Aeson gained the Golden Fleece. Proud of his prize, and taking with him a further prize, the one who had helped him gain it, the hero, and

his wife **Medea**, returned to the harbour at **Iolchos**.

Bk VII:159-178 Jason asks Medea to lengthen Aeson's life

The elderly **Haemonian** mothers and fathers bring offerings to mark their sons' return, and melt incense heaped in the flames. The sacrifice, with gilded horns, that they have dedicated, is led in and killed. But **Aeson** is absent from the rejoicing, now near death, and weary with the long years. Then **Jason**, his son, said 'O my wife, to whom I confess I owe my life, though you have already given me everything, and the total of all your kindnesses is beyond any promises we made, let your incantations, if they can (what indeed can they not do?) reduce my own years and add them to my father's!' He could not restrain his tears. **Medea** was moved by the loving request, and the contrast with **Aeetes**, abandoned by her, came to mind. Yet, not allowing herself to be

affected by such thoughts, she answered ‘Husband, what dreadful words have escaped your lips? Do you think I can transfer any part of your life to another? **Hecate** would not allow it: nor is yours a just request. But I will try to grant a greater gift than the one you ask for, Jason. If only the Triple Goddess will aid me, and give her assent in person to this great act of daring, I will attempt to renew your father’s length of years, without need for yours.’

Bk VII:179-233 Medea summons the powers and gathers herbs

Three nights were lacking before the moon’s horns met, to make their complete orb. When she was shining at her fullest, and gazed on the earth, with perfect form, Medea left the palace, dressed in unclasped robes. Her feet were bare, her unbound hair streamed down, over her shoulders, and she wandered, companionless, through midnight’s still silence. Men, beasts, and birds were freed in deep sleep. There were

no murmurs in the hedgerows: the still leaves were silent, in silent, dew-filled, air. Only the flickering stars moved. Stretching her arms to them she three times turned herself about, three times sprinkled her head, with water from the running stream, three times let out a wailing cry, then knelt on the hard earth, and prayed:

*'Night, most faithful keeper of our secret rites;
Stars, that, with the golden moon, succeed the
fires of light;*

*Triple **Hecate**, you who know all our
undertakings,
and come, to aid the witches' art, and all our
incantations:*

*You, Earth, who yield to witches, herbs of
magic force:*

*You, airs and breezes, pools and hills, and
every watercourse;*

*Be here; all You, Gods of Night, and Gods of
Groves, endorse.*

*Streams, at will, by banks amazed, turn
backwards to their source.*

*I calm rough seas, and stir the calm by my
magic spells:
bring clouds, disperse the clouds, raise storms
and storms dispel;
and, with my incantations, I break the serpent's
teeth;
and root up nature's oaks, and rocks, from their
native heath;
and move the forests, and command the
mountain tops to shake,
earth to groan, and from their tombs the
sleeping dead to wake.
You also, **Luna**, I draw down, eclipsed, from
heaven's stain,
though bronzes of **Temese** clash, to take away
your pains;
and at my chant, the chariot of the **Sun-god**, my
grandsire,
grows pale: **Aurora**, at my poisons, dims her
morning fire.
You quench the bulls' hot flame for me: force
their necks to bow,*

*beneath the heavy yoke, that never pulled the
curving plough:
You turn the savage warfare, born of the
serpent's teeth,
against itself, and lull the watcher, innocent of
sleep;
that guard deceived, bring golden spoil, to the
towns of Greece.
Now I need the juice by which old age may be
renewed,
that can regain the prime of years, return the
flower of youth,
and You will grant it. Not in vain, stars glittered
in reply:
not in vain, winged dragons bring my chariot,
through the sky.'*

There, sent from the sky, was her chariot. When she had mounted, stroked the dragons' bridled necks, and shaken the light reins in her hands, she was snatched up on high. She looked down on **Thessalian Tempe** far below, and sent the dragons to certain places that she knew. She

considered those herbs that grow on Mount **Ossa**, those of Mount **Pelion**, **Othrys** and **Pindus**, and higher **Olympus**, and of those that pleased her, plucked some by the roots, and cut others, with a curved pruning-knife of bronze. Many she chose, as well, from the banks of the **Apidanus**. Many she chose, as well, from the **Amphrysus**. Nor did she omit the **Enipeus**. **Peneus**, and **Spercheus**'s waters gave something, and the reedy shores of **Boebe**. And at **Anthedon**, by **Euboea**, she picked a plant of long life, not yet famous for the change it made in **Glaucus**'s body.

Bk VII:234-293 Medea rejuvenates Aeson

Then she returned, after nine days and nine nights surveying all the lands she had crossed, from her chariot, drawn by the winged dragons. The dragons had only smelt the herbs, yet they shed their skins of many years. Reaching her door and threshold, she stopped on the outside, and under the open sky, avoiding contact with

any man, she set up two altars of turf, one on the right to **Hecate**, one on the left to Youth. She wreathed them with sacred boughs from the wildwood, then dug two trenches near by in the earth, and performed the sacrifice, plunging her knife into the throat of a black-fleeced sheep, and drenching the wide ditches with blood. She poured over it cups of pure honey, and again she poured over it cups of warm milk, uttering words as she did so, calling on the spirits of the earth, and begging the shadowy king and his stolen bride, not to be too quick to steal life from the old man's limbs.

When she had appeased the gods by prayer and murmured a while, she ordered **Aeson's** exhausted body to be carried into the air, and freeing him to deep sleep with her spells, she stretched him out like a corpse on a bed of herbs. She ordered **Jason**, his son, to go far off, and the attendants to go far off, and warned them to keep profane eyes away from the mysteries. They went as she had ordered. **Medea**, with streaming hair, circled the burning

altars, like a **Bacchante**, and dipping many-branched torches into the black ditches filled with blood, she lit them, once they were darkened, at the twin altars. Three times with fire, three times with water, three times with sulphur, she purified the old man.

Meanwhile a potent mixture is heating in a bronze cauldron set on the flames, bubbling, and seething, white with turbulent froth. She boils there, roots dug from a **Thessalian** valley, seeds, flowerheads, and dark juices. She throws in precious stones searched for in the distant east, and sands that the ebbing tide of ocean washes. She adds hoar-frost collected by night under the moon, the wings and flesh of a vile screech-owl, and the slavering foam of a sacrificed were-wolf, that can change its savage features to those of a man. She does not forget the scaly skin of a thin **Cinyphian** water-snake, the liver of a long-lived stag, the eggs and the head of a crow that has lived for nine human life-times.

With these, and a thousand other nameless things, the barbarian witch pursued her greater than mortal purpose. She stirred it all with a long-dry branch of a fruitful olive, mixing the depths with the surface. Look! The ancient staff turned in the hot cauldron, first grew green again, then in a short time sprouted leaves, and was, suddenly, heavily loaded with olives. And whenever the flames caused froth to spatter from the hollow bronze, and warm drops to fall on the earth, the soil blossomed, and flowers and soft grasses grew.

As soon as she saw this, Medea unsheathed a knife, and cut the old man's throat, and letting the old blood out, filled the dry veins with the juice. When Aeson had absorbed it, part through his mouth, and part through the wound, the white of his hair and beard quickly vanished, and a dark colour took its place. At a stroke his leanness went, and his pallor and dullness of mind. The deep hollows were filled with rounded flesh, and his limbs expanded.

Aeson marvelled, recalling that this was his self of forty years ago.

Bk VII:294-349 Medea's destruction of Pelias

Bacchus saw this wondrous miracle from heaven's heights, and realising from it, that the **Nymphs of Mount Nysa**, who had nursed him, could have their youth restored, he secured that gift from the witch of **Colchis**. There was no end to her magic. **Phasian Medea**, pretending to a sham quarrel with her husband, fled as a suppliant to **Pelias's** threshold, he who had usurped Aeson's throne. There, the king's daughters received her, since he himself was weighed down by the years. The lying **Colchian** soon won them over by a skilful show of friendship, and when she told them of one of her greatest gifts, the removal of Aeson's many years, and lingered over it, hope was aroused in Pelias's daughters that similar magic arts might rejuvenate their father.

They begged her, and told her to set a price however great. She was silent for a moment, and appeared to hesitate, keeping the minds of her petitioners in suspense by a show of solemn pretence. When, eventually, she promised to do it, she said ‘To give you greater confidence in my gift, your oldest ram, the leader of your flocks, will by turned into a young lamb again, by my magic drugs.’ Straight away the woolly creature, worn out by innumerable years, was dragged forward, his horns curving round his hollow temples. When the witch had cut his wizened throat with her Thessalian knife, hardly staining the blade with blood, she immersed the sheep’s carcass in the bronze cauldron, along with her powerful magic herbs. These shrank its limbs, melted away its horns, and, with its horns, the years. A high-pitched bleating came from inside the vessel, and while they were wondering at the bleating, a lamb leapt out, and frisked away, seeking the udder and milk.

Pelias's daughters were stunned, and now the truth of her promise had been displayed, they insisted even more eagerly. Three times **Phoebus** had unyoked his horses, after their plunge into the **western** ocean, and on the fourth night the stars were glittering in all their radiance, when the deceitful daughter of Aeetes set clear water, and herbs, but ineffectual ones, over a blazing fire. And now the king and his guards also were deep in death-like sleep, achieved by her incantations and the power of her magic spells. The king's daughters, at her command, crossed the threshold, with the **Colchian** witch, and stood around his bed. 'Why do you hesitate, so timidly?' she said. 'Unsheath your blades, and let out the old blood, so that I can fill the empty veins with new! You father's life and youth are in your hands. If you have any filial affection, if those are not vain hopes that stir you, render your father this service, banish old age with your weapons, and drive out his poisoned blood with a stroke of the iron blade!'

Urged on by these words, the more love each had for him, the quicker she was to act without love, and did evil, to avoid greater evil. Nevertheless they could not bear to see their own blows, and turned their eyes away, and with averted faces, wounded him blindly with cruel hands. Streaming blood, the old man still raised himself on his elbow, and, though mutilated, tried to rise from his bed. Stretching his pallid hands out among the many weapons, he cried ‘Daughters, why are you doing this? What has made you take up weapons against your father’s life?’ Their strength and courage vanished. But as he was about to utter more words, the Colchian witch cut his throat, and plunged his torn body into the seething water.

Bk VII:350-403 Medea flees and reaches Athens

She would not have escaped punishment had she not taken to the air, with her winged dragons. Through the high sky, clockwise, she

fled, over the shadowy slopes of **Pelion**, **Chiron**'s home; over **Othrys** and the places made famous by the ancient fate of **Cerambus**, who, aided by the nymphs and changed to a winged scarab beetle, lifted into the air, when the all-powerful sea drowned the solid earth, and so escaped undrowned from **Deucalion**'s flood. She passed **Aeolian Pitane** on the left, with its huge stone serpent image, and **Ida**'s grove where **Liber** concealed, in the deceptive shape of a stag, the bullock stolen by his son. She passed the place where the father of **Corythus**, **Paris**, lay, buried under a little sand; and where **Hecuba**, changed to a black bitch of Hecate, **Maera**, spread terror through the fields with her strange barking.

She flew over Astypalaea, the city of **Eurypylus**, where **the women of the island, of Cos**, acquired horns when they abused **Hercules**, as he and his company departed: over **Rhodes**, beloved of **Phoebus**: and the **Telchines** of the city of **Ialysos** on Rhodes, whose eyes corrupted everything they looked

on, so that **Jupiter**, disgusted with them, sank them under his brother's ocean waves. She passed the walls of ancient **Carthaea**, on the island of **Ceos**, where **Alcidas**, as a father, would marvel, one day, that a peace-loving dove could spring from the body of his daughter, **Ctesylla**.

Then she saw Lake **Hyrie**, and **Cycnean** Tempe, made famous suddenly by a swan. There **Phyllis**, at the boy **Cycnus**'s command, brought him birds and a fierce lion he had tamed. Ordered to overcome a wild bull as well, he did overcome him, but angry that his love was rejected so often, he refused to grant this last gift of a bull, when asked. Cycnus, angered, said 'You will wish you had' and leapt from a high cliff. All thought he had fallen, but changed to a swan he beat through the air on white wings, though his mother, Hyrie, not knowing he was safe, pined away with weeping, and became the lake that carries her name.

Near there was the city of **Pleuron**, where **Combe** the daughter of **Ophius**, on flickering wings, escaped death at the hands of her sons, the Aetolian Curetes. And then **Medea** looked down at the fields of **Calaurea**'s isle, sacred to **Leto**, whose king and queen were also changed to birds. On her right was **Cyllene**, where **Menephron** lay with his mother, as though he were a wild beast. Further on she sees the **Cephisus**, the river-god lamenting his grandson's fate, changed by **Apollo** into a lumbering seal, and the home of **Eumelus**, mourning his son **Botres**, reborn as a bird, the bee-eater, in the air.

At last, the dragon's wings brought her to **Corinth**, the ancient **Ephyre**, and its **Pirenian** spring. Here, tradition says, that in earliest times, human bodies sprang from fungi, swollen by rain. After **Jason**'s new bride Glauce had been consumed by the fires of vengeful **Colchian** witchcraft and both the **Isthmus**'s gulfs had witnessed flame consuming the king's palace, **Medea** impiously

bathed her sword in the blood of their sons. Then, after performing this evil act, she fled from Jason's wrath. Carried by her dragons that are born of the **Titans**, she reached **Pallas's** citadel of **Athens**. This once knew you **Phene**, the most righteous, and you old **Periphas**, both flying in the air, as birds, the eagle and the osprey: and **Alcyone**, granddaughter of **Polypemon**, resting on strange new wings. It was **Aegeus** who gave Medea sanctuary there, damned thereafter by that one action: and not content with taking her in, he even entered into a contract of marriage with her.

Bk VII:404-424 Medea attempts Theseus's life, then vanishes

Now **Theseus** came to **Athens**, **Aegeus's** son, but as yet unknown to him. He, by his courage, had brought peace to the **Isthmus** between the two gulfs. **Medea**, seeking his destruction, prepared a mixture of poisonous aconite, she had brought with her from the coast

of **Scythia**. This poison is said to have dripped from the teeth of **Cerberus**, the **Echidnean** dog. There is a dark cavern with a gaping mouth, and a path into the depths, up which **Hercules**, hero of **Tiryns**, dragged the dog, tied with steel chains, resisting and twisting its eyes away from the daylight and the shining rays. Cerberus, provoked to a rabid frenzy, filled all the air with his simultaneous three-headed howling, and spattered the green fields with white flecks of foam. These are supposed to have congealed and found food to multiply, gaining harmful strength from the rich soil. Because they are long-lived, springing from the hard rock, the country people call these shoots, of wolf-bane, 'soil-less' aconites. Through his wife's cunning Aegeus, the father, himself offered the poison to his son, as if he were a stranger. Theseus, unwittingly, had taken the cup he was given in his right hand, when his father recognised the emblems of his own house, on the ivory hilt of his son's sword, and knocked the evil drink away from his mouth.

But she escaped death, in a dark mist, raised by her incantations.

Bk VII:425-452 The praise for Theseus

Though **the father** was overjoyed that his son was unharmed, he was still horrified that so great a crime could have come so close to success. He lit fires on the altars, and heaped gifts for the gods. His axes struck the mountainous necks of oxen, their horns tied with the sacrificial ribbons. They say that was the happiest day that dawned in the city of **Erectheus**. The statesmen celebrated among the people, and they sang verses, made even more inspired by the wine.

*'Great **Theseus**, admired in **Marathon**,
for the blood of the **Cretan** bull,
your act and gift made **Cromyon**'s fields
safe for the farmers plough.
Epidaurus's land saw you defeat
Vulcan's club-wielding son,*

*and the banks of the River **Cephisus**
saw evil **Procrustes** brought down.
Eleusis, sacred to **Ceres** the Mother,
witnessed **Cercyon** 's fall:
Sinis, you killed, a man of great strength
twisted to evil art,
who could bend pine-tree trunks to the earth,
and tear men 's bodies apart:
and **Sciron** is done for, and safe paths reach
Megara 's **Lelegeian** wall:
though the ocean denied his bones a grave,
and the land denied the same,
till, long-time hurled, they hardened to cliffs,
and the cliffs bear Sciron 's name.
If we wanted to count your years and your
honours,
the deeds would exceed the years:
to you, the bravest, we empty our **wine**-cups,
and offer our public prayers.'*

The palace echoed to the people's applause and the prayers of friends, and there was no sad place in the whole city.

Bk VII:453-500 Minos threatens war

Nevertheless **Aegeus's** pleasure in receiving his son was not carefree (indeed, joy is never complete, and some trouble always comes to spoil our delight). **Minos**, of Crete, was preparing for war. Powerful in men and ships, his anger as a father was more powerful still, and by right of arms he was seeking to avenge the death of **Androgeos**, his son. But first he acquired allies for his war, crossing the sea in the swift fleet that was his strength. The island of **Anaphe** joined with him, and that of **Astypalaea** (Anaphe by promises, Astypalaea by Cretan supremacy in war); low-lying **Myconos**, and chalky-soiled **Cimolos**; **Syros** flowering with thyme, flat **Seriphos**, marble-cliffed **Paros**, and **Siphnos**, betrayed to him by that disloyal princess, **Arne**, whom, when she had taken the gold her greed demanded, the gods changed into a bird, the black-footed,

black-winged jackdaw, that still delights in gold.

But **Oliaros** gave no aid to the **Cretan** ships; nor **Didyme**, **Tenos**, **Andros**, **Gyaros**; nor **Peparethos** rich in bright olives. Sailing northwest Minos sought **Oenopia**, the kingdom of the **Aeacidae**. They called it Oenopia in ancient times, but **Aeacus** himself named it **Aegina** after his mother. The crowd rushed down, to meet Minos, wanting to see so famous a man. **Telamon** went to him, and **Peleus**, junior to Telamon, and **Phocus**, the third child, their half-brother. Aeacus himself came, also, slow with the burden of years, and asked the cause of his visit. The ruler of a hundred cities sighed, reminded of his grief for his son, and replied 'I beg your aid in a war, waged for my son's sake; to be part of a just fight: I ask the comfort of marking out his tomb. The **grandson of Asopus** said 'You ask in vain what my city cannot give. No city is more closely linked to **Athens**, city of **Cecrops**, than this; we and they are bound by treaty.'

Minos turned away, sadly, saying ‘Your treaty will cost you dear’, since he thought it more useful to threaten war than to fight, and consume his strength too soon. The **Cretan** fleet could still be seen from **Aegina**’s walls, when a ship from Athens arrived, under full sail, and entered the allied port, bearing **Cephalus**, and likewise greetings from his country. Though they had not seen him for a long time, the **sons of Aeacus** still knew him, and clasped his right hand, and led him to their father’s house. The hero went forward, observed on all sides, even now retaining traces of his former beauty, carrying a branch of his country’s olive. And to right and left, he, the elder, had two younger men, **Clytos** and **Butes**, the sons of **Pallas**.

Bk VII:501-613 Aeacus tells of the plague at Aegina

After meeting and exchanging a few words, **Cephalus** described his mandate from **Athens**,

asking for help and quoting the treaty sworn to by their ancestors, adding that **Minos** was out to control all **Achaia**. When he had invoked the treaty, in this way, to aid his cause, **Aeacus**, resting his left hand on the handle of his sceptre, replied ‘Don’t ask for our help, assume it. Don’t hesitate to reckon the forces of this island your own, and (let this state of my fortunes last!) energy is not lacking. I have men enough, and thank the gods, the moment is auspicious and there will be no excuses.’ ‘I wish it may always be so’ Cephalus said ‘and may your city swell its numbers. Indeed, as I came I felt happy: so many equally youthful, handsome people, meeting me on the way. Yet there were many I missed, that I saw before, when I visited the city.’ Aeacus sighed, and spoke sadly. ‘From a bad beginning, better fortune follows. I wish I could recall the one for you without the other! I’ll take them in order, now, and not stall you with irrelevances. Those your mind, remembering, misses are only bones

and ashes, and how great a part of my wealth perished with them!

A terrible plague afflicted the people through the unjust anger of **Juno**, detesting us because our island had been named after my mother, her rival. While it looked like a human disease, and the cause of the disastrous epidemic was hidden, we fought it with medical skill. But the destruction cancelled out our efforts, which waned as we were conquered. At the outset the sky shrouded the earth in a thick fog, and held the sultry heat under clouds. While **Luna** filled her horns, four times, to make her disc complete, and, four times, thinned her full disc away, hot southerly winds breathed their deadly air on us. We know the pestilence reached our lakes and streams. Thousands of snakes slithered through the empty fields, and fouled the waters with their slime. The unexpected power of the disease surprised us, at the first, with its destruction of dogs, sheep and cattle, wild animals and birds. The wretched ploughman watches in dismay as

sturdy oxen stumble in their task, and sink down onto the furrows. The flocks of sheep give out a sickly bleating, while the wool falls away of itself, and their bodies waste. The spirited horse, once famous on the track, loses his glory, and forgetting past honour, whinnies in his stall, dying a slow death. The wild boar no longer remembers his fury; the deer cannot trust to speed; the bears cannot match the strength of the herds. Lethargy grips them all. Decaying carcasses lie in the roadways, fields and woods, and the air is fouled with the stench. Strangely, dogs, carrion birds, and grey wolves, will not touch them. They rot on the ground, pollute the air with their dying breath, and spread contagion far and wide.

Increasing in virulence the pestilence spreads to the luckless farmers themselves, and takes lordship inside the city walls. Firstly the inner organs grow hot, and a flushed skin and feverish breath are symptoms of hidden warmth. The tongue is rough and swollen with heat: the lips are parted, parched with dry

breath, and gasping, suck in the heavy air. The sick cannot tolerate a bed or any kind of covering, but lie face down on the bare ground, though the earth does not cool their bodies, their bodies heat the earth.

No one can control it, and it breaks out fiercely among the doctors themselves, and the practice of their skill condemns the practitioners. The nearer people are to the sick, and the more selflessly they attend them, the more swiftly they meet their fate, and as the hope of recovery deserts them, and they see the end of their illness only in death, they give way to their desires, and ignore what is good for them, since nothing is any good. Everywhere they cling to the fountains and runnels and deep wells, and drinking, thirst is not quenched sooner than life. Many of them are too weak to stand, and even die in the water, yet others still draw it. Others loathe their hateful beds so much they leave them, and if they lack the strength to stand, they roll out onto the ground. They quit their **household gods** since their

house seems fatal to them, and, because the cause is unknown, the building itself is blamed. You see them, half-dead, wandering the streets, while they can still stay on their feet, others lying on the ground weeping, turning their exhausted gaze upwards in their dying efforts, and stretching their arms out to the stars in the overhanging sky, breathing their last, here or there, wherever death has overtaken them.

What were my feelings then? What could they be, but to hate life, and to wish to be with my people? Wherever I looked as I turned my gaze, there were layers of dead, like rotten apples fallen from shaken branches, or acorns from a windblown ilex. See that temple opposite on the hill with a flight of steps up to it? It is **Jupiter**'s. Who among us did not bring useless offerings to those shrines? How often a husband while still praying for his wife, or a father still praying for his son, ended his life in front of those implacable altars, part of the unused incense found in their hands! How often the sacrificial bulls fell down, without waiting

for the blow, while the priest was praying and pouring unmixed wine between the horns. Even when I was sacrificing to Jove, for myself my country and my three sons, the victim let out a dreadful moan, and suddenly collapsed without a stroke from my blade, barely staining the knives below with its blood. The diseased entrails showed no marks, from which to read the prophetic truths, and warnings, of the gods. That offensive morbidity penetrated to their vital organs. I have seen corpses thrown down in front of the temple doors, in front of the altars, to make their deaths even more of a reproach. Some cut off their breath with a noose, and banished, by death, their fear of death, summoning their approaching fate from the beyond.

The bodies of the dead were not given the usual rites (the exit gates from the city could not cope with so many funerals). They either lay on the ground unburied, or were given to the heaped pyres without ceremony. And now there was no reverence left: the people

struggled to the pyres, and were consumed by others' flames. There was no one left to mourn, and the spirits of parents and children, of young and old were left to wander, unwept. There was no space in the burial mounds, and not enough wood for the fires.'

Bk VII:614-660 The creation of the Myrmidons

Stunned by such a storm of dark events, I said 'O **Jupiter**, if they do not lie when they say that you were held in **Aegina**'s embrace, she, the daughter of **Asopus**, and if you are not ashamed, mighty father, to have fathered me, give me back my people or bury me too in their tomb.' He gave me a flash of lightning as a sign, and thunder followed. I said 'I interpret this to be an omen, and that you give me it as a pledge, and may these accordingly be auspicious tokens of your purpose.'

There happened to be an oak-tree nearby, with open spreading branches, seeded from

Dodona, and sacred to **Jove**. I noticed a long train of food-gathering ants, carrying vast loads in their tiny mouths, and forging their own way over its corrugated bark. Admiring their numbers, I said ‘Best of fathers, give me as many citizens as this and fill the city’s empty walls.’ The tall oak-tree quivered, and its branches filled with sound, without a wind. I shivered, my limbs quaking with fear, and my hair stood on end. Though I kissed the oak-tree and the earth, not acknowledging my hopes, yet I did hope, and cherished my longings in my heart. Night fell, and sleep claimed my care-worn body.

The same oak-tree was there before my eyes, with the same branches, and the same insects on its branches, and it shook with a similar motion, and seemed to scatter its column of grain-bearers onto the ground below. Suddenly they seemed to grow larger and larger, and raise themselves from the soil, and stand erect, they lost their leanness, many feet, and their black coloration, and their limbs took on human form.

Sleep vanished. Awake again, I dismissed my dream, bemoaning the lack of help from the gods. But there was a great murmuring in the palace, and I thought I heard human voices, those I was now unaccustomed to. While I suspected that it was an effect of sleep, **Telamon** came running and throwing open the door, shouted ‘Father, come out and see, something greater than you could hope or believe. Come now!’

I went, and saw such men as I had seen in sleep’s imagining, in ranks such as I recognised and knew. They approached and saluted me as king. I fulfilled my prayer to Jove, and divided the city amongst this new people, along with the lost farmers’ empty fields. I called them **Myrmidons**, a name that did not belie each one’s origin as an ant, *μύρμηξ*. You have seen their bodies: they still retain the habits they had before, a thrifty, hard-working people, tenacious of achievement, and keeping what they achieve. These men fresh in years and spirit, will follow you to war, as soon as that

favourable east wind that brought you here' (it was indeed an easterly that had brought him) 'has swung round to the south.'

Bk VII:661-758 The infidelities of Cephalus and Procris

They filled a long day with this and other talk: the last of the light was given over to feasting, and night to sleep. The sun shone gold again, but an east wind was still blowing, and kept the sails from the homeward voyage. The sons of **Pallas** joined **Cephalus**, their senior, and Cephalus and the princes then went to the king: but the king was still in a deep sleep. **Phocus, Aeacus's son**, received them at the threshold, since **Telamon** and his brother were selecting men for the war. Phocus led the **Athenians** into an inner walk, beautiful and secluded, where they sat down together, and noticed that the **grandson of Aeolus** carried a spear in his hand, tipped with gold, and made of an unknown wood. In the midst of their first

short conversation, he said ‘I am knowledgeable about woodland, and hunting wild animals, but I have been wondering for a while what tree that shaft was cut from. If it were ash it would be deep yellow, and if it were cornelian cherry it would be knotted. What it is I am ignorant of, but my eyes have never seen one more beautifully formed for throwing.’ One of the **Athenian** brothers replied ‘You will marvel at its usefulness more than at its looks. It hits whatever it is aimed at: there is no chance involved, and then it flies back, bloodied, without needing to be retrieved.’ Then truly **the son of the Nereid** wanted to know everything: why this was so, where it came from, and who gave such a wondrous gift. What he wanted to know, Cephalus told him, but was still ashamed to say what a high price it had cost him. He was silent, and touched with sadness for his lost wife, tears welling in his eyes, he uttered these words.

‘Son of the goddess, this weapon makes me weep (who would believe that?) and it will for

many years if the fates grant me them. This weapon did for my dear wife and me. I wish that I had always been without it! She was **Procris**, or if **Orithyia**'s name has chanced to fill your ears more loudly, the sister of that Orithyia whom **Boreas** stole, though if you were to compare the two in looks and manner, Procris was more worth stealing! Her father **Erechtheus** brought us together in marriage, and love brought us together too. I was called happy, and I was. But the gods' vision of the future was otherwise, or perhaps things would still be so.

The second month after our marriage, I was setting out nets to trap antlered deer, when golden **Aurora**, chasing away the shadows, saw me from the summit of Mount **Hymettus**, that is always bright with flowers, and took me away against my will. By the grace of the goddess I can repeat the truth: though her face has the blush of roses, though she keeps the borderland of light and night, though she drinks the dewy nectar, I was in love with Procris.

Procris was in my heart: Procris was always on my lips. I kept talking about the sacred marriage bed, and the newness of our union, the recent wedding, and the prior claim of our deserted couch. The goddess was angered and said “Stop complaining, ungrateful man: have your Procris! But if my vision is far-sighted, you will wish you had never had her.” In a fury, she sent me back to her.

As I was returning, reconsidering the goddess’s words, I began to fear lest my wife had not been faithful to our marriage vows. Her youth and beauty prompted thoughts of adultery, but her character forbade those thoughts. But I had been away a while, and she from whom I was returning was herself an example of the fault, and lovers fear the worst. I decided to try what might grieve me, testing her chaste loyalty with gifts. Aurora supported my fears, and she changed my appearance (I felt it happening).

Unrecognisable, I went back to **Athens**, city of **Pallas**, and entered my house. The house

itself was irreproachable, gave every sign of innocence, and was only anxious for its vanished master. With difficulty, by a thousand stratagems, I gained access to Erechtheus's daughter. When I saw her I was rooted to the spot, and almost relinquished my thoughts of testing her loyalty. Indeed I could hardly keep from confessing the truth, and hardly keep from kissing her, as I ought. She was sad (but no one could be more lovely than her in her sadness). She grieved with longing for the husband who had been snatched away. Phocus, she *was* Beauty, whom Grief itself so befits! Why should I tell how many times her chaste nature repelled my advances? All those many times she said "I hold myself, in trust, for one man only: wherever he is, I keep what I can give, in trust, for that one man." For whom, in his senses, was that not a great enough trial of loyalty? But I was not satisfied, and struggled on, wounding myself, until by promising to give a fortune for just one night with her, and then increasing the offer, I forced her to

hesitate. Wrongly victorious, I cried out “I am no adulterer, wicked one! I am your true husband! You have me for a witness, you traitress!”

She said not a word. Silent with overwhelming shame, she fled from the treacherous threshold, and her evil husband. Deeply hurt by me, and hating the whole race of men, she wandered the mountains, following the ways of **Diana**. Then, deserted, a more violent flame burned in my bones. I begged her forgiveness, and confessed I had sinned, and that I too might have succumbed to the same fault, given the offer, if such gifts were offered to me. When I had owned to this, and after she had first taken revenge for her wounded honour, she returned to me, and we lived out sweet years in harmony. Moreover, as though she in yielding herself gave only a small prize, she gave me a hound as a gift, that her own goddess **Cynthia** had entrusted to her, saying “he will surpass all other dogs for speed.” She gave me a spear, likewise, the one, you see, I

have in my hands. Do you want to know the fate of the other gift? Listen to something marvellous: you will be stirred by the strangeness of the thing!’

Bk VII:759-795 The transformation of Cephalus’s dog Laelaps

‘Oedipus, **son of Laius**, had solved with his genius the riddles whose meaning was previously not understood, and the Sphinx, dark prophetess, had hurtled headlong from the cliff, her enigmatic words forgotten. Immediately **Aonian Thebes** was plagued again (since righteous **Themis** does not leave such things unpunished!) and many country people feared that the Teumessian vixen would destroy their flocks and themselves. The young men of the neighbourhood came, and we beat over the wide fields. That swift creature leapt lightly over the nets, and cleared the tops of the traps we had set. Then we slipped our hounds from the tether, but she escaped their pursuit, and,

travelling no slower than a bird flies, mocked the pack. With one great shout the hunters called on me to loose Laelaps, '*Hurricane*' (the name of my wife's gift). He had long been struggling to free himself from his leash, and straining his neck against the restraint. He had scarcely been released properly before we lost sight of him.

The hot dust showed the print of his paws, but he had vanished from sight. No javelin was quicker than him, no lead shot from a whirled sling, no light arrow shot from a **Cretan** bow. There was an intervening hill whose summit overlooked the surrounding fields. I climbed it, and watched the spectacle of this strange race, where the quarry seemed to be caught, and then to escape its fate. Nor does the cunning animal run in a straight course in the open, but it eludes the pursuing muzzle and swings back in a circle, so its enemy cannot charge. The hound presses hard, and matches its pace, seems to grip it, and does not grip it, and worries at the air with its empty snapping.

I turned to my spear for help. While I was balancing it in my right hand, while I was trying to fit my fingers into the throwing strap, I turned my eyes away. When I turned them back to the same place, I saw (a marvel) two shapes of marble in the middle of the plain. One you would think to be fleeing, the other pursuing. Assuredly, if a god was with them, that god must have willed that both should be unconquered in the race,' He got so far in his story, and was silent. 'What crime has the spear committed?' said **Phocus**. And **Cephalus** recounted its crime.

Bk VII:796-865 The death of Procris

'**Phocus**, my happiness was the beginning of my sorrow, and I will speak of happiness first. **Son of Aeacus**, what a joy it is to remember that blessed time, when, in those early years, I was delighted, and rightly so, with my wife, and she was delighted with her husband. We two had mutual cares, and a

shared love. She would not have preferred **Jupiter**'s bed to my love, and no woman could have captured me, not if **Venus** herself had come there. An equal flame burnt in our hearts.

Just after dawn, when the first rays struck the hilltops, full of youthfulness, I used to go hunting in the woods. I used to take no servants, or horses, or keen-scented hounds, or knotted snares. I trusted in my spear. But when my right hand was sated with the slaughter of wild creatures, I would return to the cool of the shade, and the breeze, *aura*, out of the chill valleys. I courted the breeze, gentle to me, in the midst of the heat: I waited for *aura*: she was rest for my labour. "*Aura*" (Indeed, I remember) I used to call "Come to me, delight me, enter my breast, most pleasing one, and, as you do, be willing to ease this heat I burn with!" Perhaps I did add more endearments (so my fate led me on). "You are my greatest pleasure" I used to say. "You revive me, and cherish me. You make me love the woods and

lonely places. It is always your breath I try to catch with my lips.”

Someone, I don't know who, hearing the ambiguous words, represented my speech as a betrayal, and thought the word *aura* I called so often, was the name of a nymph, a nymph he believed I loved. Immediately the unthinking witness went to **Procris** with the tale of my imagined disloyalty, and whispered what he had heard. Love is a credulous thing. Overcome with sudden pain, they tell me that she fainted. After a long time she revived, weeping for herself, calling her fate evil. She complained of my faithlessness, and troubled by an imaginary crime, she feared what was nothing, feared a name without substance, and grieved, the unhappy woman, as though *aura* were a real rival.

Yet she often doubted, and hoped, in her misery, that she was wrong, declaring she would not believe it, and unless she witnessed it herself, would not condemn her husband as guilty of any crime. Next morning, when

Dawn's light had dispelled the night I left to seek the woods, and, victorious from the hunt, lying on the grass, I said "*Aura*, come and relieve my suffering!" and suddenly, amongst my words, I thought I heard someone's moan. "Come, dearest!" I still said, and as the fallen leaves made a rustling sound in reply, I thought it was a wild creature, and threw my spear quickly. It was Procris. Claspng the wound in her breast she cried out "Ah, me!"

Recognising it as the voice of my faithful wife, I ran headlong and frantic towards that voice. I found her half-alive, her clothes sprinkled with drops of blood, and (what misery!) trying to pull this spear, her gift to me, from the wound. I lifted her body, dearer to me than my own, with gentle arms, tore the fabric from her breast, and bound up the cruel wound, trying to stem the blood, begging her not to leave me, guilty of her death. Though her strength was failing, and even though she was dying, she forced herself to speak a little. "By the bed we swore to share, by the gods that I

entreat, those that are above, and those that are of my house, by any good I have deserved of you, and by the abiding love, that still, while I die, remains, that is itself the cause of my death, do not allow this Aura to marry you in my place!” She spoke, and then I knew at last the error of the name, and told her. But what was the use of telling? She wavered, and the little strength she had ebbed away with her blood. While she could still gaze at anything, she gazed at me; and to me, and on my lips, breathed out her unfortunate spirit. And her look seemed easier then, untroubled by death.’

The hero, weeping, had told this sorrowful tale, when, behold, **Aeacus** entered with his two sons, and their newly enlisted men, whom **Cephalus** then accepted, with all their heavy armour.

Book VIII



Bk VIII:1-80 Scylla decides to betray her city of Megara

Now **Lucifer** dispelling night, and unveiling shining day, the **east wind** dropped, and rain clouds gathered. The mild **south wind**, gave **Cephalus** and the **Aeacides** safe return, bringing them, more quickly than they expected, to the harbour they steered for, by its favourable action. Meanwhile **Minos** was laying waste the coast **of Megara**, and testing his **military** strength against the city of **Alcathöus**, where **Nisus** ruled, who had a bright lock of purple hair, on the crown of his head, amongst his distinguished grey tresses, that guaranteed the safety of his kingdom.

The horns of a new moon had risen six times and the fortunes of war still hung in the balance, so protractedly did Victory hover between the two, on hesitant wings. There was a tower of the king, added to walls of singing stone, where **Apollo**, **Latona**'s son, once rested his golden lyre, and the sound resonated in the

rock. In days of peace, **Scylla**, the daughter of King Nisus, often used to climb up there, and make the stones ring using small pebbles. In wartime also she would often watch the unyielding armed conflicts from there, and now, as the war dragged on, she had come to know the names of the hostile princes, their weapons, horses, armour and **Cretan** quivers. Above all she came to know the face of their leader, **Europa**'s son, more than was fitting.

If he covered his head with a plumed helmet, she thought him handsome in a helmet. If he carried his shining bronze shield, a shield became him well. When he hurled his heavy spear, with taut limbs, the girl admired his strength combined with skill. When he bent the broad arc of his bow, with a flight notched in it, she swore that it was **Phoebus** Apollo, standing there, with his arrow ready. But when he exposed his face, free of the bronze, and when, clothed in purple, he took to horseback, his white horse conspicuous with its embroidered trappings, and he controlled its foaming bit,

Nisus's daughter was scarcely in control of herself, scarcely in a rational frame of mind. Happy the spear he held, she said, and happy the reins he lifted in his hand. Her impulse was to run, though only a girl, and if it had been allowed, through the enemy lines; her impulse was to throw herself from the top of the tower into the **Cretan** camp, to open the bronze gates to their army, or anything else Minos might wish.

As she sat gazing at the white tents of the **Dictaeon** king, she said 'I am not sure whether I should show joy or grief at this miserable war. I grieve because Minos is the enemy of one who loves him, but if there had been no war, he would never have been known to me! If he accepted me as a hostage he could abandon the war: he would have me as his companion, me as a pledge of peace. If she, who gave birth to you, most handsome of kings, was as beautiful as you are, no wonder the god was on fire for her. O I would be three times happy if I could take wing, through the air, and stand in the

camp of the Cretan king, and reveal myself, and my love, and ask what dowry he would need to win me: so long as he does not demand my country's stronghold! Rather let my hopes of marriage die, than that I be capable of betrayal! - Though often many have found it better to be defeated, if a peace-loving conqueror showed clemency. Indeed he wages a just war because of his murdered son: his cause is powerful, and the arms that support his cause. Then, I think we will be conquered. And if that is the end that awaits the city, why should his strength breach these walls of mine, rather than my love?

It would be better for him to win, without slaughter, or delay, and without the shedding of his own blood. At least I would not be afraid lest someone inadvertently wound your breast, Minos: for who would be so cruel as to venture to aim his throw at you, unless he was careless? The idea pleases me, and I am firm in my decision to deliver myself to you, with my country as my dowry, and so put an end to war. But, it is not enough merely to want it! There is

a guard watching the entrance, and my father holds the keys of the gate. I only fear through him I might be unlucky: only he hinders my wishes. Would that the gods had devised things so that I had no father! Surely everyone is their own god: Fortune rejects idle wishes. Another girl, fired with as great a passion as mine, would, long ago, have destroyed anything that stood in the way of her love. And why should another be braver than I am? I would dare to go through fire and sword: but there is no need here to brave fire or sword: I need one lock of my father's hair. That is more precious than gold to me, that purple lock of hair will bless me, and let me achieve my desire.

Bk VIII:81-151 Scylla, deserted, is changed to a bird

As she was speaking, Night, most powerful healer of our cares, darkened, and, with the shadows, her boldness grew. The first hours of quiet had come, when sleep soothes hearts that

the day's anxieties have wearied: the daughter steals silently into her father's room, and (alas, the evil!) robs him of the fateful lock of hair. Through the middle of the enemy camp she goes (so certain of her worth to them) with the impious prize she has gained, straight to the king: who is startled by her speech to him. 'Love drove me to crime! I, **Scylla**, daughter of King **Nisus**, deliver, to you, **the gods of my house**, and my country. I ask no gift but yourself. Take this purple lock of hair as the pledge of my love, and know that I do not deliver merely a lock of his hair to you, but his head!' And she held out her gift in her sinful hand. **Minos** recoiled from what she offered him, and shaken by the thought of this unnatural act, answered 'May the gods banish you from their world, O you who disgrace this age, and may land and sea be denied you! Be certain I will never allow **Crete**, which is my world, and the cradle of **Jove**, to give sanctuary to such a monstrous child.'

He spoke: and after establishing laws for his defeated enemies, this most just of legislators, ordered the cables to be loosed from his fleet, and the oars of the bronze-beaked ships to be set in motion. When Scylla saw that the ships were drawing away over the sea, and that their master had refused her the reward for her wickedness, exhausting prayer, she succumbed to violent anger, and, her hair streaming, shouted in her fury, stretching out her hands. 'Where are you running to, deserting the creator of your success, O you whom I have set above my father, set above my country? Where are you running to, cruel one, whose victory was my crime, and my kindness? Does neither the gift I gave, nor my love, move you, nor the knowledge that all my hopes are contained in you alone? Where shall I go, deserted like this? To my country? It is defeated! Even if it were not, it is closed to me through my treachery! To my father's presence? Whom I betrayed to you? The citizens hate me, with reason, and their

neighbours fear my example. I am exposed to the world, so that **Crete** alone might be open to me. If you deny me Crete, also, and leave me here, in your ingratitude, your mother was not **Europa**, but the sandbanks of hostile **Syrtis**, or the Armenian tigress, or **Charybdis**'s whirlpool, stirred by the south wind. Nor are you **Jupiter**'s son, nor was your mother deceived by the image of a bull. That tale of your birth is a lie! Truly a bull begot you: a wild one, never captive of a heifer's love.

Nisus, father, punish me! Joy in my pain, walls, that I have betrayed! Now, I confess it, I deserve to be hated, and to die. But let one of those whom I have impiously wounded destroy me! Why should you attack me for my crime, who gained victory through that crime? My sin against my father, and my country, was a kindness to you! **Pasiphaë** is truly a fit mate for you: that adulteress who fooled the fierce bull with that wooden frame, and carried a hybrid foetus in her womb. Does my speech penetrate your ears, monster of ingratitude, or do the

same winds that blow your ships on, blow my words away to nothingness? Now, Now, it is no wonder to me, that Pasiphaë preferred that bull to you, you have more savagery in you than he had. Oh, he is ordering them to run! And the waves resound to the beat of the oars, and I and my land recede. No matter. Oh, in vain, you forget my kindnesses: I shall follow you against your will, clinging to the curved sternpost, dragged over the wide ocean.'

She had scarcely finished speaking when she leapt into the sea, and swam after the fleet, her passion lending her strength, and clung to the **Cretan** boat. Her father, who had been newly changed into a sea eagle, soaring through the air on tawny wings, saw her, and dived towards her, as she clung there, to tear at her with his hooked beak. In fear she let go of the sternpost, but as she fell the light breeze seemed to hold her, not letting her touch the water. Feathers spring from her arms: changed into a bird, the rock dove, with its red legs and purple throat, she is called **Ciris**, 'Cutter', and

acquired that name from her cutting of the lock of hair.

Bk VIII:152-182 The Minotaur, Theseus, and Ariadne

When **Minos** reached **Cretan** soil he paid his dues to **Jove**, with the sacrifice of a hundred bulls, and hung up his war trophies to adorn the palace. The scandal concerning his family grew, and the queen's unnatural adultery was evident from the birth of a strange hybrid monster. Minos resolved to remove this shame, the **Minotaur**, from his house, and hide it away in a labyrinth with blind passageways. **Daedalus**, celebrated for his skill in architecture, laid out the design, and confused the clues to direction, and led the eye into a tortuous maze, by the windings of alternating paths. No differently from the way in which the watery **Maeander** deludes the sight, flowing backwards and forwards in its changeable course, through the meadows of **Phrygia**,

facing the running waves advancing to meet it, now directing its uncertain waters towards its source, now towards the open sea: so Daedalus made the endless pathways of the maze, and was scarcely able to recover the entrance himself: the building was as deceptive as that. In there, Minos walled up the twin form of bull and man, and twice nourished it on **Athenian** blood, but the third repetition of the nine-year tribute by lot, caused the monster's downfall. When, through the help of the virgin princess, **Ariadne**, by rewinding the thread, **Theseus**, son of **Aegeus**, won his way back to the elusive threshold, that no one had previously regained, he immediately set sail for **Dia**, stealing the daughter of Minos away with him, then cruelly abandoned his companion on that shore. Deserted and weeping bitterly, as she was, **Bacchus-Liber** brought her help and comfort. So that she might shine among the eternal stars, he took the crown from her forehead, and set it in the sky. It soared through the rarified air, and as it soared its jewels changed to bright fires,

and took their place, retaining the appearance of a crown, as the **Corona Borealis**, between the kneeling **Hercules** and the head of the serpent that **Ophiuchus** holds.

Bk VIII:183-235 Daedalus and Icarus

Meanwhile **Daedalus**, hating **Crete**, and his long exile, and filled with a desire to stand on his native soil, was imprisoned by the waves. ‘He may thwart our escape by land or sea’ he said ‘but the sky is surely open to us: we will go that way: **Minos** rules everything but he does not rule the heavens’. So saying he applied his thought to new invention and altered the natural order of things. He laid down lines of feathers, beginning with the smallest, following the shorter with longer ones, so that you might think they had grown like that, on a slant. In that way, long ago, the rustic pan-pipes were graduated, with lengthening reeds. Then he fastened them together with thread at the middle, and bees’-wax at the base, and, when he had arranged them, he flexed each one into a gentle curve, so that they imitated real bird’s

wings. His son, **Icarus**, stood next to him, and, not realising that he was handling things that would endanger him, caught laughingly at the down that blew in the passing breeze, and softened the yellow bees'-wax with his thumb, and, in his play, hindered his father's marvellous work.

When he had put the last touches to what he had begun, the artificer balanced his own body between the two wings and hovered in the moving air. He instructed the boy as well, saying 'Let me warn you, Icarus, to take the middle way, in case the moisture weighs down your wings, if you fly too low, or if you go too high, the sun scorches them. Travel between the extremes. And I order you not to aim towards **Bootes**, the Herdsman, or **Helice**, the **Great Bear**, or towards the drawn sword of **Orion**: take the course I show you!' At the same time as he laid down the rules of flight, he fitted the newly created wings on the boy's shoulders. While he worked and issued his warnings the

ageing man's cheeks were wet with tears: the father's hands trembled.

He gave a never to be repeated kiss to his son, and lifting upwards on his wings, flew ahead, anxious for his companion, like a bird, leading her fledglings out of a nest above, into the empty air. He urged the boy to follow, and showed him the dangerous art of flying, moving his own wings, and then looking back at his son. Some angler catching fish with a quivering rod, or a shepherd leaning on his crook, or a ploughman resting on the handles of his plough, saw them, perhaps, and stood there amazed, believing them to be gods able to travel the sky.

And now **Samos**, sacred to **Juno**, lay ahead to the left (**Delos** and **Paros** were behind them), **Lebinthos**, and **Calymne**, rich in honey, to the right, when the boy began to delight in his daring flight, and abandoning his guide, drawn by desire for the heavens, soared higher. His nearness to the devouring sun softened the fragrant wax that held the wings: and the wax melted: he flailed with bare arms, but losing his

oar-like wings, could not ride the air. Even as his mouth was crying his father's name, it vanished into the dark blue sea, the Icarian Sea, called after him. The unhappy father, now no longer a father, shouted 'Icarus, Icarus where are you? Which way should I be looking, to see you?' 'Icarus' he called again. Then he caught sight of the feathers on the waves, and cursed his inventions. He laid the body to rest, in a tomb, and the island was named Icaria after his buried child.

Bk VIII:236-259 The death of Talos

As he was consigning his unfortunate son to the grave, a noisy partridge poked its head out from a muddy ditch, and, called, cackling joyfully, with whirring wings. It was the only one of its kind, not seen in previous years, and only recently made a bird, as a lasting reproach to you, **Daedalus**. Your sister, **Perdix**, oblivious to the fates, sent you her son, Talus, to be taught: twelve years old, his mind ready

for knowledge. Indeed, the child, studying the spine of a fish, took it as a model, and cut continuous teeth out of sharp metal, inventing the use of the saw. He was also the first to pivot two iron arms on a pin, so that, with the arms at a set distance, one part could be fixed, and the other sweep out a circle. Daedalus was jealous, and hurled the boy headlong from **Minerva**'s sacred citadel, claiming that he had fallen. But Pallas Minerva, who favours those with quick minds, caught him, and turned him into the partridge, masking him with feathers in mid-air. His inborn energy was transferred to swift wings and feet, and he kept his mother's name, Perdix, from before. But the bird does not perch above the ground, and does not make its nest on branches or on high points, but flies low on whirring wings over the soil, and lays its eggs in a sheltered place.

**Bk VIII:260-328 The Calydonian Boar Hunt
– the cause**

Now **Sicily**, the land of Mount **Etna**, held the weary **Daedalus**, and King **Cocalus**, regarded as peaceable, had taken up arms, against **Minos**, in defence of the suppliant: and thanks to **Theseus**, **Athens** now had ceased to pay **Crete** the sorrowful levy. The temple was wreathed with flowers, and the Athenians called out to warlike **Minerva**, to **Jupiter** and to the other gods, honouring them with gifts, and the blood of sacrificial offerings, and the contents of their incense-boxes. Far-wandering fame had spread the name of Theseus through all the cities of the **Argolis**, and the peoples inhabiting wealthy **Achaia** begged for his help in their great trouble, and **Calydon**, as a suppliant, despite having **Meleager**, asked his help, with anxious prayers.

The reason for their asking was a wild boar, servant and avenging power of **Diana**'s aggression. King **Oeneus** of Calydon, they say, made offerings, from the successful harvests of a full year, of the first fruits of the crops to **Ceres**, of wine to **Bacchus**, 'the deliverer

from care', of libations of flowing oil, from the olives, to golden **Minerva**. The honour they desire was paid to all the gods, beginning with the rural deities: only **the daughter of Latona**'s altar was passed by: neglected, it is said, and left without its incense. Anger even touches the gods. 'I shall not suffer this without exacting punishment' she cried 'and, though not honoured, it will not be said that I was unavenged.' And the goddess, spurned, sent an avenging wild boar, over the **Aetolian** fields: grassy **Epirus** had none greater than it, and those of the island of **Sicily** were smaller. Its eyes glowed with bloodshot fire: its neck was stiff with bristles, and the hairs, on its hide, bristled stiffly like spear-shafts: just as a palisade stands, so the hairs stood like tall spears. Hot foam flecked the broad shoulders, from its hoarse grunting. Its tusks were the size of an Indian elephant's: lightning came from its mouth: and the leaves were scorched, by its breath. Now it trampled the young shoots of the growing crops, now cut short the ripeness,

longed-for by the mournful farmer, and scythed down the **corn** in ear. The granaries and threshing floors waited for the promised harvest in vain. Heavy clusters of grapes were brought down along with the trailing vines, and fruit and branch of the evergreen olives. It rages among the cattle too. Neither the herdsmen and dogs, nor their own fierce bulls can defend the herds. The people scatter, and only count themselves safe behind city walls.

At last **Meleager** and a handpicked group of men gather, longing for glory: **Castor** and **Polydeuces**, the Dioscuri, twin **sons of Tyndareus** and **Leda**, one son famous for boxing, the other for horsemanship: **Jason** who built the first ship: **Theseus** and **Pirithoüs**, fortunate in friendship: **Plexippus** and **Toxeus**, the two **sons of Thestius**, uncles of Meleager: **Lynceus** and swift **Idas**, sons of Aphareus: **Caeneus**, once a woman: warlike **Leucippus**: **Acastus**, famed for his javelin: **Hippochoüs**: **Dryas**: **Phoenix**, **Amyntor**'s son: **Eurytus** and

Cleatus, the **sons of Actor**: and **Phyleus**, sent by **Elis**.

Telamon was there, and **Peleus**, father of the great **Achilles**: with **Admetus**, the **son of Pheres**, and **Iolaüs** from **Boeotia** were **Eurytion**, energetic in action, and **Echion** unbeaten at running: and **Lelex** from **Locria**, **Panopeus**, **Hyleus**, and daring **Hippasus**: **Nestor**, still in the prime of life: and those that **Hippocoön** sent, with **Enaesimus**, from ancient **Amyclae**: **Laërtes**, **Penelope**'s father-in-law with **Ancaeus** of **Arcady**: **Mopsus**, the shrewd son of **Ampyx**: and **Amphiaräus**, son of **Oecleus**, not yet betrayed by his wife, **Eriphyle**.

And **Atalanta**, the warrior girl of **Tegea**, the glory of **Arcadia**'s woods, with a polished brooch clasping the neck of her garment, and her hair simply done, caught in a single knot. An ivory quiver, holding her arrows, that rattled as she moved, hung from her left shoulder, and her left hand held the bow. So she was dressed: as for her face, you might truly say, the virgin

was there, in a boy, and a boy, in the girl. The moment he saw her, that moment, Meleager, the hero of Calydon, desired her, though the gods might refuse it, devoured by secret fires. ‘O, happy the man, whom she might think worthy!’ he said. Neither time nor honour allowed him further words: the greater task of the greater conflict urged him on.

Bk VIII:329-375 The Calydonian Boar Hunt – the boar is roused

A forest thick with trees, that had never been cut, at any time, began above the plain, and overlooked the sloping fields. When the heroes reached it, some spread out hunting nets, others loosed the dogs from their leashes, while others again followed the deeply-marked trail, keen to discover their quarry. There was a deep valley that collected streams of rainwater, falling near it: and it held, in its depths, pliant willows, smooth sedges, and marsh grasses, and osiers and tall bulrushes, above the lowly reeds.

The boar was roused from there, and made a violent charge into the midst of its enemies, like lightning forced from colliding clouds. Trees were flattened by its impact, and the woods crashed as it drove into them. The warriors shouted, and held their spears spread outward, with firm hands, waving their broad blades. The boar rushed them, scattering the dogs, as they obstructed it in its fury, putting the baying pack to flight with sidelong swipes of its tusks. The first spear, delivered by **Echion**'s arm, was ineffectual, and gave the trunk of a maple a glancing blow. The next, if it had not been thrown with too great a force, aimed at the creature's back, seemed certain to stick there, but the throw was too long. **Jason** of **Pagasaë** hurled the spear.

Then **Mopsus**, son of **Ampyx**, cried out '**Phoebus**, if I have worshipped you, and do so now, grant what I ask, that my spear strikes surely!' The god did what he could, to fulfil the prayer: the boar was hit, but without being wounded. **Diana** had stolen the iron point of the

javelin, in flight: what arrived was the wooden shaft without its tip. The wild beast's anger was aroused, and blazed out no more gently than lightning. Flame burned in its eyes, and was breathed from its chest. With dangerous and unerring momentum, the boar hurtled towards the young men, as a stone flies from a taut catapult, aimed at walls or battlements full of soldiers. **Hippalmus** and **Pelagon**, holding the right flank, were knocked to the ground: their friends caught them up as they lay there. But **Enaesimus**, son of **Hippocoön**, did not escape the fatal blow: about to turn his back, in alarm, he sank down, as the sinews of his knee gave way. And King **Nestor** of **Pylos**, might perhaps have perished before his time at **Troy**, but, using the leverage of his firmly planted spear, he vaulted into a tree, that stood close by, and looked down, from a place of safety, on the quarry he had escaped.

The fierce creature, sharpening its tusks on the trunk of an oak, threatened them with destruction, and confident in its freshly renewed

weapons, ripped open mighty **Hippasus**'s thigh, with one curving edge. But now the Gemini, **Castor** and **Pollux**, not yet changed into stars in the sky, twin brothers, conspicuous among the rest, both rode up, on horses whiter than snow, and brandishing their javelins in the air as one, hurled them, the points quivering with the motion.

Bk VIII:376-424 The Calydonian Boar Hunt – the kill

They would have wounded the beast, had not the bristling creature retreated into the dense woods where no horse or spear could penetrate. **Telamon** did follow, and careless where he was placing his feet, in his enthusiasm, fell flat on the ground, tripping over the root of a tree. While **Peleus** was lifting him, the girl from **Tegea** strung a swift arrow, and sent it speeding from the curved bow. The shaft just grazed the top of the boar's back, and fixing itself below one ear, reddened the bristles

with a thin stream of blood. Nor did she praise her own successful shot more than **Meleager** did. He was supposed to have been the first to see the blood, and first, having seen it, to point it out to his friends, saying: ‘You will be honoured for the value of this service.’ The warriors flushed with their shame, urged each other on, gaining courage from their clamour, hurling their spears without sense of order. The jostling spoilt their throw, and prevented the strike they intended. Then **Ancaeus** of **Arcady**, with his twin-headed axe, rushing to meet his fate, cried: ‘O warriors, learn how much better a man’s weapons are than a girl’s, and leave the work to me! Though **Latona**’s daughter herself protects this creature, in her own way, in spite of **Diana**, my right arm will destroy it.’ Swollen with pride, like this, with boastful words, he spoke, and, lifting the double axe in both hands, he stood on tiptoe, poised for the downward blow. The boar anticipated this daring enemy, and struck at the upper groin, the quickest way to kill, with his twin tusks. Ancaeus collapsed,

and the slippery mass of his inner organs fell away in a pool of blood: the ground was soaked with the red fluid.

Then **Pirithoüs**, son of **Ixion**, went against the quarry, brandishing his hunting-spear in his strong right-hand. **Theseus**, **Aegeus**'s son, called out 'Stay, farther away, my soul's other half, O dearer to me than myself! It is fine to be brave at a distance, also: Ancaeus's rash courage only did him harm.' He spoke, and threw his heavy spear, of cornelian cherry-wood, with its bronze blade. Though well aimed and capable of reaching its mark, it was deflected by the leafy branch of an oak. **Jason**, **Aeson**'s son, hurled his javelin, which swerved by accident, and the fatal throw transfixing the flanks of an innocent hound, pinned it to the ground.

But **Meleager**'s hand made the difference, and of the two spears he threw, though one stuck in the earth, the other fixed itself in the boar's back. Now, while it raged, and twisted its body round, and spouted out hissing foam

and fresh blood, the author of its wound came at it, pricked his quarry to fury, and buried his shining hunting-spear in his enemy's shoulder. Then the companions give proof of their joy, shouting, and crowding around him to grasp his hand in theirs. They gaze, wonderingly, at the huge creature covering so much of the earth it lies on, and still think it unsafe to touch the beast, but nevertheless each wets his spear in its blood.

Bk VIII:425-450 The Calydonian Boar Hunt – the spoils

Meleager, himself, pressed his foot down on the head of the deadly creature, and said to **Atalanta** ‘Girl from **Nonacria**, take the prize that is mine by right, and let my glory be shared with you.’ Then he gave her the spoils, the hide bristling with hair, and the head remarkable for its magnificent tusks. She delighted in the giver no less than the gift, but the others were envious, and a murmur ran through the whole

company. Of these, **Plexippus**, and **Toxeus**, the **sons of Thestius**, Meleager's uncles, stretching their arms out, shouted loudly: 'Come on, girl, leave them alone: do not steal our titles to honour, and do not let too much faith in your beauty deceive you, lest your love-sick friend turns out to be no help to you.' And they took the gifts away from her, and denied him the right to give them. The **descendant of Mars** could not bear this, and bursting with anger, gnashing his teeth, he said: 'Learn, you thieves of other men's rights, the difference between threats and actions', and plunged his iron point into Plexippus's chest, he expecting nothing of that kind. Meleager gave Toxeus, who stood in doubt, wanting to avenge his brother, but fearing his brother's fate, scant time for doubt, and while his spear was still warm from the first brother's murder, he warmed it again with the second brother's blood.

Althaea was carrying thanksgiving offerings, for her son's victory, to the temple of the gods, when she saw them bringing back her

dead brothers. She filled the city with the clamour of wailing, beat her breasts, and replaced her golden robes with black. But when she heard who the murderer was, she forgot her mourning, and her longing changed from tears to revenge.

Bk VIII:451-514 Althaea and the burning brand

There was a piece of wood that the **Three Sisters** placed in the fire, when **Althaea**, the **daughter of Thestius**, was in the throes of childbirth. As they spun the threads of fate firmly under their thumbs, they said: ‘We assign an equal span of time to you, O new born child, and to this brand.’ When the goddesses vanished, after speaking the prophecy, the mother snatched the burning branch from the fire, and doused it with water. It had long been hidden away in the depths of the inner rooms, and preserved, had preserved your years, youth. Your mother now brought it out, and called for

pinewood and kindling: and, once that was in position, she lit the hostile flames. Then she tried, four times, to throw the brand in the fire, and four times, held back. The mother fought the sister in her, and the two tugged at the one heart. Often her cheeks grew pale at imminent wickedness. Often fierce anger filled her eyes with blood. One moment she seemed like someone threatening some cruelty: the next you would think her full of compassion. When her heart's fierce passion dried up her tears, the tears welled up again. As a ship, that the wind, and the tide opposing the wind, both seize, feels the twin forces and obeys the two, uncertainly, so the daughter of Thestius, was swayed by her emotions, and her anger alternately calmed, and then flared again.

However, the sister in her begins to outweigh the mother, and to appease the shades of her own blood, with blood, she escapes guilt by incurring it. Now, as the baleful fire strengthens, she cries 'Let this be the funeral pyre that cremates my child.' As she held the

fatal brand in her deadly hand, and stood, wretched woman, in front of the funeral altars, she said '**Eumenides**, Triple Goddesses of Retribution, turn your faces towards these fearful rites! I take revenge, and I do a wicked thing: death must be atoned for by death: crime must be heaped on crime, ruin on ruin. Let this impious house end in a flood of mourning! Shall, **Oeneus**, fortunate, rejoice in his victorious child, while Thestius is bereaved of his sons? Better for both to grieve. Only, my brother's spirits, new-made ghosts, recognise my sense of duty to you, and accept the sacrifice I prepare, so great its cost to me, the evil child of my womb! Ah me! What conclusion do I rush towards? My brothers, forgive a mother! The hand is unequal to what it began: I acknowledge he deserves to die, but I do not desire to be the cause of his death. Shall he go unpunished? Shall he live, victorious, proud of his success, and be king in **Calydon**, while you lie there, the scant ashes of chill shadows? For my part I cannot suffer that

to be: let the wicked die, and pull down his father's hopes, his kingship, and the ruins of his country! Where are my maternal feelings? Where are the sacred allegiances of a parent? Where are the anxieties I suffered over those ten months? O, I wish, when you were an infant burning in those first flames, I had allowed it to be! By my gift, you lived: now for your own fault, you die! Suffer the consequences of what you have done, and give me back the life I twice gave you, once at your birth, once when I snatched at the brand, or let me join my brothers in the tomb!

I yearn to do it, and I cannot do it. What shall I do? Now my brothers' wounds are before my eyes and the image of all that blood: and now heart's love, and the word mother move me. Woe to me! Evil is in your victory, my brothers: but victory you shall have: only let me follow you, and the comfort I bring you!' She spoke, and turning her face away, with trembling hands, threw the fatal brand, into the midst of the fire. The piece of wood itself gave,

or seemed to give, a sigh, as it was attacked, and burned, by the reluctant flames.

Bk VIII:515-546 The death of Meleager

Far off, and unaware, **Meleager** is alight with that fire, and feels his inner organs invisibly seared. He controls the fierce agonies, with courage. Nevertheless he is sad that he must die a bloodless, cowardly death, and calls **Ancaeus** fortunate in his wounds. At the last, groaning with pain, he names his aged father, his brothers, his loving sisters, the companion of his bed, and, it may be, his mother. The fire and the suffering flare up, and die away, again, and both are extinguished together. Gradually his breath vanishes into the light breeze: gradually white ashes veil the glowing embers.

Noble **Calydon** lies dead. Young men and old lament, people and princes moan, and the women of Calydon, by the River **Euenus**, tear at their hair, and beat their breasts. His father, prone on the ground, mars his aged features and

white hair with dust, and rebukes himself for his long years. As for his mother, conscious of her dreadful action, she has exacted punishment on herself, with her own hand driving the weapon into her body. Not though the god had given me a hundred mouths speaking with tongues, the necessary genius, and all **Helicon** as my domain, could I describe the sad fate of his poor sisters. Forgetting what is seemly, they strike their bruised chests, and while there is something left of the body, the body is caressed again and again, as they kiss it and kiss the bier on which it lies.

Once he is ashes; the ashes are gathered, and they press them to their breasts, throw themselves down on his tomb, and clasping the stone carved with his name, they drown the name with tears. At last, **Diana**, satiated with her destruction of the house of **Parthaon**, lifted them up, all except **Gorge**, and **Deianira**, the daughter-in-law of noble **Alcmena**, and, making feathers spring from their bodies, and stretching long wings over their arms, she gave

them beaks, and, changed to guinea-hens, the **Meleagrides**, launched them into the air.

Bk VIII:547-610 Acheloüs tells Theseus and his friends of Perimele

Meanwhile, **Theseus**, having played his part in the united effort, turned back towards Athens, **Tritonia**'s city, where **Erectheus** once ruled. But the River **Acheloüs**, swollen with rain, blocked his immediate path, and stalled his journey. 'Come under my roof, famous scion of **Cecrops**,' the river-god said, 'and do not commit yourself to my devouring waters. They are liable to carry solid tree-trunks along, in their roaring, and roll great boulders over on their sides. I have seen whole byres, near the bank, swept away, with all their livestock: and neither the cattle's strength nor the horses' speed was of any use. Many a strong man has been lost in the whirling vortices, when the torrent was loosed, after mountain snows. You will be safer to stay till my river runs in its

normal channel, when its bed holds only a slender stream.’

Aegeus’s son nodded, and replied: ‘I will make use of your house, and your counsel, Acheloüs.’ And so he did. He entered the dark building, made of spongy pumice, and rough tufa. The floor was moist with soft moss, and the ceiling banded with freshwater mussel and oyster shells.

Now **Hyperion**, the sun, had measured out two thirds of his path of light, when Theseus and his companions of the hunt seated themselves on couches. Here was **Pirithoüs, Ixion’s son**, and there, **Lelex, Troezen’s hero**, his temples already streaked with thinning grey hair, and there were others whom the **Acarnanian** river-god, greatly delighted to have such a guest, judged worthy of equal honour. Quickly the barefoot nymphs set out dishes of food on the nearby tables, and when they had been cleared again, poured wine in jewelled cups. Then the greatest of heroes looking out over the waters below, asked: ‘What is that place?’ (He pointed

with his finger.) ‘Tell me what name the island has, though it seems more than an island!’

The river-god replied ‘What you see is not one island: five pieces of land lie together, but the distance conceals their distinctiveness. This will make you less astonished at what **Diana** did to **Calydon** when she was slighted. Those islands were once nymphs, who, though they had slaughtered ten bullocks and invited the rural gods to the festival, forgot me as they led the festal dance. I swelled with anger, as fierce as when my flood is at its fullest, and terrible in wind and wave, I tore forest from forest and field from field, and swept the nymphs, who then, at last, remembered me, along with the place they trod, into the sea. There the ocean and my waters separated what had been continuous ground, and split it into as many parts as you see islands, the **Echinades**, there in the midst of the waves.

But as you can see for yourself, far off, far off one island vanishes, dear to me: the sailors call it **Perimele**. I loved her and stole her

virginity. At which her father, unable to accept it, threw his daughter from the cliffs into the deep, intending to destroy her. I caught her, and holding her as she swam, I cried: ‘O **God of the Trident**, to whom rule over the restless waves, closest to earth, fell by lot, give your aid I beg, and grant a place to one whom a father’s anger drowns, or allow her to be that place herself!’ While I spoke, new earth clasped her body, as she swam, and a solid island rose, round her changed limbs.

Bk VIII:611-678 Lelex tells of Philemon and Baucis

At this, the river-god fell silent. The wonder of the thing had gripped them all. But that daring spirit, **Pirithöus**, son of **Ixion**, scornful of the gods, laughed at their credulity. ‘These are fictions you tell of, **Acheloüs**, and you credit the gods with too much power, if you think they can give and take away the forms of things.’ The others were startled, and

disapproved of his words, **Lelex** above all, experienced in mind and years, who said: ‘The power of the gods is great and knows no limit, and whatever heaven decrees comes to pass. To help convince you, in the hills of **Phrygia**, an oak and a lime tree stand side by side, surrounded by a low wall. I have seen the place, since **Pittheus**, king of **Troezen**, sent me into that country, where his father **Pelops** once ruled.

There is a swamp not far from there, once habitable land but now the haunt of diving-birds and marsh-loving coots. **Jupiter** went there, disguised as a mortal, and **Mercury**, the **descendant of Atlas**, setting aside his wings, went with his father, carrying the caduceus. A thousand houses they approached, looking for a place to rest: a thousand houses were locked and bolted. But one received them: it was humble it is true, roofed with reeds and stems from the marsh, but godly **Baucis** and the equally aged **Philemon**, had been wedded in that cottage in their younger years, and there

had grown old together. They made light of poverty by acknowledging it, and bearing it without discontent of mind. It was no matter if you asked for owner or servant there: those two were the whole household: they gave orders and carried them out equally.

So when the gods from heaven met the humble **household gods**, and stooping down, passed the low doorway, the old man pulled out a bench, and requested them to rest their limbs, while over the bench Baucis threw a rough blanket. Then she raked over the warm ashes in the hearth, and brought yesterday's fire to life, feeding it with leaves and dried bark, nursing the flames with her aged breath. She pulled down finely divided twigs and dry stems from the roof, and, breaking them further, pushed them under a small bronze pot. Next she stripped the leaves from vegetables that her husband had gathered from his well-watered garden. He used a two-pronged stick to lift down a wretched-looking chine of meat, hanging from a blackened beam, and, cutting a

meagre piece from the carefully saved chine, put what had been cut, to seethe, in boiling water.

In the meantime they made conversation to pass the time, and prevent their guests being conscious of the delay. There was a beech wood tub, suspended by its handle from a crude peg: this had been filled with warm water, and allowed their visitors to refresh their limbs. In the middle of the floor there was a mattress of soft sedges. Placed on a frame and legs of willow it made a couch. They covered it with cloths, that they only used to bring out for the times of sacred festivals, but even these were old and worn, not unworthy of the couch. The gods were seated.

The old woman, her skirts tucked up, her hands trembling, placed a table there, but a table with one of the three legs unequal: a piece of broken pot made them equal. Pushed underneath, it countered the slope, and she wiped the level surface with fresh mint. On it she put the black and green olives that belong to

pure **Minerva**, and the cornelian cherries of autumn, preserved in wine lees; radishes and endives; a lump of cheese; and lightly roasted eggs, untouched by the hot ashes; all in clay dishes. After this she set out a carved mixing bowl for wine, just as costly, with cups made of beech wood, hollowed out, and lined with yellow bees' wax. There was little delay, before the fire provided its hot food, and the wine, of no great age, circulated, and then, removed again, made a little room for the second course. There were nuts, and a mix of dried figs and wrinkled dates; plums, and sweet-smelling apples in open wicker baskets; and grapes gathered from the purple vines. In the centre was a gleaming honeycomb. Above all, there was the additional presence of well-meaning faces, and no unwillingness, or poverty of spirit.'

Bk VIII:679-724 The transformation of Philemon and Baucis.

‘Meanwhile the old couple noticed that, as soon as the mixing bowl was empty, it refilled itself, unaided, and the wine appeared of its own accord. They were fearful at this strange and astonishing sight, and timidly Baucis and Philemon murmured a prayer, their palms upwards, and begged the gods’ forgiveness for the meal, and their unpreparedness. They had a goose, the guard for their tiny cottage: as hosts they prepared to sacrifice it for their divine guests. But, quick-winged, it wore the old people out and, for a long time, escaped them, at last appearing to take refuge with the gods themselves. Then the heaven-born ones told them not to kill it. “We are gods,” they said, “and this neighbourhood will receive just punishment for its impiety, but to you we grant exemption from that evil. Just leave your house, and accompany our steps, as we climb that steep mountainside together.”

They both obeyed, and leaning on their sticks to ease their climb, they set foot on the long slope. When they were as far from the

summit as a bowshot might carry, they looked back, and saw everywhere else vanished in the swamp: only their own roof was visible. And while they stood amazed at this, mourning their neighbours' fate, their old cottage, tiny even for the two of them, turned into a temple. Wooden poles became pillars, and the reed thatch grew yellow, until a golden roof appeared, richly carved doors, and a marble pavement covering the ground. Then the **son of Saturn** spoke, calmly, to them: "Ask of us, virtuous old man, and you, wife, worthy of a virtuous husband, what you wish."

When he had spoken briefly with Baucis, Philemon revealed their joint request to the gods. "We ask to be priests and watch over your temple, and, since we have lived out harmonious years together, let the same hour take the two of us, so that I never have to see my wife's grave, nor she have to bury me." The gods' assurance followed the prayer. They had charge of the temple while they lived: and when they were released by old age, and by the years,

as they chanced to be standing by the sacred steps, discussing the subject of their deaths, **Baucis** saw Philomen put out leaves, and old **Philemon** saw Baucis put out leaves, and as the tops of the trees grew over their two faces, they exchanged words, while they still could, saying, in the same breath: “Farewell, O dear companion”, as, in the same breath, the bark covered them, concealing their mouths.

The people of **Bithynia** still show the neighbouring trees, there, that sprang from their two bodies. Trustworthy old men related these things to me (there was no reason why they should wish to lie). For my part, I saw garlands hanging from the branches, and placing fresh ones there said: “Let those who love the gods become gods: let those who have honoured them, be honoured.” ’

Bk VIII:725-776 Erysichthon fells Ceres’s sacred oak tree

Lelex finished, and the tale and the teller of it had moved them all, **Theseus** particularly.

He wished to hear more of the marvellous acts of the gods. **Achelöüs**, the river-god of **Calydon**, leaning on his elbow, said: ‘Hero, there are those who, once changed in form, retain that transformation: there are others who are allowed to transmute into many shapes: you, for instance, **Proteus**, inhabitant of the earth-encircling sea. A moment ago they saw you as a young man, then as a lion: now as a raging boar, then as a serpent, they fear to touch: and, in a moment, horns revealed you as a bull. Often you might have appeared as a stone, often, also, as a tree: sometimes, you formed the likeness of running water, and became a river: sometimes fire, water’s opposite.

Mestra, Erysichthon’s daughter, the wife of **Autolycus**, had no less power. Her father was a man scornful of the gods, who burnt no incense on their altars. **Erysichthon**, it is said, once violated the grove of **Ceres** with an axe, and desecrated the ancient woods with iron. Within them stood a great oak, massive with the

years, a sacred grove in itself: strands of wool, wreaths of flowers and votive tablets surrounded it, evidence of prayers granted. Often beneath it the **Dryads** held their festive dances: often, also, linking hands, in line, they circled its trunk's circumference, its massive girth measuring fifteen arm's-lengths round. The other trees were not less far below it than the grass was far below all of them. **Triopas**'s son would not hold back the blade, even for those reasons, commanding his servants to fell the sacred oak.

When he saw them hesitating at the order, the wretched man snatched the axe from one of them, saying: "Though this be, itself, the goddess, not just what the goddess loves, now its leafy crown will meet the earth." As he spoke, while he balanced the blade, for the slanting stroke, Ceres's oak-tree trembled all over and gave a sigh, and at the same time its acorns and its leaves began to whiten, and its long branches grew pale. And, when his impious hand made a gash in the trunk, blood

poured out of its damaged bark, like the crimson tide from its severed neck, when the mighty bull falls, in sacrifice, before the altar.

All stood astonished, and one of them tried bravely to prevent the evil, and hinder the barbarous double-edged weapon. But the **Thessalian** glared at him, saying: “Here’s the prize for your pious thought!” and swinging his blade at the man not the tree, struck his head from his trunk. He was hewing at the oak-tree repeatedly, when the sound of a voice came from inside the oak, chanting these words:

*“I am a nymph, most dear to Ceres,
under the surface of this wood,
who prophesy to you, as I die,
that punishment will follow blood:
out of my ruin, the only good.”*

But he pursued his course of evil, and at last, weakened by innumerable blows, and dragged down by ropes, the tree fell, its weight cutting a swathe through the wood.’

Bk VIII:777-842 Ceres sends Famine to Erysichthon

‘All her sister **Dryads**, mourning and dressed in black, horrified at the forest’s loss and their own, went to **Ceres**, and begged her to punish **Erysichthon**. She assented, and, with a motion of her head, that most beautiful of goddesses stirred the fields, heavy with ripened grain. She devised a punishment to rouse men’s pity, if his actions had deserved any pity: to torment him with baleful **Hunger**. But since the goddess herself could not approach her (for fate does not allow **Famine** and Ceres to meet) she called for one of the mountain spirits, an **Oread** of wild places, and said to her: “There is a place at the furthest bounds of icy **Scythia**, with sombre, sterile ground, a land without crops or trees. Torpid Cold inhabits it, Fear and Trembling and barren Hunger. Order Famine to immure herself in the belly of that sacrilegious wretch, and let no plenty oust her, and let her

overcome me in any trial of strength. So that the length of the journey does not worry you, take my chariot, take my winged dragons, and govern their bridles on high.” And she gave her the reins. The nymph came to Scythia, carried through the air, in the chariot she was given. On the summit of a frozen mountain chain (they call the **Caucasus**) she loosed the dragons’ necks, and, searching for Famine, saw her in a field of stones, picking at the sparse grass with her nails and teeth. Her hair was matted, her eyes sunken, her face pallid: her lips were grey with mould, her throat with scabrous sores: through the hardened skin, her inner organs could be seen: dry bones stuck out beneath her hollow loins: her belly was only the excuse for a belly: her breastbone seemed to hang loosely, only held by the frame of her spine. Emaciation made the joints look large: the curve of her knees seemed swollen: and the ankles appeared as extravagant lumps.

When the Oread saw her, she relayed the goddess’s command, from a distance (since she

did not dare to approach her), and though she only delayed an instant, and stayed far off, though she had only arrived there a moment before, she still seemed to feel the hunger. Changing course, high in the air, she directed the dragons towards **Haemonia**.

Famine carried out Ceres's orders, though their tasks are ever opposed, and flew down through the eye of the wind to the appointed house. Straight away she entered the bedroom of the sacrilegious man, who was sunk in profound sleep (since it was night), and breathed herself into him, covering his throat, and chest, and lips, with her exhalations, and causing a lack of nourishment in his hollow veins. Completing her mission, she left the fertile lands, returning to the houses of poverty, and her customary caves.

Gentle Sleep still lulls Erysichthon, with his peaceful wings. He, in sleep, in imagination, dreams of feasts, closes his mouth on vacancy, grinds tooth on tooth, exercises his gluttony on insubstantial food, and, instead of a banquet,

fruitlessly eats the empty air. But when indeed peace departs, a desperate desire to eat possesses his famished jaws and burning belly. Without a moment's delay he calls out for whatever earth, air and sea produce, and at table complains of hunger, and in the midst of eating demands to eat. What would feed a city, or satisfy a people, is not enough for one. The more he puts away inside, the greater his desire. As the ocean receives the rivers of all the earth, and unfilled by the waters, swallows every wandering stream: as the devouring flames never refuse more fuel, burn endless timber, and look for more, the greater the piles they are given, more voracious themselves by being fed: so Erysichthon's profane lips accept and demand all foods, in the same breath. All nourishment in him is a reason for nourishment, and always by eating he creates an empty void.'

Bk VIII:843-884 The fate of Erysichthon and his daughter Mestra

‘Now hunger, and the deep pit of his gut had consumed his wealth, but even so, **Famine** worked unabated and his burning appetite was unappeased. Eventually, when all he owned was inside him, only his daughter, **Mestra**, was left, a girl whom the father was not worthy of. Having nothing, he tried to sell her too. The honourable child refused to accept a possessor, and stretching her hands out over the waves of the shore, she cried: “You god, who stole away the prize of my virginity”, for **Neptune** had stolen it, “save me from slavery.” He did not scorn her prayer. Although the buyer had been following her, and had seen her a moment ago, the god altered her shape, giving her a man’s features, and clothes appropriate to a fisherman.

Her purchaser looked at her, and said: “O, you who control the rod, and hide your bronze hook in a little bait, may you have calm sea, and gullible fish, that feel nothing of the hook until they bite. Tell me where she is, the girl with shabby clothes and straggling hair, who stood here on this beach a moment ago (since I

saw her, standing on the beach): there are no footprints further on!” She sensed the god’s gift was working well for her, and delighted that he was asking her for news of herself, replied to his question: “Forgive me, whoever you are: I have had no eyes for anything except this pool: I have been occupied taking pains over my fishing. To convince you, and may the sea god help me in these arts of mine, no man has been on this beach, except myself, for a long time, and no woman either.”

He believed her, and turning round on the sand, having been outplayed, departed. Then her true shape was restored. When her father realised that she could change her shape, he often surrendered **Mestra** to others, so that she, escaping in the form of a mare, or a bird, or again as a heifer or a hind, repeatedly obtained her price, dishonestly, for her gluttonous father.

In the end when the evil had consumed everything they had, and his grave disease needed ever more food, **Erysichthon** began to tear at his limbs and gnaw them with his teeth,

and the unhappy man fed, little by little, on his own body.’

‘But why do I entertain you with stories of others?’ said **Acheloüs**, ‘Indeed, young man, I have often changed shape myself, though the number of shapes I can achieve is limited. Sometimes I am seen as I am now: sometimes I become a snake: or, again, the lead bull of the herd, my power in my horns – horns, when I still had two. Now one side of my brow has lost its weapon, as you can see for yourself.’ His words were followed by a sigh.

Book IX



Bk IX:1-88 Acheloüs wrestles with Hercules

Theseus, the hero, reputed **son of Neptune**, asked **Acheloüs** why he had sighed, and the reason for his damaged forehead: to which the **Calydonian** river-god, his uncut hair wreathed with reeds, replied: ‘You ask something painful of me. Who wants to recall the battles he has lost? But, I will tell it as it happened: since the shame of being beaten is no less than the honour of having fought. It is a great consolation to me that the victor was so famous.

If her name has ever come to your notice, **Deianira** was once the most beautiful girl, and the jealous hope of many suitors. When, with them, I entered **Oeneus**’s house, her father, and the man I sought as my father-in-law, I said: “Accept me as your son-in-law, son of **Parthaon**.” **Hercules**, scion of **Alceus**, said the same. The others gave way before the two of us. Hercules declared that he could offer **Jove** as his bride’s father-in-law, spoke of his famous labours, and of how he had survived what his

stepmother, **Juno**, had prescribed for him. On my side I said: “It would be shameful for a god to concede to a mortal” – *He* was not yet a god – “In me you see the lord of the waters, that flow in winding rivers, through your kingdom. As your son-in-law I would not be a stranger sent from a foreign shore, but a native, and wedded to your own interests. Only don’t let it harm my case that Queen Juno does *not* hate me, and all the punishment of the labours, she demanded, passed *me* by!”

“Now, listen, Hercules, you, son of **Alcmena: Jupiter**, whose child you boast of being, is either wrongly called your father, or is truly a wrongdoer. You seek your father in a mother’s adultery. Choose whether you prefer this fiction of Jove as a father, or to be born the son of shame.” As I spoke, he gazed at me fiercely, all the while, and unable to act like a man and control his blazing anger, he merely replied in these words: “My right hand is more powerful than my tongue. As long as I beat you at wrestling, you can win the talking”, and he

came at me ferociously. I was ashamed to retreat, after my words: I took off my green robes; put up my arms; held my hands, fingers curved, in front of my chest in fighting stance; and readied my limbs for the match. He caught up dust in the hollow of his hands and threw it over me, and, in turn, was, himself, gilded by the yellow sand. Now he caught at my neck, or you might think he caught me, now at my legs, now at my loins: and attacked me from every side. My weight protected me, and his attempts were useless. I was like a massive pile that the roaring flood assaults with all its might: it remains, secure in its own bulk.

We pulled away for a moment, returned to the conflict, and stood firm, determined not to concede. Foot was set against foot, and I pushed at him, with my chest full forward, fingers locked with fingers, and head to head. I have seen two strong bulls come together like that, when they try for the sleekest heifer in the pasture as their prize in the contest. The herd watches in fear, not sure to which one victory

will grant overriding supremacy. Three times without success Hercules tried to push my gleaming chest away from him. At the fourth attempt, he broke my grip, loosed himself from my constricting arms, and with a blow of his hand – Certainly, I myself confess it is the truth – he turned me about, and clung, with all his weight, to my back.

If you can believe it - I am not seeking to gain false credit by saying it – I seemed to have a mountain pressing on top of me. With difficulty I thrust my arms, pouring with sweat from the great effort it took, under him, and, with difficulty, freed his firm hold on my body. He pressed me hard, as I gasped for breath, prevented me from gathering my strength, and gripped my neck. Then, at last, my knee touched the ground, and my mouth tasted sand. Inferior to him in strength, I turned to my magic arts, and slipped from his grasp in the shape of a long snake. But when I had wound my body in sinuous coils, and, hissing fiercely, darted my forked tongue at him, **Tiryns**'s hero

laughed, and mocking my magic arts, said: “My task in the cradle was to defeat snakes, and, though you are greater than other reptiles, Acheloüs, how big a slice of the **Lernean Hydra** would your one serpent be? It was made fecund by its wounds, and not one of its hundred heads was safely cut off without its neck generating two more. I overcame it, and having overcome it, disembowelled that monster, with branching snake-heads, that grew from their own destruction, thriving on evil. What do you think will happen to you, who are only a false snake, using unfamiliar weapons, whom a shifting form hides?”

He spoke and knotted his fingers round my throat. I was suffocating, as if my throat was gripped by a vice, and struggled to tear his thumbs away from my windpipe. Overpowered in this form, only my third, fierce, bull-shape remained. So I fought on, my limbs those of a bull. From the left he threw his arms round my bulging neck; and followed me as I charged off; dragging at me, my horns piercing the hard

ground as he pulled me down; and toppling me into the deep sand. As if that was not enough, holding the tough horn in his cruel hand, he broke it and tore it away from my mutilated brow. The **Naiades** took it, filling it with fruit and scented flowers, and made it sacred: the **Goddess of Abundance** is rich now because of my horn of plenty.”

Bk IX:89-158 The shirt of Nessus

He spoke: and a **nymph**, one of his attendants, dressed like **Diana**, her hair streaming over her shoulders, came to them, bringing all of autumn’s harvest in an overflowing horn, and, for an aftertaste, delicious fruits. Light gathered, and as the first rays struck the mountain summits, the warriors left, not waiting for the river to flow calmly and placidly or for the falling waters to subside. **Acheloüs** hid his wild features and his head, marred by its broken horn, in the depths of the waves.

Nevertheless he only had the loss of that adornment, which had been taken from him, to lament: he was otherwise unhurt. Also he hid his loss with a wreath of willow leaves or reeds. But you, fierce **Nessus**, the **centaur**, a passion for that same virgin girl destroyed you, hit in the back by a flying arrow.

Hercules, son of **Jupiter**, on his way to his native city with **Deianira**, his new bride, came to the swift waters of the River **Euenus**. The flood was higher than normal, increased by winter rains, with frequent whirlpools, and impassable. He had no fear of going on himself, but was anxious for his bride, when Nessus approached, strong of limb, and knowing the fords. ‘With *my* help, **Alcides**,” he said, “she will be set down on the far bank. Use *your* strength to swim!” The **Theban** handed over the **Calydonian** girl, she, pale with fear, frightened of the river and of the centaur himself.

Straight away, weighed down as he was by his quiver and his lion’s skin - he had thrown

his club and his curved bow across to the other bank – the hero said: ‘Let me endure the river since I have started to cross.’ He did not hesitate, and did not search for where the river was calmest, scorning to claim the water’s allegiance. He had gained the bank, and was picking up the bow he had thrown, when he heard his wife’s voice, and shouted to Nessus, who was preparing to betray his trust: ‘Where are you carrying her off to, you rapist, trusting in vain to your swiftness of foot? I am speaking to *you*, Nessus, the twice-formed. Listen: do not steal what is mine. If you have no respect for me, the thought of your father, **Ixion**, on his whirling wheel might prevent this illicit union. However much you trust in your horse-craft, you will not escape. With wounds, not feet, I will follow you.’ He made good his last words with his actions, shooting the arrow he fired, across, at the fleeing back. The barbed tip jutted from the centaur’s chest. When the shaft was pulled out, blood, mixed with the deadly arrow-poison of the **Lernean Hydra**, gushed out

simultaneously from the entry and exit wounds. Nessus trapped this, and murmured, to himself of course: 'I will not die without revenge' and gave his tunic soaked with warm blood to Deianira, whom he had abducted, presenting it to her as if it were a gift for reviving a waning love.

A long space of intervening time passed by, and the tales of mighty Hercules had filled the world, and overcome his stepmother's hatred. As the victor at **Oechalia**, in **Euboea** (where he had avenged an insult offered him by King **Eurytus**) he was preparing to sacrifice to **Jupiter** at **Cenaeum**, when loquacious **Rumour**, who loves to add lies to fact, and expands from the tiniest truth by her falsehoods, brought her tale on ahead, to your ears, **Deianira**. She claimed that Hercules, reputed son of **Amphitryon**, was filled with passion for **Iole**, daughter of Eurytus.

The loving wife believes it, and terrified at first by the rumour of this new affair, she indulges in tears, and the poor girl vents her misery in

weeping. But she soon says ‘Why do I weep? That adulteress will laugh at my tears. Since she is coming here, I must plan quickly, while I can, while another has not yet taken my place. Should I complain, or keep silent? Return to Calydon or stay? Should I leave my house? Or, if I can do nothing else, should I at least stand in their way? What if, remembering I am your sister, **Meleager**, I prepare, boldly, to commit a crime, and, by cutting that adulteress’s throat, show what revenge and a woman’s grief can do?’

Her thought traced various courses. Of all of them she preferred that of sending the shirt, imbued with Nessus’s blood, to restore her husband’s waning love. Unwittingly, she entrusted what became her future grief, to the servant, **Lichas**, he not knowing what he had been entrusted with: and the unfortunate woman, ordered him, with persuasive words, to give the present to her husband. Hercules, the hero, took it, without a thought, and put on the

shirt of Nessus, soaked in the poison of the Lernean Hydra.

Bk IX:159-210 The agony of Hercules

He was making offerings of incense and reciting prayers over the first flames, and pouring a libation bowl of wine on to the marble altar. The power of the venom, warmed and released by the flames, dissolved, dispersing widely through the limbs of **Hercules**. With his usual courage, he repressed his groans while he could. When his strength to endure the venom was exhausted, he overturned the altar, and filled woody **Oeta** with his shouts.

He tries at once to tear off the fatal clothing: where it is pulled away, it pulls skin away with it, and, revolting to tell, it either sticks to the limbs from which he tries in vain to remove it, or reveals the lacerated limbs and his massive bones. His blood itself hisses and boils, with the virulence of the poison, like

incandescent metal, dipped in a cold pool. There is no end to it: the consuming fires suck at the air in his chest: dark sweat pours from his whole body: his scorched sinews crackle. His marrow liquefying with the secret corruption, he raises his hands to the heavens, crying: ‘Juno, **Saturnia**, feed on my ruin: feed, cruel one: gaze, from the heights, at this destruction, and sate your savage heart! Or if this suffering seems pitiable even to an enemy, even to you, take away this sorrowful and hateful life, with its fearful torments, that was only made for toil. Death would be a gift to me, a fitting offering from a stepmother.

Was it for this I overcame **Busiris** who defiled the temples with the blood of sacrificed strangers? For this that I lifted fierce **Antaeus**, robbing him of the strength of his mother Earth? For this, that I was unmoved, by **Geryon**’s triple form, the herdsman of Spain, or your triple form, **Cerberus**? For this, you hands of mine, that you dragged down the horns of the strong **Cretan** bull: that the stables of King

Augeas of **Elis** know of your efforts: the **Stymphalian** Lake: and the woods of Mount **Parthenius**, with its golden-antlered stag? For this, that, by your virtue, the gold engraved girdle of **Hippolyte** of **Thermodon** was taken, and the apples of the **Hesperides**, guarded by the sleepless dragon? Was it for this, that the **Centaurs** could not withstand me, nor the **Erymanthian** Boar that laid **Arcady** waste? For this, that it did not help the **Hydra** to thrive on destruction and gain redoubled strength? What of the time when I saw **Thracian** Diomedes's horses, fed on human blood, their stalls filled with broken bodies, and, seeing them, overthrew them, and finished off them, and their master? The **Nemean** Lion lies crushed by these massive arms: and for **Atlas** these shoulders of mine held up the sky. **Jupiter's cruel consort** is tired of giving commands: I am not tired of performing them.

But now a strange disease affects me that I cannot withstand by courage, weapons or strength. Deep in my lungs a devouring fire

wanders, feeding on my whole body. But **Eurystheus**, my enemy is well! Are there those then who can believe that the gods exist?’ So saying he roamed, in his illness, over the heights of **Oeta**, as a bull carries around a hunting spear embedded in its body, though the hunter who threw it has long gone. Picture him there, in the mountains, in his anger, often groaning, often shouting out, often attempting, again and again, to rid himself of the last of the garment, overturning trees, or stretching his arms out to his native skies.

Bk IX:211-272 The death and transformation of Hercules

Then he caught sight of the terrified **Lichas**, cowering in a hollow of the cliff, and pain concentrated all his fury. ‘Was it not you, Lichas,’ he said, ‘who gave me this fatal gift? Are you not the agent of my death?’ The man trembled, grew pale with fear, and, timidly, made excuses. While he was speaking, and

trying to clasp the hero's knees, **Alcides** seized him, and, swinging him round three or four times, hurled him, more violently than a catapult bolt, into the **Euboean** waters. Hanging in the air, he hardened with the wind. As rain freezes in the icy blasts and becomes snow; whirling snowflakes bind together in a soft mass; and they, in turn, accumulate as a body of solid hailstones: so he, the ancient tradition says, flung by strong arms through the void, bloodless with fright, and devoid of moisture, turned to hard flint. Now, in the Euboean Gulf, a low rock rises out of the depths, and keeps the semblance of a human shape. This sailors are afraid to set foot on, as though it could sense them, and they call it, Lichas.

But you, famous son of **Jove**, felled the trees that grew on steep **Oeta**, and made a funeral pyre, and commanded **Philoctetes**, son of **Poeas**, who supplied the flame that was plunged into it, to take your bow, your ample quiver, and the arrows, that were fated to see,

once more, the kingdom of **Troy** (as they did when you rescued **Hesione**.) As the mass caught light from the eager fire, you spread the **Nemean** Lion's pelt on the summit of the pile of logs, and lay down, your neck resting on your club, and with an aspect no different from that of a guest, reclining amongst the full wine cups, crowned with garlands.

Now the fierce flames, spreading on every side, were crackling loudly, and licking at his body, he unconcerned and scornful of them. The gods were fearful for earth's champion. **Saturnian Jupiter** spoke to them, gladly, since he understood their feelings. 'O divine beings, your fear for him delights me, and I willingly congratulate myself, with all my heart, that I am called father and ruler of a thoughtful race, and that my offspring is protected by your favour also. Though this tribute is paid to his great deeds, I am obliged to you, also. But do not allow your loyal hearts to feel groundless fears. Forget **Oeta**'s flames! He, who has defeated all things, will defeat the fires you see, nor will he

feel **Vulcan**'s power, except in the mortal part that he owes to his mother, **Alcmene**. What he has from me is immortal, deathless and eternal: and that, no flame can destroy. When it is done with the earth, I will accept it into the celestial regions, and I trust my action will please all the gods. But if there is anyone, anyone at all, who is unhappy at Hercules's deification, and would not wish to grant this gift, he or she should know that it was given for merit, and should approve it, though unwillingly.' The gods agreed. **Juno**, also, appeared to accept the rest of his words with compliance, but not the last ones, upset that she was being censored.

Meanwhile, **Mulciber** had consumed whatever the flames could destroy, and no recognisable form of Hercules remained, no semblance of what came to him from his mother: he only retained his inheritance from Jove. As a snake enjoys its newness, sloughing old age with its skin, gleaming with fresh scales; so, when the **Tirynthian** hero had shed his mortal body, he became his better part,

beginning to appear greater, and more to be revered, in his high majesty. The all-powerful father of the gods carrying him upwards, in his four-horse chariot, through the substanceless clouds, set him among the shining stars.

Bk IX:273-323 Alcmena tells of Hercules's birth and of Galanthis

Atlas felt the weight of the new constellation. But even now the anger of **Eurystheus**, son of **Sthenelus**, was not appeased, and he pursued his unyielding hatred of the father through the children. **Argive Alcmena**, troubled by endless cares, had **Iole**, as one to whom she could confide an old woman's miseries, to whom she could relate her son's labours, known to all the world, and her own misfortunes. At **Hercules** request, **Hyllus**, his son by **Deianira**, had taken Iole to his marriage-bed, and his heart, and had planted a child of that noble race in her womb. Alcmena said to her: 'Let the gods at least

favour you, and shorten that time when, in childbirth, you call on **Ilithyia**, that **Lucina** who watches over frightened women, who, thanks to **Juno**'s influence, made things hard for me.

When the time for Hercules's difficult birth came, and Capricorn, the tenth sign, was hidden by the sun, the weight of the child stretched my womb: what I carried was so great, you could tell that **Jove** was the father of my hidden burden. I could not bear my labour pains much longer. Even now, as I speak, a cold horror grips my body, and part of me remembers it with pain. Tortured for seven nights and as many days, worn out with agony, stretching my arms to heaven, with a great cry, I called out to **Lucina**, and her companion gods of birth, the **Nixi**. Indeed, she came, but committed in advance, determined to surrender my life to unjust Juno. She sat on the altar, in front of the door, and listened to my groans. With her right knee crossed over her left, and clasped with interlocking fingers, she held back the birth,

She murmured spells, too, in a low voice, and the spells halted the birth once it began. I laboured, and, maddened, made useless outcries against ungrateful Jove. I wanted to die, and my moans would have moved the flinty rocks. The **Theban** women who were there, took up my prayers, and gave me encouragement in my pain.

Tawny-haired, **Galanthis**, one of my servant-girls, was there, humbly born but faithful in carrying out orders, loved by me for the services she rendered. She sensed that unjust Juno was up to something, and, as she was often in and out of the house, she saw the goddess, Lucina, squatting on the altar, arms linked by her fingers, clasping her knees, and said ‘Whoever you are, congratulate the mistress. Alcmena of Argolis is eased, and the prayers to aid childbirth have been answered.’

The goddess with power over the womb leapt up in consternation, releasing her clasped hands: by releasing the bonds, herself, easing the birth. They say Galanthis laughed at the

duped goddess. As she laughed, the heaven-born one, in her anger, caught her by the hair, and dragged her down, and as she tried to lift her body from the ground, she arched her over, and changed her arms into forelegs. Her old energy remained, and the hair on her back did not lose her hair's previous colour: but her former shape was changed to that of a weasel. And because her lying mouth helped in childbirth, she gives birth through her mouth, and frequents my house, as before.'

Bk IX:324-393 Iole tells the story of her half-sister Dryope

She finished speaking, and sighed, her feelings stirred by the memory of her former servant. While she grieved, her daughter-in-law, **Iole**, said: 'Mother, this is still the altered form of someone not of our blood that affects you. What if I were to relate to you my sister's strange fate? Though sadness and tears hold me back, and hinder me from talking. **Dryope** was

her mother's only child – I was my father's by another wife – and she was known as the most beautiful girl in **Oechalia**. Suffering the assault of **Apollo**, that god who holds **Delphi** and **Delos**; her virginity lost; **Andraemon** married her; and was considered fortunate to have her as his wife.

There is a lake, whose sloping shoreline is formed by steep banks, their summits crowned with myrtle. Dryope went there, unaware of any restrictions, and, to make what happened more unacceptable, bringing garlands for the **nymphs**. At her breast she carried a sweet burden, her son, not yet a year old, whom she was suckling with her warm milk. Not far away, a water-loving lotus tree flowered from the swamp, with the promise of fruits to come, its colours imitating **Tyrian** purples. Dryope picked some of these blossoms, to offer the child as playthings, and I was looking to do the same - I was with her - when I saw drops of blood fall from the flowers, and the branches move with a shiver of fear. It appears, as the

locals now tell us, at last, but too late, that **Lotis**, a nymph, running from obscene **Priapus**, turned into the tree, altering her features, keeping her name.

My sister had known nothing of this. When she wished to retreat, in fear, from the place, and escape by praying to the nymphs, her feet clung like roots. She struggled to tear them away, but nothing moved except her torso. Slowly, thick bark grew upward from her feet, hiding all her groin. When she saw this, and tried to tear at her hair, with her hands, her hands filled with leaves: leaves covered her whole head. But the child, **Amphissos** (so his grandfather, **Eurytus**, King of **Oechalia**, had named him) felt his mother's breast harden, and the milky liquid failed when he sucked. I was there, a spectator of your cruel destiny, sister, and could bring you no help at all. Only, as far as I could, I held back the developing trunk and branches with my embrace, and I bear witness that I longed to be sheathed in that same bark.

Then her husband, Andraemon, and her luckless father, Eurytus, came, asking for Dryope: the Dryope they searched for I revealed as the lotus. They kissed the living wood, and prostrate on the ground clung to the roots of their tree. You, my dear sister, displayed nothing but your face that was not already tree. Your tears rained on the leaves of your poor body, and while your mouth left a path for your voice, while you still could, you poured out your lament like this into the air: “If there is truth in suffering, I swear by the gods I do not deserve this wrong. I am being punished without guilt. I lived in innocence. If I lie, let me lose the leaves I have through drought, be levelled with the axe, and burned. Take this child from these maternal branches, and find him a nurse, and have him often drink his milk under this tree of mine, and play under this tree. And when he learns to talk, have him greet his mother and say, sadly, ‘My mother is revealed in this tree.’ Let him still fear lakes, and pick no

flowers from the trees, and think all shrubs are the body of the goddess.

Dear husband, farewell, and you, sister; father! If you love me, defend me from the sharp knife, and my leaves from the browsing herd. And since I am not allowed to bend to you, reach up with your arms, and find my lips, while I can still feel, and lift my little son up to me! I can speak no more. Now the soft sapwood spreads slowly over my white neck: I am imprisoned in its highest reaches. Take your hands from my eyes. Without trying to help me, allow the enveloping bark to mask the fading light!” At the moment her mouth ceased speaking, at that moment it ceased to be. For a long time, the freshly created branches glowed with warmth, from her altered body.’

Bk IX:394-417 The prophecies of Themis

While **Eurytus’s daughter** was relating this marvellous happening, and **Alcmena** was wiping away **Iole’s** tears (still weeping herself)

a wonderful thing suspended all sadness. There, on the steep threshold, stood **Iolaüs**, **Hercules**'s nephew and companion, alive again, with the look of his early years, a hint of down on his cheeks, almost, again, a child. Overwhelmed by the prayers of her husband, Hercules, **Juno**'s daughter, **Hebe**, had granted him this gift. When she was about to swear that, after this, she would never allow any further such favour, **Themis** would not allow it.

She prophesied. '**Thebes** is now moving towards civil war, and, of the Seven against her, **Capaneus** will not be overcome, except by **Jupiter** himself. Two brothers, **Eteocles** and Polynices, will die of mutually inflicted wounds. **Amphiaräus**, the seer, swallowed by the earth, still living, will gaze on the ghosts of his own dead. His son, **Alcmaeon**, shall avenge him, with his mother **Eriphyle**'s death, filial and sinful in the same act. Terrified at his own evil, exiled from home and sanity, he will be pursued by the faces of the **Eumenides**, and by his mother's shade, until his wife, **Callirhoë**

demands the fatal necklace, that **Venus** gave **Harmonia**, and until the sword, of his first father-in-law, **Phegeus**, in the hands of Phegeus's sons, shall drain his son-in-law's blood. Then at last, Callirhoë, the **daughter of Acheloüs**, as a suppliant, will ask of mighty Jupiter, to add years to her infant sons, and not allow the avenger's murder to be unavenged. In anticipation of being moved by her prayers, Jupiter claims for them this gift that you, his stepdaughter and daughter-in-law, possess, and will make them men, in their childhood years.'

Bk IX:418-438 Jupiter acknowledges the power of Fate

When **Themis** spoke these words, out of her prophetic mouth, prescient of what was to come, the gods complained in various mutterings, and there was a murmur as to why they were not able to grant the same gift to other mortals. **Aurora, daughter of the Titan Pallas**, lamented the old age of her husband,

Tithonus. Gentle **Ceres** lamented the greying hair of her former lover **Iasion**. **Mulciber** demanded another lifetime for his son, **Erichthonius**: and **Venus**, also, touched by fears for the future, wanted to bargain for the renewal of her lover **Anchises**'s years. Each god had someone whose cause they supported: and the troublesome mutiny, over their favourites, grew, until **Jupiter** opened his mouth and said: 'O, if you have any respect for me, where do you think all this talk is heading? Do any of you think you can overcome fate as well? Through fate **Iolaüs**'s past years were restored. Through fate **Callirhoë**'s children must prematurely become men, not through ambition or warfare. Even you, and I, too, fate rules, if that also makes you feel better. If I had power to alter fate, these late years would not bow down my pious **Aeacus**. Just **Rhadamanthus** would always possess youth's flower, and my **Minos**, who is scorned because of the bitter weight of old age, and no longer orders the kingdom in the way he did before.'

Bk IX:439-516 Byblis falls in love with her twin brother Caunus

Jupiter's words swayed the gods: and no one could sustain their objection when they saw **Rhadamanthos**, **Aeacus** and **Minos** wearied with the years. When he was in his prime, Minos had made great nations tremble at his very name: now he was weak, and feared **Miletus**, who was proud of his strength and parentage, the son of **Phoebus Apollo** and the nymph **Deione**. Though Minos believed Miletus might plot an insurrection, he still did not dare to deny him his **home**. On your own initiative, Miletus, you left, cutting the waters of the **Aegean** in your swift ship, and built a city on the soil of **Asia**, that still carries its founder's name.

There you knew **Cyane**, the daughter of **Maeander**, whose stream so often curves back on itself, when she was following her father's winding shores. Twin children were born to her,

of outstanding beauty of body, **Byblis** and her brother **Caunus**.

Byblis, seized by a passion, for her brother, scion of Apollo; that Byblis serves for a warning to girls, against illicit love. She loved, not as a sister loves a brother, nor as she should. At first, it is true, she did not understand the fires of passion, or think it wrong, to kiss, together, often, or throw her arms round her brother's neck. For a long time she was deceived by the misleading likeness to sisterly affection. Gradually the nature of her love went astray, and she came looking for her brother carefully dressed, and over-anxious to look beautiful. If anyone seemed more beautiful to him, she was jealous. But her own feelings were not clear to her, and though she had no inner longing for passion, nevertheless it burned. And now she called him her lord, now she hated the name that made them related, now she wrongly wished him to call her Byblis, rather than sister. While she is awake she still dare not allow her mind its illicit hope, but,

deep in peaceful dreams, she often sees what she loves, and is also seen, held in her brother's arms, and she blushes, though lost in sleep.

When sleep has vanished, she lies there for a long time, recalling, to herself, the imagery of her dream, and at last utters these inner doubts: 'Alas for me! What does it mean, this vision out of the night's silence? How I would hate it to be true! Why do I see these things in sleep? He is truly handsome, even to unfriendly eyes, and is pleasing, and if he were not my brother I could love him, and he would be worthy of me. Being his sister is the reality that harms me. Let sleep often return with similar visions, as long as I am not tempted to do any such thing while awake! A dream lacks witnesses, but does not lack pleasure's counterpart. By winged **Cupid**, and **Venus**, his tender mother, how great the joy I had! How clearly passion touched me! How my whole heart melted where I lay! What joy in remembrance! Though its pleasure was short-lived, and night rushed onwards, envious of my imaginings.

O if I could have been joined to you, with another's name, **Caunus**, how good a daughter-in-law I could have been to your father! O Caunus, how good a son-in-law you could have been to my father! We would have had everything shared between us, except our grandparents: I would have wanted you to be nobler than me! You, most beautiful one, will make someone else the mother of your children, but to me, whom evil luck has given the same parents, you will be nothing but a brother. What separates us: that we will share as one. What does my vision signify to me? What weight indeed do dreams have? Or perhaps - the gods forbid - dreams do have weight? Certainly, the gods have possessed their sisters. So, **Saturn** led **Ops**, his blood-kin, to join with him, and **Oceanus**, **Tethys**, and **the ruler of Olympus**, **Juno**. The gods have their own laws! Why try to relate human affairs to other, divine, behaviour? Either my forbidden passion will be driven from my heart, or if I cannot achieve that, I pray to be loved, before I am laid out on

my deathbed, and my brother kisses me there. Yet that needs both our wills! Suppose it pleases me: it may seem a sin to him.

Still, **the sons of Aeolus**, god of the winds, were not afraid to marry their sisters! Where did I learn that? Why do I have such ready examples? Where is this leading? Vanish, far off, illicit flames, and let my brother not be loved, except as a sister may love him! Yet, if he himself were first captured by love of me, I might perhaps be able to indulge this madness. Then let me woo him, whom I would not reject, if he were wooing! - Can you say it? Can you acknowledge it? - Love compels me: I can! Or if shame closes my lips, a secret letter will confess my hidden passions.'

Bk IX:517-594 The fatal letter

This idea pleases her, and this decision overcomes the doubt in her mind. Turning on one side and leaning on her left elbow, she says to herself: 'Let him know: let me acknowledge

my insane desires! Alas, where am I heading? What fire has my heart conceived?’ And, with a trembling hand, she begins to set down the words she has contemplated. She holds the pen in her right hand, and a blank wax tablet in her left. She begins, then hesitates; writes and condemns the writing; scribbles and smooths it out; alters, blames and approves; in turn lays down what she has lifted, and lifts what she has laid down. She does not know what to do, displeased with whatever she is about to do. In her expression, shame is mixed with boldness.

She had written ‘sister’, but decided to efface the name of sister, and inscribed these words on the corrected tablet: ‘That wish, for long life, that she will not have, unless you grant it, one who loves you, sends to you. She is ashamed, oh, ashamed to tell her name. And if you ask what I desire, I would have wished to plead my cause, namelessly, and not to have been identified, until the expectation of what I desired was certain, as Byblis.

True, you might have seen signs of my wounded heart in my pallor, thinness, features, eyes full of tears, sighs with no apparent cause, frequent embraces, kisses, which, if you had chanced to notice, might not have felt like a sister's. Yet, though my soul was deeply stricken, though the mad fire is in me, I have done everything I can (the gods are my witnesses) to become calmer. For a long time I have struggled, unhappily, to escape **Cupid**'s onslaught, and I have suffered more hardship than you would think a girl could suffer. I am compelled to confess, I have lost, and to beg your help, with humble prayers. You alone can save your lover, you alone destroy her. Choose what you will. It is not your enemy who prays to you, but one who, though closest to you, seeks to be closer still, and bound to you with a tighter bond.

Let old people know what is right, and what is allowed, and what is virtue and what is sin, and preserve the fine balance of the law. At our age **Love** is what is fitting, that takes no heed.

We do not know yet what is permitted, and we consider all things permitted, and follow the example of the great gods. We have no harsh father, no regard for reputation, and no fear to impede us. Even if there were cause for fear, we can hide sweet theft under the names of brother and sister. I am free to speak to you in private, and we can embrace and kiss in front of others. How important is what is still lacking? Pity the one who confesses her love, and would not confess if extreme desire did not force her, and do not you be the reason for the writing on my tomb.'

Her handwriting filled the wax, with these fruitless words, the last line close to the edge. Immediately she put her seal on the sinful message, dampening it with her tears (moisture failed her tongue), stamping it with her signet ring. Shamefacedly, she called one of her servants, and shyly and coaxingly said: 'You are most faithful. Take these to my.....brother' she added after a long silence. As she let them go, the tablets slipped and fell

from her hand. She still sent the letter, troubled by the omen. Finding a suitable time, the messenger went, and delivered the hidden words. Horrified, **Maeander**'s grandson, suddenly enraged, hurled away the tablets, he had accepted, and partly read, and, scarcely able to keep his hands from the trembling servant's throat, cried: 'Run while you can, you rascally aide to forbidden lust! I would deal you death, as a punishment, if your fate would not also drag our honour down with it.' The servant fled in fear, and reported **Caunus**'s fierce words, to **Byblis**.

She grew pale, hearing that she had been rejected, and her body shook, gripped by an icy chill. But, when consciousness returned, so did the passion, and, she let out these words, her lips scarcely moving: 'I deserve it! Well, why did I rashly reveal my wound? Why was I in such a hurry to commit things, which were secret, to a hasty letter? I should have tested his mind's judgment before by ambiguous words. I should have observed how the winds blew; used

other lesser sails, in case those breezes were not to be followed; and crossed the sea in safety, not as now, under full canvas, caught by uncertain gusts. So I am carried onto the rocks, swamped, overwhelmed by the whole ocean, and my sails have no means of retreat.’

Bk IX:595-665 The transformation of Byblis

‘Why, as far as that is concerned, everything, unerringly, warned me not to give way to my desire, at the moment when the tablets fell, as I was giving orders for them to be taken to him, meaning that my hopes would also fall away. Should not, perhaps, the day, or my whole intention, more so the day, have been altered? The god himself issued a warning, and gave a clear sign, if I had not been crazed with love. Also I should have told him myself, and revealed my passion to him in person, and not committed myself in writing. He would have seen the tears, and seen a lover’s face. I could have said more than any letter can contain. I

could have thrown my arms around his unwilling neck, and if I had been rejected, I could have seemed on the point of dying, embraced his feet, and lying there begged for life. I should have done all those things that, if not singly, all together, might have persuaded his stubborn mind. Maybe the messenger who was sent was at fault: did not approach him properly, I think, or choose a suitable moment, or discover when he and the time were free.

It has all harmed me. Truly, my brother is not born of the tigress. He does not have a heart of unyielding flint, solid iron, or steel. He was not suckled on the milk of a lioness. He will be won! I will try again, and not suffer any weariness in my attempts, while breath is left to me. Since I cannot undo my actions, it would have been best not to begin: but, having begun, the next best is to win through. In fact if I relinquished my longing, he could still not fail to remember what I have dared, and by desisting I will be seen to have been shallow in my desires, or to have been trying to tempt and

snare him. He will even believe, I am sure, that I have not been conquered by the god, who, above all, impels and inflames our hearts, but by lust. In short, I cannot but be guilty of impiety, of writing, of wooing: my wishes are revealed. Though I add nothing to them, I cannot be said to be innocent. There is little left to be accused of, but much to long for.'

So she argues, and (so great is the undecided conflict in her mind) while she repented of the attempt, she delights in attempting. Going beyond all moderation, and unsuccessful in what she tries, she is endlessly rejected. Finally, when there seems no end to it, he flees from this wickedness and from his home, and founds a new city in a foreign place: **Caunus**, in **Caria**.

Then, indeed, grief made **Miletus**'s daughter lose her mind completely. Then, indeed, she tore the clothes from her breast, and beat her arms in frenzy. Her madness was now public, and she confessed her hope of illicit union, by leaving the country she hated, and her

household gods, and following the footsteps of her fleeing brother. The women of **Bubasos** saw **Byblis**, howling in the open fields, as your **Thracians**, son of **Semele**, pricked by your thyrsus, keep your triennial festival.

Leaving them behind she wandered through **Caria**, through the lands of the armed **Leleges**, and on through **Lycia**. Now she was beyond Lycian **Cragus**, and **Limyre**, and the waters of the Xanthian plain, and the ridge of Mount **Chimaera** near Phaleris, where the fire-breathing monster lived, joining a lion's head and chest to a serpent's tail. Above the woods, when, wearied, you were weak from following, you fell, Byblis, your hair spread on the hard earth, and your face pressing the fallen leaves.

The **Lelegeian** nymphs often try to lift her in their tender arms, and often they teach her how she might remedy her love, and they offer comfort to her silent heart. She lies there, mute, clutching at the green stems with her fingers, and watering the grass with her flowing tears. They say the naiads created a spring from them,

beneath her, which could never run dry. Well, what more could they offer her? There and then, Byblis, **Phoebus**'s granddaughter, consumed by her own tears, is changed into a fountain: just as drops of resin ooze from a cut pine, or sticky bitumen from heavy soil, or as water, that has been frozen by the cold, melts in the sun, at the coming of the west wind's gentle breath: and even now in those valleys it retains its mistress's name, and flows from underneath a dark holm oak.

Bk IX:666-713 The birth of Iphis

Perhaps, the story of this new marvel would have filled **Crete**'s hundred cities, if Crete had not recently known a miracle nearer home, in the metamorphosis of **Iphis**. In the **Phaestos** region, near royal **Cnossos**, there once lived a man named **Ligdus**, undistinguished, a native of the place, his wealth no greater than his fame, but living a blameless and honourable life. When his pregnant wife, **Telethusa**, was

near to her time, he spoke these words of warning in her ear: ‘There are two things I wish for: that you are delivered with the least pain, and that you produce a male child. A girl is a heavier burden, and misfortune denies them strength. So, though I hate this, if, by chance, you give birth to a female infant, reluctantly, I order - let my impiety be forgiven! – that it be put to death.’ He spoke, and tears flooded their cheeks, he who commanded, and she to whom the command was given. Nevertheless, Telethusa, urged her husband, with vain prayers, not to confine hope itself. Ligdus remained fixed in his determination.

Now, her pregnant belly could scarcely bear to carry her fully-grown burden, when **Io**, the **daughter of Inachus**, at midnight, in sleep’s imagining, stood, or seemed to stand, by her bed: **Isis**, accompanied by her holy procession. The moon’s crescent horns were on her forehead, and the shining gold of yellow ears of corn, and royal splendour belonged to her. With her were the jackal-headed **Anubis**,

the hallowed cat-headed **Bast**, the dappled bull **Apis**, and **Harpocrates**, the god who holds his tongue, and urges silence, thumb in mouth. The sacred rattle, the sistrum, was there; and **Osiris**, for whom her search never ends; and the strange serpent she fashioned, swollen with sleep-inducing venom, that poisoned the sun-god Ra. Then, as if Telethusa had shaken off sleep, and was seeing clearly, the goddess spoke to her, saying: ‘O, you who belong to me, forget your heavy cares, and do not obey your husband. When **Lucina** has eased the birth, whatever sex the child has, do not hesitate to raise it. I am the goddess, who, when prevailed upon, brings help and strength: you will have no cause to complain, that the divinity, you worshipped, lacks gratitude.’ Having given her command, she left the room. Joyfully, the **Cretan** woman rose, and, lifting her innocent hands to the stars, she prayed, in all humility, that her dream might prove true.

When the pains grew, and her burden pushed its own way into the world, and a girl

was born, the mother ordered it to be reared, deceitfully, as a boy, without the father realising. She had all that she needed, and no one but the nurse knew of the fraud. The father made good his vows, and gave it the name of the grandfather: he was Iphis. The mother was delighted with the name, since it was appropriate for either gender, and no one was cheated by it. From that moment, the deception, begun with a sacred lie, went undetected. The child was dressed as a boy, and its features would have been beautiful whether they were given to a girl or a boy.

Bk IX:714-763 Iphis and Ianthe

Thirteen years passed by, meanwhile, and then, **Iphis**, your father betrothed you to golden-haired **Ianthe**, whose dowry was her beauty, the girl most praised amongst **the women of Phaestos**, the daughter of **Telestes** of **Dicte**. The two were equal in age, and equal in looks, and had received their first instruction,

in the knowledge of life, from the same teachers. From this beginning, love had touched both their innocent hearts, and wounded them equally, but with unequal expectations. Ianthe anticipated her wedding day, and the promised marriage, believing he, whom she thought to be a man, would be *her* man. Iphis loved one whom she despaired of being able to have, and this itself increased her passion, a girl on fire for a girl.

Hardly restraining her tears, she said ‘What way out is there left, for me, possessed by the pain of a strange and monstrous love, that no one ever knew before? If the gods wanted to spare me they should have spared me, but if they wanted to destroy me, they might at least have visited on me a natural, and normal, misfortune. Mares do not burn with love for mares, or heifers for heifers: the ram inflames the ewe: its hind follows the stag. So, birds mate, and among all animals, not one female is attacked by lust for a female. I wish I were not one! Yet that **Crete** might not fail to bear every

monstrosity, **Pasiphaë**, **Sol**'s daughter, loved a bull, though still that was a female and a male. My love, truth be told, is more extreme than that. She at least chased after the hope of fulfilment, though the bull had her because of her deceit, and in the likeness of a cow, and the one who was deceived was a male adulterer. Though all of the world's cleverness were concentrated here, though **Daedalus** were to return on waxen wings, what use would it be? Surely even his cunning arts could not make a boy out of a girl? Surely even he could not transform you, Ianthé?

Rather be firm-minded, Iphis, and pull yourself together, and, with wisdom, shake off this foolish, useless passion. Look at what you have been, from birth, if you don't want to cheat yourself, and seek out what is right for you, and love as a woman should! It is hope that creates love, and hope that nourishes it. Everything robs you of that. No guardian keeps you from her dear arms, no wary husband's care, no cruel father, nor does she deny your

wooing herself. Yet you can never have her, or be happy, whatever is accomplished, whatever men or gods attempt.

Even now, no part of my prayers has been denied. The gods have readily given whatever they were able, and my father, her father, and she herself, want what I want to happen. But Nature does not want it, the only one who harms me, more powerful than them all. See, the longed-for time has come, the wedding torch is at hand, and Ianthe will become mine – yet not be had by me. I will thirst in the midst of the waters. Juno, goddess of brides, and Hymen, why do you come to these marriage rites, where the bridegroom is absent, and both are brides?’

Bk IX:764-797 Isis transforms Iphis

With these words, she stopped speaking. The other girl was no less on fire, and prayed, **Hymen**, that you would come quickly. **Telethusa**, afraid of what she sought, merely

put off the day: now lengthening the delay through pretended illness, now, frequently, using omens and dreams as an excuse. But eventually every pretext was exhausted, the date for the delayed marriage ceremony was set, and only a day remained. Then Telethusa took the sacred ribbons from her own and her daughter **Iphis**'s head, so that their hair streamed down, and clinging to the altar, cried: 'Isis, you who protect **Paraetonium**, **Pharos**, the **Mareotic** fields, and **Nile**, divided in its seven streams, I pray you, bring help, and relieve our fears! Goddess, I saw you once, you, and those symbols of you, and I knew them all, accompanied by the jingling bronze of the sistrum, and imprinted your commands on my remembering mind. That my daughter looks on the light, that I have not been punished, behold, it was your purpose, and your gift. Gladden us with your aid. Have pity on us both!'

Tears followed words. The goddess seemed to make the altar tremble (it did tremble), and the doors of the temple shook, her horns,

shaped like the moon's crescents, shone, and the sistrum rattled loudly. Not yet reassured, but gladdened by the auspicious omen, the mother left the temple. Iphis, her companion, followed, taking larger paces than before; with no whiteness left in her complexion; with additional strength, and sharper features, and shorter, less elegant hair; showing more vigour than women have. Take your gifts to the temple, Iphis: rejoice, with confidence, not fear! You, who were lately a girl, are now a boy! They take their gifts to the temple, and add a votive tablet: the tablet has this brief line:

IPHIS PERFORMS AS A BOY, WHAT HE PROMISED, AS A GIRL.

The next day's sun reveals the wide world in its rays, when **Venus**, and **Juno**, joined with **Hymen**, come, to the marriage torches, and Iphis, the boy, gains possession of his **Ianthe**.

Book X



Bk X:1-85 Orpheus and Eurydice

Hymen, called by the voice of **Orpheus**, departed, and, dressed in his saffron robes, made his way through the vast skies to the **Ciconian** coast: but in vain. He was present at Orpheus's marriage, true, but he did not speak the usual words, display a joyful expression, or bring good luck. The torch, too, that he held, sputtered continually, with tear-provoking fumes, and no amount of shaking contrived to light it properly. The result was worse than any omens. While the newly wedded bride, **Eurydice**, was walking through the grass, with a crowd of **naiads** as her companions, she was killed, by a bite on her ankle, from a snake, sheltering there. When **Thracian Orpheus**, the poet of **Rhodope**, had mourned for her, greatly, in the upper world, he dared to go down to **Styx**, through the gate of **Taenarus**, also, to see if he might not move the dead.

Through the weightless throng, and the ghosts that had received proper burial, he came

to **Persephone**, and the **lord of the shadows**, he who rules the joyless kingdom. Then striking the lyre-strings to accompany his words, he sang: ‘O gods of this world, placed below the earth, to which, all, who are created mortal, descend; if you allow me, and it is lawful, to set aside the fictions of idle tongues, and speak the truth, I have not come here to see dark **Tartarus**, nor to bind **Cerberus**, **Medusa**’s child, with his three necks, and snaky hair. My wife is the cause of my journey. A viper, she trod on, diffused its venom into her body, and robbed her of her best years. I longed to be able to accept it, and I do not say I have not tried: **Love** won.

He is a god well known in the world above, though I do not know if that is so here: though I imagine him to be here, as well, and if the story of that rape in ancient times is not a lie, you also were wedded by **Amor**. I beg you, by these fearful places, by this immense abyss, and the silence of your vast realms, reverse Eurydice’s swift death. All things are destined to be yours,

and though we delay a while, sooner or later, we hasten home. Here we are all bound, this is our final abode, and you hold the longest reign over the human race. Eurydice, too, will be yours to command, when she has lived out her fair span of years, to maturity. I ask this benefit as a gift; but, if the fates refuse my wife this kindness, I am determined not to return: you can delight in both our deaths.'

The bloodless spirits wept as he spoke, accompanying his words with the music. **Tantalus** did not reach for the ever-retreating water: **Ixion**'s wheel was stilled: the vultures did not pluck at **Tityus**'s liver: the **Belides**, the daughters of Danaüs, left their water jars: and you, **Sisyphus**, perched there, on your rock. Then they say, for the first time, the faces of the **Furies** were wet with tears, won over by his song: the king of the deep, and his royal bride, could not bear to refuse his prayer, and called for Eurydice.

She was among the recent ghosts, and walked haltingly from her wound. The poet of

Rhodope received her, and, at the same time, accepted this condition, that he must not turn his eyes behind him, until he emerged from the vale of **Avernus**, or the gift would be null and void.

They took the upward path, through the still silence, steep and dark, shadowy with dense fog, drawing near to the threshold of the upper world. Afraid she was no longer there, and eager to see her, the lover turned his eyes. In an instant she dropped back, and he, unhappy man, stretching out his arms to hold her and be held, clutched at nothing but the receding air. Dying a second time, now, there was no complaint to her husband (what, then, could she complain of, except that she had been loved?). She spoke a last 'farewell' that, now, scarcely reached his ears, and turned again towards that same place.

Stunned by the double loss of his wife, Orpheus was like that coward who saw Cerberus, the three-headed dog, chained by the central neck, and whose fear vanished with his nature, as stone transformed his body. Or like

Olenos, and you, his **Lethaea**, too proud of your beauty: he wished to be charged with your crime, and seem guilty himself: once wedded hearts, you are now rocks set on moist Mount **Ida**.

Orpheus wished and prayed, in vain, to cross the **Styx** again, but the ferryman fended him off. Still, for seven days, he sat there by the shore, neglecting himself and not taking **nourishment**. Sorrow, troubled thought, and tears were his food. He took himself to lofty Mount **Rhodope**, and **Haemus**, swept by the winds, complaining that the gods of **Erebus** were cruel.

Three times **the sun** had ended the year, in watery **Pisces**, and Orpheus had abstained from the love of women, either because things ended badly for him, or because he had sworn to do so. Yet, many felt a desire to be joined with the poet, and many grieved at rejection. Indeed, he was the first of the **Thracian** people to transfer his love to young boys, and enjoy their brief

springtime, and early flowering, this side of manhood.

Bk X:86-105 The gathering of the trees

There was a hill, and, on the hill, a wide area of level ground, turfed with fresh blades of grass: shade was absent there: but when the poet, born of the god, sounded the strings of his lyre, shade gathered there. **Jupiter's Chaonian** oak-tree came; and **Phaethon's** sisters, the **Heliades**, the poplars; the durmast oak with its deep foliage; the soft lime-tree; the beech; the virgin sweet-bay, laurel; the hazel, frail; the ash-tree, used for spears; the sweeping silver-fir: holm-oak, heavy with acorns; pleasant plane-tree; the many-coloured maple; with the river-haunting willow; lotus, water-lover; boxwood ever-verdant; the slender tamarisk; the myrtle, with, over and under its leaves, the two shades of green; and the blue-berried wild-bay, *laurus tinus*. You came, also, twining ivy, together with shooting vines; the vine-

supporting elms; the flowering ‘manna’ ash; the spruce; the strawberry tree, weighed down with its red fruit; the pliant palms, the winner’s prize; and you, the shaggy-topped pine tree, armed with needles, sacred to **Cybele**, mother of the gods, since **Attis** exchanged his human form for you, and hardened in your trunk.

Bk X:106-142 The death of Cyparissus

Among the crowd came the cypress, formed like the cone-shaped *meta*, that marks the turning point in the race-course: once a boy, but now a tree: loved by the god who tunes the lyre, and strings the bow.

There was a giant stag, sacred to the nymphs that haunt the **Carthaeon** country, which cast deep shadows, around its head, from his wide-branching antlers. The antlers shone with gold, and the gems of a jewelled collar, around his polished neck, hung down onto his shoulders. A *bulla*, a silver charm, fastened with small strips of leather, quivered on his

forehead, and on either side of his hollow temples matching pearls of bronze gleamed from both ears. Free from fear, and forgetting his natural shyness, he used to visit people's houses, and offer his neck to be stroked by strangers' hands. Yet, above all others, he was dear to you, **Cyparissus**, loveliest of the **Cean** boys. You led the stag to fresh pastures, and the waters of the clear spring. Now you would weave diverse flowers through his horns, and then, astride his back like a horseman, delight in tugging his soft mouth one way or the other by means of a purple muzzle.

It was noon of a summer's day, when the curving claws of shore-loving **Cancer** were burning in the hot sun. Tired, the stag had settled its body on the grassy turf and was enjoying the cool of the woodland shade. The boy, without intention, transfixed it with his sharp spear, and when he saw it dying from the cruel wound, he wished to die himself. What was there **Phoebus** did not say, in solace, advising a moderate grief matching the cause!

He only sighed, and begged, as the last gift of the gods, that he might mourn forever. Then, his blood discharged among endless tears, his limbs began to turn to a shade of green, and his hair that a moment ago hung over his pale forehead, became a bristling crown, and he stiffened to a graceful point gazing at the starry heavens. The god sighed for him, and said, sadly: 'I will mourn for you: you will mourn for others, and enter into sorrows'.

Bk X:143-219 Orpheus sings: Ganymede; Hyacinthus

Such was the grove of trees the poet gathered round him, and he sat in the midst of a crowd, of animals and birds. When he had tried a few chords, stroking the lyre with his thumb, and felt that the various notes were in tune, regardless of their pitch, he raised his voice to sing: 'Begin my song with **Jupiter, Calliope, O Muse**, my mother (all things bow to Jupiter's might)! I have often sung the power of Jove

before: I have sung of the **Giants**, in an epic strain, and the victorious lightning bolts, hurled at the **Phlegraean** field. Now there is gentler work for the lyre, and I sing of boys loved by the gods, and girls stricken with forbidden fires, deserving punishment for their lust.

The king of the gods once burned with love for **Phrygian Ganymede**, and to win him Jupiter chose to be something other than he was. Yet he did not deign to transform himself into any other bird, than that eagle, that could carry his lightning bolts. Straightaway, he beat the air with deceitful wings, and stole the **Trojan** boy, who still handles the mixing cups, and against **Juno**'s will pours out Jove's nectar.

You too, **Hyacinthus**, of **Amyclae**, **Phoebus** would have placed in heaven, if sad fate had given him time to do so. Still, as it is, you are immortal, and whenever spring drives winter away, and **Aries** follows watery **Pisces**, you also rise, and flower in the green turf. My father, Phoebus, loved you above all others: and **Delphi**, at the centre of the world, lost its

presiding deity, while the god frequented **Eurotas**, and **Sparta** without its walls, doing no honour to the zither or the bow. Forgetting his usual pursuits, he did not object to carrying the nets, handling the dogs, or travelling as a companion, over the rough mountain ridges, and by constant partnership feeding the flames.

Now, **the sun** was midway between the vanished and the future night, equally far from either extreme: they stripped off their clothes, and gleaming with the rich olive oil, they had rubbed themselves with, they began a contest with the broad discus. Phoebus went first, balancing it, and hurling it high into the air, scattering the clouds with its weight. Its mass took a long time to fall back to the hard ground, showing strength and skill combined. Immediately the **Taenarian** boy, without thinking, ran forward to pick up the disc, prompted by his eagerness to throw, but the solid earth threw it back, hitting you in the face, with the rebound, Hyacinthus.

The god is as white as the boy, and cradles the fallen body. Now he tries to revive you, now to staunch your dreadful wound, and now applies herbs to hold back your departing spirit. His arts are useless: the wound is incurable. Just as if, when someone, in a garden, breaks violets, stiff poppies, or the lilies, with their bristling yellow stamens, and, suddenly, they droop, bowing their weakened heads, unable to support themselves, and their tops gaze at the soil: so his dying head drops, and, with failing strength, the neck is overburdened, and sinks onto the shoulder.

‘You slip away, **Spartan**, robbed of the flower of youth’ Phoebus sighed, ‘and I see my guilt, in your wound. You are my grief and my reproach: your death must be ascribed to my hand. I am the agent of your destruction. Yet, how was it my fault, unless taking part in a game can be called a fault, unless it can be called a fault to have loved you? If only I might die with you, and pay with my life! But since the laws of fate bind us, you shall always be

with me, and cling to my remembering lips. My songs; the lyre my hand touches; will celebrate you. As a new-formed flower, you shall denote my woe, by your markings. And the time will come, when **Ajax**, bravest of heroes, will associate himself with this same flower, and be identified by its petals.

While the truthful mouth of Apollo uttered these words, look, the blood that had spilt on the ground staining the grass was no longer blood, and a flower sprang up, brighter than **Tyrian** dye, and took the shape of a lily, though it was purple in colour, where the other is silvery white. Not satisfied with this alone, Phoebus (he, indeed, was the giver of the honour) himself marked his grief on the petals, and the flower bore the letters AI AI, the letters of woe traced there. Nor was Sparta ashamed of producing Hyacinthus: his honour has lasted to this day, and by ancient custom the **Hyacinthia** is celebrated, at its annual return, by displaying the flower in procession.'

Bk X:220-242 Orpheus sings: The Propoetides

‘But if you should ask the **Cyprian** city of **Amathus**, rich in mines, whether it would have wished to have produced those girls, the **Propoetides**, it would repudiate them, and equally those men, whose foreheads were once marred by two horns, from which they took their name, **Cerastae**. An altar, to Jove the Hospitable, used to stand in front of the gates: if any stranger, ignorant of their wickedness, had seen it, stained with blood, they would have thought that calves or sheep, from Amathus, were sacrificed there: it was their guests they killed! Kindly **Venus** was preparing to abandon her cities, and the **Cyprian** fields, outraged by their abominable rites, but ‘How,’ she said, ‘have my cities, or this dear place, sinned? What is their crime? Instead, let this impious race pay the penalty of death or exile, or some punishment between execution and banishment, and what might that be but the penalty of being

transformed?’ While she is deciding how to alter them, she turns her eyes towards their horns, and this suggests that she might leave them those, and she changed them into wild bullocks.

Nevertheless, the immoral Propoetides dared to deny that Venus was the goddess. For this, because of her divine anger, they are said to have been the first to prostitute their bodies and their reputations in public, and, losing all sense of shame, they lost the power to blush, as the blood hardened in their cheeks, and only a small change turned them into hard flints.’

Bk X:243-297 Orpheus sings: Pygmalion and the statue

‘**Pygmalion** had seen them, spending their lives in wickedness, and, offended by the failings that nature gave the female heart, he lived as a bachelor, without a wife or partner for his bed. But, with wonderful skill, he carved a figure, brilliantly, out of snow-white ivory, no

mortal woman, and fell in love with his own creation. The features are those of a real girl, who, you might think, lived, and wished to move, if modesty did not forbid it. Indeed, art hides his art. He marvels: and passion, for this bodily image, consumes his heart. Often, he runs his hands over the work, tempted as to whether it is flesh or ivory, not admitting it to be ivory. he kisses it and thinks his kisses are returned; and speaks to it; and holds it, and imagines that his fingers press into the limbs, and is afraid lest bruises appear from the pressure. Now he addresses it with compliments, now brings it gifts that please girls, shells and polished pebbles, little birds, and many-coloured flowers, lilies and tinted beads, and the **Heliades**'s amber tears, that drip from the trees. He dresses the body, also, in clothing; places rings on the fingers; places a long necklace round its neck; pearls hang from the ears, and cinctures round the breasts. All are fitting: but it appears no less lovely, naked. He arranges the statue on a bed on which cloths

dyed with **Tyrian** murex are spread, and calls it his bedfellow, and rests its neck against soft down, as if it could feel.

The day of **Venus**'s festival came, celebrated throughout **Cyprus**, and heifers, their curved horns gilded, fell, to the blow on their snowy neck. The incense was smoking, when Pygmalion, having made his offering, stood by the altar, and said, shyly: "If you can grant all things, you gods, I wish as a bride to have..." and not daring to say "the girl of ivory" he said "one like my ivory girl." Golden Venus, for she herself was present at the festival, knew what the prayer meant, and as a sign of the gods' fondness for him, the flame flared three times, and shook its crown in the air. When he returned, he sought out the image of his girl, and leaning over the couch, kissed her. She felt warm: he pressed his lips to her again, and also touched her breast with his hand. The ivory yielded to his touch, and lost its hardness, altering under his fingers, as the bees' wax of **Hymettus** softens in the sun, and is moulded,

under the thumb, into many forms, made usable by use. The lover is stupefied, and joyful, but uncertain, and afraid he is wrong, reaffirms the fulfilment of his wishes, with his hand, again, and again.

It was flesh! The pulse throbbed under his thumb. Then the hero, of **Paphos**, was indeed overfull of words with which to thank Venus, and still pressed his mouth against a mouth that was not merely a likeness. The girl felt the kisses he gave, blushed, and, raising her bashful eyes to the light, saw both her lover and the sky. The goddess attended the marriage that she had brought about, and when the moon's horns had nine times met at the full, the woman bore a son, **Paphos**, from whom the island takes its name.'

Bk X:298-355 Orpheus sings: Myrrha's incestuous love for Cinyras

‘**Cinyras** was the son of **Paphos**, and he might have been counted amongst the fortunate,

if he, in turn, had been childless. I speak of terrible things. Fathers and daughters, keep away: or if your mind takes pleasure in my song, put no faith in this story of mine, and imagine it did not happen. Or, if you do believe it, believe in the punishment also, that it brought. If nature, however, allows such crimes to be visible, then I give thanks that the **people of Thrace**, this city, and this land, are far from the regions where such sin is born. Let the land of **Panchaia**, beyond Araby, produce its balsam, cinnamon, costmary; its incense, exuded from the trees; its flowers different from ours; if it produces myrrh: a strange tree is not worth such a price.

Cupid denies that his arrows hurt you, **Myrrha**, and clears his fires of blame for your crime. One of the three sisters, the **Furies**, with her swollen snakes, and firebrand from the **Styx**, breathed on you. It is wrong to hate your father, but that love was a greater wrong than hatred. The pick of the princes, from everywhere, desire you: young men, from the

whole of the East, come to win you in marriage. Out of the many, choose one, for your husband, Myrrha, but let one man not be amongst the many.

Indeed, she knows it, and fights against her disgraceful passion, and says, to herself: “Where is my thought leading? What am I creating? You gods, I pray, and the duty and sacred laws respecting parents, prevent this wickedness, and oppose my sin, indeed, if sin it is. But it can be said that duty declines to condemn such love. Other creatures mate indiscriminately: it is no disgrace for a heifer to have her sire mount her, for his filly to be a stallion’s mate: the goat goes with the flocks he has made, and the birds themselves conceive, by him whose seed conceived them. Happy the creatures who are allowed to do so! Human concern has made malign laws, and what nature allows, jealous duty forbids.

Yet they say there are races where mother and son, and father and daughter, pair off, and affection is increased by a double bond. Alas

for me, that I did not happen to be born there, and that I am made to suffer by an accident of place! – Why do I repeat these things? Forbidden hopes, vanish! He is worth loving, but only as a father. – I could lie with **Cinyras**, if I were not Cinyras's already. Now, he is not mine, because he is already mine, and the nearness of our relationship damns me: I would be better off as a stranger. I would be happy to go far away, and leave the borders of my homeland behind me, if I might run from evil: but even if nothing more is permitted, a wicked desire to see Cinyras, touch him, speak to him, and kiss him, face to face, prevents my leaving. But then, what more might you look to have, impious girl? Do you realise how many names and ties you are throwing into confusion? Would you be, then, your mother's rival, and your father's mistress? Would you be known, then, as your son's sister, your brother's mother? Do you not fear the three sisters, with black snaky hair, that those with guilty hearts see, their eyes and mouths attacked with cruel

torches? Since you have still not committed sin in the flesh, do not conceive it in your mind, or disregard the prohibitions, of mighty nature, in vile congress! Grant that you want it: the reality itself forbids it. He is a good man, and mindful of the moral law – but, O, how I wish the same passion were in him!” ’

Bk X:356-430 Orpheus sings: Myrrha and her nurse

‘She spoke: **Cinyras**, however, who was made doubtful of what to do, by the crowd of noble suitors, naming them, asked her whom she wanted, as a husband.

At first she is silent, and staring at her father’s face, hesitates, her eyes filling with warm tears. Cinyras thinking this to be virgin shyness, forbids her to cry, dries her cheeks, and kisses her on the lips. **Myrrha** is overjoyed at this gift, and, being consulted as to what kind of husband she might choose, says: “Someone like you”. Not understanding this, however, he

praises her, saying: “Always be so loving.” At the word “loving”, the girl, lowers her glance, conscious of her sin.

It was midnight, and sleep had released mortal flesh from worldly cares, but Cinyras’s daughter, wakeful, stirring the embers, reawakens her ungovernable desires, one moment despairing, at another willing to try, ashamed and eager, not yet discovering what to do. As a tall tree, struck by the axe, the last blow remaining, uncertain how it will fall, causes fear on all sides, so her fickle mind, swayed this way and that, her thought taking both directions, seeing no rest for, or end to, her passion, but death. She felt ready to die. She got up, determined, to fix a noose round her throat, and, fastening a cord to the doorway’s crossbeam, she said: “Goodbye, dear Cinyras, and realize the reason for my death!” And she tied the rope around her bloodless neck. They say that the murmured words came to the ears of her loyal nurse, who watched at her foster-child’s threshold.

The old woman gets up, and opens the door, and, seeing the equipment of death, cries out, and in the same moment, strikes her breast, snatches at the folds of her robe, and tearing the noose from the girl's neck, pulls it apart. Then, finally, she has time to cry, to embrace her, and demand the reason for the rope. The girl is mute and still, looking, fixedly, at the ground, and unhappy that her belated attempt at death has been discovered. The old woman insists on knowing, baring her white hair and withered breasts, and begs her to say what grieves her, invoking her infant cradle, and first nurturing.

The girl turns away from her pleading, with a sigh. The nurse is determined to know, and promises more than loyalty. "Tell me," she says, "and let me bring you some help: age does not slow me. If it is some frenzy, I have herbs and charms that heal: if someone is seeking your harm, I will purify you with magic rites: if the gods are angry, anger is appeased by sacrifice. What else could it be? The destiny of

your house is fortunate, and on course: they are well, your mother and father.”

Hearing the word “father”, Myrrha sighed deeply. Even then the nurse had no idea of the sin in her mind, though she guessed it might be some love affair. She begged her, tenaciously, to tell her what it was, and took the weeping girl to her aged breast, and holding her with trembling arms she said: “I know, you are in love! And in this matter (have no fear) my diligence can serve you, your father will never know.” The frenzied girl leapt from her arms, and burying her face in the bed, said, urgently: “Go, I beg you, and forgo the knowledge of my wretched shame! Go, or stop asking why I am grieving. What you are striving to know, is wickedness.” The old woman shuddered, and stretching out her hands that trembled with age and fear, she fell at her foster-child’s feet, pleading, then coaxing, then frightening her, into making her party to it. She threatens her with the evidence of the noose, and the attempt on her life, and promises her help in her love

affair. The girl raises her head, and her welling tears rain on her nurse's breast. She often tries to confess, and often stops herself, and hides her face, in shame, in her clothing: then gets as far as "Mother, you are happy in your husband!" and sighs.

A shudder of cold penetrated the nurse's flesh and bone (now she understood) and her white hair stiffened all over her head. She told her at length, to banish, if she could, this fatal passion. Though the girl knew she was being advised rightly, she was still determined to die, if she could not possess her love. "Live," said the nurse, "possess your..." - and did not dare say: "father". She was silent, and confirmed her promise in the sight of heaven.'

Bk X:431-502 Orpheus sings: Myrrha's crime and punishment

'The married women were celebrating that annual festival of **Ceres**, when, with their bodies veiled in white robes, they offer the first

fruits of the harvest, wreathes of corn, and, for nine nights, treat sexual union, and the touch of a man, as forbidden. **Cenchreis**, the king's wife was among the crowd, frequenting the sacred rites. Finding **Cinyras** drunk with wine, the king's bed empty of his lawful partner, the nurse, wrongly diligent, told him of one who truly loved him, giving him a fictitious name, and praised her beauty. He, asking the girl's age, she said: "**Myrrha**'s is the same." After she had been ordered to bring her, and had reached home, she said: "Be happy, my child, we have won!" The unhappy girl felt no joy at all in her heart, and her heart prophetically mourned, yet she was still glad: such was her confusion of mind.

It was the hour, when all is silent, and **Boötes**, between the **Bears**, had turned his wagon, with downward-pointing shaft: She approached the sinful act. The golden moon fled the sky; black clouds covered the hidden stars; night lacked its fires. You, **Icarius**, and you, **Erigone**, his daughter, immortalised for

your pious love of your father, hid your faces first. Myrrha was checked by an omen, three times, when her foot stumbled: three times, the gloomy screech owl gave her warning, with its fatal cry: she still went on, her shame made less by blindness and black night. With her left hand, she kept tight hold of her nurse, groping with the other she found a way through the dark.

Now she reaches the threshold of the room, now she opens the door, now is led inside. But her trembling knees give way, her colour flees with her blood, and thought vanishes as she goes forward. The closer she is to her sin, the more she shudders at it, repents of her audacity, and wants to be able to turn back, unrecognised. When she hesitated, the old woman took her by the hand, and, leading her to the high bed, delivered her up, saying: "Take her Cinyras, she is yours", uniting their accursed flesh. The father admitted his own child into the incestuous bed, calmed her virgin fears, and encouraged her timidity. Perhaps he also said

the name, “daughter”, in accordance with her age, and she said, “father”, so that their names were not absent from their sin.

She left the room impregnated by her father, bearing impious seed in her fatal womb, carrying the guilt she had conceived. The next night the crime was repeated: nor did it finish there. Eventually, Cinyras, eager to discover his lover after so many couplings, fetching a light, saw his daughter and his guilt, and speechless from grief, he snatched his bright sword out of the sheath it hung in. Myrrha ran, escaping death, by the gift of darkness and secret night. Wandering the wide fields, she left the land of **Panchaea**, and palm-bearing **Arabia**, behind, and after roaming through nine returns of the crescent moon, weary, she rested at last in the land of the **Sabaeans**.

Now she could scarcely bear the weight of her womb. Tired of living, and scared of dying, not knowing what to pray for, she composed these words of entreaty: “O, if there are any gods who hear my prayer, I do not plead against

my well deserved punishment, but lest, by being, I offend the living, or, by dying, offend the dead, banish me from both realms, and change me, and deny me life and death!” Some god listened to her prayer: certainly the last request found its path to the heavens. While she was still speaking, the soil covered her shins; roots, breaking from her toes, spread sideways, supporting a tall trunk; her bones strengthened, and in the midst of the remaining marrow, the blood became sap; her arms became long branches; her fingers, twigs; her skin, solid bark. And now the growing tree had drawn together over her ponderous belly, buried her breasts, and was beginning to encase her neck: she could not bear the wait, and she sank down against the wood, to meet it, and plunged her face into the bark.

Though she has lost her former senses with her body, she still weeps, and the warm drops trickle down from the tree. There is merit, also, in the tears: and the myrrh that drips from the

bark keeps its mistress's name, and, about it, no age will be silent.'

Bk X:503-559 Orpheus sings: Venus and Adonis

'The child, conceived in sin, had grown within the tree, and was now searching for a way to leave its mother, and reveal itself. The pregnant womb swells within the tree trunk, the burden stretching the mother. The pain cannot form words, nor can **Lucina** be called on, in the voice of a woman in labour. Nevertheless the tree bends, like one straining, and groans constantly, and is wet with falling tears. Gentle **Lucina** stood by the suffering branches, and laid her hands on them, speaking words that aid childbirth. At this the tree split open, and, from the torn bark, gave up its living burden, and the child cried. The **naiads** laid him on the soft grass, and anointed him with his mother's tears. Even Envy would praise his beauty, being so like one of the torsos of naked **Amor** painted on

boards. But to stop them differing in attributes, you must add a light quiver, for him, or take theirs away from them.

Transient time slips by us unnoticed, betrays us, and nothing outpaces the years. That son of his grandfather, sister, now hid in a tree, and now born, then a most beautiful child, then a boy, now a man, now more beautiful than he was before, now interests **Venus** herself, and avenges his mother's desire. For while the boy, **Cupid**, with quiver on shoulder, was kissing his mother, he innocently scratched her breast with a loose arrow. The injured goddess pushed her son away: but the wound he had given was deeper than it seemed, and deceived her at first. Now captured by mortal beauty, she cares no more for **Cythera**'s shores, nor revisits **Paphos**, surrounded by its deep waters, nor **Cnidos**, the haunt of fish, nor **Amathus**, rich in mines: she even forgoes the heavens: preferring **Adonis** to heaven.

She holds him, and is his companion, and though she is used to always idling in the shade,

and, by cultivating it, enhancing her beauty, she roams mountain ridges, and forests, and thorny cliff-sides, her clothing caught up to the knee, like **Diana**. And she cheers on the hounds, chasing things safe to hunt, hares flying headlong, stags with deep horns, or their hinds. She avoids the strong wild boars, the ravening wolves, and shuns the bears armed with claws, and the lions glutted with the slaughter of cattle. She warns you Adonis, as if it were ever effective to warn, to fear them too, saying: “Be bold when they run, but bravery is unsafe when faced with the brave. Do not be foolish, beware of endangering me, and do not provoke the creatures nature has armed, lest your glory is to my great cost. Neither youth nor beauty, nor the charms that affect Venus, affect lions or bristling boars or the eyes and minds of other wild creatures. Boars have the force of a fierce lightning bolt in their curving tusks, and so does the attack of tawny lions, in their huge anger: the whole tribe are hateful to me.”

When he asks her why, she says: “I will tell, and you will wonder, at the monstrous result of an ancient crime. But now the unaccustomed effort tires me, and, look, a poplar tree entices us with its welcome shade, and the turf yields a bed. I should like to rest here on the ground,” (and she rested) “with you.” She hugged the grass, and him, and leaning her head against the breast of the reclining youth, she spoke these words, interspersing them with kisses:’

Bk X:560-637 Venus tells her story: Atalanta and Hippomenes

‘ “Perhaps you have heard of a girl who beat the fastest men at running: that was no idle tale, she did win. Nor could you say whether her speed or her beauty was more deserving of high praise. Enquiring of the god, about a husband, the god replied: ‘You don’t need a husband, **Atalanta**: run from the necessity for a husband. Nevertheless, you will not escape,

and, still living, you will not be yourself.’ Afraid of the god’s oracle, she lived in the dark forests, unmarried, and fled from the crowd of insistent suitors, setting harsh conditions: ‘I will not be won, till I am beaten in running. Compete in the foot-race with me. Wife and bed will be given as prizes to the swift, death to the tardy: let those be the rules.’

Truly she was pitiless, but (such was the power of her beauty) a rash crowd of suitors came, despite the rules. **Hippomenes** had taken his seat as a spectator at the unjust contest, and said ‘Who would try for a wife at such a risk?’ condemning the young men for their excess of passion. But when he saw her face and her unclothed body, one like mine, **Adonis**, or like yours if you were a woman, he was stunned. Stretching out his hands, he said: ‘Forgive me, you, that I just blamed! I had not yet realised what the prize was you were after.’ Praising her, he falls in love with her, and hopes none of the youths run faster, afraid, through jealousy. ‘But why, in this competition, is my luck left

untested?’ he says. The god himself favours the bold!’

While Hippomenes was debating with himself like this, the virgin girl sped by on winged feet. To the **Aonian** youth she flew like a **Scythian** arrow, yet it made him admire her beauty all the more. The race gave her a beauty of its own. The breeze blew the streaming feathers on her speeding sandals behind her, and her hair was thrown back from her ivory shoulders. Ribbons with embroidered edges fluttered at her knees, and a blush spread over the girlish whiteness of her body, just as when a red awning over a white courtyard stains it with borrowed shadows. While the stranger was watching this, the last marker was passed, and the victorious Atalanta was crowned with a festive garland, while the losers, groaning, paid the penalty according to their bond.

Undeterred by the youths’ fate, Hippomenes stepped forward and, fixing his gaze on the girl, said ‘Why seek an easy win beating the lazy? Race me. If fortune makes me

the master, it will be no shame for you to be outpaced by such a man as me, since **Megareus** of **Onchestus** is my father, and his grandfather was **Neptune**, so I am the great-grandson of the king of the ocean, and my courage is no less than my birth. Or if I am beaten, you will have a great and renowned name for defeating Hippomenes.’ As he spoke **Schoeneus**’s daughter looked at him with a softening expression, uncertain whether she wanted to win or lose, and said to herself: ‘What god, envious of handsome youths, wants to destroy this one and send him in search of marriage, at the risk of his own dear life? I am not worth that much, I think. Nor is it his beauty that moves me (yet I could be touched by that too) but that he is still only a boy. He does not move me himself: it is his youth. What if he does have courage, and a spirit unafraid of dying? What if he is fourth in line from the ruler of the seas? What if he does love, and thinks so much of marriage with me, that he would die, if a harsh fate denies me to him? While you can,

stranger, leave this blood-soaked marrying. Wedding me is a cruel thing. No one will refuse to have you, and you may be chosen by a wiser girl. – Yet why this concern when so many have already died before you?

Let him look out for himself! Let him perish, since he has not been warned off by the death of so many suitors, and shows himself tired of life. – Should he die, then, because he wants to live with me, and suffer an unjust death as the penalty for loving? My victory would not avoid incurring hatred. But it is not my fault! I wish you would desist, or if you are set on it, I wish you might be the faster! How the virginal expression of a boy clings to his face! O! Poor Hippomenes, I wish you had never seen me! You were so fitted to live. But if I were luckier, if the harsh fates did not prevent my marriage, you would be the one I would want to share my bed with.’ She spoke: and inexperienced, feeling the touch of desire for the first time, not knowing what she does, she loves and does not realise she loves.” ’

Bk X:638-680 Venus tells her story: The foot-race

‘ “Now her father and the people were calling out for the usual foot-race, when **Hippomenes**, **Neptune**’s descendant invoked my aid, as a suppliant: ‘**Cytherea**, I beg you to assist my daring, and encourage the fire of love you lit.’ A kindly breeze brought me the flattering prayer, and I confess it stirred me, though there was scant time to give him my help. There is a field, the people there call it the field of **Tamasus**, the richest earth in the island of **Cyprus**, which the men of old made sacred to me, and ordered it to be added to my temples, as a gift. A tree gleams in the middle of the field, with rustling golden leaves, and golden branches. Come from there, by chance, I was carrying three golden apples, I had picked, in my hands, and I approached Hippomenes, showing myself only to him, and told him how to use them.

The trumpets gave the signal, and, leaning forward, they flashed from the starting line, and skimmed the surface of the sand, with flying feet. You would think them capable of running along the waves without wetting them, and passing over the ripened heads of the standing corn. The young man's spirit was cheered by shouts and words of encouragement: 'Run, Hippomenes! Now, now is the time to sprint! Use your full power, now! Don't wait: you'll win!'

Who knows whether **Megareus**'s heroic son, or **Schoeneus**'s daughter, was more pleased with these words? O how often, when she could have overtaken him, she lingered, and watching his face for a while, left him behind against her will! Panting breath came from his weary throat, and the winning post was far off. Only then did **Neptune**'s scion throw away one of the fruits from the tree. The girl was astonished, and, eager for the shining apple, she ran off the course, and picked up the spinning gold. Hippomenes passed her: the stands

resounded with the applause. She made up for the delay and the lost time by a burst of speed, and left the youth behind once more. Again she delayed when a second apple was thrown, followed, and passed the man. The last section of track was left. ‘Now,’ he said, ‘be near me, goddess who made me this gift!’ He threw the shining gold vigorously, sideways, into the deep field, from where she would take longer to get back. The girl seemed to hesitate as to whether she should chase it: I made her pick it up, and added weight to the fruit she held, and obstructed her equally with the heaviness of the burden and the delay. And lest my story be longer than the race itself, the virgin was overtaken: the winner led away his prize.” ’

Bk X:681-707 Venus tells her story: The transformation

‘ “**Adonis**, did I deserve to be thanked, to have incense brought me? Unthinking, he neither gave thanks, nor offered incense to me.

I was provoked to sudden anger, and pained by his contempt, so as not to be slighted in future, I decreed an example would be made of them, and I roused myself against them both.

They were passing a temple, hidden in the deep woods, of **Cybele** mother of the gods, that noble **Echion** had built in former times fulfilling a vow, and the length of their journey persuaded them to rest. There, stirred by my divine power, an untimely desire to make love seized **Hippomenes**. Near the temple was a poorly lit hollow, like a cave, roofed with the natural pumice-stone, sacred to the old religion, where the priests had gathered together wooden figures of the ancient gods. They entered it, and desecrated the sanctuary, with forbidden intercourse. The sacred images averted their gaze, and the Great Mother, with the turreted crown, hesitated as to whether to plunge the guilty pair beneath the waters of the **Styx**: but the punishment seemed too light. So tawny manes spread over their necks, that, a moment ago, were smooth; their fingers curved into

claws; forelegs were formed from arms; all their weight was in their breast; and their tails swept the surface of the sand. They had a fierce expression, roared instead of speaking, and frequented the woods for a marriage-bed. As lions, fearful to others, they tamely bite on Cybele's bit. You must avoid, them, my love, and with them all the species of wild creature, that do not turn and run, but offer their breasts to the fight, lest your courage be the ruin of us both!" '

Bk X:708-739 Orpheus sings: The death of Adonis

'She warned him, and made her way through the air, drawn by harnessed swans, but his courage defied the warning. By chance, his dogs, following a well-marked trail, roused a wild boar from its lair, and as it prepared to rush from the trees, **Cinyras**'s grandson caught it a glancing blow. Immediately the fierce boar dislodged the blood-stained spear, with its

crooked snout, and chased the youth, who was scared and running hard. It sank its tusk into his groin, and flung him, dying, on the yellow sand.

Cytherea, carried in her light chariot through the midst of the heavens, by her swans' swiftness, had not yet reached **Cyprus**: she heard from afar the groans of the dying boy, and turned the white birds towards him. When, from the heights, she saw the lifeless body, lying in its own blood, she leapt down, tearing her clothes, and tearing at her hair, as well, and beat at her breasts with fierce hands, complaining to the fates. "And yet not everything is in your power" she said. "**Adonis**, there shall be an everlasting token of my grief, and every year an imitation of your death will complete a re-enactment of my mourning. But your blood will be changed into a flower. **Persephone**, you were allowed to alter a woman's body, **Menthe**'s, to fragrant mint: shall the transformation of my hero, of the blood of **Cinyras**, be grudged to me?" So saying, she sprinkled the blood with odorous

nectar: and, at the touch, it swelled up, as bubbles emerge in yellow mud. In less than an hour, a flower, of the colour of blood, was created such as pomegranates carry, that hide their seeds under a tough rind. But enjoyment of it is brief; for, lightly clinging, and too easily fallen, the winds deflower it, which are likewise responsible for its name, windflower: *anemone*.

Book XI



Bk XI:1-66 The death of Orpheus

While the poet of **Thrace**, with songs like these, drew to himself the trees, the souls of wild beasts, and the stones that followed him, see, how the frenzied **Ciconian** women, their breasts covered with animal skins, spy **Orpheus** from a hilltop, as he matches songs to the sounding strings. One of them, her hair scattered to the light breeze, called: ‘Behold, behold, this is the one who scorns us!’ and hurled her spear at the face of **Apollo**’s poet, as he was singing. Tipped with leaves, it marked him, without wounding. The next missile was a stone, that, thrown through the air, was itself overpowered by the harmony of voice and lyre, and fell at his feet, as though it were begging forgiveness for its mad audacity. But in fact the mindless attack mounted, without restraint, and mad **fury** ruled. All their missiles would have been frustrated by his song, but the huge clamour of the **Berecyntian** flutes of broken horn, the drums, and the breast-beating and

howls of the **Bacchantes**, drowned the sound of the lyre. Then, finally, the stones grew red, with the blood of the poet, to whom they were deaf.

First, the innumerable birds, the snakes, and the procession of wild animals, still entranced by the voice of the singer, a mark of Orpheus's triumph, were torn apart by the **Maenads**. Then they set their bloody hands on Orpheus, and gathered, like birds that spy the owl, the bird of night, wandering in the daylight, or as in the amphitheatre, on the morning of the staged events, on either side, a doomed stag, in the arena, is prey to the hounds. They rushed at the poet, and hurled their green-leaved **thyrsi**, made for a different use. Some threw clods of earth, some branches torn from the trees, and others flints. And so that their madness did not lack true weapons, by chance, oxen were turning the soil under the ploughshare, and, not far away from them, brawny farm workers were digging the solid earth, sweating hard to prepare it for use, who fled when they saw the throng, leaving their work tools behind. Hoes,

heavy mattocks, and long rakes lay scattered through the empty fields. After catching these up, and ripping apart the oxen, that threatened them with their horns, the fierce women rushed back to kill the poet. As he stretched out his hands, speaking ineffectually for the first time ever, not affecting them in any way with his voice, the impious ones murdered him: and the spirit, breathed out through that mouth to which stones listened, and which was understood by the senses of wild creatures – O, God! – vanished down the wind.

The birds, lamenting, cried for you, **Orpheus**; the crowd of wild creatures; the hard flints; the trees that often gathered to your song, shedding their leaves, mourned you with bared crowns. They say the rivers, also, were swollen with their own tears, and the **naiads** and **dryads**, with dishevelled hair, put on sombre clothes. The poet's limbs were strewn in different places: the head and the lyre you, **Hebrus**, received, and (a miracle!) floating in midstream, the lyre lamented mournfully;

mournfully the lifeless tongue murmured; mournfully the banks echoed in reply. And now, carried onward to the sea, they left their native river-mouth and reached the shores of **Lesbos**, at **Methymna**. Here, as the head lay exposed on the alien sand, its moist hair dripping brine, a fierce snake attacked it. But at last **Phoebus** came, and prevented it, as it was about to bite, and turned the serpent's gaping jaws to stone, and froze the mouth, wide open, as it was.

The ghost of **Orpheus** sank under the earth, and recognised all those places it had seen before; and, searching the fields of the Blessed, he found his wife again and held her eagerly in his arms. There they walk together side by side; now she goes in front, and he follows her; now he leads, and looks back as he can do, in safety now, at his **Eurydice**.'

Bk XI:67-84 The transformation of the Maenads

However, the god, **Lyaeus**, did not allow such wickedness by his followers to go unpunished. Grieved by the loss of the poet of his sacred rites, he immediately fastened down, with twisted roots, all the **Thracian** women who had seen the sin, since the path, that each one was on, at that moment, gripped their toes and forced the tips into the solid ground. As a bird, when it is caught in a snare, set by a cunning wild-fowler, and feels itself held, tightens the knot by its movement, beating and flapping; so each of the women, planted, stuck fast, terrified, tried uselessly to run. But the pliant roots held her, and checked her, struggling. When she looked for where her toenails, toes and feet were, she saw the wood spreading over the curve of her leg, and, trying to strike her thighs with grieving hands, she beat on oak: her breasts turned to oak: her shoulders were oak. You would have thought the jointed arms were real branches, and your thought would not have been wrong.

Bk XI:85-145 Midas and the golden touch

This did not satisfy **Bacchus**. He left the fields themselves, and with a worthier band of followers sought out the vineyards of his own Mount **Tmolus**, and the River **Pactolus**, though at that time it was not a golden stream, nor envied for its valuable sands. His familiar cohorts, the **satyrs** and **bacchantes** accompanied him, but **Silenus** was absent. The **Phrygian** countrymen had taken him captive, stumbling with age and wine, bound him with garlands, and led him to King **Midas**, to whom, with **Athenian Eumolpus**, **Orpheus** of **Thrace** had taught the **Bacchic** rites.

When the king recognised him as a friend and companion of his worship, he joyfully led a celebration of the guest's arrival, lasting ten days and nights on end. And now, on the eleventh day, **Lucifer** had seen off the train of distant stars, and the king with gladness came to the fields of **Lydia**, and restored **Silenus** to his young foster-child.

Then the god, happy at his foster-father's return, gave Midas control over the choice of a gift, which was pleasing, but futile, since he was doomed to make poor use of his reward. 'Make it so that whatever I touch with my body, turns to yellow gold.' he said. Bacchus accepted his choice, and gave him the harmful gift, sad that he had not asked for anything better. The **Berecynthian** king departed happily, rejoicing in his bane, and testing his faith in its powers by touching things, and scarcely believing it, when he broke off a green twig from the low foliage of the holm-oak: the twig was turned to gold. He picked up a stone from the ground: the stone also was pale gold. He touched a clod of earth, and by the power of touch, the clod became a nugget. He gathered the dry husks of corn: it was a golden harvest. He held an apple he had picked from a tree: you would think the **Hesperides** had given it to him. If he placed his fingers on the tall door-pillars, the pillars were seen to shine. When he washed

his hands in clear water, the water flowing over his hands would have deceived **Danaë**.

His own mind could scarcely contain his expectations, dreaming of all things golden. As he was exulting, his servants set a table before him, heaped with cooked food, and loaves were not lacking. Then, indeed, if he touched the gift of **Ceres** with his hand, her gift hardened. If he tried, with eager bites, to tear the food, the food was covered with a yellow surface where his teeth touched. He mixed pure water with wine, the other gift of his benefactor, but molten gold could be seen trickling through his lips.

Dismayed by this strange misfortune, rich and unhappy, he tries to flee his riches, and hates what he wished for a moment ago. No abundance can relieve his famine: his throat is parched with burning thirst, and, justly, he is tortured by the hateful gold. Lifting his shining hands and arms to heaven, he cries out: 'Father, **Bacchus**, forgive me! I have sinned. But have pity on me, I beg you, and save me from this costly evil!' The will of the gods is kindly.

Bacchus, when he confessed his fault restored him, and took back what he had given in fulfilment of his promise. ‘So you do not remain coated with the gold you wished for so foolishly,’ he said, ‘go to the river by great **Sardis**, make your way up the bright ridge against the falling waters, till you come to the source of the stream, and plunge your head and body at the same moment into the foaming fountain, where it gushes out, and at the same time wash away your sin.’ The king went to the river as he was ordered: the golden virtue coloured the waters, and passed from his human body into the stream. Even now, gathering the grains of gold from the ancient vein, the fields harden, their soil soaked by the pale yellow waters.

Bk XI:146-171 Pan and Apollo compete before Tmolus

Hating wealth, **Midas** lived among woods and fields, and the mountain caves **Pan** always

inhabits. But he remained dull-witted, and, as before, his foolish mind was destined once again to hurt its owner. Mount **Tmolus**, stands steep and high, commanding a wide view of the distant sea, its sloping sides extending to **Sardis** on the one side, and as far as tiny **Hypaepae** on the other. While Pan was there, playing light airs on his reeds glued together with wax, he boasted of his pipings, to the gentle nymphs, and dared to speak slightly of **Apollo**'s song compared with his own, and entered an unequal contest with **Tmolus**, the god of the mountain, as judge.

The aged judge was seated on his mountain-top and shook his ears free of the trees. Only an oak-wreath circled his dark hair, and acorns brushed against his hollow temples. Looking at the god of the flocks he said: 'There is nothing to prevent my judging.' Pan sounded the rustic reeds, and entranced Midas (who chanced to be near the playing) with wild pipings. Following this, sacred Tmolus turned

his face towards that of **Phoebus**: his forests followed.

Phoebus's golden hair was wreathed with laurel from **Parnassus**, and his robes dyed with **Tyrian** purple, swept the earth. He held his lyre, inlaid with gems and Indian ivory, in his left hand, and the plectrum in the other. His attitude was that of a true artist. Then with skilled fingers, he plucked the strings, and Tmolus, captivated by their sweetness, ordered Pan to lower his pipes in submission to the lyre.

Bk XI:172-193 Midas and the ass's ears

The judgment of the sacred mountain-god satisfied all opinions, and yet **Midas**'s voice alone challenged it and called it unjust. The **god of Delos** did not allow such indiscriminating ears to keep their human form, but drew them out and covered them with shaggy grey hair, and made them flexible at the base, and gave them powers of movement. Though the rest was human, he was punished in that sole aspect: he

wore the ears of a slow-moving ass. He was anxious to conceal them, and tried to detract from the shameful ugliness of his head with a purple turban. But the servant who used to trim his long hair with a blade, found it out, who, since he dare not reveal the disgrace he had seen, but eager to broadcast it to the four winds, and unable to keep it to himself, went off quietly and dug a hole in the soil. In a tiny voice, he whispered to the hollow earth, and buried his spoken evidence under the infill, and stole away having closed up the hidden trench. But a thick bed of quivering reeds began to shoot up there, and as soon as they had grown, at the end of the year, they gave the burrower away: stirred gently, then, by the wind they repeated the buried words, and testified against his master.

Bk XI:194-220 Laomedon and the walls of Troy

Having punished him, **Latona's son** left Mount **Tmolus** and, flying through the clear air, he came to earth in the country of **Laomedon**, this side of the narrows of the **Hellespont**, named from **Helle, daughter of Nephele**. To the right of the deeps of **Sigeum**, and to the left of those of **Rhoeteum**, there was an ancient altar of **Jupiter the Thunderer**, 'source of all oracles'. There, Apollo saw Laomedon building the foundations of the new city of **Troy**. The great undertaking prospering with difficulty, and demanding no little resources, he, and **Neptune**, trident-bearing father of the swelling sea, put on mortal form, and built the walls of the city for the **Phrygian** king for an agreed amount in gold. The edifice stood there.

But the king denied them payment, and as a crowning treachery, perjured himself by claiming they were lying. The ruler of the ocean said: 'You will not go unpunished', and he turned all his waters against the shores of tight-fisted Troy. He flooded the land to form a strait, swept away the farmers' crops, and buried the

fields beneath the waves. Even this was insufficient punishment: He demanded also that **Hesione**, the king's daughter, be given to a sea-monster, whom **Hercules** freed, as she was chained to the solid rock. Hercules demanded the payment promised, an agreed number of horses. But the reward for all his work being refused, he seized the twice-perjured walls of conquered Troy. **Telamon**, his companion, did not go without honour, and Hesione was given to him in marriage.

Peleus, Telamon's brother, was already distinguished by having a goddess as his wife, and was not more proud of being **Jupiter**'s grandson (his father **Aeacus** being the son of Jove by **Aegina**) as his son-in-law (by marrying **Thetis**), since he was not the only brother to be **Jove**'s grandson, but he was the only one to marry a goddess.

Bk XI:221-265 Peleus and Thetis

For aged **Proteus** had said to **Thetis**: ‘Goddess of the waves, conceive: you will be the mother of a warrior who will surpass his father’s deeds when he reaches manhood, and will be more famous than him.’ So **Jupiter**, lest earth produce someone greater than himself, fled from union with ocean-dwelling Thetis, though he had felt the hot fire of passion in his heart, and ordered his grandson, **Peleus**, son of **Aeacus**, to fulfil his promise, on his behalf, and enter the arms of the sea-maiden.

There is a bay, shaped like a scythe, in **Haemonia**, its arms projecting in a curved arc, which would provide a harbour, if the waves were deeper: the waters cover the surface of the sand: the shore is solid earth, that takes no footprints, does not hinder a passage, and has no seaweed covering it. A myrtle grove grows nearby, dense with its red and black berries. There is a cave in the centre, whether fashioned by art or nature is uncertain, but probably by art. Often, **Thetis** you used to come there, naked, seated on a bridled dolphin. There

Peleus found you, as you lay, overcome by sleep, and when, though influenced by his entreaties, you refused him, he prepared to use force, winding both arms round your neck.

He would have taken you then, if you had not, by your well-known arts, frequently changed your form. But when you became a bird, he still held you as a bird; now as a tree, Peleus clung fast to the tree. Your third guise was a striped tigress: in fear of that the **son of Aeacus** loosed his arms from your body. Then he entreated the gods of the sea, with wine poured over the waters, with sheep's entrails, and the smoke of incense, until **Proteus**, the **Carpathian** seer spoke from his deep gulfs: 'Son of Aeacus, you will have the bride you desire, if you bind her, unawares, with nooses and tight cords, while she is lulled asleep in the rocky cave. Though she deceives you with a hundred counterfeit shapes, hold her to you, whatever she becomes, until she is again what she was before.' So he spoke, and hid his face

below the waves, letting the waters flow in upon his final words.

Now **Titan** was low in the sky, and, his chariot pointed downwards, was close to the western ocean, when the lovely **Nereid** left the waves, and came to her accustomed bed. Peleus had scarcely taken a good grip of her virgin body, when she took on new forms, until she realised her limbs were tightly bound, and her arms spread wide apart. Then at length she sighed, saying: 'Not without some god's help have you won,' and she showed herself as Thetis. When she acknowledged herself, the hero embraced her, achieved his wish, and conceived with her the mighty **Achilles**.

Bk XI:266-345 Ceyx tells the story of Daedalion

Peleus was happy in his wife and son, and was a man for whom all things were successful, if you exclude the crime of killing his brother **Phocus**. Guilty of shedding his brother's blood,

exiled from his father's country, the soil of **Trachin** gave him sanctuary. Here **Ceyx**, son of **Lucifer**, the morning star, ruled, without force or shedding blood, his face filled with his father's radiance. At that time he was sad and unlike his normal self, mourning the loss of his brother, **Daedalion**. The **son of Aeacus** came to him, weary with cares and travel, and entered the city with a few companions. He left the flocks of sheep and cattle he had brought with him in a shady valley not far from the city walls. When he was first allowed to meet the king, he held out the draped olive branch of the suppliant, and told him whose son he was, concealed his crime, and lied about the cause of his flight. He begged to be allowed to support himself in the city or the fields. The king of Trachis replied with these kind words: 'Peleus, the opportunities in our kingdom are open even to the lower ranks, and I do not rule an inhospitable realm. Add to this willingness, the powerful influence of a noble name, and your being the grandson of **Jove**. So waste no time in

supplication! You will receive all that you wish. Take a share of everything you see, and call it yours! I wish what you see was better than it is!’

And he wept. Peleus and his companions asked what the cause was of so much grief, to which he replied: ‘Perhaps you think that bird, the hawk, that lives on prey, and terrifies other winged creatures, always had feathers. He was once a man (and – inner nature is so consistent – even then he was fierce, warlike and equipped for violence): his name, **Daedalion**. We were the sons of **Lucifer**, who summons **the dawn**, and is last to leave the sky. I care for peace; I care for preserving peace; and for my wife. Savage warfare pleased my brother. His power subdued kings and nations, that now, transformed, flutters the doves of **Boeotia**. He had a daughter, **Chione**, endowed with great beauty, who at fourteen, and ready for marriage, had a thousand suitors. It chanced that **Phoebus**-Apollo, and **Mercury**, son of **Maia**, one returning from his sacred **Delphi**, the

other from the summit of **Cyllene**, saw her at the same instant, and, at the same instant, flushed with desire. Apollo deferred his hope of union with her till the night, but Mercury could not wait, and touched the virgin's face with his sleep-inducing wand. She lay beneath that potent touch, and suffered the assault of the god. Night scattered the heavens with stars: Phoebus, having gained access disguised as an old woman, enjoyed the delight that had been forestalled. When Chione came to full term she bore the wing-footed god a son, **Autolycus**, crafty, talented in all intrigue, who could make black seem white, and white black, not unworthy of his father; and to Phoebus (it was a twin birth) she bore **Philammon**, famous for tuneful song and the lyre.

But what is the benefit in having produced two sons, in having pleased two gods, in being the child of a powerful father, and grandchild of the shining one? Is glory not harmful also to many? It certainly harmed her! She set herself above **Diana**, and criticized the goddess's

beauty. But, the goddess, moved by violent anger, said to her: "Then I must satisfy you with action." Without hesitating, she bent her bow, sent an arrow from the string, and pierced the tongue, that was at fault, with the shaft. The tongue was silent, neither sound nor attempts at words followed: and as she tried to speak, her life ended in blood.

I embraced her, in my misery, feeling a father's grief in my heart, and spoke words of comfort to my dear brother. Her father heard them no more than the cliffs hear the murmuring of the sea, mourning his lost one, bitterly. But when he saw the burning of her body, four times he made as if to throw himself into the blazing pyre; four times was thrust back; fled madly; and ran where there were no tracks, like a bullock whose neck is tender from the yoke, tormented by hornets' stings. Even then to me he seemed to run faster than humanly possible, and you would have thought he had winged feet.

He escaped us all, swift with desire for death, and gained the summit of **Parnassus**. When **Daedalion** hurled himself from the high cliffs, Apollo, pitying him, turned him into a bird, and lifted him, pendent on suddenly-formed wings, giving him a hooked beak, and curved talons, his former courage, and greater strength of body. Now, as a hawk, he rages against all birds, is merciful to none, and, suffering, is a cause of suffering.’

Bk XI:346-409 Peleus and the wolf

While **Lucifer**’s son was telling the strange story of his brother, **Peleus**’s herdsman, **Onetor** the **Phocian**, came racing up, breathing hard with the pace, shouting: ‘Peleus! Peleus! I bring you news of grave trouble.’ Peleus ordered him to tell it, whatever it was, the **Trachinian** king himself waiting with anxious face. The herdsman said: ‘When the sun was at the zenith, seeing as much of the track left as he had already run, I had driven the tired oxen down to

the bay. Some of the bullocks were kneeling on the yellow sand, lying there gazing out at the wide expanse of ocean; some were wandering slowly here and there; while others had waded out and stood up their necks in the water. There is a temple near the sea, not gleaming with gold and marble, but made of heavy timber, and shaded by an ancient grove. **Nereus** and the **Nereids** haunt it (a sailor, drying his nets on the shore, told me they were the gods of those waters). Close to it, there is a swamp, choked with dense willows, which the salt flood has turned into marshland. From it, a wolf, a huge beast, terrifies the places round about with its heavy crashing noises. It came out of the marsh reeds, its deadly jaws smeared with foam and clots of blood, and its eyes filled with red flame. It was savage with rage and hunger, more with rage; since though hungry it did not bother with the dead cattle, or with satisfying its deadly appetite, but wounded the whole herd, slaughtering them all in its hostility. Some of our men were wounded by its fatal jaws while

protecting them, and given up as dead. The shore and the shallows were red with blood, and the marshes full of bellowing. But delay is fatal: the thing allows no hesitation. While there are some of us left, let us encounter it in armour, and, seizing our weapons, meet with it carrying spears!’

So the countryman spoke: the losses did not stir **Peleus**: conscious of his guilt he concluded that **Psamathe**, the bereaved **Nereid**, was sending a funeral offering to her murdered son **Phocus**, by means of those same losses. **Oetean King Ceyx** ordered his men to put on their armour, and take their deadly spears, while he was himself preparing to go with them. But **Alcyone**, his wife, disturbed by the shouting, scattering her hair that she had not yet quite arranged, flung herself on her husband’s neck, begging him, with words and tears, to send help, but not to go himself, and protect both their lives, by protecting his own. Peleus, the **son of Aeacus**, said: ‘Queen Alcyone, forget these loving fears that so become you! I am

grateful for your husband's offer of help, but I have no wish for arms to be used against the creature on my behalf. I must pray, instead, to the goddess of the ocean!'

There was a high tower; a beacon on top of the citadel; a welcome sight for labouring vessels. They climbed up, and looked out, with murmuring sighs, at the cattle lying on the shore, seeing their rampaging killer with bloody jaws, its shaggy pelt dripping gore. There, stretching his hands out towards the shores of the open sea, Peleus prayed to sea-born **Psamathe** to forget her anger, and to aid him. She was unmoved by the prayers of the **son of Aeacus**, but **Thetis**, as a suppliant for her husband, obtained her forgiveness.

The wolf persisted even when ordered away from the savage slaughter, maddened by the taste of blood, until the goddess changed it to marble, as it was clinging to the wounded neck of a heifer. The body remained completely the same, except for its colour: the colour of the stone showed it no longer wolf, no longer to be

feared. But the fates did not allow the exiled Peleus to remain in that country. The wandering fugitive reached **Magnesia**, and there was absolved of the murder by **Haemonian** King **Acastus**.

Bk XI:410-473 The separation of Ceyx and Alcyone

Meanwhile **Ceyx**, troubled by heart's anxiety, concerning his brother, and what had followed his brother's strange fate, was preparing to go and consult the sacred oracle of **Apollo**, at **Claros**, that reveals human affairs. The infamous **Phorbas**, leader of the **Phlegyans**, had made **Delphi** inaccessible. Nevertheless, before he set out, he discussed it with you, faithful **Alcyone**.

She felt a chill, immediately, deep in her marrow, her face grew boxwood-pale, and her cheeks were drenched in flowing tears. Three times she tried to speak, three times her face was wet with weeping, and sobs interrupting

her loving reproaches, she said: ‘What sin of mine has turned your mind to this, dear one? Where is that care for me that used to come first? Can you now leave Alcyone behind, without a thought? Does it please you now to travel far? Am I dearer to you, away from you? But I suppose your way is overland, and I shall only grieve, not fear, for you. My anxieties will be free from terror.

The waters scare me, and the sombre face of the deep: and lately I saw wrecked timbers on the shore, and I have often read the names on empty tombs. Do not allow your mind to acquire false confidence, because **Aeolus**, son of **Hippotas**, is your father-in-law, who keeps the strong winds imprisoned, and, when he wishes, calms the sea. When once the winds are released and hold sway over the waters, nothing can oppose them: every country, every ocean is exposed to them. They vex the clouds in the sky, and create the red lightning-flashes from their fierce collisions. The more I know of them (I do know them, often seeing them as a child in

my father's house) the more I consider them to be feared. But if no prayers can alter your purpose, dear one, husband, if you are so fixed on going, take me with you, also! Then we shall be storm-tossed together, and at least I shall know what I fear, together we shall bear whatever comes, together we shall be borne over the waters.'

The star-born husband was moved by **the daughter of Aeolus's** words and tears: there was no less love in himself. But he would not relinquish his planned sea-journey, nor did he want to put Alcyone in peril. His anxious heart tried to comfort her, with many words, yet, despite that, he could not win his case. He added this further solace, the only one that moved his lover: 'Every delay will seem long to us indeed, but I swear to you by my father's light, to return to you as long as the fates allow it, before the moon has twice completed her circle.'

When her hopes had been revived by these promises of return, he immediately ordered the

ship to be dragged down the slipway, launched into the sea, and fitted out with her gear. Alcyone, seeing this, as if she foresaw what was to come, shuddered again, and she gave way to a flood of tears. She hugged him, and, in wretched misery, said a last 'Farewell' and her whole body gave way beneath her. With Ceyx still seeking reasons for delay, the young crew, double-ranked, pulled on the oars, with deep-chested strokes, and cut the water with their rhythmic blows.

She raised her wet eyes, and leaning forward could see her husband standing on the curved afterdeck, waving his hand, and she returned the signal. When he was further from shore, and she could no longer recognise his features, she followed the fleeting ship with her gaze, while she could. When even that was too far off to be seen, she still could see the topsails unfurling from the masthead. When no sails could be seen, with heavy heart, she sought out the empty bedroom, and threw herself on the

bed. The room and the bed provoked more tears and reminded her of her absent half.

Bk XI:474-572 The Tempest

They had left the harbour, and the breeze was stirring the rigging: the captain shipped the oars, ran the yard up to the top of the mast, and put on all sail to catch the freshening breeze. The ship was cutting through the waves, no more than mid-way across, maybe less, far from either shore, when, at nightfall, the sea began to whiten with swelling waves, and the east wind to blow with greater strength.

The captain shouts: 'Lower the yards, now, and close reef all sails.' He shouts the order but the adverse wind drowns it, and his voice cannot be heard above the breaking seas. Yet, some of the crew, on their own initiative, remove the oars, some protect the bulwarks, some deny the wind canvas-room. Here one bails water back into the water, another secures the spars. While these things are being done,

randomly, the storm increases its severity, and the roaring winds attack from every quarter, stirring the angry waves. The captain himself is fearful, and admits he does not know how things stand, what to order, what to prevent: such is the weight of destruction, so much more powerful than his skill.

There is uproar: men shouting, the rigging straining, the sound of the breaking sea from a weight of sea, and the crash of thunder. The waves rise up and seem to form the sky, and their spray touches the lowering clouds. Now the water is tainted yellow, with sand churned from the depths, now blacker than the **Styx**, while the waves break white with hissing foam. The **Trachinian** ship is driven in the grip of fate, now lifted on high, as if looking down on the valleys from a mountain summit, into the depths of **Acheron**: now sinking, caught in the trough of the wave, staring at heaven from the infernal pool. Again and again the force of the flood strikes the sides with a huge crash, sounding no lighter a blow than when,

sometime, an iron ram, or a ballista, strikes a damaged fortress. As fierce lions, on the attack, drive themselves onto the armoured chests and extended spears of the hunters, so the waves drove forward in the rising winds, reaching the height of the ship, and higher, above it.

And now the wooden wedges give way, and, stripped of their wax covering, cracks appear, offering the lethal waves a passage. Look how the heavy rain falls from the melting clouds, and you would think the whole heaven was emptying into the sea, and the sea was filling the heavenly zones. The sails are soaked with spray, and the seawater mingles with water from the heavens. The sky is starless, and the murky night is full of its own and the storm's gloom. Flashes of lightning cleave it, and give light: the rain is illuminated by the lightning flares.

Now the sea pours into the ship's hollow hull, as well. As a soldier, more outstanding than the rest, who has often tried to scale the battlement of a besieged city, succeeds at last,

and fired with a love of glory, takes the wall, one man in a thousand; so when the waves have battered nine times against the steep sides, the tenth wave surging with greater impetus rushes on, and does not cease its assault on the beleaguered craft, until it breaches the conquered vessel's defences. So one part of the sea is still trying to take the ship, and part is already inside.

All is confusion, as a city is confused when some are undermining the walls from outside, while others hold them from within. Skill fails, and courage ebbs, and as may separate deaths as advancing waves seem to rush upon them and burst over them. One cannot hold his tears, another is stupefied, and one cries out that they are fortunate whom proper burial rites await. One worships the gods in prayer, and, lifting his arms in vain to the sky, he cannot see, begs for help. Some think of fathers and brothers, some of home and children, or whatever they have left behind. But Alcyone is what moves Ceyx: nothing but Alcyone is on Ceyx's lips, and

though he only longs for her, he rejoices that she is not there.

How he would like to see his native shores again, and turn his last gaze towards his home, but he knows not where it is: the sea swirls in such vortices, and the covering shadows of pitch-black clouds so hide the sky, that it mirrors the aspect of night. The mast is shattered by the onset of a storm-driven whirlwind, and the rudder is shattered. One ultimate wave, like a conqueror delighting in his spoils, rears up gazing down at the other waves, and, as if one tore **Pindus**, and **Athos**, from their base, and threw them utterly into the open sea, it fell headlong, and the weight and the impulse together, drove the ship to the bottom. The majority of the crew met their fate with the ship, driven down by the mass of water, never to return to the light. The rest clung to broken pieces of the vessel.

Ceyx himself, held on to a fragment of the wreck, with a hand more used to holding a sceptre, and called on his father, **Lucifer**, and

his father-in-law, **Aeolus**, but alas, in vain. Mostly it is his wife's, **Alcyone**'s, name on his lips.

He thinks of her, and speaks to her, and prays that the waves might carry his body to her sight, and that, lifeless, he might be entombed by her dear hands. While he can swim, and as often as the waves allow him to open his mouth, he speaks the name of Alcyone, far off, until the waves themselves murmur it, See, a black arc of water breaks over the heart of the sea, and the bursting wave buries his drowning head.

Lucifer was indistinct, and not to be known, that dawn, and since he was not allowed to leave the sky, he covered his face in dense cloud.

Bk XI:573-649 The House of Sleep

Meanwhile, **Alcyone, Aeolus's daughter**, counts the nights, unaware of this great misfortune, quickly weaving clothes for him to

wear, and for herself, for when he returns, and she promises herself the homecoming that will not be. She piously offers incense to all the gods, but worships mostly at **Juno**'s temple, coming to the altars for a man who is no more, hoping her husband is safe, and returning to her, preferring her above any other woman. Of all her prayers, only this could be granted.

The goddess could no longer bear these appeals for one who was dead, and, to free her altar from those inauspicious hands, she said: '**Iris**, most faithful carrier of my words, go quickly to the heavy halls of **Sleep**, and order him to send Alcyone a dream-figure in the shape of her dead **Ceyx**, to tell her his true fate.' As she spoke, Iris donned her thousand-coloured robe, and, tracing her watery bow on the sky, she searched out, as ordered, the palace of that king, hid under cloud.

There is a deeply cut cave, a hollow mountain, near the **Cimmerian** country, the house and sanctuary of drowsy Sleep. Phoebus can never reach it with his dawn, mid-day or

sunset rays. Clouds mixed with fog, and shadows of the half-light, are exhaled from the ground. No waking cockerel summons **Aurora** with his crowing: no dog disturbs the silence with its anxious barking, or goose, cackling, more alert than a dog. No beasts, or cattle, or branches in the breeze, no clamour of human tongues. There still silence dwells. But out of the stony depths flows **Lethe**'s stream, whose waves, sliding over the loose pebbles, with their murmur, induce drowsiness. In front of the cave mouth a wealth of poppies flourish, and innumerable herbs, from whose juices dew-wet **Night** gathers sleep, and scatters it over the darkened earth. There are no doors in the palace, lest a turning hinge lets out a creak, and no guard at the threshold. But in the cave's centre there is a tall bed made of ebony, downy, black-hued, spread with a dark-grey sheet, where the god himself lies, his limbs relaxed in slumber. Around him, here and there, lie uncertain dreams, taking different forms, as many as the ears of corn at harvest, as the trees

bear leaves, or grains of sand are thrown onshore.

When the nymph entered and, with her hands, brushed aside the dreams in her way, the sacred place shone with the light of her robes. The god, hardly able to lift his eyes heavy with sleep, again and again, falling back, striking his nodding chin on his chest, at last shook himself free of his own influence, and resting on an elbow asked her (for he knew her) why she had come, and she replied:

‘**Sleep**, all things’ rest: Sleep, gentlest of the gods, the spirit’s peace, care flies from: who soothes the body wearied with toil, and readies it for fresh labours: Sleep, order a likeness, that mirrors his true form, and let it go, the image of King **Ceyx**, to **Alcyone**, in **Trachin** of **Hercules**, and depict a phantasm of the wreck. This, **Juno** commands.’

After she had completed her commission, Iris departed no longer able to withstand the power of sleep, and, feeling the drowsiness steal over

her body, she fled, and recrossed the arch by which she had lately come.

From a throng of a thousand sons, his father roused **Morpheus**, a master craftsman and simulator of human forms. No one else is as clever at expressing the movement, the features, and the sound of speech. He depicts the clothes and the usual accents. He alone imitates human beings. A second son becomes beast, or bird, or long snake's body. The gods call him **Icelos**, the mortal crowd **Phobetor**. The third, of diverse artistry, is **Phantasos**: he takes illusory shapes of all inanimate things, earth, stones, rivers, trees. These are the ones that show themselves by night to kings and generals, the rest wander among citizens and commoners. Old Somnus passed them by, choosing one of all these brothers, Morpheus, to carry out the command of Iris, **daughter of Thaumas**, and relaxing again into sweet drowsiness, his head drooped, and he settled into his deep bed.

Bk XI:650-709 Morpheus goes to Alcyone in the form of Ceyx

Flying through the shadows on noiseless wings, **Morpheus**, after a short delay, comes to the **Haemonian** city. Shedding his wings, he takes the shape of **Ceyx**, pallid like the dead, and naked, and stands before his unfortunate wife's bed. He appears with sodden beard, and seawater dripping from his matted hair. Then he bends over her pillow, with tears streaming down his face, and says: 'My poor wife, do you know your Ceyx, or has my face altered in death? Look at me: you will recognise me, and find for a husband, a husband's shade! Your prayers have brought me no help, **Alcyone**! I am dead! Do not hold out false hopes of my return! Storm-laden **Auster**, the south wind, caught the ship in **Aegean** waters, and tossed in tempestuous blasts, wrecked her there. My lips, calling helplessly on your name, drank the waves. No dubious author announces this news to you, nor do you hear it as a vague report: I

myself, drowned, as you see me before you, tell my fate. Get up, act, shed tears, wear mourning: do not let me go down unwept to **Tartarus**'s void.'

Morpheus spoke these words in a voice she would believe to be her husband's (the tears that he wept also seemed real tears) and his hands revealed Ceyx's gestures. Alcyone groaned, tearfully, stirring her arms in sleep, and seeking his body, grasped only air, and cried out: 'Wait for me! Where do you vanish? We will go together.' Roused by her own voice, and her husband's image, she started up out of sleep. First she gazed round to see if he was still there, the one she had just seen. At the sound of her cry the servants had brought a lamp. Not finding him anywhere, she struck her face with her hands, tore her clothes from her breasts, and beat at the breasts themselves. She did not wait to loosen her hair, but tore at it, and shouted at her nurse, who asked the cause of her grief: 'Alcyone is nothing, is nothing: she has died together with her Ceyx. Be done with soothing

words! He is wrecked: I saw him, I knew him, I stretched out my hands towards him as he vanished, eager to hold him back. It was a shadow, yet it was my husband's true shadow, made manifest. True, he did not have his accustomed features, if you ask me, nor did his face shine as before. But pallid and naked, with dripping hair, I, the unfortunate one, saw him. Look, my poor husband stood on that very spot,' and she tried to find a trace of his footprints. 'This is what I feared, with my divining mind, this: and I begged you not to leave me, chasing the winds. But, for certain, I should have desired you to take me with you, since you were going to your death. How good it would have been to have gone with you: then no part of my life would have lacked your presence, nor would we be separated by death. Now I have died absent from myself, and am thrown through the waves, absently, and the sea takes me, without me.

My mind would treat me more cruelly than the sea, if I should try to live on, and fight to

overcome my sorrow! But I shall not fight, nor leave you, my poor husband, and at least now I shall come as your companion. If not the sepulchral urn the lettered stone will join us: if I shall not touch you, bone to my bone, still I will touch you, name to name.’ Grief choked further words, and lamentation took their place wholly, and sighs drawn from a stricken heart.

Bk XI:710-748 They are turned into birds

Morning had broken. She went out of the house towards the shore, sadly seeking the place where she had watched him depart. And while she stayed there, and while she was saying: ‘Here he loosed the rope, on this strand he kissed me as he left,’ and while she recalled the significant actions by their locations, and looked seawards, she saw in the flowing waves what looked like a body, unsure at first what it was: after the tide had brought it a little nearer, though it was some way off, it was clearly a body. She did not know whose it was, but was

moved by the omen of this shipwrecked man, and as if she wept for the unknown dead, she cried out: ‘Alas for you, poor soul, whoever you may be, and your wife, if you have one!’ The body had been washed nearer by the sea, and the more she gazed at it, the smaller and smaller shrank her courage: woe! Now it was close to land, now she could see who it was: it was her husband! She cried out: ‘It’s him!’ and together tearing at cheeks, and hair, and clothes she stretched out her trembling hands to **Ceyx**, saying: ‘O, is it like this, dear husband, is it like this, wretched one, you return to me?’

A breakwater built by the waves, broke the initial force of the sea, and weakened the onrush of the tide. Though it was amazing that she could do so, she leapt onto it: she flew, and, beating the soft air on new-found wings, a sorrowing bird, she skimmed the surface of the waves. As she flew, her plaintive voice came from a slender beak, like someone grieving and full of sorrows. When she reached the mute and bloodless corpse, she clasped the dear limbs

with her new wings and kissed the cold lips in vain with her hard beak.

People doubted whether Ceyx felt this, or merely seemed to raise his face by a movement of the waves, but he did feel it: and at last through the gods' pity, both were changed to birds, the halcyons. Though they suffered the same fate, their love remained as well: and their bonds were not weakened, by their feathered form. They mate and rear their young, and **Alcyone** broods on her nest, for seven calm days in the wintertime, floating on the water's surface. Then the waves are stilled: **Aeolus** imprisons the winds and forbids their roaming, and controls his grandsons' waves.

Bk XI:749-795 The transformation of Aesacus

Seeing these birds flying together over the wide sea, some old man praised those affections maintained till the end. Someone near by, or the same man (pointing to a long-necked diving

bird) said: ‘That bird also, skimming over the ocean, trailing his slender legs, is a descendant of kings. If you want to trace his ancestry in unbroken line to himself, its source was **Ilus** the younger, the son of Tros, and his brothers **Assaracus**, and **Ganymede**, whom **Jove** snatched, Ilus’s son, old **Laomedon**, and his son **Priam**, whom fate assigned to **Troy**’s last days. That bird was **Hector**’s brother, **Aesacus**, who, if he had not met his strange fate in youth, would perhaps have had no less a name than Hector, though **Hecuba**, **daughter of Dymas**, bore Priam the first, the other Aesacus, is said to have been born to **Alexirrhoë**, daughter of two-horned **Granicus**, the river-god, in secret, under the shadow of Mount **Ida**.

He hated cities, and lived in the remote mountains, and insignificant country places, far away from the glittering court, and rarely visited crowded **Ilium**. Yet he did not have an uncultured heart, or one averse to love, and he often pursued **Hesperie**, the River **Cebren’s daughter**, through all the woodland glades,

whom he had caught sight of, drying her flowing hair, in the sun, on her father's shore. The nymph fled on sight, as a frightened hind flees the tawny wolf, or a wild duck, caught far from the pool she left, the hawk. But the Trojan hero, driven by swift love, followed her, driven by swift fear. Behold, a serpent, hidden in the grass, bit her foot with his curving fang, as she fled by, and left his poison in her body. Her flight ended with her life. The lover clasped her unbreathing body and cried: 'I regret, I regret I followed you! But I did not expect this, and it was not worth this to attempt to win you. We two have destroyed you, poor girl: the wound given by a snake, the cause of it all myself! Let me be the more accursed, if I do not send you solace by my death.'

He spoke, and threw himself from a cliff, eroded below by the rough waves, into the sea. **Tethys**, pitying him, caught him gently as he fell, clothed him with feathers as he floated on the water, and denied him the opportunity to choose his death. The lover was angered, that

he was forced to live, against his will, and that his spirit was thwarted, wishing to leave its unhappy residence. When he had gained the new wings on his shoulders, he flew up and threw his body again into the sea. His feathers broke his fall. In a rage, **Aesacus** dived headlong into the deep and tried endlessly to find a path to death. His love made him lean: his legs are long between the joints: his neck remained long: his head is far from his body. He loves seawater, and from diving there he takes his name, *mergus*, the diver.

Book XII



Bk XII:1-38 Iphigenia at Aulis

The father, **Priam**, mourned for the son, **Aesacus**, not knowing that he was still alive in winged form. **Hector** with his brothers had also, inappropriately, offered sacrifices at a tomb inscribed with his name. **Paris** was not present at this sad ritual, he, who presently brought extended war on his country because of the wife he had stolen. The whole **Pelasgian** race, joined together to pursue him, in a thousand ships, and vengeance would not have been long in coming had not fierce winds made the seas un-navigable, and the land of **Boeotia** detained the waiting ships in the fishing-grounds of **Aulis**. After they had prepared a sacrifice to Jupiter there, after the customs of their country, and when the ancient altar was alive with the kindled flames, The **Greeks** saw a dark-green snake sliding into a plane tree that stood near to where they had begun the sacrifice. There was a nest with eight young birds in the crown of the tree, and these the

serpent seized and swallowed in its eager jaws, together with the mother bird, who circled her doomed fledglings.

They looked at it wonderingly, but **Calchas**, the seer, **son of Thestor**, interpreted the truth, saying: 'We will conquer, **Greeks**, rejoice! Troy will fall, though our efforts will be of long duration,' and he divined nine years of war from the nine birds. The snake, was turned to stone, exactly as it was, twined around the green branches, and stamped in the stone its serpent shape.

Boreas, the north-wind, continued to stir the waves violently, and would not grant the warships a crossing, and some thought **Neptune** was sparing **Troy**, because he had built its walls. But not **Calchas**. He knew and did not withhold from them, that a virgin's blood would appease the wrath of **Diana**, the virgin goddess. When consideration of the common cause had conquered affection, and the king had suppressed the father, and as **Iphigenia** stood, among her weeping attendants, before the altar,

to surrender her innocent blood, the goddess was vanquished, and veiled their eyes in mist, and, in the midst of the rites and confusion of the sacrifice, and the cries of the suppliants, they say she substituted a hind for the **Mycenean** girl. When, therefore, Diana had been appeased, by the required victim, and the sea's anger had subsided simultaneously with that of **Phoebe**, the thousand ships, driven by a tail wind, reached the shores of **Phrygia**, after many adventures.

Bk XII:39-63 The House of Rumour

There is a place at the centre of the World, between the zones of earth, sea, and sky, at the boundary of the three worlds. From here, whatever exists is seen, however far away, and every voice reaches listening ears. **Rumour** lives there, choosing a house for herself on a high mountain summit, adding innumerable entrances, a thousand openings, and no doors to bar the threshold. It is open night and day: and

is all of sounding bronze. All rustles with noise, echoes voices, and repeats what is heard. There is no peace within: no silence anywhere. Yet there is no clamour, only the subdued murmur of voices, like the waves of the sea, if you hear them far off, or like the sound of distant thunder when **Jupiter** makes the dark clouds rumble.

Crowds fill the hallways: a fickle populace comes and goes, and, mingling truth randomly with fiction, a thousand rumours wander, and confused words circulate. Of these, some fill idle ears with chatter, others carry tales, and the author adds something new to what is heard. Here is Credulity, here is rash Error, empty Delight, and alarming Fear, sudden Sedition, and Murmurings of doubtful origin. Rumour herself sees everything that happens in the heavens, throughout the ocean, and on land, and inquires about everything on earth.

Bk XII:64-145 The death and transformation of Cynus

She had spread the news that the Greek fleet was nearing, filled with brave warriors, and so the arrival of the armed host was no surprise. The Trojans opposed the landing, and defended their coast. You, **Protesilaüs**, were the first to fall beneath **Hector**'s deadly spear, and joining in battle cost the **Greeks** dearly, and they knew mighty Hector's spirit by the slaughter. The **Phrygians** learnt at no small expense of blood, the power of an **Achaian** hand. Now the **Sigeian** shores ran red: now **Cycnus**, a son of **Neptune**, had consigned a thousand men to death: now **Achilles** pursued in his chariot, and laid whole columns of men low with a blow of his spear from **Pelion**. Searching the battlelines for Cycnus or for Hector, he came upon Cycnus (His meeting with Hector postponed till the tenth year of the war).

Then Achilles, urging on his horses, their snowy necks straining against the harness, he drove his chariot straight at the enemy, striking out, with the quivering spear, with all his

strength, saying: ‘O youth, whoever you may be, take death’s comfort in being killed by Achilles of **Haemonia!**’ So **Aeacides** spoke: His heavy spear followed the words, but although there was certainly no error in the flight of the spear, still the sharp point of the flying blade had no effect, and only bruised Cycnus’s chest, like a blunted weapon. ‘O son of the goddess,’ Cycnus said, ‘fame has made you known to me, why are you amazed I have no wound? (He was indeed amazed) Neither this helmet you see, with its yellow horsehair crest, nor the hollow shield weighing down my left arm, is to protect me: they only look to serve as ornament. **Mars** too wears his armour for this reason! Take away the use of this protective covering: I will still escape unharmed. It is worth something to be the son, not of **Nereus’s daughter**, but of him who rules **Nereus** and his daughters, and the whole ocean as well.’

He spoke, and hurled his spear at **Achilles**, but it stuck fast in his round bronze shield. It

tore through the bronze and nine layers of bull's hide, but was stopped by a tenth. Shaking it off, the Greek hero once more threw a quivering spear from his mighty hand. Again his enemy's body was whole and unharmed. A third spear could not even graze Cycnus though he laid himself open to it. Achilles flared up, like a bull in the arena, when it charges with its deadly horns at the Carthaginian cloak, and finds it escapes damage. He examined the spear to see if the iron point had been loosened: it was fixed to the shaft. 'Is my hand enfeebled,' he said, 'so that the power it had is lacking against this man?' Certainly it was strong enough when I led the overthrow of **Lyrnessus**'s walls, or when I drenched the island of **Tenedos**, and **Mysian Thebes**, **Eetion**'s city, in their own blood, when the River **Caïcus** ran red with the slaughter of those around it, and **Telephus** twice felt the touch of my spear. Here also, my right hand has prevailed, and will prevail, striking so many, the heaps of corpses I made and see on the shore.'

He spoke, and as if not believing the results of his previous actions, he threw the spear straight at **Menoetes**, one of the **Lycian** men, simultaneously piercing his breastplate and the breast beneath. As the dying man beat his head against the solid earth, Achilles pulled the spear from the hot wound, and cried: 'This is the hand, and this is the spear with which I have just been victorious: I shall use it on this enemy, and I pray his end may be the same.' Thus he pursued the death of Cycnus again, and the ashen shaft did not err, thudding unavoidably into the left shoulder, from which it recoiled as if from a wall or a solid rock. Achilles saw that Cycnus was stained with blood where it struck, and exulted, but in vain: there was no wound: it was Menoetes's blood! Then truly maddened, he leapt headlong from his high chariot, and seeking out his charmed enemy, at close quarters, with glittering sword, saw shield and helmet carved through, but still the iron blunted on the impenetrable body. He could stand it no longer, and he beat at the face

and hollow temples of his enemy three or four times with his raised shield and sword-hilt.

One presses as the other gives way: he rushes and harries him, allowing no respite from the shock. Fear grips Cycnus, shadows swim in front of his eyes, and, as he steps backwards, his retreating step is blocked, by a boulder, on the open ground. As he is trapped with his body bent against it, Achilles turns him over with great force, and dashes him to the ground. Then pressing his hard knees and shield into Cycnus's chest, he pulls on the helmet straps, which, tightening under the chin, squeeze the throat and windpipe, and stop the passage of breath. He prepares to strip his defeated enemy: he sees empty armour: the god of the sea has changed the body into that of a white bird, whose name is the one he bore, but a moment ago.

Bk XII:146-209 Nestor tells the story of Caeneus-Caenis

This battle brought about that truce, of many days duration, when both sides grounded their weapons and rested. While alert sentries patrolled the **Trojan** walls and alert sentries patrolled the **Greek** trenches, a feast day arrived, on which **Achilles**, the victor over **Cycnus**, was propitiating **Pallas** with the blood of a sacrificial cow. When its entrails had been placed on the blazing altars, and the perfume the gods love had climbed to the heavens, part was put aside for their holy rites, and the rest set out on the tables. The leaders reclined on couches, and ate their fill of the roasted meat, while they quenched their thirst, and drowned their cares, with wine. The zither, the sound of singing, the long boxwood flute pierced with many holes, was not their entertainment, rather they lengthened the night with talk, and courage was their theme. They talked of their enemies' battles, and of their own, and delighted in recounting, in turn, the dangers they had encountered and survived. What else should

Achilles speak of, and what else should be spoken of in great Achilles's presence?

The foremost talk was of his latest victory, the overthrow of **Cycnus**. It seemed wondrous to all of them that a warrior should have a body no spear could penetrate, impervious to wounds, and that blunted iron swords. Achilles himself and the Greeks were marvelling at it, when **Nestor** said: 'Cycnus has been the only one among your generation who ignored swords, and whom no blow could pierce. But, long ago, I myself saw one **Caeneus** of **Thessaly**, who could take a thousand strokes with unwounded body: Thessalian Caeneus, I say, who, famous for his exploits, lived on Mount **Othrys**, and what made it more remarkable in him, he had been born a woman.' All who there were interested by this strange wonder, and asked him to tell the story.

Achilles, among the rest, said: 'Say on, old one! O ancient eloquence, wisdom of our age, all of us equally desire to hear, who Caeneus was, why he was changed to his opposite, what

campaign you met him in, fighting against whom, by whom he was overcome, if anyone overcame him.’ Then the old warrior said: ‘Though the slowness of age hampers me, and many things I once saw have slipped from me, I can still remember many. Nothing sticks more firmly in my mind than this, amongst all those acts, in battle and at home, and if length of years alone enabled a man to report many deeds, I have lived two hundred years: now I live in my third century.

Elatus’s daughter, **Caenis**, loveliest of the virgins of **Thessaly**, was famous for her beauty, a girl longed for in vain, the object of many suitors throughout the neighbouring cities and your own (since she was one of your people, Achilles). Perhaps **Peleus** also would have tried to wed her, but he had already taken your mother in marriage, or she was promised to your father. Caenis would not agree to any marriage, but (so rumour has it) she was walking along a lonely beach, and the god took her by force. When Neptune had enjoyed his

new love he said: “Make your wish, without fear of refusal. Ask for what you most want!” (The same rumour mentioned this.)

“This injury evokes the great desire never to be able to suffer any such again. Grant I might not be a woman: you will have given me everything,” Caenis said. She spoke the last words in a deeper tone, that might have been the sound of a man’s voice. So it was: the god of the deep ocean had already accepted her wish, and had granted, over and above it, that as a man Caeneus would be protected from all wounds, and never fall to the sword. Caeneus, the **Atracides**, left, happy with his gifts, and spent his time in manly pastimes, roaming the **Thessalian** fields.’

Bk XII:210-244 Nestor tells of the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs

‘**Pirithoüs**, the daring son of **Ixion**, married **Hippodame**, and invited the cloud-born **centaurs** to take their place at tables, set in

lines, in a tree-shaded cave. **Caeneus**, and the other **Thessalian** princes were there, and I was there myself. The festive palace echoed with the noisy crowd. See, they were singing the marriage song, and the great hall smoked with fires, and in came the virgin surrounded by a throng of young wives and mothers, conspicuous, in her beauty. We declared Pirithoüs to be blessed in his bride, which almost betrayed his good fortune. For your heart was heated by the sight of the girl as much as by wine, **Eurytus**, most savage of the savage Centaurs: and drunkenness twinned with lust ruled it.

At once the tables were overturned and the banquet in turmoil, and the new bride was grabbed by the hair and dragged off by force. Eurytus seized Hippodame: the others whosoever they wished to, or could, and it looked like the rape of a city. The palace sounded with women's cries. We all leaped up quickly, and Theseus, first, shouted out: 'What foolishness drives you to this, Eurytus, that you

challenge Pirithoüs in my presence, and unknowingly attack two in one? Lest his words were in vain, the brave hero pushed aside those threatening him, and rescued the girl from the madmen. The other made no reply (since he could not defend his actions with words) but attacked her champion, with violent hands, striking at his face and noble chest.

There chanced to be an ancient mixing-bowl nearby, embossed with raised designs, and Theseus raised the huge thing, he himself being huger, and threw it straight at Eurytus's face. He fell backwards, drumming his feet on the blood-soaked earth, gouts of blood spurting from mouth and wound equally, along with brain-matter and wine. His twin-natured brothers, taking fire at his death, emulated each other, in shouting: 'To arms! To arms!' with a single voice. Wine gave them courage, and, in the first battle, cups, fragile jars, and round basins were sent flying, things intended for feasting, now used for fighting and killing.'

Bk XII:245-289 The deaths of Amycus, Gryneus, Cometes

‘First, **Amycus, son of Ophion**, did not fear to despoil the inner shrine of its offerings, and snatched, first, from the sanctuary, a chandelier, thickly hung with gleaming lamps, and raising it on high, as one wields a sacrificial axe to break the bull’s snowy neck, he dashed it against the forehead of **Celadon**, the **Lapith**, leaving him with the bones of his face crushed past recognition. His eyes leapt from their sockets, and his nose, pushed in, as the bones of his face shattered, was driven into his palate. At this, **Pelates** of **Pella**, wrenching a leg from a maple-wood table, knocked Amycus to the ground, his chin driven into his chest: and his enemy sent him to the shadows of **Tartarus** with a second wound, as he spat out teeth, mixed with dark blood.

Then **Gryneus**, standing near the smoking altar, gazing at it with wild eyes, shouted: “Why not put this to use?” and lifting the huge

altar with its flames, he threw it into the midst of the crowd of **Lapiths**, crushing two of them, **Broteas** and **Orios**: Orios's mother was **Mycale**, who was often known to draw down the horned moon by her incantations despite its struggles. "You will not escape with impunity, if I can find a weapon." said **Exadius**, who found the equivalent of a spear in a stag's antlers that hung on a tall pine tree, as a votive offering. Gryneus was pierced in the eyes by the twin branches, and his eyeballs gouged out, one of which stuck to the horn, and the other slipped down onto his beard, and hung there in a clot of blood.

Then **Rhoetus** snatched up a burning brand from the altar, wood from a plum tree, and swinging it down from the right hand side, broke **Charaxus**'s temples protected by yellow hair. The hair flared like a dry cornfield, set alight by the quick flames, and the blood seared in the wound gave out a terrible sizzling noise, as a bar of iron is prone to do, when the smith takes it, red-hot, from the fire, with curved

tongs, and plunges it into a bath of water: it whistles and hisses immersed in the bubbling liquid.

The wounded man shook the rapacious flames from his shaggy hair, and tearing a stone sill from the ground lifted it on his shoulders, a load for oxen, its very weight preventing him from hurling it as far as his enemy: but the mass of stone crushed his friend **Cometes**, who was standing nearer. Rhoetus could not contain his delight, saying: “May the rest of the crowd on your side be as formidable as that!” and he renewed his attack with the half-burned branch, and with three or four heavy blows broke through the joints of his skull until the bones sank into the fluid brain.’

Bk XII:290-326 The deaths of Corythus, Aphidas and others

‘The victor turned his attention to **Euagrus**, **Corythus** and **Dryas**. When Corythus, one of these, fell, whose first downy hair covered his

cheeks, Euagrus cried: “What glory is there on your part in shedding the blood of a boy?” **Rhoetus** stopped him from speaking, thrusting the fiery flames into the man’s open mouth, and down his throat. He pursued you, also, savage Dryas, whirling the branch round his head, but with a different result. As Rhoetus came on exulting in the succession of killings, you ran him through with a charred stake, where neck and shoulder meet. Rhoetus groaned and with an effort wrenched the stake out of the solid bone: then he ran, drenched in his own blood.

Orneus and **Lycabas**, also ran; **Medon**, wounded in the right shoulder; **Thaumas** and **Pisenor**; and **Mermeros** who had recently overcome everyone by his fleetness of foot, and now ran more slowly from the wound he had suffered. **Pholus**, **Melaneus**, and **Abas** the boar-hunter also fled, and **Asbolus**, the augur, who had vainly tried to dissuade them from fighting. To **Nessus**, who also ran with him, fearful of being wounded, he said: “Do not flee! You are fated to be preserved for **Hercules**’s

bow.” But **Eurynomus**, and **Lycidas**, **Areos** and **Imbreus** did not escape death: all these Dryas’s hand killed as they fronted him. You also received a wound in front, **Crenaeus**, though you had turned your back in flight: as you looked back the heavy blade took you between the eyes, where nose and forehead meet.

Aphidas lay amongst the intense noise, without waking, all his strength sunk in endless sleep, still holding a cup of mixed wine, in his limp hand, stretched out on the shaggy skin of a bear from Mount **Ossa**. **Phorbas** caught sight of him at a distance, uselessly idle in the fight, and fitting his fingers into the strap of his javelin said: “Go drink your wine mixed with the waters of **Styx**.” Without hesitating he hurled his spear at the youth, and the ash shaft tipped with iron was driven through his neck, as he chanced to be lying with his head thrown back. He did not feel death, and the black blood flowed from his welling throat, onto the couch and into the wine-cup itself.’

Bk XII:327-392 Pirithoüs, Theseus and Peleus join the fight

I saw **Petraeus** trying to tear an oak-tree full of acorns from the ground. While he had his arms round it, bending it this way and that, and shaking the loosened trunk, **Pirithoüs** sent a lance through his ribs, and pinned his writhing body to the hard wood. They say that **Lycus** fell by Pirithoüs's might, and **Chromis** by Pirithoüs's might, but **Dictys** and **Helops** gave the victor a greater title to fame. Helops was transfixed by a javelin that passed through both temples; hurled from the right and piercing the left ear. Dictys, fleeing in desperate panic, pressed hard by **Ixion**'s son, stumbled on a mountain height, and fell headlong, breaking a huge flowering ash with the weight of his body, and entangling his entrails in the shattered tree.

Aphareus was there, his avenger, who tried to hurl a rock torn from the mountainside: but as he tried **Theseus**, the **son of Aegeus**, caught

him with his oaken club and broke the massive bones of his elbow. Having neither time nor desire to inflict further injury on his worthless body, he leaped onto tall **Bienor**'s back, unused to carrying anything but its owner, and, pressing his knees into the centaur's flanks, and clutching the mane with his left hand, he shattered the face, the mouth uttering threats, and the solid temples, with his knotted club. With the club he overthrew **Nedymnus**, and **Lycopes** the javelin-thrower; **Hippasos**, his chest protected by a flowing beard, and **Ripheus**, who towered above the treetops; **Thereus**, also, who used to take bears on the mountain slopes of **Thessaly**, and carry them home angry and alive.

Demoleon could no longer stand the success Theseus was enjoying: he had been trying, with great effort, to tear up the solid trunk of an ancient pine. Unable to do it, he broke it off and hurled it at the enemy. But Theseus drew well away from the oncoming missile, warned by **Pallas**, or so he would have

us believe. The tree trunk did not fall without effect, since it severed tall **Crantor**'s chest and left shoulder from the neck. He was your father's armour bearer, **Achilles**, whom **Amyntor** king of the **Dolopians**, having been defeated in battle, gave to **Peleus**, the **Aeacides**, as a true pledge of peace.

When Peleus, some distance away, saw him torn apart by the frightful wound he shouted: "Accept this tribute to the dead, at least, Crantor, dearest of youths, " and with his powerful arm, he hurled his ash spear, at full strength, at **Demoleon**. It ruptured the ribcage, and stuck quivering in the bone. The centaur pulled out the shaft minus its head (he tried with difficulty to reach that also) but the head was caught in his lung. The pain itself strengthened his will: wounded, he reared up at his enemy and beat the hero down with his hooves. Peleus received the resounding blows on helmet and shield, and defending his upper arms, and controlling the weapon he held out,

with one blow through the arm he pierced the bi-formed breast.

Peleus had already, before this, killed **Phlegraeos** and **Hyles**, from a distance, and **Iphinoüs** and **Clanis** in close conflict. He added **Dorylas** to these, who wore a wolfskin cap on his head, and instead of a deadly spear, carried a magnificent pair of crooked bull's horns, dyed red with copious blood.

I shouted to him (my courage giving me strength) "See how your horns give way before my spear" and I threw my javelin. Since he could not evade it, he blocked a wound to his forehead with his right hand, and his hand was pinned to his forehead. He screamed, but Peleus (as he stood near him) struck him with his sword in mid-stomach, as he came to a halt there, overcome by the harsh wound. Dorylas leapt forward fiercely, dragging his guts on the ground, and as he dragged he trampled them, and as he trampled he tore them, entangled his legs in them, and fell, with emptied belly.'

Bk XII:393-428 Cyllarus and Hylonome

‘Nor did your beauty, **Cyllarus**, if indeed we attribute beauty to your centaur race, save you in the fighting.

His beard was beginning to show; a beard the colour of gold; and a golden mane fell from his shoulders half way down his flanks. He had a liveliness of expression that was pleasing; his neck and shoulders, chest and hands, and all his human parts, you would praise as almost sculpted by an artist. Nor was the equine part below marred, or inferior to the human: give him a horse’s head and neck and he would be worthy of a **Castor**, the back so fit for a rider, the deep chest so muscular. He was blacker than pitch all over, except for a white tail, and legs also snow-white.

Many females of his race courted him, but one, **Hylonome**, won him, none lovelier, among the female centaurs, in the deep forests. She alone held Cyllarus’s affections, by endearments, by loving and admitting love; and

by her appearance, as far as those limbs allow its cultivation: now she would smooth her mane with a comb, now entwine it with rosemary, now violets or roses: or else she wore bright lilies. She bathed her face twice a day in the spring that fell from the woods, on the heights near **Pagasae**, twice dipped her body in the stream. She would wear only selected skins of wild beasts that became her, over her shoulder or across her left flank. Their love was equally shared. They wandered the mountainsides together, rested at the same time in caves: and now they had both come to the palace of the Lapiths, and both fought fiercely.

A javelin (who threw it is unknown) came from the left and took you, Cyllarus, below the place where the chest swells to the neck. When the weapon was withdrawn the heart, though only slightly pierced, grew cold with the whole body. Immediately Hylonome clasped the dying limbs, sealed the wound with her hand, placed her mouth on his, and tried to prevent the passage of his spirit. Seeing he was dead, with

words that the noise prevented from reaching my ears, she threw herself onto the spear that had pierced him, embracing her husband in dying.’

Bk XII:429-535 The transformation of Caeneus

‘Still **Phaecomes** stands before my eyes, he, who had tied six lion skins together with knotted cords, as a covering, protecting both man and horse. Hurling a log, that two teams of oxen could hardly move, he crushed the skull-bone of **Tectaphos**, son of **Olenus**. The broad dome of his head was shattered, and the soft brain matter oozed out through the hollow nostrils, eyes and ears, like curdled milk through the oak lattice, or as liquid trickles through a coarse sieve, under the weight, and squeezes thickly through the close mesh. But even as Phaecomes prepared to strip the arms from the fallen man (your father knows this), I thrust my sword deep into the despoiler’s thigh.

Chthonius and **Teleboas** also fell to my sword: the first carried a forked branch, the other a spear: he gave me a wound with the spear - see, the scar! - the mark of the old wound is still visible. In those days I would have been sent to capture **Troy's citadel**; then, I could have entertained **Hector** greatly with my weapons, if not overcome him. But Hector at that time was a child or not yet born, now my age has weakened me.

What need to tell you how **Periphas** conquered dual-shaped **Pyraethus**? Why tell of **Ampyx** who drove his cornel-wood spear that had lost its tip into the opposing face of four-footed **Echeclus**? **Macareus** threw a crowbar at the chest of **Pelethronian Erigdupus**, killing him: and I remember how a hunting spear, from the hand of **Nessus**, buried itself in **Cymelus**'s groin. Nor would you have thought **Mopsus**, Ampycus's son, only prophesied the future: bi-formed **Hodites** fell to Mopsus's throw, trying in vain to speak, his tongue fixed to the floor of his mouth, the floor of his mouth to his throat.

Caeneus had killed five: **Styphelos**, **Bromus**, **Antimachus**, **Elymus**; and **Pyracmos**, who was armed with a battle-axe. I do not recall their wounds, but I noted their number, and their names. Then **Latreus** rushed forward, massive in body and limbs, armed with the spoils of **Emathian Halesus** whom he had killed. He was between youth and age, but had the strength of youth, his hair greying on his temples. Prancing in a circle, turning to face each of the battle-lines in turn, and conspicuous for his **Macedonian** lance, helmet and shield, he clashed his weapons, pouring out many proud words, into the empty air. “Do I have to put up with you, **Caenis**? For you will always be a woman, Caenis, to me. Does your natal origin not remind you; does not the act you were rewarded for come to mind, at what cost you gained this false aspect of a man? Consider what you were born as, or what you experienced, go, pick up your distaff and basket of wool and twist the spun thread with your thumb: leave war to men.”

At this Caeneus threw his spear, ploughing a furrow in the centaur's side, where man and horse joined, as he was stretched out in the act of galloping. Maddened with pain, Latreus struck the **Phylleian** youth in his unprotected face, with the lance: but it bounced off like a hailstone from a rooftop, or a small pebble from a hollow drum. Then he closed up on him, and tried to thrust his sword into his impenetrable side: the sword found no way in. The centaur shouted: "You will still not escape! I will kill you with the sword's edge if the point is blunt." Turning his blade sideways he reached out for his enemy's loins with his long right arm. The blow resounded, as if it struck a body of marble, and the weapon fractured in pieces as it hit the firm flesh.

When he had exposed his unwounded limbs for long enough to his wondering enemy, Caeneus said: "Now let me try your body with my blade!" and he drove his fatal weapon into the other's side, turning and twisting his hand, buried in the guts, causing wound on wound.

See, the centaurs maddened, rushed on him with a great shout, and all aimed and threw their spears at the one man. The spears fell, blunted: and Caeneus, **son of Elatus**, remained unpierced and unbloodied by all their efforts. This marvel astonished them.

“Oh, what overwhelming shame!” **Monychus** exclaimed. “A people defeated by one who is scarcely a man: yet he is the man, and we, with our half-hearted attempts are what he once was. What use are our huge limbs? What use our twin powers, and that double nature uniting the strongest living things in us? We are not sons of a divine mother: nor of **Ixion** who was such as aspired to captivate great **Juno**: we are overcome by an enemy, who is half a man! Roll down rocks and tree trunks on him, and whole mountainsides, and crush that stubborn spirit with the forests we hurl! Let their mass constrict his throat, and let weight work instead of wounds.”

He spoke, and finding a chance tree-trunk toppled by a furious southerly wind, he threw it

at his powerful enemy. He served as the example, and in a little while Mount **Othrys** was bare of trees, and **Pelion** had lost its shade. Buried under the huge pile, Caeneus strained against the weight of trees, and propped up the mass of oak on his strong shoulders, but as it mounted above his mouth and face, he had no breath of the air that he breathed, and lacking it, often, he tried in vain to raise himself into the air, and throw off the forest piled on him, and often heaved, as if steep Mount **Ida**, that we see there, look, was shaken by an earthquake.

His fate is doubtful: some said his body was thrust down to empty **Tartarus**, by the mass of forest: but **Mopsus**, the **son of Ampycus** denied this. He saw a bird with tawny wings fly into the clear air from the midst of the pile, which I saw also, then, for the first and last time ever. As Mopsus watched him smoothly circling his camp in flight, making a great noise, he pursued him with mind and vision, saying “Hail to you, Caeneus, glory of the race of Lapiths, once a great hero, but now a bird

alone!” The thing was believed because of its author: grief was added to anger, and we could barely accept one man being conquered by so many enemies. Nor did we cease to work off our pain with the sword until half were dead, and half, fleeing, were swallowed by the night.’

Bk XII:536-579 Nestor tells of the death of Periclymenus

As the hero from **Pylos** told of this battle between the **Lapiths** and the half-human **Centaurs**, **Tlepolemus**, son of **Hercules**, leader of the **Rhodians**, could not keep his mouth silent in his indignation at Hercules, **the descendant of Alceus**, being overlooked. He said ‘Old man, it is amazing that your recital forgot to praise Hercules: certainly my father often used to tell me of the cloud-born centaurs he defeated.’ Nestor answered him, sternly. ‘Why do you force me to remember wrongs, to re-open wounds healed by the years, and to reveal hatred for your father and the injuries he

did me? He has done deeds beyond belief, the gods know, and filled the earth with his praises: that, I wish I could deny. But we do not praise **Deïphobus**, or **Polydamas**, or **Hector**: who praises an enemy indeed?

That father of yours razed **Messene**'s walls; destroyed the innocent cities of **Elis** and **Pylos**, and overthrew my **household gods** with fire and sword. I say nothing of the others he killed: there were twelve of us, **sons of Neleus**, outstanding young men, all except myself fell to Hercules's strength. We must accept that the others could be defeated: the death of **Periclymenus** was strange, whom **Neptune**, founder of **Neleus**'s bloodline, had granted the power to assume any form he wished and reverse that which he had assumed. Now, after he had changed to every form in turn, he reverted to the shape of a bird, the eagle that carries the lightning bolts in its curved talons, beloved by the king of the gods. He tore at the hero's face with all the power of his wings, his hooked beak, and crooked claws. Then, as he

soared among the clouds, and hung poised there, the **Tirynthian** fired his unerring bow at him, and pierced him where the wing meets the side.

The wound was not fatal, but the sinews, severed by the wound, failed, devoid of movement or power of flight. He fell to earth, his weakened pinions not mastering the air, and the arrow, clinging lightly to the wing, was driven upwards with the body's weight, and forced through the top of the breast into the left side of the throat.

Now, O most glorious leader of the **Rhodian** fleet, do you think I should cry out your Hercules's praises? Yet I look for no other revenge for my brothers than to be silent about his mighty deeds: there is unbroken friendship between you and me.'

When **Nestor** had told his tale in a pleasant voice, passing from the old man's story to the gifts of **Bacchus** again, they rose from the couches: the rest of the night was given to sleep.

Bk XII:579-628 The death of Achilles

But the god of the trident, who rules the ocean waters, grieved, with a father's feelings, for the son changed into a swan, the bird **of Phaethon**, and, hating fierce **Achilles**, he nursed an excessive anger in his memory.

And now, when the war against **Troy** had lasted for almost ten years, he called to **Sminthean Apollo**, the unshorn, in these words: 'O, by far the best loved of my brother's sons, who built the walls of Troy with me, to no purpose, do you sigh at all to see these battlements at the moment of their destruction? Do you grieve at all that so many thousands died defending her walls? Not to name all of them, does not the shade come before you of **Hector**, dragged round his own citadel, **Pergama**? But savage Achilles, more cruel than war itself, is still alive, ravager of our creation. Let him be given up to me. I would let him feel

what I can do with my three-pronged spear: but since I am not allowed to meet face to face with the enemy, destroy him unexpectedly with a hidden arrow!’

The **Delian** god nodded, and satisfying his own and his uncle’s desire, he came to the Trojan lines, wrapped in a cloud, and there, among human massacre, he saw **Paris** firing infrequent shafts at unknown Greeks. Showing himself as a god, he said: ‘Why waste your arrows on the blood of the rank and file? If you care for your own, aim at Achilles, **grandson of Aeacus**, and avenge your dead brothers!’ He spoke, and, pointing to **Pelides**, who, with his weapon, was strewing the ground with Trojan bodies, he turned Paris’s bow towards him, and guided the unerring shaft with deadly hand. This was the one thing that could delight old **Priam** since Hector’s death.

So, Achilles, conqueror of so much greatness, you are conquered, by the cowardly thief of the wife of a Greek! If your death had to be by a woman’s hand, in war, you would

rather have fallen to an **Amazon**'s two-edged axe.

Now Achilles, grandson of Aeacus, the terror of the **Phrygians**, the glory and defence of the **Pelasgian** name, the invincible captain in battle, was burned: one god, **Vulcan**, armed him, and that same god consumed him. Now he is ash, and little if anything remains of Achilles, once so mighty, hardly enough to fill an urn. But his fame lives, enough to fill a world. That equals the measure of the man, and, in that, the **son of Peleus** is truly himself, and does not know the void of **Tartarus**.

So that you might know whose it was, even his shield makes war: and arms, for his arms, are raised. **Diomedes**, **son of Tydeus**, and **the lesser Ajax**, **Oileus**'s son, dare not claim them, nor the younger **son of Atreus**, **Menelaüs**, nor the elder, **Agamemnon**, greater in warfare, nor the rest. Only **Ajax**, the son of **Telamon**, and **Ulysses**, **Laërtes**'s son, were confident enough for such glory. Agamemnon, the **descendant of Tantalus**, in order to escape the invidious

burden of choosing between them, ordered the leaders of the Greeks to meet in the middle of the camp, and he transferred judgment of the dispute to them

Book XIII



Bk XIII:1-122 The debate over the arms: Ajax speaks

When the captains were seated, and the rank and file were standing, in a circle, around them, **Ajax**, master of the seven-layered shield, leapt up, and, fired with indignation, he looked back fiercely at the **Sigeon** shore, and the ships beached on the shore, and, pointing to them, he said: 'It is in front of these vessels I plead my cause, and **Ulysses** opposes me, by Jupiter! Yet he did not hesitate to give way before **Hector**'s blazing torches, which I resisted, which I drove away from the boats. But then, it is less risky to battle using lying words, than to fight with fists, and I am not prompt to speak, as he is not to act. I am as powerful in the fierce conflicts of the battle, as that man is in talk. I do not think however that I need to mention my deeds to you, **Pelasgians**, since you have seen them: let Ulysses tell you of his that are conducted without witness, in which night is the only sharer! I confess the prize I seek is great: but

my rival detracts from the honour of it. There is nothing magnificent for Ajax in it, however great the thing is, if Ulysses has aspired to it. He has already won the prize in this contest, since when he is defeated he can say he fought it out with me.

As for me, if my courage were in doubt, my noble birth is a powerful argument, a son of **Telamon**, he who, under brave **Hercules**, captured the walls of **Troy**, and sailed in the ship from **Pagasaë**, with the **Argonauts**, to **Colchis**. Telamon's father was **Aeacus**, who judges there, among the silent dead, where **Sisyphus, son of Aeolus** rolls his heavy stone. Lofty **Jupiter** acknowledges **Aeacus** and confesses him to be his son: so Ajax is third in descent from **Jove**. Yet even this ancestry would not further my cause, if I did not share it with great Achilles. Our fathers, **Peleus** and Aeacus, were brothers: Achilles was my cousin, I ask for my cousin's weapons! Why are you, Ulysses, the son of Sisyphus, and similar to him in your capability for fraud and trickery,

involving an alien race in the affairs of the **Aeacidae**?

Are the arms denied me because I took up arms first, and without being rooted out, and shall he seem the better man who seized his weapons last, and shirked the fight with a pretence of madness, until **Palamades, son of Nauplius**, the shrewder man, uncovered this cowardly spirit's deceit, and dragged him to the weapons he shunned? Shall he own all, who wanted none: shall I, who was the first to put myself at risk, be denied honour, and my cousin's gifts? if only his madness had been real, or been believed, and this exhorter to crime had never been our companion against the Phrygian fortresses! Then **Lemnos** would not hold you, to our shame, **Philoctetes, son of Poeas**, of whom they say that, hidden in the woodland caves, you move the stones, now, with your laments, calling down on **Laërtes's son**, the curses that he deserves, and, if there are gods, do not curse in vain! Now, alas, he who was sworn to the same conflict as

ourselves, one of our captains, heir to **Hercules**'s arrows, weakened by sickness and hunger, clothed and fed by the birds, employs the arrows, that fate intended for Troy, in firing at birds! Still, he is alive, because he did not accompany Ulysses further: luckless **Palamades** would have preferred to be left behind also: he would have been alive, or at least have died an irreproachable death: that man there, remembering all too well the exposure of his own supposed madness, accused him of betraying the Greek cause, and uncovered gold, he had previously hidden, as evidence of the fabricated charge. So, by abandonment or death, he has drawn the strength of Achaea: that is how Ulysses fights, that is why he is to be feared!

Though he be greater than **Nestor**, the true, in eloquence, I will never believe that his desertion of Nestor in battle was anything but a crime. When Nestor implored Ulysses's help, weary as he was with old age, and slowed by a wound to his horse, he was abandoned by his

companion. **Diomede, son of Tydeus**, is well aware that I am not inventing the charge: he called Ulysses repeatedly, by name, and reproached his cowardly friend for running away.

The gods look down, with the eyes of the just, at human dealings! Look, he who gave no help needs it: and as he had abandoned Nestor, so he would have been abandoned: he himself had established his own precedent. He shouted to his companions. I approached, and saw him, trembling and pale, and shaking with fear of impending death. I thrust out the mass of my shield, and covered him as he lay there, and (small cause for praise in that) I saved his cowardly life. If you go through with this contest, let us revisit that spot: revisit the enemy, your wound, and your usual cowardice, hide behind my shield, and contend with me under it! Yet, after I had snatched him up, he who was granted no strength to stand, because of his wounds, ran for it, not slowed by his wounds at all.

Hector approaches, and, with him, leads the gods to battle, and brave men as well as you are terrified, **Ulysses**, when he rushes onwards, such is the fear he brings. I felled him to the ground with a huge rock hurled from a distance, as he was exulting in the success of his bloodthirsty slaughter. When he challenged one warrior to meet him, I withstood him. You wished the lot would fall to me, Achaeans, and your prayers were answered. If you ask what the outcome of that conflict was I was not beaten by Hector. See, the Trojans bring fire and sword, and **Jupiter** himself, against the Greek ships: where now is the eloquent Ulysses? Surely I, with my own breast, shielded the thousand ships, your hope of return: grant me the arms for all that fleet.

Yet, if I may speak the truth, the arms search for greater honour than I do, to be linked to my glory, and the arms seek out Ajax, not Ajax the arms. Let the **Ithacan** compare with these things his killing of **Rhesus**, and of cowardly **Dolon**, his taking captive **Helenus**,

Priam's son, and his theft of **Pallas's** image, the **Palladium**: nothing performed in daylight, nothing without **Diomedes** present. If ever you grant the armour for such worthless service, divide it, and let Diomedes have the greater share of it. Nevertheless why give them to the Ithacan, who carries things out secretly, and always unarmed, deceiving the unsuspecting enemy with his tricks? The gleam of the helmet, radiant with shining gold, will reveal his scheming, and show where he hides. The **Dulichian's** head beneath Achilles's helmet, will not bear so great a weight, and the spear-shaft, from Pelion, cannot be anything but heavy and burdensome for his arm, unsuited to war, and the shield, with its engraved design of the vast world, will not be fit for that cowardly left hand born for stealing. Perverse man, why do you go after a prize that will cripple you, one that, if it is given you in error by the Achaean people, will be a reason for being despoiled by the enemy, not feared by them? And running away, in which you surpass everyone, you

master-coward, will turn out to be a slow game for you, if you are carrying such a weight. Add to that your shield that is rarely used in battle, and uninjured, and mine split in a thousand places from fending off spear-thrusts, that needs a new successor.

Finally (what is the use of words?) let us be seen together in action! Send out the brave hero's arms into the middle of the enemy ranks: order them to be recovered from there, and let the retriever be equipped with what he retrieves.'

Bk XIII:123-381 The debate over the arms: Ulysses speaks

The son of **Telamon** finished, and the crowd's applause followed his closing words. Until the hero, son of **Laërtes**, stood. He gazed at the ground for a while and then raised his eyes to look at the captains, and opened his lips for the speech they anticipated: his eloquent words did not lack grace in their delivery.

‘If my wishes and yours, **Pelasgians**, had been worth anything, there would be no question as to who should inherit the arms in this great contest: you, **Achilles**, would have your armour, and we would have you. But since unequal fate has denied his presence to me and to you, (and he made as if to wipe a tear from his eye), who better to take Achilles’s place than the man through whom mighty Achilles took his place among the Greeks? Only do not let it help him that he is slow-witted, as he seems to be, nor harm my case that my ability has always profited you Greeks. And let this eloquence of mine, if it exists, that often spoke for you, and now speaks for its master, escape envy: no man should refuse to employ his talents.

Now, as to race, and ancestry, and whatever we have not personally achieved; I hardly call those things ours. But since **Ajax** has recalled that he is **Jove**’s great grandson, Jupiter is the founder of my bloodline also, and I am the same distance from him. **Laërtes** is my father,

Arcesius was Laërtes's father, and he was the son of Jupiter: and there are no exiled criminals, like **Peleus** and **Telamon**, amongst them. Also there is the addition to my nobility of **Cyllenian Mercury** through my mother, Anticleia. The gods are in both my parents. But I do not claim the arms lying there, because I am nobler on my mother's side, nor because my father is innocent of a brother's blood. Judge the case on its merits. Provided that it is not regarded as Ajax's merit that Telamon and Peleus were brothers, and that what is considered in this award is respect for ability not the claims of blood! Or, if you are asking who is the next of kin, and the lawful heir, well Peleus is Achilles's father, and **Pyrrhus** is Achilles's son: where is Ajax's claim? Take the arms to Peleus's **Phthia**, or Pyrrhus's **Scyros**! **Teucer** is no less Achilles's cousin than Ajax, yet does he ask for the arms, and if he did, would he gain them? So, since it is a contest about naked achievements, I have done more than I can

recount in glib words, but I will take things in their proper order.

Thetis, Achilles's **Nereid** mother, foreseeing her son's death, disguised his appearance, and wearing women's clothes he deceived everyone, including **Ajax**. But, among the things women buy, I placed arms to stir a man's spirit. Before the hero had abandoned the clothes of a girl, while he held the shield and spear, I said: 'Pergama the citadel doomed to be destroyed, waits for you, son of the goddess! Why do you hesitate to overthrow mighty Troy?' And I took him in hand, and sent the brave out to do brave things. So his deeds are mine: I overcame warring **Telephus** with my spear, and healed him with it, when he was defeated and begging for help. It is down to me that **Mysian Thebes** fell: credit the capture of **Lesbos** to me, **Tenedos** to me, **Chryse** and **Cilla** the cities of **Apollo**, and **Phrygian Scyros** as well. Imagine that my right hand razed **Lyrnesus**'s walls to the ground. I gave you the man who could destroy fierce Hector, not to

speak of those other Trojans: through me glorious Hector lies low! I seek these arms for the arms that revealed Achilles: I gave to the living, I claim from the dead.

When one man's sorrow fell on all the Greeks, and a thousand ships gathered at **Euboean Aulis**, though they waited for a long time, there were adverse winds or no wind. Then a cruel oracle ordered **Agamemnon** to sacrifice his innocent daughter, **Iphigenia**, to pitiless **Diana**. The father said no, angered with the gods themselves: and there is still a father even in a king. I with my skill in words turned him away from a parent's fondness and towards the common good. I had a difficult case indeed to plead, before (I confess, and may **Atrides** pardon the confession) a prejudiced judge, but given the needs of his brother and the expedition, and the high command vested in him, he balanced glory against blood. Then I was sent to the mother, **Clytaemnestra**, who was not to be persuaded, but deceived by

cunning. If Telamon's son had gone, our sails would still be waiting for the winds.

Also, as an ambassador, I was sent to Troy's citadel, and saw and entered the senate house of lofty **Ilium**, still full of heroes. As I was charged to do by Greece, for the common good, undaunted, I accused **Paris**, demanded the return of **Helen** and what Paris had plundered, and stirred **Priam**, and **Antenor**, at one with Priam. But Paris, and his brothers, and those who plundered with him, could scarcely keep their sinful hands off me (you know it, **Menelaüs**) and that first day of danger to me was shared with you.

It would take a long time to tell what I have achieved that has been useful, by stratagem and deed, in the long space of this conflict. After the first onslaught the enemy kept inside the city walls for a long time, and there was no chance for open warfare. Finally in the tenth year we fought it out. What were you doing meanwhile, **Ajax**, you who only know about battles? What use were you then? If you ask what I was doing,

I laid ambushes for the enemy; surrounded the defences with a ditch; encouraged our allies so that they might bear the weariness of a long campaign with patience of mind; advised on how we should be fed and armed; was sent wherever benefit required it.

See, deceived by a dream in sleep, **Agamemnon**, the king, commanded by **Jupiter**, orders us to give up all concern with the war we have begun. He can justify his words by this dream's authority. Let Ajax prevent it, and demand that the citadel, **Pergama**, be destroyed, let him do what he can do, fight! Why does he not restrain those who are for returning home? Why does he not take up arms, and give a lead for the fickle mob to follow?

That was not too much to ask of one who never speaks without boasting: but what of the fact that he fled as well?

I saw you, Ajax, and was ashamed to see it, when, turning your back, you readied your dishonourable sails. Instantly I shouted: 'What

are you doing? What madness is urging you to abandon captured Troy? What are you taking home with you, except disgrace? With these words, and others, in which my anguish made me eloquent, I turned men from their flight, and led them back. Atrides assembled the allies who were quaking with fear: even then the son of Telamon did not dare utter a thing, but even **Thersites** dared to attack the kings with insolent words, though not without punishment from me! I rose to my feet and urged on my frightened countrymen against the enemy, and by my voice restored their lost courage. From that time on, whatever bravery this man can be seen to have shown, is mine, who dragged him back when he was given to flight.

Next, which of the Greeks praises you or seeks you out, Ajax? Yet **Diomedes** shares what he does with me, supports me, and always trusts **Ulysses** as his companion. That is something, to be singled out by Diomedes from so many thousand Greeks! No drawing of lots forced me to go: yet, disregarding the dangers of night and

the enemy, I killed **Dolon**, the **Phrygian**, out on the same errand as we were, but not before I had forced him to tell what he knew, and had learned what perfidious Troy was planning. I had discovered everything, and had no need to spy further, and could now return with the glory I sought: yet not content with that, I searched out **Rhesus**'s tents, and I killed him and his comrades in their camp. And so, a victor, with what I prayed for achieved, as if it were a triumph, I rode his captured chariot. Deny me the arms of **Achilles**, whose horses my enemy, Dolon, asked of **Hector**, for his night's work, and let Ajax be more generous than you.

Why should I have to mention the ranks of **Sarpedon** of **Lycia** cut to pieces by my sword? With bloody slaughter I killed **Coeranos**, **Iphitus**'s son; **Alastor** and **Chromius**; **Alcander**, **Halius**, **Noëmon** and **Prytanis**; and I dealt destruction to **Thoön**, **Chersidamas**, **Charopes**, and **Ennomos** driven by inexorable fate; and others less well known fell to my hand under the walls of the city. I have wounds,

friends, honourable ones, as their position shows: do not believe empty words, look!’ and he pulled his tunic open with his hand, ‘here is my breast that has always been employed in your actions! But the son of Telamon has shed no blood for his companions, in all these years, and his flesh is unwounded!

What relevance is it that he declares he took up arms against the Trojans and against Jove? I agree, he did (since I do not maliciously disparage beneficial actions) but do not let him seize the honour that is shared, and let him grant you some respect also. It was **Patroclus, son of Actor**, protected by being disguised in Achilles’s armour, who pushed back the Trojans from the ships that would have gone up in flames, with Ajax, their defender. He thinks that he is the only one who dared to face Hector’s spear, forgetting the captains and the king, and myself: he was the ninth to volunteer, and selected by the luck of the draw. But what was the result of your struggle, strongest of

men? Hector retreated without receiving a single wound.

Alas, with what sadness I am forced to recall that time when Achilles, the defence of Achaia, fell! Yet tears, grief, fear did not prevent my lifting his body from the earth: I carried the body of Achilles over these shoulders, these very shoulders, along with the weapons, that now also I am anxious to carry. I have strength enough for such a burden, and a mind that can surely appreciate the honour. Was it for this that his mother, the sea-goddess, was so ambitious for her son, that the gifts of heaven, the works of such artistry, should adorn an ignorant and thoughtless soldier? He understands nothing of the shield's engraving, Ocean, or earth, or high starry sky; the **Pleiades** and the **Hyades**, the **Bear** that is always clear of the waters, and opposite, beyond the Milky Way, **Orion**, with his glittering sword. He demands to bear armour that he does not comprehend!

What of the fact that he accuses me of shirking the harsh duties of war, and of coming late to a labour already begun? Does he not see that he is speaking ill of great Achilles? If you call it a crime to dissimulate, we both dissimulated: if delay is a fault, I was the earlier to arrive. A loving wife detained me, a loving mother Achilles. Our priority was given to them, the rest to you. I hardly fear an accusation, even if I cannot defend myself against it, shared with such a man: he was revealed by Ulysses's cunning, but not Ulysses by Ajax's.

Let us not be astonished that he pours out against me the invective from his foolish tongue, since he reproaches you shamefully. Was it a disgrace for me to accuse **Palamades** on an erroneous charge, but proper for you to condemn him? But then the son of Nauplias could not defend himself against so great a crime, and one so clearly proven: nor did you merely hear of the crime: you saw it, revealed by the gold I exposed.

Nor do I merit being called a criminal because **Lemnos, Vulcan's** isle, holds the **son of Poeas, Philoctetes**, (defend your own actions, since you agreed to it!) but I will not deny that I persuaded him to withdraw from the hardships of war and the journey, and to try and relieve his terrible agonies in rest. He agreed – and he still lives! Not only was my opinion offered in good faith, though it is enough that it was in good faith, but it turned out well. Now since our seers demand his presence for the destruction of Troy, do not commission me! Telamon's son, with his eloquence, had better go and soothe that man, maddened by pain and fury, or bring him by some cunning trick! If my mind were idle on your behalf, the River **Simois** would flow backwards, and Mount **Ida** stand there leafless, and Achaia help Pergama, before the skill, of foolish Ajax, would benefit the Greeks.

I would go to you, harsh Philoctetes, and try to bring you back with me, though you are aggressive towards king and countrymen, and

myself; though you execrate me, and pour curses endlessly on my head; and, in your pain, long for me to be given into your power, to drink my blood, and to have your chance at me, as I did at you. And I would gain possession of your arrows (by **Fortune**'s favour), as I took possession of the **Dardanian** seer, **Helenus**, whom I captured; as I revealed the gods' oracles and the fate of Troy; as I stole the image of Phrygian **Minerva** from the inner sanctuary, from the midst of the enemy. Does Ajax compare himself to me? The fates surely denied our capturing Troy without it.

Where is brave Ajax now? Where are the great hero's mighty words? What do you fear then? Why does Ulysses dare to go through the sentries and commit himself to night; to enter not only the walls of Troy but also the heights of the citadel, past the sharp swords; and to snatch the goddess from her temple, and carry her captive through the enemy ranks? If I had not done it, the son of Telamon would have carried the seven-layered bull's-hide shield on

his left arm in vain. That night the victory over Troy was established: I defeated Pergama then, when I secured the possibility of her defeat.

You can stop pointing out with your murmurs and looks, Ajax, that Diomedes was my partner: he has his share of praise in this! Nor were you alone, when you held your shield in defence of the allied ships: you had a crowd of companions: I had only one. If he did not know that a fighter is worth less than a thinker, and that the prize is not owed merely because of an indomitable right hand, he would also claim it; so would **the lesser Ajax**, fierce **Eurypylus**, and **Thoas**, the son of famous **Andraemon**, and no less surely would **Idomeneus**, and **Meriones** born of the same nation, and **Menelaüs**, the brother of Agamemnon.

In fact, they accept my counsel, these strong right hands, not second to me in battle. Your right hand, useful in war, needs the guidance of my intellect. You have power without mind, mine is the care for the future. You can fight, but Atrides, with me, chooses

the time to fight. You only display the flesh, I the spirit. By as much as he who steers the ship is superior to him who rows, by as much as the general exceeds the soldier, by that much I surpass you. No less is the head more powerful than the hand, in our body: the energy of the whole is within it.

O princes, grant the prize to your sentry, for the many years I have spent in anxious care, grant me the judgement, this honour for my services. Now my labour is done: I have removed fate's obstacles, and by making it possible to take high Pergama, have taken her. Now, by our common expectation; by Troy's doomed walls; by the gods I recently took from the enemy; by whatever else remains that needs to be done wisely; I pray, that if there is still some bold and dangerous thing to attempt, if you think that anything is yet in store involving Troy's fate, remember me! And if you do not give me the arms, give them to her!' and he pointed towards Minerva's fatal statue.

Bk XIII:382-398 The death of Ajax

The council of princes was swayed, and it shows what eloquence can do: the gifted speaker carried away the arms of the brave hero. But [Ajax](#), who had so often stood alone against Hector, against sword and flame, against Jove himself, could not stand against mere passion, and indignation conquered the unconquerable hero. Drawing his sword he shouted: ‘This is mine, at least! Or does Ulysses demand it for himself? This I will use myself, on myself, and the iron so often drenched in Phrygian blood, will now be drenched in its master’s, so that none can defeat [Ajax](#) but himself.’ He spoke, and drove the lethal weapon to its full extent into his chest, that, till then, had never felt a wound. No hand was strong enough to draw out the implanted weapon: it was the blood itself expelled it, and the bloodstained ground bore a purple flower from the green turf, that had first sprung from the wound of the [Spartan](#), [Hyacinthus](#). In the

centre of the petals letters are inscribed, shared by the hero and the boy, one reading of them being a name, ΑΙΑΣ, and the other one, ΑΙ ΑΙ, a cry of woe.

Bk XIII:399-428 The fall of Troy

Ulysses, the winner, set sail for **Lemnos**, the island of Queen **Hypsipyle** and her father the famous **Thoas**, a country notorious in ancient times for the murder by its women of their men, to bring back the arrows of **Tyrinthian Hercules**. When he had brought them back to the Greeks, with **Philoctetes** their master, the last hand was dealt in the long drawn-out war. **Troy** fell, and **Priam** also. **Hecuba**, Priam's unhappy wife, when all else was lost, lost her human form, and filled the air of an alien country, where the long **Hellespont** narrows to a strait, with strange barking.

Ilium burned; the flames had not yet died down; **Jove**'s altar was soaking up old Priam's meagre stream of blood; and **Cassandra**, the head priestess of **Apollo**, dragged along by her

hair, stretched out her arms uselessly to the heavens. The **Dardanian** women, embracing the statues of their nation's gods while they still could, and thronging the burning temples, were snatched away by the victorious Greeks as enviable prizes. **Astyanax**, was thrown down from that tower, from which he used to see his father, **Hector**, whom Andromache his mother pointed out to him, as Hector fought for him, and protected the ancestral kingdom. Now **Boreas**, the north wind, urged the Greeks on their way, and the sails flapped in a favourable breeze.

The sailors are ordered to take advantage of the wind. The Trojan women wail, kissing their native earth, abandoning the burning houses: 'Troy, farewell! We are taken against our will.'

The last to embark – pitiable sight! – was Hecuba, found among the tombs of her sons. There as she clung to their graves, trying to kiss their relics, the hands of **Dulichian Ulysses** dragged her away. Yet she emptied one sepulchre, and carried away with her, at her

breast, Hector's ashes from the emptied urn. And on Hector's grave she left a scant offering to the dead, shreds of her grey hair, hair and tears.

Bk XIII:429-480 The deaths of Polydorus and Polyxena

There is a country opposite **Phrygia**, where **Troy** stood, that the **Bistones** inhabit: **Polymestor**'s wealthy court was there, to whom **Priam** your father secretly sent you, **Polydorus**, to be reared away from the Phrygian war: a wise plan if he had not sent great riches with you, a reward for the criminal, a temptation to the greedy spirit. When Phrygia's fortunes waned, the impious king of **Thrace** took his sword and stabbed his young foster child in the throat, and threw the body from a cliff into the sea, as if murder could be eliminated with the corpse.

Agamemnon had moored his fleet on a **Thracian** beach until the sea calmed, and the

winds were kinder. Here, suddenly the ghost of **Achilles** appeared from a broad fissure in the earth, as large as he used to be in life. He appeared as on the day when, with threatening face, and sword in hand, he fiercely challenged **Agamemnon**'s injustice. 'You depart, then, Achaeans, forgetting me, and gratitude for my courage is buried with me!' he cried, 'Do not let it be so! Let **Polyxena** be sacrificed, so that my tomb is not without its honours. Appease Achilles's shade!'

He spoke, and, his countrymen obeyed the pitiless ghost. Now, she was torn from her mother's arms, and the girl, almost **Hecuba**'s only comfort, ill-fated, but with more than a woman's courage, was led to the burial mound and became a victim of the dread grave. She remembered who she was, set before the brutal altar, knowing the savage rite was readied for her, and when she saw **Neoptolemus** standing, gripping his sword, his eyes gazing at her face, she said: 'Now, shed noble blood, nothing prevents you: but sheathe your sword in my

throat or in my breast,' and she uncovered both her throat and her breast, 'Polyxena, for certain, has no desire to be slave to any man! No god will be appeased by such a rite as this! I only wish my death could be unknown to my mother: my mother weakens and lessens my joy in death, though it is not my dying but her living that is terrible. Now, move away, you, so that if my request is lawful, I may not be hindered in going to the Stygian shades: and take the hands of man from virgin flesh! My free blood will be more acceptable to him, whoever he is, whom you are trying to appease with my murder. If my last words still move any of you (The daughter of Priam asks it, not a prisoner) return my body to my mother without ransom: let her pay for the sad privilege of burying me, not with gold, but with tears! When she could, then she paid in gold as well'

She spoke, and the crowd could not restrain its tears, that she restrained. Then the priest, also weeping, and against his will, driving his sword home, pierced the breast she offered up.

Her knees gave way, and she sank to the ground, keeping her look of fearless courage to the end. Even then, as she fell, she was careful to hide the parts that should be hidden, and to protect the honour of her chaste modesty.

Bk XIII:481-575 Hecuba's lament and transformation

The **Trojan women** lift her body, counting over the lamented **children of Priam**, and recounting how much blood one house has surrendered. They weep for you, girl, and for you, **Hecuba**, who were lately called the royal wife, the royal parent, the image of bright **Asia**, now in evil circumstances, even for a prisoner, whom victorious **Ulysses** would not have wanted, except for the fact that you had given birth to **Hector**: a partner for his mother that Hector would scarcely have imagined!

Embracing the body of Polyxena, now empty of that brave spirit, she sheds the tears for her that she has shed so often for her husband, sons and country. She pours her tears

over her daughter's wound, covers her lips with kisses, and beats at her own bruised breast.

Then, tearing at her white hair caked with blood, and plucking at her breast, she said this amongst other things: 'Child – since, what else is left me? – your mother's last grief, Child, you lie there, and I see your wound, that is my wound. Look, you also have your wound, so that I might lose none of my children without bloodshed. Because you were a woman, I thought you safe from the sword: yet, a woman, you have died by the sword: and that same Achilles who has ruined Troy and made me childless, who has destroyed so many of your brothers, has killed you in the same way.

Yet when he fell to the arrow of **Paris**, and **Phoebus**, I said: "Now surely, **Achilles** is no longer to be feared." Yet even then I still needed to fear him. His very ashes in the tomb are hostile to our race: even in the grave we feel his enmity: I gave birth for the **Aeacidae**! Mighty **Ilium** is in the dust, and, in a grievous outcome, our ruined State is ended. But still, it

ended: in me, only, **Pergama** remains. My grief still takes its course. A moment ago I was endowed with the greatest things, so many sons and daughters, sons-in-law, and daughters-in-law, and my husband. Now, exiled, destitute, torn from the tombs of my loved ones, I am dragged off as a prize, to serve **Penelope**. She will point me out to the women of **Ithaca**, as I spin the wool she gives me, and say: “This is the famous mother of **Hector**, this is **Priam**’s queen.” Now you, Polyxena, after so many have been lost, you, who were the only one left to comfort your mother’s grief, have been sacrificed on an enemy tomb! I have borne offerings for the enemy dead!

Why do I remain, unyielding? Why do I linger here? Why do you preserve me, wrinkled old age? Why prolong an old woman’s life, cruel gods, unless it is for me to view more funerals? Who would have thought **Priam** could be happy when **Pergama** has fallen? Yet he is happy, in death! He did not see you killed, daughter, but left his kingdom and his life

together. Do I imagine you will be endowed with funereal splendour, and your body laid to rest in the ancestral tomb? That is not our house's fate! Your mother's tears will be your funeral gift, and the wastes of foreign sand. I have lost everything: now an only child is left, once the youngest son of my family, his mother's dearest, a reason to endure life for a brief space of time, **Polydorus**, sent to these shores, to the **Ismarian** king.

But why do I delay, meanwhile, the cleansing of your cruel wound with water, your face spattered with drops of blood?'

She spoke, and went to the shore, with the stumbling steps of an old woman, tearing at her white hair. 'Give me an urn, **women of Troy!**' said the unhappy mother, wanting to draw water from the sea. There, she saw **Polydorus**'s body, thrown on the beach, covered with open wounds made by **Thracian** spears. The Trojan women cried out, but she was dumb with grief. The grief itself obliterated both her powers of speech and the tears welling inside, and she

stood unmoving like solid rock, at one moment with her gaze fixed on the ground, the next lifting her face grimly towards the sky. Now she looked at her dead son's face, now at his wounds, mostly at his wounds, awakening a growing anger in herself. Then it blazed out, and she, as if she were still a queen, determined on vengeance, her whole mind filled with thoughts of punishment.

Hecuba, her grief mixed with anger, forgetting her age, but not forgetting her rage, like a lioness maddened by the theft of her unweaned cub, that, though she cannot see her enemy, follows the traces she finds of his footsteps, found her way to the author of the dreadful crime, **Polymestor**. She made out that she wanted to show him a secret hoard of gold, to be given to her son. The **Thracian** believed her, and with his usual desire for gain, came with her secretly. Then with smooth and cunning words, he said: 'Do not delay, Hecuba: give me your gift to your son! It will all be for

him, both what you give and what was given before, I swear by the gods.’

She gazed at him, grimly, as he spoke and swore his lying oath, until, her seething anger boiling over, she called on her train of captive women to attack the man, and drove her nails into his deceitful eyes, and (made strong by anger) tore the eyeballs from their sockets, and dipped her hand, and drank, stained with his sinful blood, not from his eyes (nothing of them remained) but from the holes that were his eyes.

The **Thracians**, enraged by the murder of their king, attacked the **Trojan** woman, hurling stones and missiles, but she chased the stones they threw, snapping at them with a harsh growling, and, readying her jaws for words, barked when she tried to speak. The place is still there, and takes its name, Cynossema, the Monument of the Bitch, from this, and she still howls mournfully amongst the **Sithonian** fields, remembering endlessly her ancient suffering.

Her fate moved the **Trojans** and her enemies the **Greeks**, and it moved all the gods as well, yes, all, so that even **Juno**, **Jove**'s sister-wife, said that **Hecuba** did not merit such misfortune.

Bk XIII:576-622 Aurora and the Memnonides

But **Aurora** had no time for being moved by the fall and ruin of **Hecuba** and **Troy**, though she had aided its defence. A closer sorrow, and a private grief tormented her, the loss of her son **Memnon**, whom she, his bright mother, had seen wasted by **Achilles**'s spear on the **Phrygian** plain. She saw it, and that colour, that reddens the dawn, paled, and the sky was covered with cloud. His mother could not bear to look at his body laid on the summit of the funeral pyre, but with dishevelled hair, just as she was, she did not scorn to fall at the feet of mighty **Jove**, adding tears to these words: 'I am the least of all, whom the golden heavens hold

(since temples to me are the rarest in all the world), yet I come as a goddess: though not that you might give me sanctuaries, or sacred days, or altars to flame with sacrificial fires. Yet if you considered what I, as a woman, do for you, when each new dawn I keep the borders of night, you would think to give me some reward. But that is not my care, nor Aurora's errand, to ask for well-merited honours.

I come bereft of my Memnon, who bore arms bravely, but in vain, for his uncle **Priam**, and in his youth has fallen to mighty Achilles (so you willed). I beg you to grant him some honour, as a solace for his death, great king of the gods, and lessen a mother's wound!' Jupiter nodded, while Memnon's steep pyre collapsed in leaping flames, and the daylight was stained with columns of black smoke, like the river-fog the **naiad** breathes out, that does not admit the light beneath it. Dark ashes flew upwards, and gathering into a ball and solidifying, they formed a shape, and it drew life and heat from the fire (its own lightness giving it wings). At

first resembling a bird, then a true bird, it clapped its wings, and innumerable sisters, sprung from the same natal source, sounded too. Three times they circled the pyre, and three times their clamour rose in the air in consonance, on the fourth flight the flock divided. Then in two separate fierce bands they made war, wielding beaks and hooked talons in rage, wearying wing and breast in the struggle.

Remembering they were sprung from a brave hero, they fell as offerings to the buried ashes of their kinsman's body. The source of these suddenly created birds gave them his name: from him they were called the **Memnonides**: and when the sun has transited his twelve signs, they war and die again in ritual festival.

And so, while others wept to witness Hecuba's baying, Aurora was intent on her own grief, and even now she sheds tears, and wets the whole world with dew.

Bk XIII:623-639 Aeneas begins his wanderings

Yet the fates did not allow **Troy**'s destiny, also, to be overthrown with her walls. **Aeneas**, **Cytherean Venus**'s heroic son, carried away on his shoulders her sacred icons, and bore his father, another sacred and venerable burden. He dutifully chose that prize from all his riches, and his son **Ascanius**, and carried over the sea in his exiled fleet, he left **Antandros**'s harbour, and the sinful thresholds of **Thrace**, and the soil drenched in **Polydorus**'s blood, and riding the favourable winds and tides, he came with his company of friends, to the city of **Apollo** on **Delos**.

Anius, who ruled the people, and worshipped **Phoebus**, with the proper ritual, as high priest, received him in palace and temple. He showed him the city, the famous sanctuary, and the two trees to which **Latona** clung when she gave birth. They gave incense to the flames, poured wine onto the incense, and, in accord

with custom, burned the entrails of slaughtered oxen, and then sought out the royal palace, where reclining on high couches, they ate the gifts of **Ceres**, and drank the wine of **Bacchus**.

Bk XIII:640-674 The transformation of Anius's daughters.

Then virtuous **Anchises** said: 'O chosen priest of **Phoebus**, am I wrong, or do I not remember that you had a son and four daughters, when I first saw your city?' Shaking his head, bound with its white sacrificial fillets, **Anius** replied sadly: 'Mightiest of heroes, you are not wrong: you saw me the father of five children, whom now you see almost bereft. What is the use of my absent son, who holds the island of **Andros**, that takes its name from him, and rules it in his father's place? **Delian Apollo** gave him the power of prophecy. **Bacchus Liber** gave my female offspring other gifts, greater than those they hoped or prayed for. All that my daughter's touched turned into corn or

wine or the grey-green olives of **Minerva**, and employing them was profitable.

When **Agamemnon, son of Atreus**, ravager of **Troy**, learned of this (so that you do not think we escaped all knowledge of your destructive storm) he used armed force to snatch my unwilling daughters from a father's arms, and ordered them to feed the Greek fleet, using their gift from heaven. Each escaped where they could. Two made for **Euboea**, and two for their brother's island of **Andros**. The army landed and threatened war unless they were given up. Fear overcame brotherly affection, and he surrendered his blood-kin. It is possible to forgive the cowardly brother, since Aeneas and **Hector**, thanks to whom you held out till the tenth year, were not here to defend Andros.

Now they were readying the chains for the prisoners' arms. They, while their arms were free, stretched them out to the sky, saying: "**Bacchus**, father, bring your aid!" and he, who granted their gifts, helped them – if you call it

help for them to lose in some strange way their human form, for I could not discover by what process they lost it, nor can I describe it. The end of this misfortune I did observe: they took wing, and became snow-white doves, the birds of your goddess-wife **Anchises**, **Venus**.’

Bk XIII:675-704 The cup of Alcon

After they had filled the time with these and other matters, they left the table and retired to sleep, and rising with the dawn, they went to the oracle of **Phoebus**, who ordered them to seek their ancient mother, and their ancestral shores.

The king gave them parting gifts and escorted them on their way: a sceptre for **Anchises**, a cloak and quiver for his grandson, **Ascanius**, and a drinking-bowl for **Aeneas**, that **Therses** of **Thebes**, a friend, had sent, from the **Aonian** coast, to the king: Therses had given it, but it was made by **Alcon** of **Hyle**, who had engraved it with a complete story.

There was a city, and you could see its seven gates: these served to name it, and tell you that it was **Thebes**. In front of the city funeral rites, sepulchres, funeral pyres, and fires, and women with naked breasts and streaming hair, depicted mourning. **Nymphs**, also, appeared weeping, and lamenting their dried-up fountains: the trees stood bare and leafless: goats nibbled the dry gravel.

See here, in the midst of **Thebes** he portrays **Orion**'s daughters, the one, more than a woman, slashing her unprotected throat, the other stabbing a weapon into her valiant breast, falling on behalf of their people, then carried in glorious funeral procession through the city, and burned among crowds of mourners. Then two youths, famous as the **Coroni**, spring from the virgin ashes, so that the race will not die, and lead the cortège containing their mother's remains.

Such was the ancient bronze with its gleaming designs: round the rim gilded acanthus leaves were embossed. The Trojans

gave gifts in return, worth no less: an incense-box for the priest, a libation-saucer, and a crown shining with gold and jewels.

Bk XIII:705-737 Aeneas's journey to Sicily

From there, remembering that they, the **Teucrians**, came originally from the blood of **Teucer**, they made for his **Crete**. But, unable to endure **Jove's** plague, they left Crete with its hundred cities, hoping to reach the harbours of **Ausonian** Italy. Tempests raged, and tossed the heroes on stormy seas, and taking refuge in the treacherous harbour of the **Strophades**, they were terrified by the **harpy, Aëlle**.

Now they were carried past **Dulichium's** anchorage; past **Same**, and the houses of **Neritos**; and **Ithaca**, cunning **Ulysses's** kingdom. They saw **Ambracia**, famous now for its **Apollo** of **Actium**, once contended over by quarreling gods; and saw the image of the judge who was turned to stone; **Dodona's** land with its oracular oaks; and **Chaonia's** bay, where the

sons of Munichus, the **Molossian** king, escaped the impious flames on new-found wings.

Next they headed for the country of the **Phaeacians**, set with rich orchards, and touched at **Buthrotus** in **Epirus**, a miniature **Troy**, ruled by **Helenus**, the Trojan seer. From there, certain of their future, all of which Helenus, **Priam**'s son predicted, with reliable warnings, they entered **Sicilian** waters. Three tongues of this land run down into the sea. Of these **Pachynos** faces the rainy south, **Lilybaeon** fronts the soft western breeze, and **Peloros** looks to the northern **Bears** that never touch the waves. Here the Teucrians came, and rowing, with a favourable tide, their fleet reached the sandy beach of **Zancle**, as night fell.

Scylla attacks from the right-hand coast, restless **Charybdis** from the left. The latter sucks down and spits out ships she has caught: the former has a girdle of savage dogs round her dark belly. She has a girl's face, and if the tales of poets are not all false, she was once a girl also. Many suitors wooed her, whom she

rejected, and she would go and tell the ocean nymphs, being well loved by the ocean nymphs, of the thwarted desires of young men.

Bk XIII:738-788 Acis and Galatea

Once while **Galatea** let **Scylla** comb her hair, she addressed these words to her, sighing often: ‘At least, O virgin Scylla, you are not wooed by a relentless breed of men: and you can reject them without fear, as you do. But I, whose father is **Nereus**, and whose mother is sea-green **Doris**, I, though protected by a crowd of sisters, was not allowed to flee the love of **Polyphemus**, the **Cyclops**, except through sorrow’, and tears stopped the sound of her voice. When the girl had wiped away the tears with her white fingers, and the goddess was comforted, she said: ‘Tell me, O dearest one: do not hide the cause of your sadness (I can be so trusted)’ The **Nereid** answered **Crateis**’s daughter in these words: ‘**Acis** was the son of **Faunus** and the nymph **Symaethis**, a great

delight to his father and mother, but more so even to me, since he and I alone were united. He was handsome, and having marked his sixteenth birthday, a faint down covered his tender cheeks. I sought him, the Cyclops sought me, endlessly. If you asked, I could not say which was stronger in me, hatred of Cyclops, or love of Acis, both of them were equally strong.

Oh! Gentle **Venus**, how powerful your rule is over us! How that ruthless creature, terrifying even to the woods themselves, whom no stranger has ever seen with impunity, who scorns mighty **Olympus** and its gods, how he feels what love is, and, on fire, captured by powerful desire, forgets his flocks and caves. Now Polyphemus, you care for your appearance, and are anxious to please, now you comb your bristling hair with a rake, and are pleased to cut your shaggy beard with a reaping hook, and to gaze at your savage face in the water and compose its expression. Your love of killing, your fierceness, and your huge thirst for blood, end, and the ships come and go in safety.

Meanwhile, **Telemus** the augur, Telemus, the son of **Eurymus**, whom no flight of birds could deceive, came to **Sicilian** Mount **Aetna**, addressed grim Polyphemus, and said: “**Ulysses** will take from you, that single eye in the middle of your forehead.” He laughed, and answered: “O most foolish of seers, you are wrong, another, a girl, has already taken it.” So he scorned the true warning, given in vain, and weighed the coast down, walking with giant tread, or returned weary to his dark cave.

A wedge-shaped hillside, ending in a long spur, projects into the sea (the waves of the ocean wash round it on both sides). The fierce **Cyclops** climbed to it, and sat at its apex, and his woolly flocks, shepherd-less, followed. Then laying at his feet the pine trunk he used as a staff, fit to carry a ship’s rigging, he lifted his panpipes made of a hundred reeds. The whole mountain felt the pastoral notes, and the waves felt them too. Hidden by a rock, I was lying in my **Acis**’s arms, and my ears caught these words, and, having heard them, I remembered:’

Bk XIII:789-869 The song of Polyphemus

*'Galatea, whiter than the snowy privet petals,
taller than slim alder, more flowery than the
meadows,
friskier than a tender kid, more radiant than
crystal,
smoother than shells, polished, by the endless
tides;
more welcome than the summer shade, or the
sun in winter,
showier than the tall plane-tree, fleeter than
the hind;
more than ice sparkling, sweeter than grapes
ripening,
softer than the swan's-down, or the milk when
curdled,
lovelier, if you did not flee, than a watered
garden.*

*Galatea, likewise, wilder than an untamed
heifer,*

*harder than an ancient oak, trickier than the sea;
tougher than the willow-twigs, or the white vine branches,
firmer than these cliffs, more turbulent than a river,
vainer than the vaunted peacock, fiercer than the fire;
more truculent than a pregnant bear, pricklier than thistles,
deafener than the waters, crueller than a trodden snake;
and, what I wish I could alter in you, most of all, is this:
that you are swifter than the deer, driven by loud barking,
swifter even than the winds, and the passing breeze.*

But if you knew me well, you would regret your flight, and you would condemn your own efforts yourself, and hold to me: half of the mountain is mine, and the deep caves in the

natural rock, where winter is not felt nor the midsummer sun. There are apples that weigh down the branches, golden and purple grapes on the trailing vines. Those, and these, I keep for you. You will pick ripe strawberries born in the woodland shadows, in autumn cherries and plums, not just the juicy blue-purples, but also the large yellow ones, the colour of fresh bees'-wax. There will be no lack of fruit from the wild strawberry trees, nor from the tall chestnuts: every tree will be there to serve you.

This whole flock is mine, and many are wandering the valleys as well, many hidden by the woods, many penned in the caves. If you asked me I could not tell you how many there are: a poor man counts his flocks. You can see, you need not merely believe me, how they can hardly move their legs with their full udders. There are newborn lambs in the wain sheepfolds, and kids too, of the same age, in other pens, and I always have snow-white milk: some of it kept for drinking, and some with rennet added to curdle it.

You will not have vulgar gifts or easily found pleasures, such as leverets, or does, or kids, or paired doves, or a nest from the treetops. I came upon twin cubs of a shaggy bear that you can play with: so alike you can hardly separate them. I came upon them and I said: “I shall keep these for my mistress.”

Now **Galatea**, only lift your shining head from the dark blue sea: come, do not scorn my gifts. Lately, I examined myself, it’s true, and looked at my reflection in the clear water, and, seeing my self, it pleased me. Look how large I am: **Jupiter**, in the sky, since you are accustomed to saying some Jove or other rules there, has no bigger a body. Luxuriant hair hangs over my face, and shades my shoulders like a grove. And do not consider it ugly for my whole body to be bristling with thick prickly hair. A tree is ugly without its leaves: a horse is ugly unless a golden mane covers its neck: feathers hide the birds: their wool becomes the sheep: a beard and shaggy hair befits a man’s body. I only have one eye in the middle of my

forehead, but it is as big as a large shield. Well? Does great **Sol** not see all this from the sky? Yet Sol's orb is unique.

Added to that my father, **Neptune**, rules over your waters: I give you him as a father-in-law. Only have pity, and listen to my humble prayers! I, who scorn Jove and his heaven and his piercing lightning bolt, submit to you alone: I fear you, **Nereid**: your anger is fiercer than lightning. And I could bear this contempt of yours more patiently, if you fled from everyone. But why, rejecting **Cyclops**, love **Acis**, and prefer Acis's embrace to mine? Though he is pleased with himself, and, what I dislike, pleases you too, Galatea, let me just have a chance at him. Then he will know I am as strong as I am big! I'll tear out his entrails while he lives, rend his limbs and scatter them over the fields, and over your ocean, (so he can join you!) For I am on fire, and, wounded, I burn with a fiercer flame, and I seem to bear **Aetna** with all his violent powers sunk in my breast, yet you, **Galatea**, are unmoved.'

Bk XIII:870-897 Acis is turned into a river-god

‘With such useless complaints he rose (for I saw it all) and as a bull that cannot stay still, furious when the cow is taken from it, he wanders through the woods and glades. Not anticipating such a thing, without my knowing, he saw me, and saw **Acis**. “I see you,” he cried, “and I’ll make this the last celebration of your love.” His voice was as loud as an angry **Cyclops**’s voice must be: **Aetna** shook with the noise. And I, terrified, plunged into the nearby waters. My hero, **son of Symaethis**, had turned his back, and ran, crying: “Help me, I beg you, **Galatea**! Forefathers, help me, admit me to your kingdom or I die!”

Cyclops followed him and hurled a rock wrenched from the mountain, and though only the farthest corner of the stone reached him, it still completely buried Acis. Then I, doing the

only thing that fate allowed me, caused Acis to assume his ancestral powers. From the rock, crimson blood seeped out, and in a little while its redness began to fade, became the colour of a river at first swollen by rain, gradually clearing. Then the rock, that Polyphemus had hurled, cracked open, and a tall green reed sprang from the fissure, and the mouth of a chamber in the rock echoed with leaping waters, and (a marvel) suddenly a youth stood, waist-deep in the water, his fresh horns wreathed with rushes. It was Acis, except that he was larger, and his face dark blue: yet it was still Acis, changed to a river-god, and his waters still retain his former name.

Bk XIII:898-968 Glaucus tells Scylla of his transformation

Galatea finished speaking and the group of **Nereids** went away, swimming through the placid waves. **Scylla** returned to the beach, not daring to trust herself to mid-ocean, and either

wandered naked along the parched sand, or, when she was tired, found a remote, sheltered pool, and cooled her limbs in its enclosed waters.

See, **Glaucus** comes, skimming the water, a new inhabitant of the sea, his form recently altered, at **Anthedon** opposite **Euboea**. Seeing the girl, he stood still, desiring her, and said whatever he thought might stop her running away. Nevertheless she ran, and, with the swiftness of fear, came to the top of a mountain standing near the shore. It faced the wide sea, rising to a single peak, its wooded summit leaning far out over the water. Here she stopped, and from a place of safety, marvelled at his colour; the hair that hid his shoulders and covered his back; and his groin below that merged into a winding fish's tail; she not knowing whether he was god or monster.

He saw her, and, leaning on a rock that stood nearby, he said: 'Girl, I am no freak or wild creature, but a god of the sea. **Proteus**, **Triton**, or **Palaemon son of Athamas**, have no

greater power in the ocean. Mortal once, but no doubt destined for the deep, even then I worked the waves: now drawing in the drag nets full of fish, now sitting on a rock, casting, with rod and line.

There is a beach, bounded by a green field, one side bordered by sea, the other by grass, that horned cattle have not damaged by grazing, that placid sheep or shaggy goats have not cropped. No bees intent on gathering pollen plundered the flowers there; no garlands came from there for the heads of revellers; no one had ever mown it, scythe in hand. I was the first to sit there on the turf, drying my sea-soaked lines, and laying out in order the fish I had caught, to count them, that either chance or innocence had brought to my curved hook. This will sound like a tale, but what would I get from lying? Touching the grass, my catch began to stir, and shift about, and swim over land as if they were in the sea. While I hesitated and wondered, the complete shoal fled into their native waters, leaving behind their new master, their new land.

I stood dumbfounded, for a while not believing it, searching for the cause. Had some god done it, or the juice of some herb? “Yet what herb has such power?” I asked, and gathering some herbage in my hand, I bit what I had gathered with my teeth. My throat had scarcely swallowed the strange juice, when suddenly I felt my heart trembling inside me, my breast seized with yearning for that other element. Unable to hold out for long, crying out: “Land, I will never return to, goodbye!” I immersed my body in the sea.

The gods of the sea received me, thinking me worth the honour of their company, and asked **Oceanus** and **Tethys** to purge what was mortal in me. I was purified by them, and, cleansed of sin by an incantation nine times repeated, they ordered me to bathe my body in a hundred rivers. Immediately streams from every side poured their waters over my head. So much I can tell of you of those marvellous things, so much of them I remember: then my mind knew no more. When later I came to, my

whole body was altered from what I was before, and my mind was not the same.

Then I saw, for the first time, this dark green beard, my hair that sweeps the wide sea, these giant shoulders and dusky arms, these legs that curve below into a fish's fins. Yet what use is this shape, or that I was pleasing to the ocean gods? What use is it to be a god, if these things do not move you?'

As the god spoke these words, looking to say more, Scylla abandoned him. Then Glaucus, maddened, and angered by her rejection, sought the wondrous halls of **Circe, daughter of the Sun.**

Book XIV



Bk XIV:1-74 The transformation of Scylla

Glaucus, the fisher of the swollen **Euboean** waters, soon left **Aetna** behind, that mountain piled on **Typhoeus**'s giant head, and the **Cyclops**'s fields, that know nothing of the plough's use or the harrow, and owe nothing to the yoked oxen. **Zancle** was left behind as well, and the walls of **Rhegium** opposite, and the dangerous strait, hemmed in between twin coastlines, that marks the boundary between **Sicily** and Italian **Ausonia**. From there, swimming with mighty strokes, across the **Tyrrhenian** Sea, he came to the grassy hills and the halls of **Circe**, daughter of the **Sun**, filled with transformed beasts.

As soon as he saw her, and words of welcome had been exchanged, he said: 'Goddess, I beg you, take pity on a god! You alone can help this love of mine, if I seem worthy of help. No one knows better than I, **Titaness**, what power herbs have, since I was transmuted by them. So that the cause of my

passion is not unknown to you, I saw Scylla, on the Italian coast, opposite **Messene**'s walls. I am ashamed to tell of the prayers and promises, the blandishments I used, words that were scorned. If there is any power in charms, utter a charm from your sacred lips: or, if herbs are more potent, use the proven strength of active herbs. I trust you not to cure me, or heal me, of these wounds: my love cannot end: only let her feel this heat.

No one has a nature more susceptible to such fires than Circe, whether the root of it is in herself, or whether **Venus**, offended by **Sol** her father's tale-bearing, made her that way, so she replied: 'You would do better to chase after someone whose wishes and purposes were yours, and who was captured by equal desire. Besides, you were worth courting (and certainly could be courted), and if you offer any hope, believe me you will be too. If you doubt it, and have no faith in your attractions, well, I, though I am a goddess, daughter of shining Sol, though I possess such powers of herbs and charms, I

promise to be yours. Spurn the spurner, repay the admirer, and, in one act, be twice revenged.'

To such temptations as these Glaucus replied: 'Sooner than my love will change, Scylla unchanged, leaves will grow on the waters, and sea-weed will grow on the hills.' The goddess was angered, and since she could not harm him (nor, loving him, wished to do so) she was furious with the girl, who was preferred to her. Offended at his rejection of her passion, she at once ground noxious herbs with foul juices, and joined the spells of **Hecate** to their grinding. Wrapping herself in a dusky cloak, she made her way from the palace, through the crowd of fawning beasts, and sought out Rhegium opposite Zancle's cliffs, travelling over the seething tidal waters, as if she trod on solid ground, crossing dry-footed over the surface of the sea.

There was a little pool, curved in a smooth arc, dear to Scylla for its peacefulness. When the sun was strongest, at the zenith, and from its heights made shortest shadows, she retreated

there from the heat of sky and sea. This, the goddess tainted in advance and contaminated with her monstrous poison. She sprinkled the liquid squeezed from harmful roots, and muttered a mysterious incantation, dark with strange words, thrice nine times, in magical utterance.

Scylla comes, wading waist deep into the pool, only to find the water around her groin erupt with yelping monsters. At first, not thinking them part of her own body, she retreats from their cruel muzzles, fears them, and pushes them away: but, what she flees from, she pulls along with her, and, seeking her thighs, her legs, her feet, in place of them finds jaws like **Cerberus**'s. She stands among raging dogs, and is encircled by beasts, below the surface, from which her truncated thighs and belly emerge.

Her lover Glaucus wept, and fled Circe's embrace, she, who had made too hostile a use of her herbs' powers. Scylla remained where she was, and, at the first opportunity, in her

hatred of Circe, robbed Ulysses of his companions. Later she would have overwhelmed the Trojan ships, if she had not previously been transformed into a rock, whose stone is visible even now: a rock that sailors still avoid.

Bk XIV:75-100 Aeneas journeys to Cumae

When the oarsmen of the Trojan ships had escaped **Scylla**, and rapacious **Charybdis**, when they had almost reached the **Ausonian** shore, the wind carried them to the coast of **Libya**. There **Sidonian** Queen **Dido** took **Aeneas** into her heart and home, she, who was fated not to endure her **Phrygian** husband's departure. She stabbed herself with his sword, on a blazing pyre, that was built as if it were intended for sacred rites, deceiving, as she had been deceived.

Fleeing from the new city, Carthage, and its sandy shores, and carried back to the home of his loyal half-brother **Acestes**, son of Venus of

Eryx, Aeneas sacrificed there, and paid honours at his dead father's, **Anchises**'s, tomb. Then he loosed the ships, that **Iris** almost destroyed by fire, at **Juno**'s command, and passed the Aeolian Islands, smoking with clouds of hot sulphur, the kingdom of **Aeolus**, **son of Hippotes**, and passed the rocky isle of the **Sirens**, the daughters of **Acheloüs**.

Bereft of its pilot, Palinurus, he follows the coast by **Inarime**, **Prochyte**, and **Pithecusae**, on its barren hill, named after its inhabitants, from *pithecium*, a little ape. For the father of the gods, **Jupiter**, hating the lying and deceit of the **Cercopes**, and the crimes of that treacherous people, changed them into disgraceful creatures, so that, though unlike men, they should seem like them. He contracted their limbs, turned up and blunted their noses, and furrowed their faces with the wrinkles of old age. Their bodies completely covered by yellow hair, he sent them, as monkeys, to this place, but not before he had robbed them of the power of speech, and those tongues born for dreadful

deceit, leaving them only the power to complain in raucous shrieks.

Bk XIV:101-153 Aeneas and the Sybil of Cumae

When he had passed those islands, and left the walls of **Parthenope** behind him to starboard, the tomb of **Misenus**, the trumpeter, the **son of Aeolus**, was to larboard, and the shore of **Cumae**, a place filled with marshy sedges. He entered the cave of the **Sibyl**, and asked to go down to **Avernus**, to find his father's ghost. Then the Sibyl after remaining, for a long time, with her eyes gazing at the earth, lifted them, at last, filled with the frenzy of the god, and cried: 'You ask great things, man of great achievements, whose hand has been tested by the sword, whose faith has been tested by the fire. But have no fear, **Trojan**, you will have what you desire, and, with me as your guide, you will know the halls of **Elysium**,

and earth's strangest realm, and the likeness of your dear father. To virtue, no way is barred.'

She spoke, and pointed out to him a gleaming golden bough, in the woods of **Proserpine**, the **Juno** of Avernus, and ordered him to break it from the tree. **Aeneas** obeyed, and saw the power of dread **Dis**, and he saw his own ancestors, and the ancient shade of great-souled **Anchises**. He learned also the laws of those regions, and the trials he must undergo in fresh wars.

Then taking the return path, with weary paces, he eased the labour by talking with his **Cumean** guide. As he travelled the fearful road through the shadowy twilight, he said: 'Whether you are truly a goddess, or only most beloved by the gods, you will always be like a goddess to me, and I will acknowledge myself in your debt, who have allowed me to enter the place of the dead, and having seen that place of the dead, escape it. When I reach the upper air, I will build a temple to you, for this service, and burn incense in your honour.'

The priestess gazed at him and with a deep sigh, said: ‘I am not a goddess: and do not assume any human being is worth the honour of holy incense, or err out of ignorance. I was offered eternal life without end, if I would surrender my virginity to **Phoebus** my lover. While he still hoped for it, while he desired to bribe me beforehand with gifts, he said: “Virgin of **Cumae**, choose what you wish, and what you wish you shall have.” Pointing to a pile of dust, that had collected, I foolishly begged to have as many anniversaries of my birth, as were represented by the dust. But I forgot to ask that the years should be accompanied by youth. He gave me the years, and lasting youth, as well, if I would surrender: I rejected Phoebus’s gift, and never married.

But now my more fruitful time has turned its back on me, and old age comes, with tottering step, that must be long endured. Though I have now lived seven centuries, three hundred harvests, three hundred vintages, still remain to be seen, to equal the content of the

dust. The time will come when the passage of days will render such body as I have tiny, and my limbs, consumed with age, will reduce to the slightest of burdens. I will be thought never to have loved, and never to have delighted a god. **Phoebus** too perhaps will either not know me, or will deny that he loved me. I will go as far as having to suffer transformation, and I will be viewed as non-existent, but still known as a voice: the fates will bequeath me a voice.'

Bk XIV:154-222 Macareus meets Achaemenides again

As the **Sibyl** spoke these words, they emerged, by the rising path, from the **Stygian** regions, into the city of **Cumae** of the **Euboeans**. **Trojan Aeneas** came to the shore that was later named after his nurse **Caieta**, where he carried out her funeral rites, as accepted, according to custom. This was also the place where **Macareus** of **Neritos**, a

companion of sorely tried **Ulysses**, had settled, after the interminable weariness of hardship.

Macareus now recognised **Achaemenides**, among the Trojans, he, who had been given up as lost, by Ulysses, long ago, among the rocks of **Aetna**. Astonished to discover him, unexpectedly, still alive, he asked: ‘What god or chance preserved you, Achaemenides? Why does a Trojan vessel now carry a Greek? What land is your ship bound for? Achaemenides, no longer clothed in rags, his shreds of clothing held together with thorns, but himself again, replied to his questions, in these words: ‘If this ship is not more to me than **Ithaca** and my home, if I revere **Aeneas** less than my father, let me gaze at **Polyphemus** once more, with his gaping mouth dripping human blood. I can never thank Aeneas enough, even if I offered my all. Could I forget, or be ungrateful for, the fact that I speak and breathe and see the sky and the sun’s glory? Aeneas granted that my life did not end in the monster’s jaws, and when I leave

the light of day, now, I shall be buried in the tomb, not, indeed, in its belly.

What were my feelings, then (if fear had not robbed me of all sense and feeling), abandoned, seeing you making for the open sea? I wanted to shout to you, but feared to reveal myself to the enemy. Indeed, **Ulysses**'s shout nearly wrecked your vessel. I watched as **Cyclops** tore an enormous boulder from the mountainside, and threw it into the midst of the waves. I watched again as he hurled huge stones, as if from a catapult, using the power of his gigantic arms, and, forgetting I was not on board the ship, I was terrified that the waves and air they displaced would sink her.

When you escaped by flight from certain death, **Polyphemus** roamed over the whole of Aetna, groaning, and groping through the woods with his hands, stumbling, bereft of his sight, among the rocks. Stretching out his arms, spattered with blood, to the sea, he cursed the Greek race like the plague, saying: "O, if only chance would return Ulysses to me, or one of

his companions, on whom I could vent my wrath, whose entrails I could eat, whose living body I could tear with my hands, whose blood could fill my gullet, and whose torn limbs could quiver between my teeth: the damage to me of my lost sight would count little or nothing then!”

Fiercely he shouted, this and more. I was pale with fear, looking at his face still dripping with gore, his cruel hands, the empty eye-socket, his limbs and beard coated with human blood. Death was in front of my eyes, but that was still the least of evils. Now he'll catch me, I thought, now he'll merge my innards with his own, and the image stuck in my mind of the moment when I saw him hurl two of my friends against the ground, three, four times, and crouching over them like a shaggy lion, he filled his greedy jaws with flesh and entrails, bones full of white marrow, and warm limbs.

Trembling seized me: I stood there, pale and downcast, watching him chew and spit out his bloody feast, vomiting up lumps of matter,

mixed with wine. I imagined a like fate was being prepared for my wretched self. I hid for many days, trembling at every sound, scared of dying but longing to be dead, staving off hunger with acorns, and a mixture of leaves and grasses, alone, without help or hope, left to torture and death.

After a long stretch of time, I spied this ship far off, begging them by gestures to rescue me, and ran to the shore and moved their pity: a Trojan ship received a Greek!

Now, dearest of comrades, tell me of your fortunes too, and of your leader, and the company that has entrusted itself to the sea with you.'

Bk XIV:223-319 Ulysses and Circe

Macareus spoke of how **Aeolus** ruled the **Tuscan** deep, Aeolus **son of Hippotes**, imprisoning the winds. **Ulysses**, the **Dulichian** leader, had received them from him, an amazing gift, fastened up, in a bull's hide bag.

Sailing for nine days, with a favourable wind, Ulysses and his crew spied the homelands they sought, but when the tenth morning came, his comrades were conquered by greed and desire for their share: thinking the bag contained gold, they loosened the strings that tied up the winds. The ship was blown back over the waters, through which they had come, and, once more, entered King Aeolus's harbour.

‘From there,’ Macareus said, ‘we came to the ancient city of **Lamus**, of the **Laestrygonians: Antiphates** was now king in that land. I was sent to him with two companions. One of my friends and myself, fleeing, barely reached safety. The third reddened the Laestrygonians' evil mouths with his blood. Antiphates chased us as we ran for it, urging his men on. They rushed us, hurling rocks and tree-trunks, drowning the men, and sinking the ships. The one which Ulysses himself, and I sailed in, escaped.

Mourning our lost companions, lamenting greatly, we came to that land you see, in the

distance, (believe me the island I saw is best seen from a distance!) and I warn you, O most virtuous of Trojans, son of the goddess, (since the war is over now, I will not treat you as an enemy, Aeneas) shun the shores of **Circe**! We, likewise, beaching our vessel, refused to go on, remembering Antiphates, and savage Cyclops: but we were chosen by lot to explore the unknown place. I, and the loyal **Polites**, and also **Eurylochus**, and **Elpenor**, too fond of wine, and eighteen others of my comrades, were sent within Circe's walls.

We had no sooner arrived, and were standing on the threshold of her courts, when a thousand wolves, and mixed with the wolves. she-bears and lionesses rushed at us, filling us with terror. But there was nothing to be afraid of: none of them gave our bodies a single scratch. Why they even wagged their tails in the air with affection, and fawned on us, as they followed our footsteps, until female servants received us, and led us, through halls covered with marble, to their mistress.

She sat in a lovely inner room on her sacred throne, wearing a shining robe, covered over with a gold-embroidered veil. **Nereids** and **nymphs** were with her, who do not work wool with nimble fingers, nor, then, spin the thread: they arrange herbs, scattered without order, separating flowers and grasses of various colours, into baskets. She herself directs the work they do: she herself knows the use of each leaf, which kinds mix in harmony, examines them, and pays attention to the weighings of the herbs.

When she saw us, and words of welcome had been received, she smiled at us, and seemed to give a blessing to our desires. Without delay she ordered a drink to be blended, of malted barley, honey, strong wine, and curdled milk, to which she secretly added juices, that its sweetness would hide. We took the cup offered by her sacred hand. As soon as we had drained it, thirstily, with parched lips, the dread goddess touched the top of our hair with her wand, and then (I am ashamed, but I will tell you) I began

to bristle with hair, unable to speak now, giving out hoarse grunts instead of words, and to fall forward, completely facing the ground.

I felt my mouth stiffening into a long snout, my neck swelling with brawn, and I made tracks on the ground, with the parts that had just now lifted the cup to my mouth. I was shut in a sty with the others in the same state (so much can magic drugs achieve!) We saw that only **Eurylochus** had escaped the transformation: the only one to avoid the proffered cup. If he had not refused, I would even now be one of the bristly herd, since Ulysses would not have heard of our plight from him, or come to Circe, as our avenger.

Peace-loving **Cyllenian Mercury** had given him the white flower, the gods call *moly*, that springs from a black root. With this, and divine warnings, he entered Circe's house in safety, and, when he was asked to drink from the fateful cup, he struck aside the wand, with which she tried to stroke his hair, and scared off the frightened goddess, with drawn sword.

Then they gave their right hands to each other, as a pledge of good faith, and after being received into her bed as her husband, he asked for his friends true bodies to be restored, as a wedding gift.

We were sprinkled with the more virtuous juices of unknown herbs, our heads were stroked with the wand reversed, and the words, she had said, were pronounced, with the words said backwards. The more words she spoke, the more we stood erect, lifted from the ground. Our bristles fell away, our cloven hoofs lost their cleft, our shoulders reappeared, and below them were our upper and lower arms. Weeping we embraced him, as he wept himself, and clung to our leader's neck, and nothing was said until we had testified to our gratitude.

We stayed there for a year, and, in that length of time, I saw and heard many things. Here is one told me, in secret, by one of the four female servants, dedicated to those earlier tasks. While Circe was tarrying alone with our leader, the girl showed me the statue of a young

man, carved out of snow-white marble, with a woodpecker's head on top. It stood in a holy temple, distinguished by many wreaths. I asked, as I wished to know, who it was, and why he was worshipped in a holy temple, and why he bore a bird's head. She said "Listen, Macareus, and learn, as well, how great is my mistress's power: keep your mind on my words!" '

Bk XIV:320-396 The transformation of Picus

‘ “**Picus**, the son of **Saturn**, was king in the land of **Ausonia**, and loved horses trained for war. The hero's appearance was as you see it there. Though, if you looked at his beauty itself, you would approve the true and not the imaginary form. His spirit equalled his looks. In age, he had not yet seen four of the five-yearly Games at **Elis** in Greece. He had turned the heads of the **dryads** born on the hills of **Latium**: the nymphs of the fountains pursued him, and the **naiads**; those that live in the **Tiber**; and in the River **Numicius**; in **Anio**'s

streams; and the brief course of the **Almo**; the rushing **Nar**; and **Farfar** of dense shadows; and those who haunt the wooded pool of **Scythian Diana**, and its neighbouring lakes.

But, spurning them all, he loved one nymph alone, whom, it is said, **Venilia** once bore, on the **Palatine** hill, to two-faced **Janus**. She, when she had grown to marriageable age, was given to **Picus** of **Laurentum**, preferred of all her suitors. She was of rare beauty, but rarer her gift of song, so that she was called **Canens**. She could move the rocks and trees with her singing, make wild beasts gentle, halt wide rivers, and detain the wandering birds. One day when she was singing her song, with a girl's expressiveness, **Picus** left home to hunt the native wild boar, in the Laurentian fields. Astride the back of an eager mount, he carried two hunting spears in his left hand, and wore a Greek military cloak, dyed crimson, fastened with a golden brooch.

Sol's daughter had come to those same woods, leaving the fields, called **Circean** from

her name, to cull fresh herbs in the fertile hills. As soon as she saw the youth from the cover of a thicket, she was stunned: the herbs she had culled fell from her hand, and flames seemed to reach to her very marrow. As soon as she had recovered rational thought after the wave of passion, she wanted to own to her desires, but she could not reach him, because of his horse's speed, and his crowd of companions. 'Though the wind take you, you will not escape,' she cried, 'if I know my skill, if the power of herbs has not completely vanished, and my incantations do not fail.' Saying this, she conjured up a bodiless phantom boar, and commanded it to cross under the king's very eyes, and seem to enter a dense grove of trees, where the woods were thickest, and the place was impenetrable to horses. Instantly, and unwittingly, without a moment's delay, Picus, followed his shadowy prey, and, quickly leaping from the back of his foaming mount, he roamed, on foot, through the deep wood, chasing an empty promise.

Circe recited curses, and spoke magic words, worshipping unknown gods, with unknown incantations, by which she used to dim the face of the bright moon, and veil her father's orb, with moisture-loving cloud.

Now, also, by her song, the sky is darkened, and the earth breathes out fog, and his companions wander on blind trails, and the king's protection is lost. Having made the time and place, she says: 'O, by those eyes, that have captured mine, and by that beauty, most handsome of youths, that has made a goddess suppliant to you, think of my passion, and accept the sun, who sees all things, as your father-in-law. Do not, unfeelingly, despise Circe, **daughter of Titan.**'

She spoke: he fiercely rejected her and her entreaties, and said: 'Whoever you may be, I am not for you. Another has captured my love and holds me, and I hope she will hold me forever. While the fates guard **Canens, Janus's daughter**, for me, I will not harm our bond of affection by an alien love. Repeating her

entreaties, time and again, in vain, Circe cried: ‘You will not go unpunished, or return to your Canens, and you will learn the truth of what the wounded; a lover; a woman, can do: and Circe is a lover; is wounded; is a woman!’

Then twice to the west, twice to the east, she turned; thrice touched the youth with her wand, thrice spoke an incantation. He ran, but was surprised to find himself running faster than before: he saw wings appear on his body. Angered at his sudden transformation to a strange bird in the woods of **Latium**, he pecked at the rough oak wood with his hard beak, and in fury wounded the long branches. The feathers of his crown and nape took on the colour of his crimson cloak, and what had been a golden brooch, pinning his clothes, became plumage, and his neck was surrounded behind by green-gold. Nothing was left to Picus of his former being, except his name.” ’

Bk XIV:397-434 The fate of Canens

Meanwhile, his companions came upon **Circe**, after calling for **Picus** through the fields, often, and uselessly (she had now thinned the mist, and dispersed the clouds with winds, and revealed the sun). They pressed true charges against her; demanded the king; showed force; and prepared to attack her with deadly spears. She sprinkled them with harmful drugs and poisonous juices, summoning **Night** and the gods of Night, from **Erebus** and Chaos, and calling on **Hecate** with long wailing cries.

Marvellous to say, the trees tore from their roots, the earth rumbled, the surrounding woods turned white, and the grass she sprinkled was wet with drops of blood. And the stones seemed to emit harsh groans, and dogs to bark, and the ground to crawl with black snakes, and the ghostly shades of the dead to hover. The terrified band shuddered at these monstrosities. She touched the fearful, stunned, faces with her wand, and, at its contact, the monstrous forms of various wild beasts appeared, as the warriors

were transformed: none of them retained his human form.

Now Phoebus, setting, dyed the shores of Spain, and Canens was looking, in vain, for her husband, with her eyes and in her thoughts. Her servants, and her people, ran through the woods to meet him, carrying torches. The nymph was not satisfied with weeping, and tearing at her hair, and beating her breast (though she did all those things) and she rushed out herself, and roamed madly through the fields of **Latium**. Six nights, and as many returns of the sun's light, found her wandering, without food or sleep, through valleys and hills, wherever chance lead her.

Tiber was last to see her, as she lay down, weary with grief and journeying, on his wide banks. There, she poured out her words of grief, tearfully, in faint tones, in harmony with sadness, just as the swan sings once, in dying, its own funeral song. At the last she melted away, wasted by grief, liquefied to the marrow, little by little vanishing into thin air. But her

story is signified by the place, that the Muses of old, fittingly, called **Canens**, from the nymph's name.” ’

Bk XIV:435-444 Caieta's epitaph

‘I heard many such stories, and saw many things throughout that long year. Sluggish and torpid, through inactivity, we were commanded to spread the sails and travel the seas again. **Circe**, the **Titan's daughter**, had told us of the fierce dangers of the seas to come, the dangerous channels, and the vast reaches: I confess I was afraid, and finding this shore, I clung to it.’ **Macareus** had done.

Aeneas's nurse, **Caieta**, was interred in a marble urn, having a brief epitaph carved on her tomb:

**HERE HE WHOM I, CAIETA, NURSED,
WHO, NOTED FOR HIS PIETY,
SAVED ME FROM ACHAEAN FIRE, AS
IS RIGHT, CREMATED ME.**

**Bk XIV:445-482 War in Latium: Turnus asks
Diomedes's help**

Freeing their cables from the grassy shore, and keeping far away from the treacherous island and the home of the infamous goddess, the Trojans sought the groves where dark-shadowed **Tiber**, rushes, yellow with sand, to the sea. There, **Aeneas** won the daughter, **Lavinia**, and the kingdom of **Latinus**, son of **Faunus**, but not without a battle.

Turnus fights with fury for his promised bride, and war is waged with a fierce people. All **Etruria** clashes with **Latium**, and for a long time, with anxious struggle, hard-fought victory is looked for. Both sides add to their strength with outside aid, and many support the **Rutuli**, many others the **Trojan** camp.

Aeneas did not seek help from **Evander** in vain, but **Venulus**, sent by **Turnus**, had no profit from the city of exiled **Diomede**. He had founded a major city, Arpi, in **Daunus**'s kingdom of **Iapygia**, and held the country given him as a dowry. When Venulus had done as Turnus commanded and asked for help, Diomede, **Aetolia**'s hero, pleaded lack of resources as an excuse: he did not wish to commit himself or his father-in-law's people, nor had he any men of his own race he could arm. 'So that you do not think that these are lies,' he said, 'I will endure the telling of my story patiently, though its mention renews my bitter grief.'

When high **Ilium** had been burned, and **Pergama** had fed the Greek fires, and when **Ajax**, hero of **Naryx**, had brought down, on us all, the virgin goddess **Minerva**'s punishment, that he alone deserved, for the rape of virgin **Cassandra**, we Greeks were taken, and scattered by storms, over the hostile seas. We suffered lightning, darkness, and storms, the

anger of sea and sky, and Cape **Caphereus**, the culminating disaster. Not to waste time by telling you our sad misfortunes one by one, the Greeks then might even have appeared to warrant **Priam**'s tears. Warrior **Minerva**'s saving care for me, however, rescued me from the waves. But I was driven from my native country again, for gentle **Venus**, remembering the wound I had once given her, exacted punishment. I suffered such great toils in the deep sea, such conflicts on land, that I often called those happy whom the storm, that we shared, and the troubled waters, of Caphereus, drowned, and I longed to have been one of them.'

Bk XIV:483-511 Acmon and others are changed into birds

'Now my friends lost heart, having endured ultimate misery in war and on the sea, and begged me to end our wanderings. But fiery-natured **Acmon**, truly exasperated by our

disasters, said: “What is left, indeed, men, that your patience would not bear? What more could **Cytherean Venus** do, do you think, if she wished to? When we fear the worst there is a place for prayer, but when our lot is worst, fear is under our feet, and at the height of misfortune we are unconcerned. Though she herself should hear me, though she should hate, as she does, all those under **Diomedes**’s command, yet we all scorn her hatred. Great powers hardly count as great to us.”

Acmon **of Pleuron** goaded Venus with these insulting words, and rekindled her former anger. Few of us approved of what he said: the majority of his friends reprovved him, and when he tried to answer, his voice and throat grew attenuated; his hair turned to plumage; and plumage covered his newly formed neck, chest and back. His arms received large feathers, and his elbows twisted to form swift wings; his toes took up most of his feet, and his face hardened and stiffened like horn, and ended in a pointed beak. **Lycus**, and **Idas**, **Rhexenor**, **Nycteus** and

Abas, marvelled at him, and while they marvelled, they took the same form. The larger number of the flock rose, and circled the oarsmen on beating wings. If you ask the shape of these suddenly created birds, they were like white swans, though they were not swans. Now I can scarcely hold this house, and its parched fields, as **Daunus** of **Iapygia**'s son-in-law, with this tiny remnant of my friends.'

Bk XIV:512-526 The creation of the wild olive

So said **Diomedes**, grandson of **Oeneus** of **Calydon**. **Venulus** left that kingdom passing the **Peucetian** valleys, and the fields of **Messapia**. Here he came across a cave, dark with trees, and masked by slender reeds, that now is held by the goat-god **Pan**, but once was held by the **nymphs**. A shepherd from that region of Apulia scared them to flight, at first, suddenly inspiring terror in them. When they had collected their wits, scornful of their

pursuer, they returned to their dancing, feet skipping to the measure.

The shepherd mocked them, leaping wildly in imitation, and adding foul language, with coarse abuse. Nor was his mouth silent till tree-bark imprisoned his throat: he is indeed a tree: you may know its character, by the taste of its fruit that bears the mark of his speech in the wild olives' bitterness. The sharpness of his words has entered them.

Bk XIV:527-565 The transformation of Aeneas's ships

When the ambassadors returned, saying that **Aetolia**'s arms were denied them, the **Rutuli** pursued war without their help, and much blood was spilled on both sides. **Turnus** attacked the pinewood ships, with devouring fire, and the Trojans feared to lose by fire what the sea had spared. Now **Mulciber**'s flames burned the pitch and wax, and other fuel, and climbed the tall masts to the sails, and the thwarts across the

curved hulls were smouldering, when **Cybele**, the sacred mother of the gods, remembering that these pines were felled on Mount **Ida**'s summit, filled the air with the clashing throb of bronze cymbals, and the shrilling of boxwood flutes. Carried through the clear air by tame lions, she cried out: 'Turnus, you hurl those firebrands, with sacrilegious hands, in vain! I will save: I will not allow the devouring fire to burn what was part of my woods and belongs to me.'

As the goddess spoke it thundered, and, after the thunder, heavy rain, and leaping hail, fell, and the winds, the brothers, sons of **Astraeus** the Titan by **Aurora**, troubled the air and the sea, swollen by the sudden onrush, and joined the conflict. The all-sustaining mother goddess, used the force of one of them, and broke the hempen cables of the **Trojan** ships, drove them headlong, and sank them in the deep ocean.

Their rigidity softened, and their wood turned to flesh; the curved sternposts turned

into heads; the oars into fingers and legs, swimming; the sides of each vessel became flanks, and the submerged keel down the ship's middle turned into a spine; the cordage became soft hair, the yards were arms; and their dusky colour was as before. **Naiads** of the waters, they play, in the waves they used to fear, and born on the hills they frequent the gentle sea, and their origin does not affect them. Yet not forgetting how many dangers they have often endured on the ocean, they often place their hands beneath storm-tossed boats, unless they have carried Greeks. Remembering, as yet, the Trojan disaster, they hate the **Pelasgians** and with joyful faces they saw the wreckage of **Ulysses**'s ship, and with joyful faces they saw King **Alcinous**'s vessel become a rock, its wood turning to stone.

Bk XIV:566-580 The heron is born from Ardea's ruins

There was hope that the Rutuli, in awe of the wonder of the Trojan fleet being turned into sea-nymphs, would abandon the war. It continued, and both sides had gods to help them, and courage that is worth as much as the gods' assistance. Now they were not seeking a kingdom as a dowry, nor a father-in-law's sceptre, nor you, virgin Lavinia, but to win: and they waged war because they were ashamed to surrender. At length Turnus fell, and Venus saw her son's weapons victorious. Ardea fell, spoken of as a power while Turnus lived. After the savage fires had destroyed it, and warm ashes buried its houses, a bird flew from the ruins, one now seen for the first time, and beat at the embers with flapping wings. Its cry, its leanness, its pallor, everything that fitted the captured city, even its name, *ardea*, the heron, survived in the bird: and in the beating of its wings, Ardea mourns itself.

Bk XIV:581-608 The deification of Aeneas

Aeneas's virtues had compelled all the gods, even **Juno** herself, to bring to an end their ancient feud, and since his young son **Julus**'s fortunes were firmly founded, **Cytherea**'s heroic son was ripe for heaven. **Venus** had sought the opinion of the gods, and throwing her arms round her father's neck, had said 'You have never been harsh to me, father, now be kindest of all, I beg you. Grant my Aeneas, who claims you as his grandfather through my bloodline, some divinity, however little - you choose - so long as you grant him something! It is enough that he once gazed on the hateful kingdom, once crossed the steams of **Styx**.' The gods agreed, and Juno, the royal consort, did not display her severe expression, but consented peacefully. Then **Jupiter** said: 'You are worthy of this divine gift, you who ask, as is he for whom you ask it: my daughter, possess what you desire!'

The word was spoken: with joy she thanked her father, and drawn by her team of doves through the clear air, she came to the coast of

Laurentum, where the waters of the River **Numicius**, hidden by reeds, wind down to the neighbouring sea. She ordered the river-god to cleanse Aeneas, of whatever was subject to death, and bear it away, in his silent course, into the depths of the ocean. The horned god executed Venus's orders, and purged Aeneas of whatever was mortal, and dispersed it on the water: what was best in him remained. Once purified, his mother anointed his body with divine perfume, touched his lips with a mixture of sweet nectar and ambrosia, and made him a god, whom the **Romans** named **Indiges**, admitting him to their temples and altars.

Bk XIV:609-622 The line of Alban kings

After that the **Alban** and Latin kingdom had both names under **Ascanius**. **Silvius** succeeded him, whose son claimed the name **Latinus**, with the sceptre. The famous **Alba** followed Latinus, and then **Epytus** inherited. After him came first **Capys**, and then **Capetus**.

Tiberinus inherited the kingdom from them, who, drowning in the waters of that **Tuscan** stream, gave his name to the River **Tiber**. His sons were **Acrota** the warrior, and **Remulus**. The elder Remulus was killed by a lightning-bolt, when trying to portray the lightning. Acrota, more restrained than his brother, passed the sceptre to brave **Aventinus**, who lies buried on the very hill where he reigned, and has given his name to it, the Aventine hill. And then **Proca** had the rule of the **Palatine** people.

Bk XIV:623-697 Vertumnus woos Pomona

Pomona lived in this king's reign. No other hamadryad, of the wood nymphs of **Latium**, tended the gardens more skilfully or was more devoted to the orchards' care, hence her name. She loved the fields and the branches loaded with ripe apples, not the woods and rivers. She carried a curved pruning knife, not a javelin, with which she cut back the luxuriant growth, and lopped the branches spreading out here and

there, now splitting the bark and inserting a graft, providing sap from a different stock for the nursling. She would not allow them to suffer from being parched, watering, in trickling streams, the twining tendrils of thirsty root. This was her love, and her passion, and she had no longing for desire. Still fearing boorish aggression, she enclosed herself in an orchard, and denied an entrance, and shunned men.

What did the **Satyrs**, fitted by their youth for dancing, not do to possess her, and the **Pans** with pine-wreathed horns, and **Silvanus**, always younger than his years, and **Priapus**, the god who scares off thieves, with his pruning hook or his phallus? But **Vertumnus** surpassed them all, even, in his love, though he was no more fortunate than them. O how often, disguised as an uncouth reaper, he would bring her a basket filled with ears of barley, and he was the perfect image of a reaper! Often he would display his forehead bound with freshly cut hay, and might seem to have been tossing the new-mown grass.

Often he would be carrying an ox-goad in his stiff hand, so that you would swear he had just unyoked his weary team. Given a knife he was a dresser and pruner of vines: he would carry a ladder: you would think he'd be picking apples. He was a soldier with a sword, or a fisherman taking up his rod.

In short, by his many disguises, he frequently gained admittance, and found joy, gazing at her beauty. Once, he even covered his head with a coloured scarf, and leaning on a staff, with a wig of grey hair, imitated an old woman. He entered the well-tended garden, and admiring the fruit, said: 'You are so much more lovely', and gave her a few congratulatory kisses, as no true old woman would have done. He sat on the flattened grass, looking at the branches bending, weighed down with autumn fruit. There was a specimen elm opposite, covered with gleaming bunches of grapes. After he had praised it, and its companion vine, he said: 'But if that tree stood there, unmated, without its vine, it would not be sought after for

more than its leaves, and the vine also, which is joined to and rests on the elm, would lie on the ground, if it were not married to it, and leaning on it.

But you are not moved by this tree's example, and you shun marriage, and do not care to be wed. I wish that you did! **Helen** would not have had more suitors to trouble her, or **Hippodamia**, who caused the **Lapithae** problems, or **Penelope**, wife of that **Ulysses**, who was delayed too long at the war. Even now a thousand men want you, and the demi-gods and the gods, and the divinities that haunt the **Alban** hills, though you shun them and turn away from their wooing. But if you are wise, if you want to marry well, and listen to this old woman, that loves you more than you think, more than them all, reject their vulgar offers, and choose Vertumnus to share your bed! You have my assurance as well: he is not better known to himself than he is to me: he does not wander here and there in the wide world: he lives on his own in this place: and he does not

love the latest girl he has seen, as most of your suitors do.

You will be his first love, and you will be his last, and he will devote his life only to you. And then he is young, is blessed with natural charm, can take on a fitting appearance, and whatever is ordered, though you ask all, he will do. Besides, that which you love the same, those apples you cherish, he is the first to have, and with joy holds your gifts in his hand! But he does not desire now the fruit of your trees, or the sweet juice of your herbs: he desires nothing but you. Take pity on his ardour, and believe that he, who seeks you, is begging you, in person, through my mouth. Fear the vengeful gods, and **Idalian Venus**, who hates the hard-hearted, and **Rhamnusian Nemesis**, her inexorable wrath! That you may fear them more (since my long life has given me knowledge of many tales) I will tell you a story, famous through all of **Cyprus**, by which you might easily be swayed and softened.'

Bk XIV:698-771 Anaxarete and Iphis

‘Once, **Iphis**, a youth, born of humble stock, saw noble **Anaxarete**, of the blood of **Teucer**, saw her, and felt the fire of passion in every bone. He fought it for a long time, but when he could not conquer his madness by reason, he came begging at her threshold. Now he would confess his sorry love to her nurse, asking her not to be hard on him, by the hopes she had for her darling. At other times he flattered each of her many attendants, with enticing words, seeking their favourable disposition. Often he gave them messages to carry to her, in the form of fawning letters. Sometimes he hung garlands on her doorpost wet with his tears, and lay with his soft flank on the hard threshold, complaining at the pitiless bolts barring the way.

But she spurned, and mocked, him, crueller than the surging sea, when the **Kids** set; harder than steel tempered in the fires of **Noricum**; or natural rock still rooted to its bed. And she

added proud, insolent words to harsh actions, robbing her lover of hope, as well. Unable to endure the pain of his long torment, **Iphis** spoke these last words before her door. “You have conquered, Anaxarete, and you will not have to suffer any tedium on my account. Devise glad triumphs, and sing the **Paean** of victory, and wreath your brow with shining laurel! You have conquered, and I die gladly: now, heart of steel, rejoice! Now you will have something to praise about my love, something that pleases you. Remember that my love for you did not end before life itself, and that I lose twin lights in one.

No mere rumour will come to you to announce my death: have no doubt, I myself will be there, visibly present, so you can feast your savage eyes on my lifeless corpse. Yet, if you, O gods, see what mortals do, let me be remembered (my tongue can bear to ask for nothing more), and suffer my tale to be told, in future ages, and grant, to my fame, the years, you have taken from my life.”

He spoke, and lifted his tear-filled eyes to the doorposts he had often crowned with flowery garlands, and, raising his pale arms to them, tied a rope to the cross-beam, saying: “This wreath will please you, cruel and wicked, as you are!” Then he thrust his head in the noose, though, as he hung there, a pitiful burden, his windpipe crushed, even then he turned towards her. The drumming of his feet seemed to sound a request to enter, and when the door was opened it revealed what he had done.

The servants shrieked, and lifted him down, but in vain. Then they carried his body to his mother’s house (since his father was dead). She took him to her breast, and embraced her son’s cold limbs, and when she had said all the words a distraught father could say, and done the things distraught mothers do, weeping, she led his funeral procession through the heart of the city, carrying the pallid corpse, on a bier, to the pyre.

The sound of mourning rose to the ears of stony-hearted Anaxarete, her house chancing to be near the street, where the sad procession passed. Now a vengeful god roused her. Still, she was roused, and said: “Let us see this miserable funeral” and went to a rooftop room with open windows. She had barely looked at Iphis, lying on the bier, when her eyes grew fixed, and the warm blood left her pallid body. Trying to step backwards she was rooted: trying to turn her face away, also, she could not. Gradually the stone that had long existed in her heart possessed her body. If you think this is only a tale, **Salamis** still preserves the image of the lady as a statue, and also possesses a temple of Gazing **Venus**.

Remember all this, O nymph of mine: put aside, I beg you, reluctant pride, and yield to your lover. Then the frost will not sear your apples in the bud, nor the storm winds scatter them in flower.’

When **Vertumnus**, the god, disguised in the shape of the old woman, had spoken, but to

no effect, he went back to being a youth, and threw off the dress of an old woman, and appeared to **Pomona**, in the glowing likeness of the sun, when it overcomes contending clouds, and shines out, unopposed. He was ready to force her: but no force was needed, and the nymph captivated by the form of the god, felt a mutual passion.

Bk XIV:772-804 War and reconciliation with the Sabines

Now unjust **Amulius** rules **Ausonia**, by means of military power, and old **Numitor**, with his grandson **Romulus**'s help, captures the kingdom he has lost, and the city of **Rome** is founded, on the day of the **Palilia**.

The **Sabine** leaders, and their king **Tatius**, wage war, and **Tarpeia** who gives them access to the citadel, is punished as she deserves, stripped of her life, crushed by a heap of weapons.

Then the men of **Cures**, with hushed voices, silently, like wolves, overcome the Romans, whose bodies are lost in sleep, and attempt the gates that Romulus, **son of Ilia**, has closed, and firmly barred.

Saturnian Juno herself unbarred a gate, opening it silently on its hinges. Only **Venus** saw that the gate's bars had dropped, and would have closed it, except that one god is never allowed to reverse the actions of another.

The **Ausonian Naiads**, owned a spot, adjoining the temple of **Janus**, moistened by a cold spring. Venus asked them for help: the nymphs did not refuse her just request, and elicited the aid of the streams, and watercourses, belonging to their fountain. But the pass of Janus was still not blocked, and the water did not bar the way: they placed yellow sulphur under their copious spring, and heated the hollow channels with burning pitch. By these and other means the vapour penetrated the depths of the spring, and you waters that a

moment ago dared to compete with **Alpine** coldness, now did not concede to fire itself!

The twin gateposts smouldered under a fiery spray, and the gate, that vainly promised an entrance to the tough Sabines, was blocked by the new waters, while the Roman soldiers took up their weapons of war.

After this Romulus sallied out, and the Roman soil was strewn with the Sabine dead, and with Rome's own, and the impious sword mixed the blood of son-in-law with the blood of father-in-law. Yet it was decided not to fight it out to the end, to let peace end war, and that **Tatius** should share the rule of Rome.

Bk XIV:805-828 The deification of Romulus

Tatius died, and you, **Romulus**, gave orders equally to both peoples. **Mars**, removing his helmet, addressed the father of gods and men in these words: 'The time has come, lord, to grant the reward (that you promised to me and your deserving grandson), since the Roman

state is strong, on firm foundations, and does not depend on a single champion: free his spirit, and raising him from earth set him in the heavens. You once said to me, in person, at a council of the gods (since I am mindful of the gracious words I noted in my retentive mind), ‘There will be one whom you will raise to azure heaven.’ Let your words be ratified in full!’

Omnipotent **Jupiter** nodded, and, veiling the sky with dark clouds, he terrified men on earth with thunder and lightning. **Mars** knew this as a sign that ratified the promised ascension, and leaning on his spear, he vaulted, fearlessly, into his chariot, the horses straining at the blood-wet pole, and cracked the loud whip. Dropping headlong through the air, he landed on the summit of the wooded **Palatine**. There he caught up **Romulus, son of Ilia**, as he was dealing royal justice to his people. The king’s mortal body dissolved in the clear atmosphere, like the lead bullet, that often melts in mid-air, hurled by the broad thong of a catapult. Now he has beauty of form, and he is

Quirinus, clothed in ceremonial robes, such a form as is worthier of the sacred high seats of the gods.

Bk XIV:829-851 The deification of his wife Hersilia

His wife, **Hersilia**, was mourning him as lost, when royal **Juno** ordered **Iris** to descend to her, by her rainbow path, and carry these commands, to the widowed queen: ‘O lady, glory of the **Latin** and **Sabine** peoples, worthy before to have been the wife of so great a hero, and now of **Quirinus**, dry your tears, and if it is your desire to see your husband, follow me and seek the grove, that flourishes on the Quirinal hill and shades the temple of Rome’s king.’

Iris obeyed, and gliding to earth along her many-coloured arch addressed Hersilia as she had been ordered. She, hardly raising her eyes, replied, modestly: ‘O goddess (since it is not easy for me to say who you are, but it is clear you are a goddess), lead on: O, lead on, and

show me my husband's face. If only the fates allow me to see him once, I shall declare I have been received in heaven.'

Without delay, she climbed to **Romulus's** hill, with Iris, the virgin daughter of **Thaumas**. There a star fell, gliding from sky to earth, and Hersilia, hair set alight by its fire, vanishes with the star in the air. The founder of the Roman city receives her in his familiar embrace, and alters her former body and her name, and calls her **Hora**, who, a goddess now, is one with her Quirinus.

Book XV



Bk XV:1-59 Myscelus: the founding of Crotona

Meanwhile the Romans looked for a leader, to bear the weight of such responsibility, and follow so great a king: **Fame**, the true harbinger, determined on the illustrious **Numa** for the throne. Not content with knowing the rituals of the **Sabine** people, with his capable mind he conceived a wider project, and delved into the nature of things. His love of these enquiries led him to leave his native **Cures**, and visit the city of **Crotona**, to which Hercules was friendly. When **Numa** asked who was the founder of this Greek city on Italian soil, one of the older inhabitants, not ignorant of the past, replied: ‘They say that Hercules, **Jupiter**’s son, back from the sea with the rich herds of **Spain**, happily came to the shore of **Lacinium**, and while his cattle strayed through the tender grass, he entered the house of the great **Croton**, a not inhospitable roof, and refreshed himself with rest, after his long labours, and, in leaving,

said: ‘At a future time, there will be a city here, of your descendants.’

And the promise proved true, since there was one **Myscelus**, the son of **Alemon** of **Argos**, dearest to the gods of all his generation. Hercules, the club-bearer, leaning over him, spoke to him as he lay in a deep sleep: ‘Rise now, leave your native country: go, find the pebble-filled waves of **Aesar!**’ and he threatened him with many and fearful things if he did not obey. Then the god and sleep vanished together. Alemon’s son rose, and, in silence, thought over the vision, fresh in his mind. He struggled in himself for a long time over the decision: the god ordered him to go: the law prohibited his going. Death was the penalty for the man who wished to change his nationality.

Bright **Sol** had hidden his shining face in **Ocean**’s stream, and **Night** had lifted her starriest face: the same god seemed to appear to him, to admonish him in the same way, and warn of worse and greater punishment if he did

not obey. He was afraid, and prepared, at once, to transfer the sanctuary of his ancestors to a new place. There was talk in the city, and he was brought to trial, for showing contempt for the law. When the case against him had been presented, and it was evident the charge was proven, without needing witnesses, the wretched defendant, lifting his face and hands to heaven, cried: ‘O you, whose twelve labours gave you the right to heaven, help me, I beg you! Since you are the reason for my crime.’

The ancient custom was to vote using black and white pebbles: the black to condemn: the white to absolve from punishment. Now, also, the harsh verdict was determined in this way, and every pebble dropped into the pitiless urn was black: but when the urn was tipped over and the pebbles poured out for the count, their colour had changed from black to white, and, acquitted through the divine power of Hercules, Alemon’s son was freed.

He first gave thanks to that son of **Amphitryon**, his patron, and with favouring

winds set sail on the **Ionian** Sea. He sailed by **Neretum**, of the **Sallentines**, **Sybaris**, and the **Spartan** colony of **Tarentum**, the bay of **Siris**, **Crimisa**, and the **Iapygian** fields. He had barely passed the lands that overlook those seas, when he came, by destiny, to the mouth of the river Aesar, and near it the tumulus beneath which the earth covered the sacred bones of **Croton**. He founded the city of Crotona there, in the land commanded by the god, and derived the name of the city from him, whom the tumulus held. Such were the established beginnings, according to reliable tradition, of that place, and the cause of the city's being sited on Italian soil.

Bk **XV:60-142** **Pythagoras's**
Teachings:Vegetarianism

There was a man here, **Pythagoras**, a Samian by birth, who had fled **Samos** and its rulers, and, hating their tyranny, was living in voluntary exile. Though the gods were far

away, he visited their region of the sky, in his mind, and what nature denied to human vision he enjoyed with his inner eye. When he had considered every subject, through concentrated thought, he communicated it widely in public, teaching the silent crowds, who listened in wonder to his words, concerning the origin of the vast universe, and of the causes of things; and what the physical world is; what the gods are; where the snows arise; what the origin of lightning is; whether **Jupiter**, or the storm-winds, thunder from colliding clouds; what shakes the earth; by what laws the stars move; and whatever else is hidden; and he was the first to denounce the serving of animal flesh at table; the first voice, wise but not believed in, to say, for example, in words like these :

‘Human beings, stop desecrating your bodies with impious foodstuffs. There are crops; there are apples weighing down the branches; and ripening grapes on the vines; there are flavoursome herbs; and those that can be rendered mild and gentle over the flames;

and you do not lack flowing milk; or honey fragrant from the flowering thyme. The earth, prodigal of its wealth, supplies you with gentle sustenance, and offers you food without killing or shedding blood.

Flesh satisfies the wild beast's hunger, though not all of them, since horses, sheep and cattle live on grasses, but those that are wild and savage: Armenian tigers, raging lions, and wolves and bears, enjoy food wet with blood. Oh, how wrong it is for flesh to be made from flesh; for a greedy body to fatten, by swallowing another body; for one creature to live by the death of another creature! So amongst such riches, that earth, the greatest of mothers, yields, you are not happy unless you tear, with cruel teeth, at pitiful wounds, recalling **Cyclops**'s practice, and you cannot satisfy your voracious appetite, and your restless hunger, unless you destroy other life!

But that former age, that we call golden, was happy with the fruit from the trees, and the herbs the earth produced, and did not defile its

lips with blood. Then birds winged their way through the air in safety, and hares wandered, unafraid, among the fields, and its own gullibility did not hook the fish: all was free from trickery, and fearless of any guile, and filled with peace. But once someone, whoever he was, the author of something unfitting, envied the lion's prey, and stuffed his greedy belly with fleshy food, he paved the way for crime. It may be that, from the first, weapons were warm and bloodstained from the killing of wild beasts, but that would have been enough: I admit that creatures that seek our destruction may be killed without it being a sin, but while they may be killed, they still should not be eaten.

From that, the wickedness spread further, and it is thought that the pig was first considered to merit slaughter because it rooted up the seeds with its broad snout, and destroyed all hope of harvest. The goat was led to death, at the avenging altar, for browsing the vines of **Bacchus**. These two suffered for their crimes!

What did you sheep do, tranquil flocks, born to serve man, who bring us sweet milk in full udders, who give us your wool to make soft clothing, who give us more by your life than you grant us by dying? What have the oxen done, without guile or deceit, harmless, simple, born to endure labour?

He is truly thankless, and not worthy of the gift of corn, who could, in a moment, remove the weight of the curved plough, and kill his labourer, striking that work-worn neck with his axe, that has helped turn the hard earth as many times as the earth yielded harvest. It is not enough to have committed such wickedness: they involve the gods in crime, and believe that the gods above delight in the slaughter of suffering oxen! A victim of outstanding beauty, and without blemish (since to be pleasing is harmful), distinguished by sacrificial ribbons and gold, is positioned in front of the altar, and listens, unknowingly, to the prayers, and sees the corn it has laboured to produce, scattered between its horns, and, struck down, stains with

blood those knives that it has already caught sight of, perhaps, reflected in the clear water.

Immediately they inspect the lungs, ripped from the still-living chest, and from them find out the will of the gods. On this (so great is man's hunger for forbidden food) you feed, O human race! Do not, I beg you, and concentrate your minds on my admonitions! When you place the flesh of slaughtered cattle in your mouths, know and feel, that you are devouring your fellow-creature.'

**Bk XV:143-175 Pythagoras's
Teachings:Metempsychosis**

'Now, since a god moves my lips, I will follow, with due rite, the god who moves those lips, and reveal my beloved **Delphi** and the heavens themselves, and unlock the oracles of that sublime mind. I will speak of mighty matters, not fathomed by earlier greatness, things long hidden. I delight in journeying among the distant stars: I delight in leaving

earth and its dull spaces, to ride the clouds; to stand on the shoulders of mighty **Atlas**, looking down from far off on men, wandering here and there, devoid of knowledge, anxious, fearing death; to read the book of fate, and to give them this encouragement!

O species, stunned by your terror of chill death, why fear the **Styx**, why fear the ghosts and empty names, the stuff of poets, the spectres of a phantom world? Do not imagine you can suffer any evil, whether your bodies are consumed by the flames of the funeral pyre, or by wasting age! Souls are free from death, and always, when they have left their previous being, they live in new dwelling-places, and inhabit what received them. I myself (for I remember) was **Euphorbus**, son of **Panthoüs**, at the time of the **Trojan** War, in whose chest was pinned the heavy spear of the **lesser Atrides, Menelaüs**. I recognised the shield I used to carry on my left arm, recently, in the temple of **Juno** at **Argos**, city of **Abas**!

Everything changes, nothing dies: the spirit wanders, arriving here or there, and occupying whatever body it pleases, passing from a wild beast into a human being, from our body into a beast, but is never destroyed. As pliable wax, stamped with new designs, is no longer what it was; does not keep the same form; but is still one and the same; I teach that the soul is always the same, but migrates into different forms. So, I say as a seer, cease to make kindred spirits homeless, by wicked slaughter: do not let blood be nourished by blood!’

Bk XV:176-198 Pythagoras’s Teachings: The Eternal Flux

‘Since I have embarked on the wide ocean, and given full sails to the wind, I say there is nothing in the whole universe that persists. Everything flows, and is formed as a fleeting image. Time itself, also, glides, in its continual motion, no differently than a river. For neither the river, nor the swift hour can stop: but as

wave impels wave, and as the prior wave is chased by the coming wave, and chases the one before, so time flees equally, and, equally, follows, and is always new. For what was before is left behind: and what was not comes to be: and each moment is renewed.

You see the nights' traverses tend towards day, and brilliant light follow the dark of night. The sky has a different colour when all weary things are at rest, at midnight, than when bright **Lucifer** appears on his white charger, and alters again when **Aurora**, herald of the dawn, stains the world she bequeaths to **Phoebus**. The shield of the god himself is red, when it rises from beneath the earth, and still red, when it is hidden below the earth, again: but is white at the zenith, because there the atmosphere is purer, and it escapes far from the contagion of earth. And **Diana**, the moon, can never have the same or similar form, and is always less today than tomorrow if her orb is waxing, greater if it is waning.'

Bk XV:199-236 Pythagoras's Teachings: The Four Ages of Man

‘Do you not see that the year displays four aspects, passing through them, in a semblance of our life? For spring, in its new life, is tender and sap-filled, and like a child: then the shoots are fresh and growing, delicate, without substance, quickening the farmer’s hopes. Then everything blossoms, the kindly land is a riot of brightly coloured flowers, but the leaves are still not strong. From spring, the year, grown stronger, moves to summer, and becomes a powerful man: no season is sturdier, or more expansive, than this, or shines more richly. Autumn comes, when the ardour of youth has gone, ripe and mellow, between youth and age, a scattering of grey on its forehead. Then trembling winter, with faltering steps, its hair despoiled, or, what it has, turned white.

And our bodies themselves are always, restlessly, changing: we shall not be, tomorrow, what we were, or what we are. There was a

time when we were hidden in our first mother's womb, only the seed and promise of a human being: nature applied her skilful hands, and, unwilling for our bodies to be buried, cramped in our mother's swollen belly, expelled us from our home, into the empty air. Born into the light, the infant lay there, powerless: but soon it scrambled on all fours like a wild creature, then, gradually, helped by a supporting harness, it stood, uncertainly, on shaky legs. From that point, it grew strong and swift, and passed through its span of youth.

When the middle years are also done, life takes the downward path of declining age. **Milon**, the athlete, grown old, cries when he looks at those weak and flabby arms, that were once, like those of **Hercules**, a solid mass of muscle. **Helen**, the daughter of **Tyndareus**, also weeps, when she sees an old woman's wrinkles in the glass, and asks why she has been twice ravaged. Devouring Time, and you, jealous Age, consume everything, and slowly

gnawing at them, with your teeth, little by little, consign all things to eternal death!’

Bk XV:237-258 Pythagoras’s Teachings:The Elements

‘Even the things we call elements do not persist. Apply your concentration, and I will teach the changes, they pass through. The everlasting universe contains four generative states of matter. Of these, two, earth and water, are heavy, and sink lower, under their own weight. The other two lack heaviness, and, if not held down, they seek height: that is air, and fire, purer than air. Though they are distinct in space, nevertheless they are all derived from one another, and resolve into one another. Earth, melting, is dilated to clear water: the moisture, rarified, changes to wind and air: then air, losing further weight, in the highest regions shines out as fire, the most rarified of all. Then they return, in reverse, revealing the same series of changes. Since fire, condenses, turns into

denser air, and this to water, and water, contracted, solidifies as earth.

Nothing keeps its own form, and Nature, the renewer of things, refreshes one shape from another. Believe me, nothing dies in the universe as a whole, but it varies and changes its aspect, and what we call 'being born' is a beginning to be, of something other, than what was before, and 'dying' is, likewise, ending a former state. Though, 'that' perhaps is transferred here, and 'this', there, the total sum is constant.

**Bk XV:259-306 Pythagoras's
Teachings:Geological changes**

For my part, I would have thought that nothing lasts for long with the same appearance. So the ages changed from gold to iron, and so the fortunes of places have altered. I have seen myself what was once firm land, become the sea: I have seen earth made from the waters: and seashells lie far away from the

ocean, and an ancient anchor has been found on a mountaintop. The down rush of waters has made what was once a plain into a valley, and hills, by the deluge have been washed to the sea. Marshy land has drained to parched sand, and what was once thirsty ground filled with a marshy pool.

Here, Nature generates fresh springs, and there seals them up, and rivers, released by deep earthquakes, burst out or dry up, and sink. So when the **Lycus** is swallowed by a chasm in the earth, it emerges far off, reborn, from a different source. So, engulfed, flowing as a hidden stream, the mighty **Erasinus** emerges again, in the fields of **Argos**. And they say that **Mysus**, ashamed of its origin and its former banks, now flows elsewhere, as **Caicus**. **Amenanus** flows sometimes churning **Sicilian** sands, at other times dried up, its fountains blocked. **Anigrus**, once drinkable, now flows with water you would not wish to touch, since, unless we deny all credence to the poets, the bi-formed centaurs washed their wounds there,

dealt by the bow of club-bearing **Hercules**. Is the **Hypanis**, born in the **Scythian** mountains, not ruined by bitter saltwater, that once was sweet?

Antissa, and **Pharos**, and **Phoenician Tyre**, were surrounded by sea: of which not one, now, is an island. The former settlers of **Leucas** lived on a peninsula: now the waves encircle it. **Zancle** also is said to have been joined to Italy, till the waves washed away the boundary, and the deep sea pushed back the land. If you look for **Helice** and **Buris**, cities of **Achaia**, you will find them under the waters, and sailors are accustomed, even now, to point out the submerged towns with their sunken walls.

There is a mound near **Troezen**, where **Pittheus** ruled, steep and treeless, that once was the flattest open space on the plain, and now is a mound. For (strange to relate) the wild strength of the winds, imprisoned in dark caves, longing for somewhere to breathe, and struggling in vain to enjoy the freer expanses of

sky, since there was no gap at all in their prison, as an exit for their breath, extended and swelled the ground, just as a man inflates a bladder, or a goatskin taken from a twin-horned goat. The swelling remained there, and has the look of a high hill, solidified by long centuries.’

Bk XV:307-360 Pythagoras’s Teachings:Physical changes

‘Though many instances, I have heard and known of, come to mind, I shall relate only a few more. Does not water, also, offer and receive new forms? Your stream, horned Ammon, is chill at mid-day, and warm in the morning and evening, and they tell of the Athamanians setting fire to wood, by pouring your waters over it, when the moon wanes to her smallest crescent.

The **Cicones** have a river, whose waters when drunk turn the vital organs to stone, and that change things to marble when touched. The **Crathis**, and the **Sybaris**, here, near our own

country, make hair like amber or gold: and what is more amazing, there are streams that have power to change not merely the body but the mind as well. Who has not heard of the disgusting waves of **Salmacis**, and the **Aethiopian** lakes? Whoever wets his throat with these, is either maddened, or falls into a strange, deep sleep.

Whoever slakes his thirst at **Clitor's** fountain, shuns wine, and only enjoys pure water, whether it is due to a power in the water that counteracts hot wine, or whether, as the natives claim, Melampus, **Amythaon's** son, when he had saved the demented daughters of **Proetus** from madness, by herbs and incantations, threw the remnants, of what had purged their minds, into its springs, and the antipathy to wine was left behind in its waters. The flow of the River **Lyncestius** has the opposite effect, so that whoever drinks even moderately of it, stumbles about, as if they had drunk pure wine. There is a place in **Arcadia**, the ancients called **Pheneus**, mistrusted for its

dual-natured waters: beware of them at night, drunk at night they are harmful: in the day they can be drunk without harm. So, rivers and lakes can harbour some power or other.

There was a time when **Ortygia** floated on the waves, now it is fixed, and the **Argo**'s crew feared the **Symphlegades**' collisions, and the spray of their crashing waves, islands that now stand there motionless, and resist the winds.

And **Aetna** that glows, with its sulphurous furnaces, was not always on fire, and will not always be on fire. For if the earth is a creature, that lives, and, in many places, has vents that breathe out flame, she can alter her air passages, and as frequently as she shifts, she can close these caverns and open others. Or, if swift winds are confined in the deep caves, and strike rock against rock, or against material containing the seeds of fire, and Aetna catches alight from the friction, the caves will be left cold when the wind dies. Or, if it is bituminous substances that take fire, and yellow sulphur, burning with little smoke, then, when the

ground no longer provides rich fuel, or nourishment for the flames, and their strength fails after long centuries, earth herself will lack the support of devouring nature, and will not withstand that famine, and forsaken, will forsake her fires.

There is a tale of men in **Hyperborean** Pallene, who are used to clothing their bodies in soft plumage, by plunging nine times in **Minerva**'s pool: for my part, I can scarcely believe it: also the women of **Scythia** are said to practise the same arts, sprinkling their bodies with magic liquids.'

Bk XV:361-390 Pythagoras's
Teachings:Autogenesis

'However if trust is only placed in proven things, do you not see that whenever corpses putrefy, due to time or melting heat, they generate tiny creatures? Bury the carcasses of sacrificed bulls (it is a known experiment) in the ditch where you have thrown them, and

flower-sipping bees, will be born, here and there, from the putrid entrails. After the custom of their parent bodies, they frequent the fields, are devoted to work, and labour in hope of harvest.

A war-horse dug into the earth is the source of hornets: If you remove the hollow claws of land-crabs, and put the rest under the soil, a scorpion, with its curved and threatening tail, will emerge from the parts interred: and the caterpillars that are accustomed to weave their white cocoons, on uncultivated leaves (a thing observed by farmers) change to a butterfly's form, symbol of the soul.

Mud contains the generative seeds of green frogs, and generates them without legs, soon giving them legs for swimming, and, at the same time, with hind legs longer than their forelegs, so that they are fit to take long leaps. The cub that a she-bear has just produced is not a cub but a scarcely living lump of flesh: the mother gives it a body, by licking it, and shapes it into a form like that she has herself. Do you

not see how the larvae of the honey-carrying bees, protected by the hexagonal waxen cells, are born as limbless bodies, and later acquire legs, and later still wings?

Who would believe, if he did not know, that **Juno**'s bird, the peacock, that bears eyes, like stars, on its tail; and **Jupiter**'s eagle, carrying his lightning-bolt; and **Cytherea**'s doves; all the bird species; are born from the inside of an egg? There are those who believe that when the spine decomposes, interred in the tomb, human marrow forms a snake.'

Bk XV:391-417 Pythagoras's Teachings:The Phoenix

'Yet these creatures receive their start in life from others: there is one, a bird, which renews itself, and reproduces from itself. The **Assyrians** call it the phoenix. It does not live on seeds and herbs, but on drops of incense, and the sap of the cardamom plant. When it has lived for five centuries, it then builds a nest for

itself in the topmost branches of a swaying palm tree, using only its beak and talons. As soon as it has lined it with cassia bark, and smooth spikes of nard, cinnamon fragments and yellow myrrh, it settles on top, and ends its life among the perfumes.

They say that, from the father's body, a young phoenix is reborn, destined to live the same number of years. When age has given it strength, and it can carry burdens, it lightens the branches of the tall palm of the heavy nest, and piously carries its own cradle, that was its father's tomb, and, reaching the city of **Hyperion**, the sun-god, through the clear air, lays it down in front of the sacred doors of Hyperion's temple.

If there is anything to marvel at, however, in these novelties, we might marvel at how the hyena changes function, and a moment ago a female, taken from behind by a male, is now a male. Also that animal, the chameleon, fed by wind and air, instantly adopts the colour of whatever it touches.

Vanquished India gave lynxes to **Bacchus** of the clustered vines, and, they say that, whatever their bladder emits, changes to stone, and solidifies on contact with air. So coral, also, hardens the first time air touches it: it was a soft plant under the waves.’

Bk **XV:418-452** **Pythagoras’s**
Teachings:Transfers of Power

‘The day will end, and **Phoebus** will bathe his weary horses in the deep, before my words can do justice to all that has been translated into new forms. So we see times change, and these nations acquiring power and those declining. So **Troy**, that was so great in men and riches, and for ten years of war could give so freely of her blood, is humbled, and only reveals ancient ruins now, and, for wealth, ancestral tombs. **Sparta** was famous, great **Mycenae** flourished, and **Cecrops’s** citadel of **Athens**, and **Amphion’s Thebes**. Sparta is worthless land, proud Mycenae is fallen, and what is the

Thebes of **Oedipus** but a name, what is left of the Athens of **Pandion**, but a name?

Even now, there is a rumour that **Rome**, of the **Dardanians**, is rising, by **Tiber**'s waters, born in the **Apennines**, and laying, beneath its mass, the foundation of great things. So, growing, it changes form, and one day will be the capital of a whole world! So, it is said, the seers predict, and the oracles that tell our fate. As I remember also, when the **Trojan** State was falling, **Helenus**, son of **Priam**, said to a weeping **Aeneas**, who was unsure of his future: "Son of the goddess, if you take careful heed, of what my mind prophesies, Troy will not wholly perish while you live! Fire and sword will give way before you: you will go, as one man, catching up, and bearing away **Pergama**, till you find a foreign land, kinder to you and Troy, than your fatherland. I see, even now, a city, destined for **Phrygian** descendants, than which none is greater, or shall be, or has been, in past ages.

Other leaders will make her powerful, through the long centuries, but one, born of the blood of **Iulus**, will make her mistress of the world. When earth has benefited from him, the celestial regions will enjoy him, and heaven will be his goal.”

These things, I remember well, Helenus prophesied for Aeneas, as Aeneas carried the **ancestral gods**, and I am glad that the walls, of his descendants, are rising, and that the **Greeks** conquered to a Trojan’s gain.’

Bk XV:453-478 Pythagoras’s Teachings: The Sanctity of Life

‘Now (lest I stray too far off course, my horses forgetting to aim towards their goal), the heavens, and whatever is under them, change their form, and the earth, and whatever is within it. We, as well, who are a part of the universe, because we are not merely flesh, but in truth, winged spirits, and can enter into the family of

wild creatures, and be imprisoned in the minds of animals.

We should allow those beings to live in safety, and honour, that the spirits of our parents, or brothers, or those joined to us by some other bond, certainly human, might have inhabited: and not fill our bellies as if at a **Thyestean feast**! What evil they contrive, how impiously they prepare to shed human blood itself, who rip at a calf's throat with the knife, and listen unmoved to its bleating, or can kill a kid to eat, that cries like a child, or feed on a bird, that they themselves have fed! How far does that fall short of actual murder? Where does the way lead on from there?

Let the ox plough, or owe his death to old age: let the sheep yield wool, to protect against the chill north wind: let the she-goats give you full udders for milking! Have done with nets and traps, snares and the arts of deception! Do not trick the birds with limed twigs, or imprison the deer, scaring them with feathered ropes, or hide barbed hooks in treacherous bait. Kill

them, if they harm you, but even then let killing be enough. Let your mouth be free of their blood, enjoy milder food!’

Bk XV:479-546 The transformation of Hippolytus

His mind versed in these and other teachings, it is said that **Numa** returned to his native country, and took control of **Latium**, at the people’s request. Blessed with a nymph, **Egeria**, for wife, and guided by the **Muses**, he taught the sacred rituals, and educated a savage, warlike, race in the arts of peace.

When, in old age, he relinquished his sceptre, with his life, the women of Latium, the populace, and the senators wept for the dead Numa: but Egeria, his wife, left the city, and lived in retirement, concealed by dense woods, in the valley of **Aricia**, and her sighs and lamentations prevented the worship of **Oresteian Diana**. O! How often the nymphs of

the lakes and groves admonished her to stop, and spoke words of consolation to her!

How often **Hippolytus**, **Theseus**'s heroic son, said, to the weeping nymph: 'Make an end to this, since yours is not the only fate to be lamented: think of others' like misfortunes: you will endure your own more calmly. I wish my own case had no power to lighten your sorrow! But even mine can. If your ears have heard anything of Hippolytus, of how, through his father's credulity, and the deceits of his accursed stepmother, he met his death, though you will be amazed, and I will prove it with difficulty, nevertheless, I am he.

Phaedra, **Pasiphaë**'s daughter, having tried, vainly, to tempt me to dishonour my father's bed, deflected guilt, and, (more through fear than anger at being rejected?), made out I had wanted, what she wished, and so accused me. Not in the least deserving it, my father banished me from the city, and called down hostile curses on my head.

Exiled, I headed my chariot towards **Troezen**, **Pittheus**'s city, and was travelling the **Isthmus**, near **Corinth**, when the sea rose, and a huge mass of water shaped itself into a mountain, and seemed to grow, and give out bellowings, splitting at the summit: from it, a horned bull, emerged, out of the bursting waters, standing up to his chest in the gentle breeze, expelling quantities of seawater from his nostrils and gaping mouth. My companions' hearts were troubled, but my mind stayed unshaken, preoccupied with thoughts of exile, when my fiery horses turned their necks towards the sea, and trembled, with ears pricked, disturbed by fear of the monster, and dragged the chariot, headlong, down the steep cliff.

I struggled, in vain, to control them with the foam-flecked reins, and leaning backwards, strained at the resistant thongs. Even then, the horses' madness would not have exhausted my strength, if a wheel had not broken, and been wrenched off, as the axle hub, round which it

revolves, struck a tree. I was thrown from the chariot, and, my body entangled in the reins, my sinews caught by the tree, you might have seen my living entrails dragged along, my limbs partly torn away, partly held fast, my bones snapped with a loud crack, and my weary spirit expiring: no part of my body recognisable: but all one wound. Now can you compare your tragedy, or dare you, nymph, with mine?

I saw, also, the kingdom without light, and bathed my lacerated body in **Phlegethon**'s waves: there still, if **Apollo**'s son, **Aesculapius**, had not restored me to life with his powerful cures. When, despite **Dis**'s anger, I regained it, by the power of herbs and **Paeon**'s help, **Cynthia**, created a dense mist round me, so that I might not be seen and increase envy at the gift. And she added a look of age, and left me unrecognisable, so that I would be safe, and might be seen with impunity. She considered, for a while, whether to give me **Crete** or **Delos** to live in: abandoning Delos and Crete, she set me down here, and ordered me to discard my

name that might remind me of horses, and said: “You, who were Hippolytus, be also, now, **Virbius!**” Since then I have lived in this grove, one of the minor deities, and sheltering in the divinity of Diana, my mistress, I am coupled with her.’

Egeria’s grief could not be lessened, even by the sufferings of others: prostrate, at the foot of a mountain, she melted away in tears, till Phoebus’s sister, out of pity for her true sorrow, made a cool fountain from her body, and reduced her limbs to unfailling waters.

Bk XV:552-621 Cipus acquires horns

This strange event amazed the nymphs, and the **Amazon**’s son was no less astounded, than the **Tyrrhenian** ploughman when he saw a fateful clod of earth in the middle of his fields, first move by itself with no one touching it, then assume the form of a man, losing its earthy nature, and open its newly acquired mouth, to utter things to come. The native people called

him **Tages**, he who first taught the **Etruscan** race to reveal future events. No less astounded than **Romulus**, when he saw his spear, that had once grown on the **Palatine** Hill, suddenly put out leaves, and stand there, not with its point driven in, but with fresh roots: now not a weapon but a tough willow-tree, giving unexpected shade to those who wondered at it.

No less astounded than **Cipus**, the praetor, when he saw his horns in the river's water (truly he saw them) and, thinking it a false likeness of his true form, lifting his hands repeatedly to his forehead, touched what he saw. Unable now to resist the evidence of his eyes, he raised his eyes and arms to the sky, like a victor returning from a beaten enemy, and cried: 'You gods, whatever this unnatural thing portends, if it is happiness, let it be the happiness of my country, and the race of **Quirinus**: if it is a threat, let it be towards me.'

Making a grassy altar of green turf, he appeased the gods with burning incense, and made a libation of wine, and inspected the

quivering entrails of sacrificed sheep, as to what they portended for him. As soon as the **Tyrrhenian** seer, there, saw them, he recognised the signs of great happenings, not yet manifest, and when indeed he raised his keen eyes from the sheep's entrails to Cibus's forehead, he cried: 'Hail! O King! You, even you, Cibus, and your horns, this place, and Latium's citadels, shall obey. Only no delay: hurry and enter the open gates! So fate commands: and received in the city, you will be king, and safely possess the eternal sceptre.'

Cibus drew back, and grimly turning his face away from the city's walls, he said: 'Oh, let the gods keep all such things, far, far away, from me! Far better for me to spend my life in exile, than for the **Capitol** to see me crowned! He spoke, and immediately called together the people and the grave senators. First however he hid his horns with the laurels of peace, then standing on a mound raised by resolute soldiers, and praying to the ancient gods as customary, he said: 'There is a man here who shall be king,

unless you drive him from the city. I will show you who he is, not by name, but by a sign: he wears horns on his forehead! The augur declares that if he enters **Rome**, he will grant you only the rights of slaves. He could have forced his way in, through the open gates, but I opposed it, though no one is more closely connected to him than me. **Quirites**, keep the man out of your city, and, if he deserves it, load him with heavy chains, or end all fear, with the death of this fated tyrant!’

There was a sound from the crowd, like the murmur from the pine-trees when the wild East wind whistles through them, or like the waves of the sea, heard from far off: but among the confused cries of the noisy throng, one rang out: ‘Who is he?’ They looked at each other’s forehead looking for the horns foretold. Cibus spoke to them again: ‘You have here, whom you seek,’ and, taking the wreath from his head, the people trying to prevent him, he showed them his temples, conspicuous by their twin horns. They all sighed, and lowered their eyes

(who could believe it?) and were reluctant to look at that distinguished head. Not allowing him any longer to be dishonoured, they replaced the festal wreath.

But since you were forbidden to enter the city, Cibus, they gave you, as an honour, as much land as you could enclose, with a team of oxen, harnessed to the plough, between dawn and sunset. And they engraved horns on the bronze gateposts, recalling their marvellous nature, to remain there through the centuries.

Bk XV:622-745 Aesculapius, the god, saves Rome from plague

You **Muses**, goddesses present to poets, reveal, now (since you know, and spacious time cannot betray you) where **Aesculapius**, son of **Coronis**, came from, to be joined to the gods of **Romulus**'s city, that the deep **Tiber** flows around.

Once, plague tainted the air of **Latium**, and people's bodies were ravaged by disease, pallid

and bloodless. When they saw that their efforts were useless, and medical skill was useless, wearied with funeral rites, they sought help from the heavens, and travelled to **Delphi**, set at the centre of the earth, to the oracle of **Phoebus**, and prayed that he would aid them, in their misery, by a health-giving prophecy, and end their great city's evil. The ground, the laurel-tree, and the quiver he holds himself, trembled together, and the tripod responded with these words, from the innermost sanctuary, troubling their fearful minds: 'You should have looked in a nearer place, **Romans**, for what you seek here: even now, look for it from that nearer place: your help is not from **Apollo**, to lessen your pain, but **Apollo's son**. Go, with good omens, and fetch my child.'

When the senate, in its wisdom, heard the god's command, it made enquiries as to the city where **Phoebus's** son lived, and sent an embassy to sail to the coast of **Epidaurus**. As soon as the curved ship touched shore, the embassy went to the council of **Greek** elders,

and begged them to give up the god, who, by his presence, might prevent the death of the **Ausonian** race: so the oracle truly commanded. They disagreed, and were of various minds: some thought that help could not be refused: the majority recommended the god should be kept, and their own wealth not released, or surrendered.

While they wavered, as dusk dispelled the lingering light, and darkness covered the countries of the earth with shadow, then, in your dreams, **Aesculapius**, god of healing, seemed to stand before your bed, **Roman**, just as he is seen in his temple, holding a rustic staff in his left hand, and stroking his long beard with his right, and with a calm voice, speaking these words: 'Have no fear! I will come, and I will leave a statue of myself behind. Take a good look at this snake, that winds, in knots, round my staff, and keep it in your sight continually, until you know it! I will change into this, but greater in size, seeming as great as a celestial body should be when it changes.'

The god vanished with the voice, at once: and sleep, with the voice, and the god: and as sleep fled, kind day dawned.

When morning had put the bright stars to flight, the leaders, still unsure what to do, gathered at the temple complex of that god whom the Romans sought, and begged him to show them by some divine token where he himself wanted to live. They had hardly ceased speaking, when the golden god, in the likeness of a serpent with a tall crest, gave out a hiss as a harbinger of his presence, and by his coming, rocked the statue, the doors, the marble pavement, and the gilded roof. Then he stopped, in the middle of the temple, raising himself breast-high, and gazed round, with eyes flashing fire.

The terrified crowd trembled, but the priest, his sacred locks tied with a white band, knew the divine one, and cried: ‘The god, behold, it is the god! Restrain your minds and tongues, whoever is here! Let the sight of you, O most beautiful one, work for us, and help the people

worshipping at your shrine!’ Whoever was there, worshipped the god, as they were told, and all re-echoed the priest’s words, and the **Romans** gave dutiful support, with mind and voice.

The god nodded, and shook his crest, confirming his favour, by hissing three times in succession, with his flickering tongue. Then he glided down the gleaming steps, and turning his head backwards, gazed at the ancient altars he was abandoning, and saluted his accustomed house, and the temple where he had lived. From there the vast serpent slid over the flower-strewn ground, flexing his body, and made his way through the city centre to the harbour, protected by its curved embankment. He halted there, and, appearing to dismiss the dutiful throng, with a calm expression, settled his body down in the **Ausonian** ship. It felt the divine burden, and the keel sank under the god’s weight. The Romans were joyful, and, sacrificing a bull on the shore, they loosed the twisted cables of their wreath-crowned ship. A

gentle breeze drove the vessel: the god arching skyward, rested his neck heavily on the curving sternpost, and gazed at the dark blue waters.

With gentle breezes he reached **Italy**, over the **Ionian** Sea, on the sixth **morning**. He passed the shores of **Lacinium**, famous for **Juno**'s temple, and **Scylaceum**; he left **Iapygia**, and avoided the rocks of **Amphrisia** to larboard, the cliffs of **Cocinthia** to starboard; he coasted by **Romethium**, by **Caulon** and **Narycia**: he passed the narrow strait of **Sicilian Pelorus**, and the home of King **Aeolus**, and the mines of **Temese**, and headed for **Leucosia** and the rose-gardens of gentle **Paestum**.

From there he skirted **Capri**, and **Minerva**'s promontory, and **Surrentum**'s hills well-stocked with vines, **Herculaneum**, **Stabiae**, and **Parthenope**, born for idleness, and headed for the temple of the **Cumean Sibyl**. By **Baiae**'s hot pools; and **Liternum**'s lentisk trees; and the River **Volturnus**, dragging quantities of sand along in its floodwaters; and **Sinuessa**, frequented by white

doves; and unhealthy **Minturnae**; and **Caieta**, named after her whom **Aeneas** her foster-son buried; and the home of **Antiphates**; and marsh-surrounded **Trachas**; and **Circe**'s land; and **Antium**'s firm shore.

When the sailors steered their ship, under sail, to the place (since the sea was now rough) the god unwound his coils, and gliding along, fold after fold, in giant curves, entered his father Apollo's temple, bordering the yellow strand. When the sea was calm, the **Epidaurian** left the paternal altars, and having enjoyed the hospitality of his divine father, furrowed the sandy shore as he dragged his rasping scales along, and climbing the rudder, rested his head on the ship's high sternpost, until he came to **Castrum**, the sacred city of **Lavinium**, and the **Tiber**'s mouths.

All the people, men and women alike, had come thronging from every side, in a crowd, to meet him, along with those who serve your flames, **Trojan Vesta**, and they hailed the god with joyful cries. As the swift ship sailed up-

stream, incense burned with a crackling sound on a series of altars on either bank, and the fumes perfumed the air, and the slaughtered victims bled heat on the sacrificial knives.

Now it entered **Rome**, the capital of the world. The snake stood erect, and resting his neck on the mast's summit, turned, and looked for places fit for him to live. The river splits here into two branches, flowing round what is named the Island, stretching its two arms out equally on both sides, with the land between. There the serpent-child of **Phoebus** landed, and, resuming his divine form, made an end to grief, and came as a health-giver to the city.

Bk XV:745-842 The deification of Julius Caesar

Though Aesculapius came as a stranger to our temples, **Caesar** is a god in his own city. Outstanding in war or peace, it was not so much his wars that ended in great victories, or his actions at home, or his swiftly won fame, that

set him among the stars, a fiery comet, as his descendant. There is no greater achievement among Caesar's actions than that he stood father to our emperor. Is it a greater thing to have conquered the sea-going **Britons**; to have lead his victorious ships up the seven-mouthed flood of the papyrus-bearing **Nile**; to have brought the rebellious **Numidians**, under **Juba** of **Cinyps**, and **Pontus**, swollen with the name of **Mithridates**, under the people of **Quirinus**; to have earned many triumphs and celebrated few; than to have sponsored such a man, with whom, as ruler of all, you gods have richly favoured the human race? Therefore, in order for the emperor not to have been born of mortal seed, Caesar needed to be made a god.

When **Venus**, the golden mother of **Aeneas**, saw this, and also saw that a grim death was being readied for Caesar, her high-priest, and an armed conspiracy was under way, she grew pale and said to every god in turn: 'See the nest of tricks being prepared against me, and with what treachery that life is being

attacked, all that is left to me of **Trojan Iulus**. Will I be the only one always to be troubled by well-founded anxiety: now **Diomedes**'s **Calydonian** spear wounds me: now the ill-defended walls of **Troy** confound me, seeing my son Aeneas driven to endless wandering, storm-tossed, entering the silent house of shadows, waging war against **Turnus**, or, if we speak the truth, with **Juno**, rather? Why do I recall, now, the ancient sufferings of my race? This present fear inhibits memory of the past: look at those evil knives being sharpened. Prevent them, I beg you, thwart this attempt, and do not allow **Vesta**'s flames to be quenched by the blood of her priest!

Venus in her anxiety voiced her fears throughout the heavens, but in vain, troubling the gods, who though they could not break the iron rules of **the ancient sisters**, nevertheless gave no uncertain omens of imminent disaster. They say weapons, clashing among black clouds, and terrifying trumpets and horns, foretelling crime, were heard from the sky: and

that the face of the sun, darkened, gave out a lurid light, over the troubled earth. Often, firebrands were seen, burning in the midst of the stars: often drops of blood rained from the clouds: **Lucifer**, the morning star, was dulled, with rust-black spots on his disc, and the moon's chariot was spattered with blood.

The **Stygian** owl sounded its sad omens in a thousand places: in a thousand places ivory statues wept: and incantations, and warning words, were said to have been heard in the sacred groves. No sacrifice was favourable, and the livers were found with cleft lobes, among the entrails, warning of great and impending civil conflict. In the forum, and around men's houses, and the temples of the gods, dogs howled at night, and they say the silent dead walked, and earthquakes shook the city. Still the gods' warnings could not prevent the conspiracy, or fate's fulfillment.

Drawn swords were carried into the *curia*, the sacred senate house: no place in the city would satisfy them, as scene for the act of evil

murder, but this. Then in truth **Cytherean** Venus struck her breast with both hands, and tried to hide Caesar in a cloud, as **Paris** was once snatched from the attack of **Atrides**, and **Aeneas** escaped **Diomedes**'s sword.

Then Jupiter, the father, spoke: 'Alone, do you think you will move the immoveable fates, daughter? You are allowed yourself to enter the house of the three: there you will see all things written, a vast labour, in bronze and solid iron, that, eternal and secure, does not fear the clashing of the skies, the lightning's anger, or any forces of destruction. There you will find the fate of your descendants cut in everlasting adamant. I have read them myself, and taken note of them in my mind, and I will tell you, so that you are no longer blind to the future.

This descendant of yours you suffer over, Cytherean, has fulfilled his time, and the years he owes to earth are done. You, and Augustus, his 'son', will ensure that he ascends to heaven as a god, and is worshipped in the temples. Augustus, as heir to his name, will carry the

burden placed upon him alone, and will have us with him, in battle, as the most courageous avenger of his father's murder. Under his command, the conquered walls of besieged **Mutina** will sue for peace; **Pharsalia** will know him; **Macedonian Philippi** twice flow with blood; and the one who holds **Pompey's** great name, will be defeated in **Sicilian** waters; and a **Roman general's Egyptian consort**, trusting, to her cost, in their marriage, will fall, her threat that our **Capitol** would bow to her city of **Canopus**, proved vain.

Why enumerate foreign countries, for you, or the nations living on either ocean shore? Wherever earth contains habitable land, it will be his: and even the sea will serve him!

When the world is at peace, he will turn his mind to the civil code, and, as the most just of legislators, make law. He will direct morality by his own example, and, looking to the future ages and coming generations, he will order a son, Tiberius, born of his virtuous wife, to take his name, and his responsibilities. He will not

attain his heavenly home, and the stars, his kindred, until he is old, and his years equal his merits. Meanwhile take up Caesar's spirit from his murdered corpse, and change it into a star, so that the deified Julius may always look down from his high temple on our Capitol and forum.'

Bk XV:843-870 Ovid's celebration of Augustus

He had barely finished, when gentle **Venus** stood in the midst of the senate, seen by no one, and took up the newly freed spirit of her **Caesar** from his body, and preventing it from vanishing into the air, carried it towards the glorious stars. As she carried it, she felt it glow and take fire, and loosed it from her breast: it climbed higher than the moon, and drawing behind it a fiery tail, shone as a star.

Seeing his son's good works, Caesar acknowledges they are greater than his own, and delights in being surpassed by him. Though

the son forbids his own actions being honoured above his father's, nevertheless fame, free and obedient to no one's orders, exalts him, despite himself, and denies him in this one thing. So great **Atreus** cedes the title to **Agamemnon**: so **Theseus** outdoes **Aegeus**, and **Achilles** his father **Peleus**: and lastly, to quote an example worthy of these two, so **Saturn** is less than **Jove**.

Jupiter commands the heavenly citadels, and the kingdoms of the threefold universe. Earth is ruled by **Augustus**. Each is a father and a master. You gods, the friends of **Aeneas**, to whom fire and sword gave way; you **deities of Italy**; and **Romulus**, founder of our city; and **Mars**, father of Romulus; **Vesta**, Diana, sacred among Caesar's **ancestral gods**, and you, **Phoebus**, sharing the temple with Caesar's Vesta; you, **Jupiter** who hold the high **Tarpeian** citadel; and all you other gods, whom it is fitting and holy for a poet to invoke, I beg that the day be slow to arrive, and beyond our own lifetime, when Augustus shall rise to

heaven, leaving the world he rules, and there, far off, shall listen, with favour, to our prayers!

Bk XV:871-879 Ovid's Envoi

And now the work is done, that **Jupiter's** anger, fire or sword cannot erase, nor the gnawing tooth of time. Let that day, that only has power over my body, end, when it will, my uncertain span of years: yet the best part of me will be borne, immortal, beyond the distant stars. Wherever **Rome's** influence extends, over the lands it has civilised, I will be spoken, on people's lips: and, famous through all the ages, if there is truth in poet's prophecies, *vivam* - I shall live.

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King of Iolchos in Thessaly, son of Pelias.

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Bk XI:346-409. He absolves Peleus of blood-guilt.

Acestes

Bk XIV:75-100. A Trojan, a friend of Aeneas, living at Eryx on Sicily. Aeneas visits him, and sacrifices, and pays honour at his father, Anchises's tomb, who had previously died there. (See Virgil, The Aeneid III 700, and V)

Achaemenides

Bk XIV:154-222. A companion of Ulysses, wrongly believed lost near Aetna.

Achaia

[Bk III:511-527](#). [Bk V:294-331](#). [Bk VII:501-613](#). A name for the Greek mainland, derived from a region in the northern [Peloponnese](#). Hence the Achaeans, for the name of the people who fought against [Troy](#) in Homer's Iliad.

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[Bk XI:474-572](#). It is in the deepest pit of the infernal regions.

Achilles

The Greek hero of the [Trojan](#) War. The son of [Peleus](#), king of [Thessaly](#), and the sea-goddess [Thetis](#), (See Homer's Iliad).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). His father is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk XI:221-265](#). He is conceived when Peleus holds the shape-changing Thetis, and forces her to adopt her true form.

[Bk XII:64-145](#). He is a Greek hero at [Troy](#), and defeats the seemingly invulnerable [Cycnus\(3\)](#).

[Bk XII:146-209](#). He sacrifices to [Pallas](#), and asks [Nestor](#) to tell the story of [Caeneus](#).

[Bk XII:290-326](#). Nestor tells him of his father's armour bearer.

[Bk XII:579-628](#). [Bk XIII:481-575](#). He is killed by [Paris](#)'s arrow, at [Apollo](#)'s instigation. The Greeks dispute over the ownership of his armour.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Victim of an unequal fate. (He famously wished for a short and glorious life, rather than a long, inglorious one.) [Dolon](#) was promised his horses for spying on the Greeks.

[Bk XIII:429-480](#). He appears as a ghost demanding the sacrifice of [Polyxena](#).

[Bk XIII:576-622](#). He had killed [Memnon](#) in battle.

[Bk XV:843-870](#). His achievements surpass those of his father Peleus.

Acis

The lover of [Galatea](#). The son of Faunus and Symaethis.

(See Claude Lorrain's painting – Landscape with Acis and Galatea – Gemäldegalerie, Dresden)

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). [Galatea](#) loves him.

Bk XIII:789-869. Polyphemus threatens him.

Bk XIII:870-897. Polyphemus kills him with a rock and he is changed by Galatea into his ancestral form of a river.

Acmon

Bk XIV:483-511. A companion of Diomede. He insults Venus and is transformed into a bird.

Acoetes

Bk III:572-596. A Tyrrhenian from Maeonia, a ship's captain and priest of Bacchus, captured by Pentheus. There is the suggestion later that Acoetes is a manifestation of Bacchus himself ('*nec enim praesentior illo est deus*'). (See Euripides: The Bacchae)

Bk III:597-637. He tells of them finding Bacchus on Chios, and how he knew that the boy was a god, and tried to avoid sacrilege.

Bk III:638-691. He escapes the transformation of the ship and crew by Bacchus.

Bk III:692-733. He vanishes from Pentheus's prison mysteriously.

Aconteus

Bk V:200-249. A companion of Perseus, inadvertently turned to stone.

Acrisioniades

Bk V:30-73. Perseus, as the grandson of Acrisius.

Acrisius

Bk III:528-571. King of Argos, the son of Abas, father of Danaë, and grandfather of Perseus. He opposed the worship of Bacchus-Dionysus.

Bk IV:604-662. He rejects the divine origin of Bacchus and Perseus, but will live to regret it. He is kin to Cadmus and to Bacchus son of Semele, Cadmus's daughter, because Danaüs is his ancestor whose line runs back to Belus,

brother of [Agenor](#), who is father of Cadmus. Both Belus and Agenor are sons of [Neptune](#). [Bk V:200-249](#). He is ousted by his brother [Proetus](#), but has his kingdom restored to him, though little deserving it, by [Perseus](#).

Acropolis

Confused with [Areopagus](#).

Acrota

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). A mythical [Alban](#) king.

Actaeon

[Bk III:138-164](#). Grandson of [Cadmus](#), son of [Autonoë](#), called [Hyantius](#) from an ancient name for [Boeotia](#).

[Bk III:165-205](#). He sees Diana bathing naked and is turned into a stag.

[Bk III:206-231](#). He is pursued by his hounds. The dogs are named.

[Bk III:232-252](#). He is torn to pieces by his own pack. (See the Metope of Temple E at Selinus –

the Death of Actaeon – Palermo, National Museum: and Titian’s painting – the Death of Actaeon – National Gallery, London.)

Actaeus

[Bk II:531-565](#). Atticus, belonging to [Attica](#) in Greece.

[Bk II:708-736](#). The Actaeon hill, referring to the Athenian Acropolis.

[Book VI:675-721](#). Used of [Orithyia](#) of [Athens](#).

[Bk VIII:152-182](#). [Minos](#) demands a tribute of young men and girls selected by lot every nine years from [Athens](#) to feed the [Minotaur](#).

Actium

The promontory in [Epirus](#) site of the famous naval battle in the bay between Octavian (later [Augustus](#) Caesar) and [Antony](#) in 31BC. (It lies opposite the modern port of Préveza on the Gulf of Amvrakia.)

Antony was defeated by Octavians' admiral, Agrippa and the outcome led to [Cleopatra's](#) downfall.

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). Passed by [Aeneas](#). Associated with [Apollo](#).

Actorides

A descendant of Actor.

[Bk V:74-106](#). Of [Eurytus](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). Eurytus and [Cleatus](#) present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Admetus, see [Pheretiades](#)

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Adonis

The son of [Myrrha](#) by her father [Cinyras](#), born after her transformation into a myrrh-tree. (As such he is a vegetation god born from the heart of the wood.)

Bk X:503-559. Venus falls in love with him.

Bk X:560-637. She tells him the story of Atalanta and Hippomenes.

Bk X:681-707. She warns him to avoid savage creatures.

Bk X:708-739. He ignores her warning and is killed by a wild boar that gashes his thigh. His blood becomes the windflower, the *anemone*.

Aeacides

Bk VII:453-500. The descendants of Aeacus.

Bk VII:796-865. Phocus as a son of Aeacus.

Bk VIII:1-80. The troops mustered on Aegina to fight Minos.

Bk XI:221-265. Bk XI:266-345. Bk XI:346-409. Bk XII:290-326. Peleus son of Aeacus.

Bk XII:64-145. Bk XII:579-628. Bk XIII:481-575. Achilles as the son of Peleus.

Bk XIII:1-122. Ajax and Achilles whose fathers were the brothers Peleus and Telamon.

Aeacus

Bk VII:453-500. The son of Jupiter and Aegina, grandson of Asopus, the river-god of the north-eastern Peloponnese. He names his island, in the Saronic gulf, Aegina after his mother. Its ancient name was Oenopia. He refuses to ally himself with Minos against Athens.

Bk VII:501-613. He recounts the history of the plague at Aegina.

Bk VII:796-865. He provides Cephalus with men and weapons.

Bk IX:418-438. Bk IX:439-516. Jupiter recognising his piety wishes that he could remove the burden of old age from him.

Bk XI:194-220. The father of Telamon and Peleus.

Bk XI:221-265. The father of Peleus.

Bk XIII:1-122. The father of Telamon, and grandfather of Ajax. The acknowledged son of Jupiter by Aegina.

Aeas

Bk I:568-587. A river in Epirus.

Aeetes

King of [Colchis](#), son of [Sol](#) and the Oceanid Perse, brother of [Circe](#), and father of [Medea](#).

[Bk VII:1-73](#). The [Argonauts](#) reach his court, and request the return of the Golden Fleece. This [fleece](#) was that of the divine ram on which Phrixus had fled from [Orchemonos](#), to avoid being sacrificed. [Iolcus](#) could never prosper until it was brought back to [Thessaly](#). King Aeetes is reluctant and sets [Jason](#) demanding tasks as a pre-condition for its return.

[Bk VII:159-178](#). [Medea](#) regrets her betrayal of her father and country.

Aeetias

[Medea](#), as the daughter of [Aeetes](#).

Aegaeon

[Bk II:1-30](#). Briareus, one of the hundred-handed giants. A name also for the earliest

Heracles. He is depicted on the palace of the [Sun](#).

Aegaeus, Aegean

The Aegean Sea between Greece and Asia Minor.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). [Miletus](#) crosses it to found the city of that name in Asia Minor.

[Bk XI:650-709](#). [Ceyx](#) is drowned there in a southerly gale.

Aegeus

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The father of [Theseus](#), a king of [Athens](#), and son of [Pandion](#). He gives refuge to [Medea](#) and marries her.

[Bk VII:404-424](#). His son Theseus by Aethra, daughter of [Pittheus](#) of [Troezen](#), is unknown to him, but comes to Athens. Aegeus recognises a sword he has left under a stone, as a trial, successfully attained by Theseus, in time to

dash Medea's poisoned cup from Theseus's lips.

[Bk VII:425-452](#). He gives thanks for Theseus's escape.

[Bk VII:453-500](#). He prepares for war with [Minos](#) of [Crete](#).

[Bk XV:843-870](#). He is surpassed by his son Theseus.

Aegides

[Bk VIII:152-182](#). [Bk VIII:376-424](#). [Bk XII:290-326](#). [Theseus](#), son of [Aegeus](#).

Aegina(1)

The daughter of the river god [Asopus](#) (of the north-eastern [Peloponnese](#)) , hence called Asopis.

[Bk VI:103-128](#) . [Arachne](#) depicts her rape by [Jupiter](#) in the form of a flame.

[Bk VII:453-500](#). [Aeacus](#) her son names the island of [Aegina\(2\)](#) after her.

Bk VII:614-660. Aeacus invokes her in his plea to Jupiter.

Bk XI:194-220. Her grandsons are Telamon and Peleus allowing them to claim Jupiter as their grandfather.

Aegina(2)

Bk VII:453-500. An island in the Saronic Sea between Attica and Argolis. Named by Aeacus after his mother. Once called Oenopia.

It refuses to aid Minos in his war on Attica. (The later conflict with Athens compelled the surrender of the island in 459BC and its destruction as an economic power.)

Aegyptius

Of Egypt, the north African country.

Bk V:294-331. Pretended by the Emathides to have given refuge to the gods in their war with the giants.

Bk XV:745-842. Ruled by Cleopatra.

Aëllo

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). A [harpy](#) on the islands of the [Strophades](#) encountered by [Aeneas](#).

Aeneades

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A descendant of [Aeneas](#). The Romans.

Aeneas

[Bk XV:745-842](#). A [Trojan](#) prince, the son of [Venus](#) and [Anchises](#), and the hero of Virgil's Aeneid.

(See Turner's etching and painting, The Golden Bough- British Museum and Tate Gallery)

[Bk XIII:623-639](#). He leaves ruined [Troy](#) carrying his father, and the sacred icons of Venus, and, with his son [Ascanius](#) also, sails to [Delos](#) where he sacrifices to the Delian gods.

[Bk XIII:640-674](#). [Bk XIII:675-704](#). He consults the oracle of [Apollo](#) and is told to seek out his ancient mother and ancestral shores. He

receives the gift of a cup of [Alcon](#)'s design from King [Anius](#) of [Delos](#).

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). He reaches [Crete](#), and then sails to [Sicily](#). (See Virgil, The Aeneid III)

[Bk XIV:75-100](#). He reaches Carthage, deserts [Dido](#), and reaches [Cumae](#). (See Virgil, The Aeneid I, IV, and V)

[Bk XIV:101-153](#). He visits the [Sibyl](#), who conducts him to the Underworld, having plucked the golden bough. He sees his father's shade in the fields of [Elysium](#). (See Virgil, The Aeneid VI)

[Bk XIV:154-222](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). He returns from the Underworld, and sails from [Cumae](#) north, along the western Italian coast, to [Caieta](#) (modern Gaeta) where he marks the funeral of Caieta his old nurse, who gives her name to the place. (See Virgil's Aeneid, the opening lines of book VII.)

[Bk XIV:435-444](#). He sets up Caieta's tomb and inscribes an epitaph.

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). He wins the throne of [Latinus](#), and marries his daughter, [Lavinia](#). He

wages war with the [Rutulians](#) under [Turnus](#), and is supported by [Evander](#).

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). He is deified as [Indiges](#).

[Bk XV:418-452](#). [Helenus](#) prophesied that Aeneas carried the destiny of [Troy](#) and its descendant city, [Rome](#).

[Bk XV:745-842](#). [Venus](#) once saved him from [Diomede](#), by veiling him in a cloud.

[Bk XV:843-870](#). Ovid calls on the gods friendly to Aeneas.

Aeolia virgo

[Bk VI:103-128](#). [Canace](#), the daughter of [Aeolus](#). Her rape by [Neptune](#) in the form of a bull is depicted by [Arachne](#).

Aeolides

A descendant of [Aeolus](#).

[Book IV:512-542](#). Applied to his son [Athamas](#).

[Book VI:675-721](#). Applied to his grandson [Cephalus](#).

[Bk IX:439-516](#). The six sons of Aeolus by his wife Enarete, who married their six sisters. Robert Graves suggests they were all [Titans](#), and not bound by the rules of incest, and that the parents and six pairs of children represented the seven planetary deities.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). Applied to [Sisyphus](#).

[Bk XIV:101-153](#). Applied to [Misenus](#).

Aeolis

[Bk XI:573-649](#). [Alcyone](#), the daughter of [Aeolus](#).

Aeolus

[Bk VII:350-403](#). Of Aeolis in Asia Minor.

Aeolus

[Bk I:244-273](#). [Bk XIV:75-100](#). The king of the winds. His cave is on the islands of Lipari (the Aeolian Islands) that include Stromboli, off Sicily.

Bk IV:464-511. Juno is angry at his son Athamas, and contemplates his other son, Sisyphus in Hades.

Bk IV:663-705. He imprisons the winds in the cave below Etna.

Bk VI:103-128. He is the father of Canace.

Bk VII:350-403. Bk XI:410-473. The father of Alcyone.

Bk XI:474-572. Ceyx calls to him, as his father-in-law, *in extremis*.

Bk XI:710-748. Aeolus calms the sea for seven days in winter, 'the halcyon days', while the transformed Alcyone rears his grandsons.

Bk XIV:223-319. He rules the Tuscan deep. He gives Ulysses the winds imprisoned in a bull's hide bag.

Aesacus

Bk XI:749-795. The son of Priam and Alexirrhoë, a prince of Troy, and half-brother to Hector.

Bk XI:749-795. He chases Hesperie who is killed by a snake. In penance he tries to kill

himself, but is turned by [Tethys](#) into a diving bird, probably the merganser, *mergus serrator*, from *mergus*, a diver.

[Bk XII:1-38](#). His father Priam mourns for him thinking him dead.

Aesar

[Bk XV:1-59](#). A river in Lower Italy. The site of [Crotona](#).

Aesculapius

[Bk II:612-632](#). The son of [Coronis](#) and [Apollo](#). He is saved by Apollo from his mother's body and given to [Chiron](#) the Centaur to rear. He is represented in the sky by the constellation [Ophiucus](#) near Scorpius, depicting a man entwined in the coils of a serpent, consisting of the split constellation, [Serpens](#) Cauda and Serpens Caput, which contains Barnard's star, having the greatest proper motion of any star and being the second nearest to the sun.

[Bk II:633-675](#). His fate is foretold by [Ocyrhoë](#).

Bk XV:479-546. He restores Hippolytus to life.
Bk XV:622-745. He saves Rome from the plague, and becomes a resident god. (His cult centre was Epidaurus where there was a statue of the god with a golden beard. Cicero mentions that Dionysius the Elder, Tyrant of Syracuse wrenched off the gold. ('On the Nature of the Gods, Bk III 82)

Aeson

A Thessalian prince of Iolchos, father of Iason. His half-brother Pelias usurped his throne.

Bk VII:74-99. Bk VII:100-158 . Jason is his son.

Bk VII:159-178. He is near death, so Jason asks Medea to renew his life.

Bk VII:234-293. Medea restores his youth.

Aesonides, Aesonius heros

Bk VII:1-73. Bk VII:74-99. Bk VII:159-178.
Bk VII:234-293.

Bk VIII:376-424. Iason, the son of Aeson.

Aethalion

[Bk III:638-691](#). A seaman, companion of [Acoetes](#).

Aethion

[Bk V:107-148](#). An [Ethiopian](#) prophet, killed in the fight between [Perseus](#) and [Phineus](#).

Aethiopia, Aethiops

[Bk II:227-271](#). The country Ethiopia in north-east Africa bordering the Red Sea, containing the Mountains of the Moon. During [Phaethon](#)'s fatal chariot ride the sun burnt the skins of its peoples black. Aethiops, means Ethiopian.

[Bk V:107-148](#). Culmination of the fight at [Cepheus](#)'s court. He is an Ethiopian king.

[Bk XV:307-360](#). The country has lakes with waters that cause delerium.

Aethon

Bk II:150-177. One of the four horses of the Sun.

Aetna

Bk II:201-226. A volcanic mountain in Sicily.

Bk IV:663-705. Aeolus imprisons the winds there.

Bk V:332-384. Bk XIV:1-74. It covers the head of the giant, Typhoeus.

Bk V:425-486. Ceres lights her torches at Etna's fires in her search for Persephone in the night.

Bk VIII:260-328. It is a distinguishing feature of Sicily.

Bk XIII:738-788. Telemus the seer arrives there.

Bk XIII:789-869. Polyphemus compares the fire of love to having Aetna's fires inside his breast.

Bk XIII:870-897. His voice shakes Aetna.

Bk XIV:1-74. Glaucus leaves it behind.

Bk XIV:154-222. Achaemenides was wrongly believed lost there.

Bk XV:307-360. Volcanic action.

Aetola arma

Bk XIV:527-565. The assistance of Diomede.

Aetolia

Bk XIV:445-482. The region of eastern mid-Greece containing Calydon and Chalcis. Diomede is its hero.

Bk XIV:527-565. He refuses help to the Rutuli.

Aetolius heros

Bk XIV:445-482. Diomede.

Agamemnon

The king of Mycenae, son of Atreus, brother of Menelaüs, husband of Clytaemnestra, father of Orestes, Iphigenia, and Electra. The leader of

the Greek army in the [Trojan](#) War. See Homer's Iliad, and Aeschylus's Oresteian tragedies.

[Bk XII:579-628](#). He dares not compete for the arms of [Achilles](#) and passes the responsibility for choosing between [Ajax](#) and [Ulysses](#) to the assembled captains.

[Bk XII:1-38](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). He sacrificed Iphigenia at [Aulis](#).

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Prompted by a dream he was prepared to abandon the war.

[Bk XIII:429-480](#). He moors the fleet on a [Thracian](#) beach returning from [Troy](#), and there [Achilles](#)'s ghost appears demanding the sacrifice of [Polyxena](#).

[Bk XIII:640-674](#). He snatches the daughters of [Anius](#).

[Bk XV:843-870](#). He surpasses his father Atreus.

Aganippe

[Bk V:294-331](#). A famous fountain of the [Muses](#) on Mount [Helicon](#). Pausanias says (Bk IX:xxix,

Boeotia) that Aganippe was a daughter of Termessos, another stream on the mountain

Agave

A daughter of [Cadmus](#), who married [Echion](#) and was the mother of [Pentheus](#).

[Bk III:692-733](#). A [Maenad](#), she destroys her son [Pentheus](#), not recognising him in the madness of the sacred mysteries.

Agenor

[Bk II:833-875](#). [Europa](#)'s father. King of Phoenicia, son of [Neptune](#), father of [Cadmus](#) and brother of [Belus](#). His capital cities are [Sidon](#) and [Tyre](#) in the Lebanon.

[Bk III:1-49](#). His son is Cadmus whom he sends to find Europa.

[Bk III:50-94](#). His son Cadmus kills the Serpent.

[Bk III:95-114](#). Cadmus sows the Dragon's teeth.

Agenorides

A descendant of [Agenor](#).

[Bk IV:563-603](#). [Cadmus](#).

[Bk IV:753-803](#). [Perseus](#).

Aglauros, Cecropides

[Bk II:531-565](#). One of the three daughters of King [Cecrops](#).

[Bk II:737-751](#). [Mercury](#) elicits her help.

[Bk II:787-811](#). [Envy](#) poisons her heart.

[BkII:812-832](#). She is turned to stone by [Mercury](#).

Agyrtes

[Bk V:107-148](#). An [Ethiopian](#) killed in the fight between [Perseus](#) and [Phineus](#).

Aiax(1)

A hero of the [Trojan](#) War, the son of [Telamon](#) and grandson of [Aeacus](#).

[Bk X:143-219](#). [Bk XIII:382-398](#). He shares with [Hyacinthus](#) the flower (*hyacinthos grapta* – the blue larkspur) that bears the marks of woe, AI AI, and that spells his name, AIAΣ.

[Bk XII:579-628](#). He competes for the arms of [Achilles](#).

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). He speaks in his own cause, attacking [Ulysses](#). He fought in single combat with [Hector](#) and was undefeated, rescued Ulysses, and saved the ships.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Ulysses responds with a speech extolling intelligence above mere brawn and courage, and arguing that a man should be judged on his abilities not his ancestry. He was deceived by [Achilles](#)'s female disguise. He was ready to turn tail when [Agamemnon](#) gave the order to abandon the war.

[Bk XIII:382-398](#). Defeated in the contest for the arms, he kills himself in his rage. From his blood a flower grows, see above.

Aiax(2)

[Bk XII:579-628](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#). Aiax *moderator* ‘the lesser’. The son of [Oileus](#). He dare not compete for the arms of [Achilles](#).

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). His rape of [Cassandra](#) brought the wrath of [Minerva](#) on the Greeks.

Alastor

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). A [Lycian](#), killed by [Ulysses](#).

Alba

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). [Bk XIV:623-697](#). Of the early Latin kingdom. Also the king who succeeded [Latinus](#).

Albula

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). The [Tiber](#). An ancient name for the river of [Rome](#).

Alcander

Bk XIII:123-381. A Lycian, killed by Ulysses.

Alcathoüs

Bk VII:425-452. The son of Pelops, founder of the city of Megara, hence Megara is called urbs Alcathoï. Near Megara is the place where Theseus killed Sciron.

Bk VIII:1-80. A term for the city of Megara on the Isthmus.

Alcidas

Bk VII:350-403. The father of Ctesylla. An inhabitant of Carthaea. His daughter gave birth to a dove.

Alcimedon

Bk III:597-637. A seaman, companion of Acoetes.

Alcides

A descendant of Alceus, father of [Amphitryon](#), usually applied to [Hercules](#) his reputed son.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). [Bk IX:89-158](#). [Bk IX:211-272](#). [Bk XI:194-220](#).

[Bk XII:536-579](#). Of Hercules.

Alcinoüs

[Bk XIV:527-565](#). The king of the [Phaeacians](#) (Phaeacia is probably Corcyra, =Corfu), on whose coast [Ulysses](#) was washed ashore. One of his ships was turned to stone. See Homer, The Odyssey XIII.

Alcithoë, Minyeias

[Bk IV:1-30](#). The daughter of [Minyas](#), who opposed the worship of [Bacchus](#).

[Bk IV:274-316](#). She tells the story of [Salmacis](#).

Alcmaeon

Bk IX:394-417. The son of Amphiaräus and Eriphyle. He avenges his father's death, and is in turn murdered in the chain of revenge following the war of the Seven against Thebes. Themis prophesies the events.

Alcmena, Alcmene

The daughter of Electryon king of Tiryns, wife of Amphitryon, and mother of Hercules by the god Jupiter.

Bk VI:103-128. Arachne depicts her rape by Jupiter disguised as Amphitryon.

Bk VIII:515-546. Deianira, wife of Hercules, sister of Meleager, is her daughter-in-law.

Bk IX:1-88. The mother of Hercules.

Bk IX:211-272. His funeral pyre attacks only the mortal part of him inherited from Alcmene.

Bk IX:273-323. She tells of Hercules's birth and the transformation of her servant Galanthis.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). She comforts [Iole](#). Iolaüs, her grandson, appears to them, his youth renewed. (He is the grandson of Alcmene, since his father Iphicles is her son by Amphitryon, and Hercules mortal half-brother, the twin or *tanist* of the sun-god. Iolaüs's renewal and appearance at the threshold may indicate his cult as a representative of the risen sun of the new year. His cult was celebrated in Sardinia where he was linked to [Daedalus](#).)

Alcon

[Bk XIII:675-704](#). A [Boeotian](#), and a famous engraver.

Alcyone

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The daughter of [Aeolus](#), granddaughter of [Polypemon](#), and wife of [Ceyx](#), changed into a kingfisher or *halcyon*. They foolishly compared themselves to Juno and Jupiter, for which the gods drowned Ceyx in a storm. Alcyone leapt into the sea to join

him, and both were transformed into kingfishers. In antiquity it was believed that the hen-kingfisher layed her eggs in a floating nest in the Halcyon Days around the winter solstice, when the sea is made calm by Aeolus, Alcyone's father. (The kingfisher actually lays its eggs in a hole, normally in a riverbank, by freshwater and not by seawater.)

[Bk XI:346-409](#). She begs [Ceyx](#) not to fight the wolf from the marsh.

[Bk XI:410-473](#). She reproaches him for leaving her in order to visit the oracle.

[Bk XI:474-572](#). Ceyx calls to her as he is drowning.

[Bk XI:573-649](#). She prays for his return at [Juno's](#) shrine.

[Bk XI:650-709](#). In a dream [Morpheus](#) reveals himself in the form of Ceyx and tells her of his death.

[Bk XI:710-748](#). His body returns to her on the tide, and they are transformed into halcyons.

Alemon

Bk XV:1-59. The father of Myscelos, and founder of Crotona in Italy.

Alemonides

Bk XV:1-59. Myscelos, son of Alemon.

Alexiroë, Alexirrhoë

Bk XI:749-795. A nymph, the daughter of the river god Granicus, and the mother of Aesacus by Priam.

Almo

Bk XIV:320-396. A tributary of the Tiber.

Aloïdae

The sons of Aloeus, namely Otus and Ephialtes, who are actually the children of Neptune by Iphimeida wife of Aloeus.

Bk VI:103-128. Arachne depicts the rape by Neptune.

Alpes

[Bk II:201-226](#). [Bk XIV:772-804](#). The Alps mountain chain in northern Italy, Switzerland, Austria, France etc.

Alpheias

[Bk V:487-532](#). [Arethusa](#), loved by [Alpheus](#) the river god.

Alphenor

[Bk VI:204-266](#). One of [Niobe](#)'s seven sons killed by [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#).

Alpheus

[Bk II:227-271](#). A river and river-god of [Elis](#) in western Greece. Olympia is near the lower reaches of the river. (The idea for Coleridge's 'Alph, the sacred river' in *Kubla Khan*?)

[Bk V:487-532](#). He loves [Arethusa](#).

[Bk V:572-641](#). He merges with Arethusa after she has turned to water.

Althaea

[Bk VIII:425-450](#). The mother of [Meleager](#), and wife of [Oeneus](#), king of [Calydon](#). The sister of the [Thestiadae](#), [Plexippus](#) and [Toxeus](#). She seeks revenge for their deaths at the hands of her own son, Meleager.

[Bk VIII:451-514](#). She throws into the fire the piece of wood that is linked to Meleager's life, and which she once rescued from the flames, at the time of the [Fates](#) prophecy to her.

Amathus

[Bk X:220-242](#). [Bk X:503-559](#). A city of [Cyprus](#), sacred to [Venus](#). A place with rich mineral deposits, famous for its mines.

Amazon

[Bk XV:552-621](#). One of the Amazons, a race of warlike women living by the River Thermodon, probably based on the [Scythian](#) warrior princesses of the Black Sea area (See Herodotus). In particular [Hippolyte](#) the mother of [Hippolytus](#) by [Theseus](#).

Ambracia

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). A city of [Epirus](#) in north western Greece. The land there one fought over by the gods. The judge in the contest was turned to stone. [Aeneas](#) passes it.

Amenanus

[Bk XV:259-306](#). A river of [Sicily](#), subject to variable flow.

Ammon(1)

[Bk IV:663-705](#). [Bk V:1-29](#). An Egyptian and [Lybian](#) god, worshipped in the form of a Ram-

headed deity, identified by the Romans and Greeks with Jupiter and Zeus.

Ammon(2)

Bk V:107-148. A famous boxer, friend of Perseus, brother of Broteas, killed by Phineus.

Amor, Cupid

Bk I:473-503. God of love.

Bk I:601-621. Opposes Shame (Pudor) in Jupiter's mind over the sacrifice of Io as a gift to Juno.

Bk IV:753-803. He waves the marriage torch with Hymen at Perseus's marriage to Andromeda.

Bk V:332-384. His power is linked to that of Venus Aphrodite.

Bk X:1-85. He has power even in Hades.

Bk X:503-559. He is often portrayed naked with his quiver, and is compared to Adonis.

Amphiaräus

A Greek seer, one of the heroes, the [Oeclides](#), at the Calydonian Boar Hunt. The son of Oecleus, father of [Alcmaeon](#), and husband of [Eriphyle](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). Fighting in the war of the Seven against [Thebes](#) he is swallowed up alive by the earth.

Amphimedon

[Bk V:74-106](#). A [Libyan](#) follower of [Phineus](#), killed by [Perseus](#).

Amphion

[Bk XV:418-452](#). The husband of [Niobe](#), and son of [Jupiter](#) and [Antiope](#). The King of [Thebes](#).

[Bk VI:146-203](#). His art is mentioned, that is his magical use of the lyre. His music enabled him to build the walls of Thebes.

[Bk VI:204-266](#). The death of his seven sons.

[Bk VI:267-312](#). He kills himself in grief.

[Bk VI:401-438](#). He and his children are mourned, and Niobe blamed.

Amphissos

[Bk IX:324-393](#). The son of [Apollo](#) and [Dryope](#). He founded the city of [Oeta](#) and built a temple of Apollo there

Amphitrite

[Bk I:1-30](#). A sea-goddess, daughter of Nereus and wife of Neptune. The [Nereid](#) whom Poseidon married, here representing the sea. He had courted [Thetis](#) another of the Nereids but desisted when it was prophesied that any son born to her would be greater than his father. Thetis bore Achilles.

Amphitryon

The son of Alceus, and king of [Thebes](#), husband of [Alcmene](#) and supposed father of [Hercules](#).

[Bk VI:103-128](#). [Arachne](#) depicts how [Jupiter](#) disguised as Amphitryon raped Alcmena.

[Bk IX:89-158](#). [Bk XV:1-59](#). Hercules is his reputed son.

Amphitryoniades

[Bk XV:1-59](#). Hercules, as the supposed son of [Amphitryon](#).

Amphrisia saxa

[Bk XV:622-745](#). Unknown rocks in lower Italy, near to the cliffs of [Cocinthus](#).

Amphrysus

[Bk I:568-587](#). A river in [Thessaly](#).

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Medea](#) gathers magic herbs there.

Ampycides

Mopsus, son of Ampyx.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:329-375. He strikes the boar, but Diana has stolen his spear point in flight.

Bk XII:429-535. He is present at the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs.

Ampycus

Bk V:107-148. A priest of Ceres, killed by Phineus.

Ampyx(1)

Bk V:149-199. A follower of Phineus, turned to stone by the Gorgon's head.

Bk VIII:260-328. His son Mopsus is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Ampyx(2)

Bk XII:429-535. One of the Lapithae.

Amulius

[Bk XIV:772-804](#). The younger son of the [Alban](#) king [Proca](#). He usurped his elder brother [Numitor](#), but was dethroned by [Romulus](#) and Remus the grandsons of Numitor.

Amyclae

A town in [Laconia](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). Home of [Hippocoön](#), and of his sons who are present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk X:143-219](#). The home of [Hyacinthus](#).

Amyclides

An epithet of Hyacinthus as the descendant of Amyclas, builder of Amyclae.

Amycus

[Bk XII:245-289](#). A centaur. He kills [Celadon](#) and is killed by [Pelates](#) at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Amymone

Bk II:227-271. A famous spring at Argos.

Amyntor

Bk VIII:260-328. King of the Dolopians of Thessaly, father of Phoenix.

Bk XII:290-326. Gives Crantor to Peleus to be his armour-bearer, as a peace-pledge after defeat in battle.

Amythaon

Bk XV:307-360. The son of Cretheus, and father of Melampus, noted for wisdom.

Anaphe

An island in the Cyclades.

Bk VII:453-500. Allied to Crete.

Anapis

Bk V:385-424. A river and river god of Sicily, who loves Cyane.

Anaxarete

Bk XIV:698-771. A maiden of Cyprus. She rejects Iphis, and is turned to stone.

Ancaeus

An Arcadian.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:376-424. He is killed by the boar.

Bk VIII:515-546. Meleager envies him his honourable death.

Anchises

The son of Capys and father of Aeneas by the goddess Venus.

Bk IX:418-438. Venus wishes to ward off old age from him.

Bk XIII:640-674. He asks after Anius's children.

Bk XIII:675-704. Anius gives him the parting gift of a sceptre.

Bk XIV:75-100. Aeneas pays honour at his tomb, he having died at Drepanum (Trapani) in Sicily. (Note: Trapani was the site of the naval battle of 241BC when the Roman fleet defeated the Carthaginians ending the first Punic War)

Bk XIV:101-153. Aeneas meets his ghost in Avernus.

Andraemon(1)

Bk IX:324-393. The father of Amphissus, and husband of Dryope.

Andraemon(2)

Bk XIII:1-122. An Aetolian king, father of Thoas.

Androgeos

Bk VII:453-500. A son of Minos, King of Crete. Killed while visiting Attica, Minos sets out to avenge him.

Andromeda

The daughter of [Cepheus](#) and [Cassiope](#) who was chained to a rock and exposed to a sea-monster Cetus because of her mother's sin. She is represented by the constellation Andromeda which contains the Andromeda galaxy M31 a spiral like our own, the most distant object visible to the naked eye. Cetus is represented by the constellation of Cetus, the Whale, between Pisces and Eridanus which contains the variable star, Mira.

[Bk IV:663-705](#). She is chained to a rock for [her mother's](#) fault and [Perseus](#) offers to rescue her. (See Burne-Jones's oil paintings and gouaches in the Perseus series, particularly The Rock of Doom)

[Bk IV:753-803](#). He kills the sea serpent and claims her as his bride.

Andros

Son of [Anius](#), ruler of one of the [Cycladic](#) islands named after him.

[Bk VII:453-500](#). The island is not allied to [Crete](#).

[Bk XIII:640-674](#). He holds the kingship of the island in his father's place, has the power of prophecy, and surrenders two of his sisters to [Agamemnon](#).

Anemone

[Bk X:708-739](#). The flower that sprang from the blood of [Adonis](#). The windflower.

Anguis, The Serpent

[Bk II:111-149](#). The constellation of the Serpent, near the constellation [Scorpius](#), and above the ecliptic (right of it, as the sun travels annually along it) in the northern hemisphere. It is separated into two parts, Serpens Cauda, and Serpens Caput, the tail and the head.

Anigrus

[Bk XV:259-306](#). A river of [Elis](#) in southwestern Greece. Its waters were said to be

poisoned by the centaur Pylenor, shot by [Hercules](#) with a poisoned arrow. Pausanias gives the background and confirms the chemical foulness of the water. (See Pausanias V 5)

Anio

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). A river in [Latium](#).

Anius

[Bk XIII:623-639](#). The king, and high priest of [Apollo](#), on [Delos](#). He welcomes [Aeneas](#).

[Bk XIII:640-674](#). He tells of his son and daughters.

Antaeus

[Bk IX:159-210](#). A Libyan giant killed by [Hercules](#).

Antandrus

Bk XIII:623-639. A seaport in the Troad from which Aeneas leaves.

Antenor

Bk XIII:123-381. One of the older Trojan leaders. He sided with Priam when Ulysses addressed the senate.

Anthedon

A town in Boeotia on the Euboean Gulf.

Bk VII:179-233. Medea gathers magic herbs there.

Bk XIII:898-968. Glaucus is transformed there.

Antigone

Bk VI:70-102. The daughter of Laomedon of Troy (Ilium), who was turned into a stork by Juno for challenging her.

Antimachus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Antiope

The daughter of king Nycteus, so known as Nycteïs, the mother by Jupiter of [Amphion](#) and Zethus.

[Bk VI:103-128](#). Her rape by [Jupiter](#) disguised as a [Satyr](#), is depicted by [Arachne](#). (See Hans von Aachen's – Jupiter embracing Antiope – Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

Antiphates

[Bk XIV:223-319](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). The king of the [Laestrygonians](#). He incites his people, who are cannibals, to attack [Ulysses](#) and his crew.

Antissa

[Bk XV:259-306](#). A town on the northern coast of [Lesbos](#). Once an island harbour, subsequently a peninsula. (Near modern Skalakhorió).

Antium

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A town in Latium.

Antonius

[Bk XV:745-842](#). Antony, the Roman general, who seized the inheritance at [Caesar](#)'s death, despite his will, and who was defeated by Octavius at [Mutina](#) in Cisalpine [Gaul](#), and Octavian's naval commander, Vispanius Agrippa, at the naval battle of [Actium](#) in 31BC. Lover of [Cleopatra](#), Queen of Egypt.

Anubis

[Bk IX:666-713](#). The jackal-headed god Anpu of Egypt, identified with [Mercury](#), and 'opener of the roads of the dead'. He accompanies [Isis](#).

Aonia

Bk I:313-347. Part of Boetia containing Mount Helicon.

Bk III:339-358. The region of Tiresias's fame as a prophet.

Bk VII:759-795. It contains Thebes.

Bk IX:89-158. The country of Hercules.

Bk X:560-637. The country of Hippomenes.

Bk XIII:675-704. The country of Therses.

Aonides

Bk VI:1-25. An epithet of the Muses from Mount Helicon in Aonia, an earlier name for Boeotia.

Aphareïa proles

Lynceus and Idas, the sons of Aphareus, a king of the Messenians.

Bk VIII:260-328. They are present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Aphareus

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Aphidas

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Apidanus

[Bk I:568-587](#). A river in [Thessaly](#).

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Medea](#) gathers magic herbs there.

Apis

Hapi, ‘the Bull Apis’, the Egyptian sacred animal, a reincarnation of the god Ptah. The Apis bull was tended and worshipped at Memphis where a visit to see the animal in his courtyard was a tourist attraction of the Graeco-Roman world. The mummified sacred bulls were entombed at the vast subterranean complex of Saqqarah. The temple above was the Serapeum. Worshipped as [Osiris](#), Apis was

later confused with Serapis and worshipped in the Serapeum at Alexandria.

[Bk IX:666-713](#). He accompanies [Isis](#).

Apollineus

[Bk XI:1-145](#). [Orpheus](#), as the son of [Apollo](#).

[Bk XV:622-745](#). [Aesculapius](#) as the son of Apollo.

Apollo, [Phoebus](#), [Delius](#)

[Bk I:438-473](#). Son of [Jupiter](#) and [Latona](#) (Leto), brother of [Diana](#) (Artemis), born on [Delos](#). See also the extensive entry under [Phoebus](#). (See the Apollo Belvedere, sculpted by Leochares?, Vatican: the Piombino Apollo, Paris Louvre: the Tiber Apollo, Rome, National Museum of the Terme: the fountain sculpture by Tuby at Versailles – The Chariot of Apollo: and the sculpture by Girardon and Regnaudin at Versailles – Apollo Tended by the Nymphs – derived from the Apollo Belvedere, and once part of the now demolished Grotto of Thetis)

Bk VII:350-403. Responsible for changing Cephisus's grandson into a seal.

Bk IX:324-393. Raped Dryope. Rules at Delphi and Delos.

Bk XI:1-66. Orpheus is his poet.

Bk XI:146-171. He competes with Pan's reed-pipe on the lyre.

Bk XI:194-220. He helps Laomedon build the walls of Troy, with Neptune.

Bk XI:410-473. He has an oracular temple at Claros.

Bk XII:579-628. Neptune prompts him to help Troy. He encourages Paris to fire an arrow at Achilles and guides the bow. He is worshipped as Smintheus at Troy.

Bk XIII:123-381. Chryse and Cilla, captured by Achilles, are cities of his in Asia Minor.

Bk XIII:399-428. Cassandra is his head priestess at Troy.

Bk XIII:623-639. Aeneas sacrifices to him on Delos.

Bk XIII:640-674. He gave Andros the power of prophecy.

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). He is associated with [Actium](#).
[Bk XV:479-546](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). [Aesculapius](#)
is his son.

Appeninus

[Bk II:201-226](#). The mountain chain in northern Italy.

[Bk XV:418-452](#). The source of the river [Tiber](#).

Aquilo

[Bk I:244-273](#). The north wind. As a god he is [Boreas](#).

[Bk VII:1-73](#). His two winged sons are [Calais](#) and [Zetes](#).

Ara

[Bk II:111-149](#). The constellation, the Altar, in the Milky Way south of the constellation [Scorpius](#), and below the ecliptic (left of it, as the sun travels annually along it) in the northern hemisphere. Ara represents the altar on which

the gods swore an oath of allegiance before defeating the [Titans](#).

Arabes

[Bk X:431-502](#). The Arabians. Arabia.

Arachne

[Bk VI:1-25](#). The daughter of [Idmon](#), skilled in weaving. She rejects the claim that she has been taught by [Minerva](#).

[Bk VI:26-69](#). She foolishly challenges [Pallas Minerva](#) to a contest in weaving.

[Bk VI:103-128](#). She depicts the rapes perpetrated by the disguised gods. (See Velázquez's painting – The Fable of Arachne, or Las Hilanderas, the Weavers – Prado, Madrid. The tapestry, that Velázquez shows Arachne weaving in the painting, is a copy of Titian's painting of the Rape of Europa in the Gardner Museum, Boston, done for Philip II of Spain, the painting therefore revealing as Ovid does, a myth within a myth.)

[Bk VI:129-145](#). Her work is so good, and so revealing, that Pallas destroys it and strikes the girl, who tries to hang herself. In pity [Pallas](#) Minerva turns her into a spider, and rules that her descendants shall hang and spin forever.

[Bk VI:146-203](#). [Niobe](#) had known her.

Arcadia

[Bk I:689-721](#). A region in the centre of the [Peloponnese](#), the archetypal rural paradise. [‘Et in Arcadia ego’, ‘and I too (Death) am here in paradise’. See the paintings by Nicholas Poussin, Paris, Louvre; and Chatsworth, England]

[Bk VIII:376-424](#). [Ancaeus](#) comes from there.

[Bk IX:159-210](#). Land of the [Erymanthian](#) boar.

[Bk XV:307-360](#). [Pheneus](#) is a plain and city there, where the river Olbios ran.

Arcas

[Bk II:466-495](#). The son of [Jupiter](#) and [Callisto](#).

Bk II:496-507. Set in the heavens by Jupiter as the Little Bear.

Arcesius

Bk XIII:123-381. The grandfather of Ulysses. The son of Jupiter and the father of Laërtes.

Arctos

Bk II:111-149, Bk III:1-49, Bk III:572-596. Bk IV:604-662.

Bk XIII:705-737. The twin constellations of the Great and Little Bear, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, individually or together.

Bk XIII:123-381. The stars are engraved on Achilles's shield.

Ardea

A city of the Rutulians, of Latium. (Its site was near modern Anzio, south of Rome.) It was the centre of a cult of Venus and Cicero mentions

the procession around the sacred enclosure ('On the Nature of the Gods' BkIII 46)

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). It is destroyed in the war, and the grey heron, *ardea cinerea*, is born from its ashes.

Areopagus

[Bk VI:70-103](#). The hill of [Mars](#) at [Athens](#), confused with the [Acropolis](#).

Areos

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Arestor, Arestorides

[Bk I:622-641](#). Father of [Argus](#), the hundred-eyed.

Arethusa

[Bk V:385-424](#). A nymph of [Elis](#), and attendant of [Diana](#).

Bk V:487-532. She tells Ceres of having seen Persephone and promises to tell her own story later.

Bk V:572-641. She tells the story of her pursuit by Alpheus and her transformation into the waters of Syracusan Ortygia.

Argo

Bk XV:307-360. The ship of the Argonauts. They had to avoid the clashing islands of the Symphlegades.

Argolis

Bk I:722-746. A region in the Peloponnese.

Bk VIII:260-328. It is threatened by Diana's avenging wild boar.

Bk IX:273-323. The country of Alcmena.

Bk XII:146-209. The land of the Greeks who attack Troy.

Argonauts

The band of heroes, lead by [Iason](#), who sailed from Greece to [Colchis](#) in search of the Golden Fleece. (See Gustave Moreau's painting – The Return of the Argonauts – in the Gustave Moreau Museum Paris)

[Book VI:675-721](#). Called [Minyans](#) since they sailed from [Iolchos](#) in [Thessaly](#) ruled at one time by Minyas of [Orchomenus](#). [Calais](#) and [Zetes](#) are two of their number.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Hercules](#) was one of their number.

Argos

[Bk I:601-621](#). The capital of Argolis in the [Peloponnese](#).

[Bk II:508-530](#). Argive, of Argos, as an epithet of [Io](#).

[Bk IV:604-662](#). [Acrisius](#) closes its gates against [Bacchus](#).

[Bk V:200-249](#). The ancestral city of [Abas](#), and [Perseus](#).

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children.

[Bk XV:1-59](#). The city of [Alemon](#).

[Bk XV:143-175](#). It has a temple of [Juno](#) containing the shield of [Euphorbus](#), a previous incarnation of [Pythagoras](#).

[Bk XV:259-306](#). The river [Erasinus](#) reappears there.

Argus

[Bk I:622-641](#). A creature with a thousand eyes, the son of [Arestor](#), set to guard [Io](#) by [Juno](#).

[Bk I:689-721](#). Killed by [Mercury](#). (For an echo of the last lines here see Rilke's poem and epitaph 'Rose, oh reiner Widerspruch, Lust, Niemandes Schlaf zu sein unter soviel Lidern.')

[Bk I:722-746](#). After his death, Juno sets his eyes in the peacock's tail.

Ariadne

A daughter of [Minos](#). Half-sister of the [Minotaur](#), and sister of [Phaedra](#) who helps [Theseus](#) on [Crete](#).

[Bk VIII:152-183](#). She flees to [Dia](#) with Theseus and is abandoned there, but rescued by [Bacchus](#), and her crown is set among the stars as the Corona Borealis. (See Titian's painting – Bacchus and Ariadne – National Gallery, London: and Annibale Carracci's fresco – The triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne – Farnese Palace, Rome)). The Northern Crown, the Corona Borealis, is a constellation between [Hercules](#) and [Serpens Caput](#), consisting of an arc of seven stars, its central jewel being the blue-white star Gemma.

Aricia

[Bk XV:479-546](#). A town in [Latium](#), (the modern La Riccia), at the foot of the Alban Mountain, three miles from Nemi. The lake and the sacred grove at Nemi were sometimes

known as the lake and grove of Aricia, and were the sanctuary of [Diana](#) Nemorensis, Diana of the Wood. (See Turner's etching and painting, The Golden Bough- British Museum and Tate Gallery). Worship there was instituted by [Orestes](#), who fled to Italy, after killing [Thoas](#), king of the Tauric Chersonese, taking with him the image of Tauric Diana. The rites practised there are the starting point for J.G.Frazer's monumental study in magic and religion, 'The Golden Bough'. (See Chapter I, et seq.)

Aries

[Bk X:143-219](#). The constellation of the Ram, between [Taurus](#) and [Andromeda](#). It represents the ram whose Golden Fleece was sought by [Jason](#) and the [Argonauts](#). In ancient times it contained the point of the spring equinox (The First Point of Aries) that has now moved into [Pisces](#) due to precession.

Arne

Bk VII:453-500. She betrayed her country, the island of Siphnos to Minos for gold, and was changed by the gods into a jackdaw.

Arsippe

Bk IV:31-54. One of the three daughters of Minyas who rejected the worship of Bacchus and was changed into a bat.

Bk IV:55-92. She tells the story of Pyramus and Thisbe.

Asbolus

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur with the power of prophecy. He tells Nessus that he will die at the hand of Hercules.

Ascalaphus

Bk V:533-571. The son of Orphne and the River Acheron. He sees Persephone eat the pomegranate seeds, informs on her, and is turned into a screech-owl.

Ascanius

Bk XIII:623-639. The son of Aeneas. He leaves Troy with his father and grandfather.

Bk XIII:675-704. King Anius gives him a cloak and quiver.

Bk XIV:566-580. He survives his father.

Bk XIV:609-622. He rules the Latin and Alban kingdom.

Asia

The Asian continent.

Bk IX:439-516. Asia Minor.

Bk XIII:481-575. Hecuba embodies bright Asia.

Asopiades

Bk VII:453-500. Aeacus, as the grandson of the river god Asopus.

Asopis

[Bk VI:103-128](#). [Bk VII:614-660](#). [Aegina](#), as the daughter of Asopus.

Assaracus

[Bk XI:749-795](#). King of [Phrygia](#), son of Tros, brother of [Ilus](#) the younger and [Ganymede](#), father of [Capys](#), and grandfather of [Anchises](#).

Assyrius

[Bk XV:391-417](#). An Assyrian. From the ancient kingdom of Mesopotamia and the Upper Tigris River.

Asterie

[Bk VI:103-128](#). The sister of [Latona](#), and daughter of [Coeus](#), raped by [Jupiter](#) disguised as an eagle.

Astraea

[Bk I:125-150](#). Goddess of Justice, last of the immortals to abandon earth because of human wickedness. She is represented in the sky as the constellation and zodiacal sign of Virgo, which alternatively depicts [Ceres](#)-Demeter. Nearby are her scales of justice, the constellation and zodiacal sign of Libra.

Astraeus

[Bk XIV:527-565](#). The [Titan](#), husband of [Aurora](#), and father of the winds, the Astraeon brothers.

Astreus

[Bk V:107-148](#). A companion of [Phineus](#), killed in the fight with [Perseus](#).

Astyages

[Bk V:200-249](#). A companion of [Phineus](#), turned to stone.

Astyanax

Bk XIII:399-428. The son of Hector and Andromache, killed by the Greeks at the sack of Troy.

Astypaleïus

Of the island of Astypalea, on of the Sporades.
Bk VII:453-500. Allied to Crete.

Atalanta(1)

The daughter of Iasos of Arcadia and Clymene, loved by Meleager. She joined in the Calydonian Boar Hunt, wounded the boar first and was awarded the spoils by Meleager. She is called Tegeaea, and Nonacria.

Bk VIII:260-328. She is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt. Meleager falls in love with her.

Bk VIII:376-424. She wounds the boar.

Bk VIII:425-450. Meleager gives her the spoils, which causes conflict.

Atalanta(2)

The daughter of King Schoeneus of [Boeotia](#), famous for her swift running.

[Bk X:560-637](#). Warned against marriage by the oracle, her suitors are forced to race against her on penalty of death for losing. She falls in love with [Hippomenes](#).

[Bk X:638-680](#). He races with her, and by use of the golden apples, wins the race and her.

[Bk X:681-707](#). She, and Hippomenes, desecrate [Cybele](#)'s sacred cave and are turned into lions.

(See Guido Reni's painting – Atalanta and Hippomenes – Naples, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte)

Athamantiades

[Bk XIII:898-968](#). [Palaemon](#), as the son of [Athamas](#).

Athamas

The son of [Aeolus](#), and husband of [Ino](#). The uncle of Pentheus.

[Bk III:528-571](#). He reproves [Pentheus](#) for attempting to capture the god [Bacchus](#).

[Bk IV:512-542](#). Maddened by [Tisiphone](#) he kills his child [Learchus](#).

Athens, Athenae

[Bk II:787-811](#). The chief city of [Attica](#), sacred to [Minerva](#)(Pallas Athene).

[Bk II:708-736](#). The Actaeon hill, referring to the Athenian Acropolis.

[Bk V:642-678](#). Minerva's city and the home of [Triptolemus](#).

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Attacked by a Barbarian army fails to send a delegate to [Thebes](#). Described as the city of [Mopsopus](#).

[Bk VI:70-102](#). [Pallas](#) lays claim to the city.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). [Medea](#) flees there. [Aegeus](#) the king marries her.

[Bk VII:404-424](#). [Theseus](#) is Aegeus's son and comes to Athens to find his father.

Bk VII:453-500. The city is allied to Aegina by treaty.

Bk VII:501-613. Cephalus goes to Aegina as its ambassador.

Bk VII:661-758. Cephalus tempts Procris there, in disguise.

Bk VIII:260-328. It ceases to pay tribute to Crete thanks to Theseus.

Bk XV:418-452. A symbol of vanished power.

Athis

Bk V:30-73. An Indian youth, a companion of Phineus, killed by Perseus along with his friend and lover Lycabas.

Athos

Bk II:201-226. Bk XI:474-572. A high mountain in Macedonia on a peninsula in the northern Aegean.

Atlantiades

Bk I:689-721. Bk II:676-701. Bk VIII:611-678.

An epithet of Mercury as descendant of Atlas through his mother Maia.

Bk IV:346-388. And to Hermaphroditus as Mercury's son.

Atlantis

Bk II:676-701. Maia, the Pleiad, daughter of Atlas and mother of Mercury.

Atlas

Bk II:272-300. The Titan who rules the Moon with Phoebe the Titaness. Leader of the Titans in their war with the gods. The son of Iapetus by the nymph Clymene. His brothers were Prometheus, Epimetheus and Menoetius. Represented as Mount Atlas in North-western Africa, holding up the heavens. Father of the Pleiades, Hyades and Hesperides. He struggles

to support the sky when [Phaethon](#) loses control of the sun chariot.

[Bk IV:604-662](#). He is turned to stone by [Perseus](#) wielding the [Gorgon's](#) head.

[Bk IV:753-803](#). The cave of the [Graeae](#) lies beneath his frozen slopes.

[Bk VI:146-203](#). He is the grandfather of [Niobe](#), since her mother Dione is one of the [Pleiades](#), the daughters of Atlas.

[Bk IX:159-210](#). [Hercules](#) bribed him into bringing the apples of the Hesperides by offering to hold up the sky. On his return Hercules deceived him into taking back its weight.

[Bk XV:143-175](#). [Pythagoras](#) compares philosophy to standing on Atlas's shoulders.

Atracides

[Bk XII:146-209](#). [Caeneus](#), from his home town of Atrax in [Thessaly](#).

Atreus

Bk XV:843-870. King of Mycenae, the son of Pelops. The father of Agamemnon and Menelaüs. His son Agamemnon surpasses him.

Atrides

Son of Atreus.

Bk XII:579-628. Menelaüs and Agamemnon.

Bk XIII:123-381. Bk XIII:429-480. Bk XIII:640-674. Agamemnon.

Bk XV:143-175. Bk XV:745-842. Menelaüs, the younger brother.

Attica, Atticus

Bk VII:453-500. The region of southern Greece containing Athens.

Attis

A Phrygian shepherd, loved by Cybele. An incarnation of the vegetation god, the consort of the Great Goddess.

[Bk X:86-105](#). He is embodied by the sacred pine, one of the trees that gather to hear [Orpheus](#) sing.

Augustus Caesar

[Bk XV:745-842](#). Julius Caesar's grand-nephew, whom he adopted and declared as his heir, Octavius Caesar (Octavian). (The honorary title Augustus was bestowed by the Senate 16th Jan 27BC). His wife was Livia. [Jupiter](#) prophesies his future glory: his defeat of [Antony](#), who had seized the inheritance, at [Mutina](#): his defeat of the conspirators Cassius and Brutus at the twin battles of [Philippi](#): his (Agrippa's) defeat of Antony at [Actium](#): and his (Agrippa's) defeat of [Pompey](#)'s son at Mylae and Naulochus off Sicily. (See the sculpture of Augustus, from Primaporta, in the Vatican)

He exiled Ovid to the Black Sea region for 'a poem and a mistake'. The poem probably the *Ars Amatoria*, the mistake probably something to do with the notorious Julia's set, that Ovid knew of and repeated. He seems to refer to it in

a number of the stories, for example that of [Coronis](#), where the talebearer is punished. As Naso, 'the beaky one', he may have personified himself as the garrulous bird.

[Bk XV:843-870](#). Ovid prays that Augustus will outlive him, and being deified, grant entreaties from afar (! A subtle cry from exile -Augustus in fact died in 14AD, and Ovid in 17AD, and Ovid was never pardoned.)

Aulis

[Bk XII:1-38](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). The [Boeotian](#) harbour where the Greek fleet massed prior to setting out for [Troy](#) and where [Iphigenia](#) was sacrificed. The area was a rich fishing-ground.

Aura

[Bk VII:796-865](#). A breeze, invoked by [Cephalus](#).

Aurora, Pallantias

Bk I:52-68. Bk V:425-486. Bk VII:796-865.

Goddess of the Morning, and wife of Tithonus, daughter of the Titan Pallas, hence called Pallantias or Pallantis, who fathered Zelus (zeal), Cratus (strength), Bia (force) and Nicē (victory) on the River Styx.

Bk II:111-149. Brings the dawn as Phaethon begins his ride.

Bk III:138-164. Actaeon talks of her ‘saffron car’ bringing back the light. (See Guido Reni’s fresco –Aurora and the Chariot of the Sun – Casino Rospigliosi, Rome)

Bk III:165-205. Bk VI:26-69. The radiant red of her dawn light referred to.

Bk IV:604-662. Bk XI:266-345. Lucifer wakes her fires to begin the day, and she summons the chariot of the dawn.

Bk VII:179-233. Pales at the sight of Medea’s poisons.

Bk VII:661-758. She seduces Cephalus and is angered by him. She foresees disaster for him.

She changes his appearance to assist his testing of Procris's loyalty.

Bk IX:418-438. Longs to renew the youth of her mortal husband Tithonus. She had gained eternal life for him but not eternal youth.

Bk XI:573-649. Bk XV:176-198. The dawn.

Bk XIII:576-622. She sees her son Memnon killed by Achilles, and begs Jupiter to grant him honours. He creates the Memnonides, a flight of warring birds from the ashes.

Bk XIV:527-565. She is the mother by Astraeus, the Titan, of the four winds, the Astraean brothers.

Ausonia

Bk XIV:772-804. Bk XV:622-745. Bk XV:622-745. A country in lower Italy, or used for Italy itself. (Broadly modern Campania, occupying the Tyrrhenian coast and the western slopes of the Apennines, colonised by Greeks and Etruscans, and Calabria the 'toe' of the Italian 'boot' between the Tyrrhenian and Ionian Seas,

colonised by the Greeks, and part of *Magna Graecia*)

Bk V:332-384. Referring to Pelorus on the north-east coast of Sicily nearest to Italy.

Bk XIII:705-737. Bk XIV:75-100. The destination of Aeneas.

Bk XIV:1-74. Separated from Sicily by the Straits of Messina (Zancle).

Bk XIV:320-396. Picus is king there.

Bk XIV:772-804. Amulius rules by force of arms but is deposed by Romulus, reinstating Numitor.

Auster

Bk I:52-68. Bk VIII:1-80. The South Wind. Eurus is the East Wind, Zephyrus the West Wind, and Boreas is the North Wind.

Bk XI:650-709. A storm-wind.

Autolycus

The grandfather of [Ulysses](#). He is the master trickster and thief, son of [Mercury](#) and [Chione](#), father of Anticlea, Ulysses's mother.

[Bk VIII:725-776](#). His wife, the [daughter of Erysichthon](#), had the power to change her shape at will.

[Bk XI:266-345](#). Chione bore him to Mercury.

Autonoë

[Bk III:165-205](#). The daughter of [Cadmus](#) and mother of [Actaeon](#).

[Bk III:692-733](#). [Pentheus](#) calls on her to help him, invoking the shade of her dead Actaeon, but she helps the other [Maenads](#) to tear him apart.

Autoneius heros

[Bk III:165-205](#). [Actaeon](#), son of [Autonoë](#).

Aventinus

Bk XIV:609-622. A mythical Alban king who gave his name to the Aventine hill from which he ruled.

Avernus, Averno

Bk V:533-571. A name for the Underworld. Averno is its entrance.

Bk XIV:101-153. Aeneas enters it. Proserpina is its queen, and Dis (Orcus) its king.

Babylonius

Bk II:227-271. Of Babylon, the ancient Mesopotamian capital of the Babylonians, in modern Iraq.

Bacchantes, Maenades, Maenads, Bassarids

Bk XI:85-145. The female followers of Bacchus-Dionysus, noted for their ecstatic worship of the god.

Bk III:692-733. They celebrate the rites on Mount Cithaeron.

Bk VII:234-293. Medea has the appearance of a Bacchante.

Bk XI:1-66. They kill Orpheus.

Bacchiadae

Bk V:385-424. An ancient royal family of Corinth, descended from Bacchis, one of the Heraclidae, founder of Syracuse.

Bacchus, Bacheus (=Bacchic)

The god Dionysus, the ‘twice-born’, the god of the vine. The son of Jupiter and Semele. His worship was celebrated with orgiastic rites borrowed from Phrygia. His female followers are the Maenades. He carries the *thyrsus*, a wand tipped with a pine-cone, the Maenads and Satyrs following him carrying ivy-twined fir branches as *thyrsi*. (See Caravaggio’s painting – Bacchus – Uffizi, Florence)

Bk III:273-315. Snatched from his mother Semele's womb when she is destroyed by Jupiter's fire, he is sewn into Jupiter's thigh, reared by Ino and hidden by the nymphs of Mount Nysa. (See Charles Shannon's painting – The Childhood (or Education) of Bacchus – Private Collection)

Bk III:528-571. His worship comes to Thebes and is opposed there by Pentheus and at Argos by Acrisius.

Bk III:597-637. Acoetes tells how Bacchus was discovered on Chios. Bacchus asks to be put ashore on Naxos his home. Acoetes may be a manifestation of Bacchus himself.

Bk III:638-691. Bacchus transforms the ship and crew.

Bk III:692-733. His Maenads destroy Pentheus.

Bk IV:1-30. His names, features, deeds and rites. He is Dionysus Sabazius, the barley-god of Thrace and Phrygia, 'formosissimus alto conspiceris caelo' the morning and evening star, the star-son, identified by the Jews with Adonis, consort of the Great Goddess Venus

Aphrodite or Astarte, and therefore manifested with her in the planet Venus. Later he is the horned Lucifer, ‘son of the morning’.

[Bk IV:389-415](#). He turns the daughters of [Minyas](#) into bats.

[Bk IV:512-542](#). [Juno](#) mocks at [Ino](#) his foster-mother, invoking his name.

[Bk IV:604-662](#). He is worshipped in India and by all of Greece.

[Bk IV:753-803](#). [Bk VI:486-548](#). [Bk VII:425-452](#),

[Bk XII:536-579](#). [Bk XIII:623-639](#). Wine at the marriage feast or banquet is his gift. (See Velázquez’s painting – The Drinkers, or the Triumph of Bacchus – Prado, Madrid) (Note: Wine in Ancient Greece contained honey, aloes, thyme, myrtle berries etc. to form a thick sweet syrup which was diluted when drinking, hence the mixing bowls etc. at the banquets.)

[Bk VI:571-619](#). His triennial festival, the *trietericus*, is celebrated on Mount [Rhodope](#) by the young [Thracian](#) women.

Bk VIII:152-182. He rescues Ariadne on Dia, and sets her crown among the stars as the Corona Borealis.

Bk VIII:260-328. He receives libations of wine from the harvest.

Bk XI:85-145. He grants Midas a gift, and takes it away when Midas is plagued by his golden touch.

Bk XIII:640-674. He gave Anius's daughters the power to change everything into corn, wine and olives, and ultimately rescued them by turning them into doves.

Bk XV:391-417. His worship conquered India, and from there he took the lynxes that follow him.

Bactrius

Of the city of Bactria in Persia.

Bk V:107-148. The native place of Halcyoneus.

Baiae

[Bk XV:622-745](#). The modern Baia, opposite Pozzuoli on the Bay of Pozzuoli, once the fashionable bathing place of the Romans, owing its name, in legend, to Baios, the navigator of [Odysseus](#). The Emperors built magnificent palaces there. Part now lies beneath the sea due to subsidence.

Balearic, Balearicus

[Bk II:708-736](#). [Bk IV:706-752](#) . Of the Balearic islands between Africa and Spain.

Battus

[Bk II:676-701](#). A countryman changed by [Mercury](#) into a flint (touchstone, the ‘informer’)

Baucis

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). The wife of [Philemon](#). They are visited by the gods, [Jupiter](#) and [Mercury](#), disguised as mortals.

[Bk VIII:679-724](#). They are both turned into trees, she into a lime tree and he into an oak. (See the painting by Rubens – Landscape with Philemon and Baucis – Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

Belides, Danaïdes

The fifty daughters of Danaüs, granddaughters of Belus, king of Egypt.

[Bk IV:416-463](#). They were forced to marry their cousins, the fifty sons of Aegyptus, and, with one exception, Hypermnestra, who saved the life of Lynceus, because he preserved her virginity, killed them on their wedding night. The others were punished in [Hades](#) by having to fill a bottomless cistern with water carried in leaking sieves.

Bk X:1-85. Their punishment in the underworld ceases for a time at the sound of Orpheus's song.

Bellona

Bk V:149-199. The goddess of war, and sister of Mars.

Belus

Bk IV:190-213. Founder of the line of Achaemenian Kings of Persia. *Not* the ancestor of the Belides.

Bk IV:604-662. Ancestor of the Belides, King of Egypt, brother of Agenor, and son of Neptune. Acrisius is his descendant through Danaüs.

Berecyntius heros

Bk XI:85-145. Midas, son of Cybele, from Mount Berecyntus (Bk XI:1-66.) in Phrygia.

Beroë

Bk III:273-315. Semele's nurse.

Bienor

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Bisaltis

Bk VI:103-128. Theophane, daughter of Bilsaltes, loved by Neptune, and depicted by Arachne.

Bistonius

Bk XIII:123-381. Of the Bistones, a people of Thrace.

Boebe

A lake in Thessaly.

Bk VII:179-233. Medea gathers magic herbs there by its reedy shores.

Boeotia

[Bk II:227-271](#). A country in mid-Greece containing [Thebes](#).

[Bk III:1-49](#). Cadmus is instructed to found Thebes.

[Bk XII:1-38](#). The Greek ships assemble there at [Aulis](#).

Bona Copia

[Bk IX:1-88](#). The goddess of plenty. The [Naiades](#) give her the horn of plenty lost by [Acheloüs](#) in his fight with [Hercules](#).

Bootës

[Bk II:150-177](#). The constellation of the Waggoner, or Herdsman, or Bear Herd. The nearby constellation of [Ursa Major](#) is the Waggon, or Plough, or Great Bear. He holds the leash of the constellation of the hunting dogs, Canes Venatici. He is sometimes identified with [Arcas](#) son of [Jupiter](#) and [Callisto](#). Arcas may alternatively be the [Little Bear](#).

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). [Icarus](#) is warned not to fly too near the constellation.

[Bk X:431-502](#). Identified with Icarius the father of [Erigone](#). Led to his grave by his dog Maera, she committed suicide by hanging, and was set in the sky as the constellation Virgo. The Latin text says Icarus, a valid alternative, but I have translated it as Icarius to avoid confusion with Daedalus's son.

Boreas

[Bk I:52-68](#). The North Wind. [Eurus](#) is the East Wind, [Zephyrus](#) is the West Wind, and [Auster](#) is the South Wind.

[Book VI:675-721](#). He is identified with [Thrace](#) and the north. He steals [Orithyia](#), daughter of [Erectheus](#) of [Athens](#), and marries her. She bears him the two [Argonauts](#), [Calais](#) and [Zetes](#). (See Evelyn de Morgan's painting—Boreas and Orithyia—Cragside, Northumberland)

[Bk XII:1-38](#). He prevents the Greeks sailing from [Aulis](#).

Bk XIII:399-428. He blows the Greeks home from Troy. (These are the Meltemi or Etesian winds that blow over the northern Aegean in the summer months. On their reliability the Northern Aegean civilisation was based. See Ernle Bradford's 'Ulysses Found' Ch.4)

Botres

Bk VII:350-403. The son of Eumelus, killed by his father for desecrating the sacrifice to Apollo. Apollo pitied the father and changed the boy into a bird, the bee-eater, *merops apiaster*.

Britanni

Bk XV:745-842. The peoples of ancient Britain. Julius Caesar had two campaigns in Britain in 55 and 54BC.

Bromius

[Bk IV:1-30](#). An epithet of [Bacchus](#) meaning ‘The noisy one’.

Bromus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Broteas(1)

[Bk V:107-148](#). A famous boxer. A twin brother of [Ammon](#), killed by [Phineus](#).

Broteas(2)

[Bk XII:245-289](#) One of the Lapithae. Killed by [Gryneus](#) at the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs.

Bruttium

A region of southern Italy, in modern Calabria. The ancient capital of the Bruttians was at Cosentia, modern Cosenza, and was taken by the Romans in 204BC. It was an important halt

on the Via Popilia linking Rome with Reggio and Sicily. (Ovid does not mention it directly in the text)

Bubasis

[Bk IX:595-665](#). Of Bubasos, a town in [Caria](#) passed by [Byblis](#).

Bubastis

[Bk IX:666-713](#). A town in Egypt. The lioness, later cat goddess (Bast, Bastet) worshipped there, equated with [Diana](#).

Buris

[Bk XV:259-306](#). A city near the coast of [Achaia](#), on the Corinthian Gulf destroyed by earthquake. Possibly Pausanias's Boura, see Pausanias VII 25, though it was not on the coast, its destruction was linked with the destruction of [Helice](#).

Busiris

[Bk IX:159-210](#). A king of Egypt who sacrificed strangers. See the entry for [Hercules](#).

Butes

[Bk VII:453-500](#). A son of [Pallas](#), an [Athenian](#) prince. Goes with [Cephalus](#) on an embassy to [Aegina](#). Brother of [Clytos](#).

Buthrotos, Buthrotum

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). A city in [Epirus](#). There [Helenus](#), the [Trojan](#) seer, built a replica of Troy. (See Virgil Aeneid III:290-350). [Aeneas](#) lands there and Helenus foretells his future.

Byblis

The daughter of [Miletus](#), and [Cyanee](#), twin sister of [Caunus](#).

[Bk IX:439-516](#). The twins are noted for their beauty. Byblis falls in love with Caunus and decides to woo him incestuously.

Bk IX:517-594. She declares her love in a letter to Caunus, and is rejected.

Bk IX:595-665. She follows him as he flees her, and, on Mount Chimaera in Lycia, is turned into an ever-weeping fountain.

Cadmeïs

Bk III:273-315. Semele, daughter of Cadmus.

Cadmus

Bk III:1-49. The son of the Phoenician king Agenor who searches for his sister Europa stolen by Jupiter. The founder of Thebes.

Bk III:50-94. He kills the serpent sacred to Mars.

Bk III:115-137. He founds Thebes.

Bk III:528-571. He reproves his grandson Pentheus, son of his daughter Agave, for his attempt to lay hands on the god Bacchus.

Bk IV:464-511. His son-in-law is Athamas, husband of his daughter Ino, who are both maddened by the Fury.

[Bk IV:563-603](#). Cadmus and Harmonia are turned into serpents. There is a tradition that this happened in a cave on the coast of Dalmatia near Dubrovnik (Ragusa), see Rebecca West 'Black Lamb and Grey Falcon' p251. It was ten miles north of an ancient Dalmatian Epidaurus (now Tsavtat) founded by Greek colonists.

[Bk VI:204-266](#). [Amphion](#) is his descendant.

[Bk IX:273-323](#). The [Theban](#) women are 'of Cadmus'

Caeneus

A youth of [Thessaly](#), called [Atracides](#) from the city of Atrax. He was born a girl, Caenis, but changed to a youth by [Neptune](#) as a gift and made invulnerable. He became a king of the [Lapithae](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk XII:146-209](#). [Nestor](#) tells his story.

[Bk XII:210-244](#). He is present at the battle of the [Lapithae](#) and the [Centaur](#)s.

[Bk XII:429-535](#). He is killed, despite his invulnerability to wounds, by being buried under a weight of trees, and is turned into a unique bird with tawny wings.

Caenis

[Bk XII:146-209](#). The daughter of [Elatus](#) of [Thessaly](#), raped by [Neptune](#), and changed into the youth and invulnerable warrior [Caeneus](#) at her request.

[Bk XII:429-535](#). [Latreus](#) taunts Caeneus calling him Caenis.

Caesar, Julius

[Bk XV:745-842](#). The Roman general and Tribune. His deeds, death and deification. (As ‘king of Rome’ he was also the high-priest of [Vesta](#), ‘marrying’ her, the incarnation of Tauric [Diana](#), as described by Fraser in ‘The Golden Bough’ – Ch.1 et.seq.)

[Bk I:199-243](#). His assassination mentioned.

Bk XV:843-870. He confesses that Augustus has surpassed him. Venus sets him among the stars.

Caïcus

Bk II:227-271. Bk XV:259-306. A river in Mysia in Asia Minor near Pergamum.

Bk XII:64-145. Achilles slaughtered the surrounding peoples.

Caïeta

Bk XIV:154-222. Bk XV:622-745. The old nurse of Aeneas. The place in Italy where she died and was buried (modern Gaeta).

Bk XIV:435-444. Her epitaph.

Calais

Book VI:675-721. One of the winged sons of Boreas and Orithyia. One of the Argonauts.

Bk VII:1-73. Drives away the Harpies.

Calaurea

Bk VII:350-403. An island off the coast of Argolis.

Calchas

A seer and priest, the son of Thestor, who accompanied the Greeks to Troy.

Bk XII:1-38. He foresees the long duration of the war and the ultimate Greek victory, and that the sacrifice of Iphigenia to Diana at Aulis will bring the Greeks favourable winds.

Calliope

The Muse of epic poetry. The mother of Orpheus.

Bk V:332-384. She sings the song that defeats the Emathides.

Bk V:642-678. The Muses through her efforts defeat the Emathides and then change them into magpies.

Bk X:143-219. Orpheus asks his mother for inspiration.

Callirhoë

[Bk IX:394-417](#). The daughter of [Achelouïs](#). [Themis](#) prophesies the events following the war of the Seven against [Thebes](#), when as [Alcmaeon](#)'s second wife, she unwittingly unleashes a chain of events involving the fatal necklace of [Harmonia](#), and the murder of Alcmaeon. She begs [Jupiter](#) to age her infant sons so that they can avenge the murder.

[Bk IX:418-438](#). Jupiter explains to the gods that he can grant this only because fate wills it also.

Callisto

[Bk II:401-416](#). A nymph of [Nonacris](#) in [Arcadia](#), a favourite of [Phoebe](#)-Diana. The daughter of [Lycaon](#).

[Bk II:417-440](#). [Jupiter](#) rapes her.

[Bk II:441-465](#). Pregnant by Jupiter she is expelled from the band of Diana's virgin followers by Diana as Cynthia, in her Moon goddess mode. Gives birth to a son [Arcas](#).

Bk II:466-495. She is turned into a bear by Juno.

Calydon

An ancient city in Aetolia on the River Euenus.
Bk VI:401-438. Its ruler goes to Thebes to show sympathy for the death of Amphion and his children.

Bk VIII:260-328. Bk XIV:512-526. Its King is Oeneus. The people ask Theseus's help against Diana's avenging wild boar.

Bk VIII:451-514. Althaea brings down vengeance on Calydon.

Bk VIII:515-546. Meleager's action brings down the house of Parthaon.

Bk VIII:547-610. The victim of Diana's vengeance.

Bk VIII:725-776. Bk IX:1-88. Acheloüs is a river-god of Calydon.

Bk IX:89-158. Deianira is from Calydon.

Bk XV:745-842. Diomedes's spear is Calydonian.

Calydonian Boar-Hunt

Bk VIII:260-328. A famous hunt attended by all the heroes of Greece, caused by Diana, seeking revenge for being slighted. She sent a fierce wild boar against Calydon.

Calymne

An island in the Aegean Sea near Ionia.

Bk VIII:183-235. Daedalus and Icarus fly towards it after leaving Crete.

Camenae

Bk XV:479-546. Ancient Italian nymphs, with the gift of prophecy, later identified with the Muses.

Canace, see Aeolia virgo

Bk VI:103-128. Depicted by Arachne.

Cancer

[Bk II:63-89](#). The constellation of the Crab, and the zodiacal sun sign. It represents the crab that attacked [Hercules](#) while he was fighting the multi-headed [Hydra](#) and was crushed underfoot but subsequently raised to the stars. The sun in ancient times was in this constellation when furthest north of the equator at the summer solstice (June 21st). Hence the latitude where the sun appeared overhead at noon on that day was called the Tropic of Cancer (23.5 degrees north).

[Bk IV:604-662](#). Seen three times by the storm-driven [Perseus](#).

[Bk X:106-142](#). The sun is in Cancer when [Cyparissus](#) kills the stag.

Canens

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). The daughter of [Janus](#) and [Venilia](#), and wife of [Picus](#), noted for her singing.

[Bk XIV:397-434](#). She wastes away with grief at the loss of [Picus](#).

Canopus

[Bk XV:745-842](#). A city in Egypt in the Nile delta, from where, [Cleopatra](#) ruled.

Capaneus

[Bk IX:394-417](#). An Argive leader, one of the Seven against Thebes.

A synonym for pride in the Middle Ages.

Capella

[Bk III:572-596](#). The ‘she-goat’, the sixth brightest star in the sky, now part of the constellation Auriga the Charioteer, but once part of the [Olenian](#) Goat, representing Aege daughter of Olenos.

Capetus

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). One of the [Alban](#) kings.

Caphereus

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). A rocky promontory on the coast of [Euboea](#) where the returning Greek fleet came to grief.

Capitolium

[Bk I:553-567](#). [Bk II:531-565](#). [Bk XV:552-621](#).
[Bk XV:745-842](#). The hill in [Rome](#), the [Tarpeian](#) citadel, on which stood a temple of [Jupiter](#).

Capreae

[Bk XV:622-745](#). An island in the Bay of Naples. The isle of Capri, mountainous, with an inaccessible, precipitous coast, abounding in caves and fantastic rocks. It has perennial sunshine, pure air, and almost tropical vegetation. Tiberius Caesar retired there in 27AD. See Suetonius 'The Twelve Caesars', and Tacitus.

Capys

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). An [Alban](#) king.

Caria, Cares

The country in Asia Minor bordering the southern [Aegean](#) containing [Miletus](#) and Halicarnassus. Its inhabitants the Cares or Carians.

[Bk IX:595-665](#). The country of [Byblis](#) and [Caunus](#).

Carpathius

[Bk XI:221-265](#). Of the island of Carpathos in the [Aegean](#) Sea. An epithet for [Proteus](#).

Cartheïus

[Bk VII:350-403](#). From Carthaea, a town on the island of [Ceos](#) in the [Aegean](#).

[Bk X:106-142](#). The home of [Cyparissus](#).

Cassandra

The daughter of [Priam](#) and [Hecuba](#), gifted with prophecy by [Apollo](#), but cursed to tell the truth

and not be believed. Taken back to Greece by [Agamemnon](#). (See Aeschylus: The Agamemnon)

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). Dragged from the burning temple by her hair as [Troy](#) falls.

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). Her rape by [Ajax](#) causes [Minerva](#)'s anger to fall on the returning Greeks.

Cassiopeia, Cassiope

The mother of [Andromeda](#) and wife of [Cepheus](#). The queen of [Ethiopia](#). She is represented by the constellation Cassiopeia between Cepheus and Andromeda, and is depicted sitting in a chair. The constellation is identifiable by its distinctive W shape.

[Bk IV:663-705](#). She foolishly boasted that she and her daughter were more beautiful than the [Nereids](#), who complained to [Neptune](#) who sent a sea monster to devastate Cepheus's kingdom. The Oracle of [Jupiter Ammon](#) told Cepheus to sacrifice his daughter Andromeda. Cassiope and Cepheus accepted [Perseus](#)'s offer to rescue Andromeda on condition that she became his

wife. For breaking faith with Perseus, Neptune set Cepheus and Cassiopeia as a warning among the stars.

[Bk IV:706-752](#). She rejoices at Perseus's defeat of the sea-serpent.

Castalius, Castalian

[Bk III:1-49](#). Of the spring of Castalia and cave on Mount [Parnassus](#) and the oracle of [Apollo](#) there. The spring is sacred to the [Muses](#).

Castor

The son of Tyndareus of [Sparta](#) and [Leda](#), and twin brother of [Pollux](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He joins the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk VIII:329-375](#). The brothers hurl their spears.

[Bk XII:393-428](#). Noted for his horses and horsemanship.

Castrum Inui

[Bk XV:622-745](#). An ancient city of the [Rutuli](#).

Caucasus

[Bk II:201-226](#). The mountain range in Asia.

[Bk V:74-106](#). The native place of [Abaris](#).

[Bk VIII:777-842](#). The haunt of [Famine](#).

Caulon

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A city in [Bruttium](#). (Near the modern Monastarece Marina on the Ionian Sea, ancient Caulonia, the original Achaean colony was destroyed by Syracuse in 389BC. What is now modern Caulonia, inland, was founded by the survivors.)

Caunus

The son of [Miletus](#) and the nymph [Cyanee](#), daughter of the river god [Maeander](#), hence called Maeandrius.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). His twin sister [Byblis](#) falls incestuously in love with him, and decides to declare her love in a letter.

[Bk IX:517-594](#). He is horrified and rejects her.

[Bk IX:595-665](#). Fleeing his sister he founds the city of Caunus in [Caria](#).

Caÿstros, Caÿster

[Bk II:227-271](#). [Bk V:385-424](#). A river famous for its swans in [Lydia](#) in Asia Minor. Ephesus is near its mouth.

Cea, Ceos

[Bk VII:350-403](#). An island of the [Cyclades](#), off Cape Sunium. Its ancient city was [Carthaea](#).

[Bk X:106-142](#). [Cyparissus](#) was a beautiful boy of the island.

Cebrenis

[Bk XI:749-795](#). [Hesperie](#), daughter of Cebren a river god of the [Troad](#).

Cecropides

Bk VII:453-500. Theseus, as a descendant of Cecrops. The Cecropidae, are therefore the Athenians.

Bk VIII:547-610. Theseus in Acarmania.

Cecropis, Cecropides

Bk II:812-832. Aglauros as daughter of Cecrops. The Cecropides, are the daughters of Pandion, that is Procne and Philomela, as Athenians.

Cecropius

Bk VI:70-103. Bk VI:438-485. Bk XI:85-145. Athenian. From Cecrops the founder of Athens.

Cecrops

Bk II:531-565. Bk XV:418-452. The mythical founder of Athens. He was a son of mother Earth like Erechthonius (who some think was his father). He was part man and part serpent. His three daughters were Aglauros, Herse and

Pandrosus who were goddesses of the Acropolis in Athens.

Celadon(1)

Bk V:107-148. An adversary of Perseus, killed in the fight with Phineus.

Celadon(2)

Bk XII:245-289. One of the Lapithae. He is killed by Amycus at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Celmis

Bk IV:274-316. One of the Dactyls ('fingers'), born when Rhea pressed her fingers into the earth as she was bearing Jupiter. They were ironsmiths who guarded the infant Jupiter's cradle. Their sisters taught the mysteries on the island of Samothrace. Celmis was turned into adamantine steel as a punishment for insulting Rhea.

Cenaeus

Bk IX:89-158. An epithet of Jupiter worshipped by Hercules at Cenaeum, the north western point of Euboea.

Cenchreis

Bk X:431-502. The mother of Myrrha, and wife of Cinyras. Her absence from Cinyras's bed during the festival of Ceres allows Myrrha to commit her incest.

Centaur

Creatures, half-man and half-horse living in the mountains of Thessaly, hence called biformes, duplex natura, semihomines, bimembres.

They were the sons of Ixion, and a cloud, in the form of Juno.

Bk II:633-676. Chiron the centaur and Ocyrhoë his daughter.

Bk IX:89-158. The story of Nessus the centaur and Hercules.

Bk IX:159-210. Hercules fought with Pholus and the Centaurs and wounded Chiron with an arrow poisoned with the Hydra's venom. Chiron's agony was ended when he exchanged his immortality for Prometheus's mortal fate.

Bk XII:210-244. Invited to the marriage feast of Pirithoüs and Hippdamia, Eurytus precipitates a fight with the Lapithae.

Bk XII:536-579. Nestor finishes telling the story of the battle.

Cephalus

An Athenian prince, the grandson of Aeolus, hence Aeolides.

Book VI:675-721. Married happily to Procris, daughter of Erectheus King of Athens.

Bk VII:453-500. Goes to Aegina to seek help from an ally.

Bk VII:501-613. He hears the history of the plague from Aeacus.

Bk VII:661-758. He is unfaithful to his wife Procris and then tempts her into disloyalty.

They are reconciled. She gives him a magic hound and a magic javelin, gifts of [Diana](#).

[Bk VII:759-795](#). He recounts the story of Laelaps the hound.

[Bk VII:796-865](#). He tells how through an error he was led to kill [Procris](#), unwittingly, with the magic spear that was her gift.

[Bk VIII:1-80](#). He returns to [Athens](#) with the [Aeacides](#).

Cephenes

[Bk IV:753-803](#). [Bk V:1-29](#). [Bk V:74-106](#). A name for the [Ethiopians](#) from their king [Cepheus](#).

Cepheus

The king of [Ethiopia](#), husband of [Cassiope](#), and father of [Andromeda](#). He is represented by the constellation Cepheus near Cassiopeia which includes the prototype of the Cepheid variable stars used as standard light sources for measurement of distances in space.

Bk IV:663-705. He accepts Perseus's offer to rescue Andromeda.

Bk IV:706-752. He promises Perseus a kingdom as dowry for defeating the sea serpent and winning Andromeda.

Cephisus

Narcissus, as the son of the river god Cephisus.

Cephisus

Bk I:348-380. A river in Phocis.

Bk III:1-49. Cadmus passes by it, following the heifer.

Bk III:339-358. Father of Narcissus, by the nymph Liriope.

Bk VII:350-403. Mourns for his grandson changed into a seal by Apollo.

Bk VII:425-452. The location where Theseus defeated Procrustes.

Cerambus

[Bk VII:350-403](#). A mythical character, whose home was near Mount [Othrys](#), who escaped [Deucalion](#)'s flood. He was saved by the nymphs, who changed him to a scarabeus, and he flew to the summit of Mount [Parnassus](#).

Cerastae

[Bk X:220-242](#). A horned people of [Cyprus](#) turned into wild bullocks by [Venus](#), for the crime of sacrificing strangers and guests on their altars.

Cerberus

[Bk IV:416-463](#). The three-headed watchdog of the Underworld. He bays at [Juno](#) entering the city of [Dis](#).

[Bk IV:464-511](#). The foam from his jaws forms part of [Tisiphone](#)'s venom of the [Furies](#).

[Bk VII:404-424](#). It also produces the plant wolfsbane, or monkshood, the aconite used by [Medea](#) as a poison.

Bk IX:159-210. In the Twelfth Labour he is captured by Hercules and dragged out of the Underworld.

Bk X:1-85. Mentioned by Orpheus. He has snaky hair.

Bk XIV:1-74. Scylla is surrounded by jaws, like Cerberus's, below the waist.

Cercopes

Bk XIV:75-100. A Lydian people. Jupiter changed them into monkeys, because of their trickery and deceit, and sent them to Pithecusae which took its name from them. (*pithecium*, a little ape)

Cercyon

Bk VII:425-452. A king of Eleusin, who required all travellers to wrestle with him, and killed them when they were defeated. He was defeated by Theseus. The wrestling-ground was on the road to Megara.

Ceres

[Bk I:113-124](#). The Corn Goddess. The daughter of [Saturn](#) and Rhea, and [Jupiter](#)'s sister. As Demeter she is represented in the sky by the constellation and zodiacal sign of Virgo, holding an ear of wheat, the star Spica. It contains the brightest quasar, 3C 273. The constellation alternatively depicts [Astraea](#). The worship of her and her daughter Persephone, as the Mother and the Maiden, was central to the Eleusinian mysteries, where the ritual of the rebirth of the world from winter was enacted. Ceres was there a representation of the Great Goddess of Neolithic times, and her daughter her incarnation, in the underworld and on earth.

[Bk V:107-148](#). [Ampycus](#) is one of her priests.

[Bk V:332-384](#). The [Muse Calliope](#) sings of her.

[Bk V:385-424](#). Her daughter [Proserpine](#) (Persephone) is raped and abducted by [Dis](#).

[Bk V:425-486](#). She searches for her throughout the world. [Cyane](#) gives evidence of the abduction, in [Sicily](#), and Ceres blights that land. (On the way she drinks the mixture of water

and meal known as the *kykeion*, the partaking of which was an element of the ritual surrounding the Eleusinian Mysteries.)

Bk V:487-532. She finds that Persephone is in Hades, and asks Jupiter to intercede. He agrees so long as Persephone has not eaten while in the underworld, a decree made by the Fates.

Bk V:533-571. She is allowed her daughter for six months of each year.

Bk V:572-641. She asks Arethusa to tell her story.

Bk V:642-678. She sends Triptolemus, of Eleusis, with her gift of the crops to the barbarian king of Scythia, Lyncus. He attacks Triptolemus and she changes Lyncus into a lynx.

Bk VI:103-128. Neptune lay with her in the form of a horse.

Bk VII:425-452. Eleusis is sacred to her.

Bk VIII:260-328. She is offered the first fruits of the crops.

Bk VIII:260-328. A synonym for the harvest.

Bk VIII:725-776. Erysichthon violates her sacred oak grove.

Bk VIII:777-842. She asks Famine to torment him to death.

Bk IX:418-438. She wishes she could win renewed youthfulness for Iasion, whom she fell in love with at the marriage of Cadmus and Harmonia, and lay with in the thrice-ploughed field.

Bk X:1-85. A synonym for nourishment.

Bk X:431-502. The festival of the first fruits (in Attica, the Thesmophoria) held annually in her honour, where married women dressed in white brought corn garlands as offerings, and sexual union and the touch of a man were forbidden for nine nights.

Bk XI:85-145. Bk XIII:623-639. Bread is her gift.

Ceyx

Bk VII:350-403. The son of Lucifer. The husband of Alcyone, turned into a kingfisher with her.

Bk XI:266-345. He gives sanctuary to Peleus in his kingdom of Trachin, and tells the story of his brother Daedalion.

Bk XI:346-409. His wife Alcyone begs him not to fight against the wolf from the marshes.

Bk XI:410-473. He goes to consult the oracle of Apollo at Claros.

Bk XI:474-572. He is drowned in the tempest.

Bk XI:573-649. Morpheus is sent to Alcyone, taking on his form.

Bk XI:650-709. Morpheus tells Alcyone of his death.

Bk XI:710-748. His body returns on the tide and he is transformed with her into a halcyon.

Chalciope

Bk VII:1-73. The sister of Medea whom Aeetes had given in marriage to Phrixus.

Chaonian oaks

The sacred oak grove of Chaonia at [Dodona](#) in [Epirus](#), the site of an ancient oracle of [Jupiter](#) (Zeus).

[Bk X:86-105](#). The oracular oak is among the gathering of trees when [Orpheus](#) sings.

Chaonis, Chaonius

Of Chaonia, the region in [Epirus](#).

[Bk V:149-199](#). The native country of [Molpeus](#).

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). Passed by [Aeneas](#).

Charaxus

[Bk XII:245-289](#). One of the Lapithae. He was killed by [Rhoetus](#) at the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs.

Chariclo

[Bk II:633-675](#). A water nymph, the mother of [Ocyroë](#) by [Chiron](#) the Centaur.

Charon

Bk X:1-85. The ferryman who carries the dead across the River Styx in the underworld, whose tributary is the Acheron. (See Dante's Inferno). He prevents Orpheus crossing the Styx for a second time.

Charops

Bk XIII:123-381. A Lycian, killed by Ulysses.

Charybdis

Bk VII:1-73. Bk VIII:81-151. The whirlpool between Italy and Sicily in the Messenian straits. Charybdis was the voracious daughter of Mother Earth and Neptune, hurled into the sea, and thrice, daily, drawing in and spewing out a huge volume of water.

Bk XIII:705-737. Bk XIV:75-100. Aeneas passes by it.

Chersidamas

Bk XIII:123-381. A Lycian, killed by Ulysses.

Chimaera

A fire-breathing monster with a lion's head, goat's body and serpent's tail.

Bk VI:313-381. Its native country is Lycia in Asia Minor.

Bk IX:595-665. Byblis travels to Mount Chimeara there and becomes a fountain.

Chione

Bk XI:266-345. The daughter of Daedalion, loved by Apollo and Mercury. She bore twin sons, Philammon to Apollo, and Autolycus to Mercury. She was killed by Diana for criticising the goddess's beauty and boasting of her own.

Chios, Chius (of Chios)

Bk III:597-637. The island in the north-eastern Aegean off the coast of Ionia where Acoetes lands and finds Bacchus.

Chiron

Bk II:612-632. One of the Centaurs, half-man and half-horse. He was the son of Philyra and Saturn. Phoebus Apollo took his new born son Aesculapius to his cave for protection. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Centaurus, which contains the nearest star to the sun, Alpha Centauri.

Bk II:633-675. Father of Ocyroë, by Chariclo the water-nymph.

Bk VI:103-128. Begot by Saturn disguised as a horse.

Bk VII:350-403. His home is on Mount Pelion.

Chromis(1)

Bk V:74-106. A companion of Phineus who kills the old man Emathion in the fight with Perseus.

Chromis(2)

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Chromius

Bk XIII:123-381. A Lycian, killed by Ulysses.

Chrysaor

Bk IV:753-803. The brother of Pegasus the winged horse, the warrior born from the blood of Medusa, and clasping a golden falchion. A son of Neptune. The father of Geryon.

Chryse, Chrysa

A coastal city in the Troad near Mount Ida.

Bk XIII:123-381. Captured by Achilles.

Chthonius

Bk XII:429-535. A centaur.

Cicones

Book VI:675-721. A Thracian people.

Bk X:1-85. The country of Orpheus.

Bk XI:1-66. The crazed Ciconian women are the Maenads who murder Orpheus.

Bk XV:307-360. Their river with strange properties.

Cilix

Bk II:201-226. Of Cilicia in Asia Minor.

Cilla

A city of the Troad.

Bk XIII:123-381. Captured by Achilles.

Cimmerians

A fabled people, said to live in caves in perpetual darkness, 'beyond the north Wind.'
[Bk XI:573-649](#). Their country is the home of [Somnus](#), Sleep.

Cimolus

An island in the [Cyclades](#). Described as chalky-soiled.
[Bk VII:453-500](#). Allied to [Crete](#).

Cinyphius

Of the River Cinyps in Africa.
[Bk V:107-148](#). [Pelates](#) comes from there.
[Bk VII:234-293](#). [Medea](#) uses one of its water snakes as an ingredient for her magic potion.
[Bk XV:745-842](#). [Juba](#)'s place of origin.

Cinyras(1)

[Bk VI:70-102](#). An [Assyrian](#) King. His daughters were changed into the stone steps of the temple, for their presumption.

Cinyras(2)

The son of [Paphos](#), and the father of [Myrrha](#), and by her incestuously of [Adonis](#). [Bk X:708-739](#). Adonis is therefore called Cinyreius.

[Bk X:298-355](#). Myrrha conceives a passion for him.

[Bk X:356-430](#). He, innocently, asks her to choose a husband.

[Bk X:431-502](#). He is deceived into admitting her to his bed, and impregnating her, driving her out when he realises what has happened.

Cipus

[Bk XV:552-621](#). A fabled Roman praetor. He grows horns and is prophesied as a king who will enslave [Rome](#) if he enters the city, but declares himself instead, and is rewarded with honours.

Circe

[Bk IV:190-213](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). The sea-nymph, daughter of [Sol](#) and Perse, and the granddaughter of [Oceanus](#). (Kirke or Circe means a small falcon) She was famed for her beauty and magic arts and lived on the 'island' of Aea, which is the promontory of Circeii. (Cape Circeo between Anzio and Gaeta, on the west coast of Italy, now part of the magnificent *Parco Nazionale del Circeo* extending to Capo Portiere in the north, and providing a reminder of the ancient Pontine Marshes before they were drained, rich in wildfowl and varied tree species.) Cicero mentions that Circe was worshipped religiously by the colonists at Circei. ('On the Nature of the Gods', Bk III 47) (See John Melhuish Strudwick's painting – *Circe and Scylla* – Walker Art Gallery, Sudley, Merseyside, England: See Dosso Dossi's painting - *Circe and her Lovers in a Landscape* - National gallery of Art, Washington)

[Bk XIII:898-968](#). [Glaucus](#) seeks her home.

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). She refuses him a love potion to make [Scylla](#) love him, and instead transforms Scylla into a monster.

[Bk XIV:223-319](#). She transforms [Ulysses](#)'s men into beasts. [Mercury](#) gives him the plant *moly* to enable him to approach her. He marries her and frees his men, staying for a year on her island. (*Moly* has been variously identified as 'wild rue', wild cyclamen, and a sort of garlic, *allium moly*. John Gerard's Herbal of 1633 Ch.100 gives seven plants under this heading, of which the third, *Moly Homericum*, is he suggests the *Moly* of Theophrastus, Pliny and Homer – Odyssey XX- and he describes it as a wild garlic.

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). She loves [Picus](#), but, thwarted in her love, turns him into the green woodpecker, *picus viridis*.

[Bk XIV:397-434](#). She turns Picus's companions into wild beasts.

[Bk XIV:435-444](#). She had warned [Ulysses](#)'s and his crew of the dangers they must still face.

Ciris

[Bk VIII:81-151](#). The bird into which Scylla, daughter of [Nisus](#) was changed. Nisus was changed into the sea eagle. Elsewhere, and interpolated in this translation, the bird is described as having a purple breast and red legs. From the habits of the sea eagle, that preys on it, from its description, and the sacredness of the dove to Cer, the Cretan Bee-Goddess, this translator takes it to be the rock dove, *columba livia*. The followers of Cer, the Curetes, shaved their locks. Megara was said to have been founded by Car or Ker, a follower of the goddess. See the entry for [Scylla](#).

Cithaeron

[Bk II:201-226](#). A mountain in [Boeotia](#), near [Thebes](#).

[Bk III:692-733](#). The place chosen for the worship of [Bacchus](#).

Clanis(1)

Bk V:107-148. The brother of Clytius. A companion of Phineus, killed by Perseus.

Clanis(2)

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Clarius

Bk XI:410-473. An epithet of Apollo from Claros (Clarus) a city in Ionia, where there was an oracle and temple of the god.

Claros

Bk I:504-524. A town in Ionia between Smyrna and Ephesus. See Clarius.

Cleatus

The son of Actor, and brother of Eurytus.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Cleonae

A town in the [Argolis](#).

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children.

Cleopatra

[Bk XV:745-842](#). Queen of [Egypt](#), mistress of [Julius Caesar](#) and [Antony](#). She fell from power and committed suicide when she and Antony were defeated at the battle of [Actium](#). (See Suetonius 'The Twelve Caesars' and, of course, Shakespeare.)

Clitorius

[Bk XV:307-360](#). Of the city of Clitor (Kleitor) in [Arcadia](#), in the fork of the Kleitor and Karnesi rivers. See Pausanias VIII 21.

Clymene

Bk I:747-764. Daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, wife of the Ethiopian king Merops, mother of Phaethon by Phoebus (Sol)

Bk II:329-343. She mourns for her dead son.

Clymeneius

Bk II:1-30. An epithet of Phaethon from his mother Clymene.

Clymenus

Bk V:74-106. A companion of Phineus.

Clytaemnestra

The wife of Agamemnon, daughter of Tyndareus of Sparta, and Leda. Sister or half-sister of Helen, and of the Dioscuri. Mother of Orestes, Electra (Laodice), and Iphigenia.

Bk XIII:123-381. Tricked by Ulysses into yielding up Iphigenia for sacrifice.

Clytie

[Bk IV:190-213](#). One of the daughters of [Oceanus](#), who loves [Sol](#).

(See the painting by Lord Leighton – Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge, on loan to Leighton House, London).

[Bk IV:214-255](#). She tells [Leucothoë](#)'s father about her and Sol.

[Bk IV:256-273](#). Sol disdains her and she wastes away, becoming a plant, the heliotrope, that follows the sun.

Clytius

[Bk V:107-148](#). The brother of [Clanis](#). A companion of [Phineus](#), killed by [Perseus](#).

Clytus(1)

[Bk V:74-106](#). A companion of [Phineus](#), killed by [Perseus](#).

Clytus(2)

[Bk VII:453-500](#). A son of [Pallas](#), an [Athenian](#) prince. Goes with [Cephalus](#) on an embassy to [Aegina](#). The brother of [Butes](#).

Cnidos

[Bk X:503-559](#). A city in [Caria](#). A haunt of [Venus](#), and famous for its fish, associated with the goddess.

Cnosiacus

[Bk III:206-231](#). [Bk VII: 453-500](#). [Bk VIII:1-80](#).
[Bk VIII:81-151](#). Cnosius, from Cnosos (Cnossos), a city in [Crete](#), therefore Cretan.
[Bk IX:666-713](#). The royal city of Crete.

Coae matres

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The women of the island of Cos in the Sporades in the Eastern [Aegean](#) off Halicarnassus, angered by [Hercules](#) because he dressed in women's clothes to escape detection.

They abused him, and were given horns like cows, by [Juno](#).

Cocalus

The mythical king of [Sicily](#) whom [Daedalus](#) sought refuge with. Daedalus threaded a spiral Triton shell for him, using an ant to pull the thread, lured by honey.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He defends Daedalus against [Minos](#) of [Crete](#).

Cocinthus

[Bk XV:622-745](#). Of the promontory of Cocinthus in [Bruttium](#), somewhere between [Croton](#) and [Caulon](#).

Coeranus

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). A [Lycian](#), killed by [Ulysses](#).

Coeus

[Bk VI:146-203](#). [Bk VI:313-381](#). A [Titan](#), father of [Latona](#) and [Asterie](#).

Colchis, Colchus

[Bk VII:100-158](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#). A country in Asia south east of the Black Sea. The destination of the [Argonauts](#) and home of [Medea](#).

[Bk VII:294-349](#). [Bk VII:294-349](#). [Bk VII:350-403](#). Medea as the witch of Colchis.

Colophonius

[BkVI:1-25](#). Of Colophon a city in Asia Minor, near the coast, north-west of Ephesus and the mouth of the River [Cayster](#). The home city of [Idmon](#).

Combe

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The daughter of [Ophius](#), mother of the Aetolian Curetes, changed into a bird.

Cometes

[Bk XII:245-289](#). One of the Lapithae. He was killed by [Rhoetus](#) at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Corinth, Ephyre, Corinthus

[Bk II:227-271](#). [Bk XV:479-546](#). The city north of [Mycenae](#), on the [Isthmus](#) between [Attica](#) and the [Argolis](#). (Built on the hill of Acrocorinth it and Ithome were ‘the horns of the Greek bull’, whoever held them held the Peloponnese. It was destroyed by the Roman general Mummius in 146BC and rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 44BC.)

[Bk V:385-424](#). Origin of the [Bacchiadae](#) who founded Syracuse.

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children. It is famous for bronze.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). [Jason](#) having claimed the throne is king there. Its ancient name is Ephyre. It is famous for the spring of [Pirene](#) on the citadel (rebuilt in marble by Herodes Atticus in the 2ndc.AD).

Cornix

[Bk II:566-595](#). The daughter of [Coroneus](#) king of [Phocis](#). She was turned into a Crow by [Minerva](#).

Coronae, Coroni

[Bk XIII:675-704](#). Two youths who sprang from the ashes of the daughters of [Orion](#).

Coroneus

Bk II:566-595. A king of Phocis. The father of Cornix who was turned into a Crow by Minerva.

Coronides

Bk XV:622-745. An epithet of Aesculapius as the son of Coronis and Apollo.

Coronis

Bk II:531-565. The daughter of Phlegyas of Larissa, King of the Lapiths and Ixion's brother. She lived on the shores of Lake Beobis in Thessaly. She was loved by Apollo.

Bk II:566-595. She is unfaithful to Apollo and killed by him. Bk II:612-632. Apollo saves their unborn child Aesculapius and gives him into the care of Chiron the Centaur.

Corvus

Bk II:531-565. The Raven, whose feathers are turned from white to black by Apollo for bringing him the news of Coronis's unfaithfulness.

Corycides

Bk I:313-347. Nymphs of the Corycian cave on Parnassus.

Corythus(1)

Bk V:107-148. A warrior from Marmarica, friend to Perseus.

Corythus(2)

Bk VII:350-403. The son of Paris and Oenone, the fountain-nymph daughter of the river Oeneus. He was sent by Oenone, in jealousy of Helen, to guide the avenging Greeks to Troy.

Corythus(3)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). One of the Lapithae.

Coüs

[Bk VII:350-403](#). From the island of Cos.

Cragos

[Bk IX:595-665](#). A mountain in [Lycia](#).

Crantor

[Bk XII:290-326](#). The armour bearer of [Peleus](#).

Crataeis

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). A nymph, the mother of [Scylla](#).

Crathis

[Bk XV:307-360](#). A river in [Arcadia](#), into which the corrosive waters of the Arcadian Styx flow.

Aegae is at its mouth. Pausanias describes the complex of rivers and towns near Mount [Cyllene](#) and Mount Chelmos: [Clitor](#) (Kleitor), and [Nonacris](#), the Crathis, and the Arcadian Styx that is its tributary, in Pausanias VIII 17 and 18. He does not confirm Ovid's comments about hair being turned to gold, but does elaborate on the marvellous properties of the Styx. (Robert Graves has an interesting digression on this, and the Proetides, in 'The White Goddess' p353 and p354.)

Alternatively, and since Crathis seems to be coupled here with [Sybaris](#), Ovid is referring to properties of the Italian river Crathis (modern Crati) which may have been what Ovid calls the Sybaris, on which the ancient town of Sybaris probably stood. These properties of the river may have been transferred in legend by Greek colonists from the Greek Crathis.

Crenaesus

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Cressa, Telethusa

[Bk IX:666-713](#). A Cretan woman. [Telethusa](#).

Crete

[Bk III:1-49](#). The island in the Mediterranean Sea. Dictaeon from Mount Dicte.

[Bk VII:425-452](#). Famous for its bull-worship in [Minoan](#) times. [Hercules](#) lets a white bull of Crete loose on the plains of [Marathon](#) which [Theseus](#) overcomes.

[Bk VIII:81-151](#). The kingdom of [Minos](#).

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). [Daedalus](#), kept there by Minos, plans to escape.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). [Athens](#) ceases to pay it tribute.

[Bk IX:159-210](#). In the Seventh Labour [Hercules](#) killed a bull that was ravaging the island.

[Bk IX:666-713](#). The country of [Ligdus](#) and [Telethusa](#).

[Bk IX:714-763](#). The country of monstrosities.

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). The country of [Teucer](#), an ancient king of [Troy](#), and its people the [Teuceri](#).

[Bk XV:479-546](#). Sacred to [Diana](#).

Crimese

[Bk XV:1-59](#). A town in Lucania.

Crocale

[Bk III:165-205](#). One of the nymphs of [Diana](#), daughter of the river-god [Ismenus](#), and therefore called Ismenis.

Crocus

[Bk IV:274-316](#). A youth who pined away from love of the nymph [Smilax](#), and was changed into the crocus flower. Smilax became the flowering bindweed.

Cromyon

[Bk VII:425-452](#). A village near [Corinth](#), where [Theseus](#) destroyed a fierce and monstrous white sow, that killed the farmers and prevented them ploughing their fields. It was said to be the offspring of Typhon and [Echidne](#).

Croton

A mythical hero who entertained [Hercules](#) at his home in [Sicily](#).

[Bk XV:1-59](#). [Myscelus](#) founds Crotona, taking the name from its proximity to Croton's tomb. (This is the modern Crotona, the only harbour between Taranto and Reggio. The ancient town was founded in 710BC by settlers, sent, according to legend, by the Delphic oracle. It was an important city of the [Bruttians](#), and with [Sybaris](#) it controlled Magna Graecia and included colonies on the Ionian and Tyrrhenian coasts. [Pythagoras](#) made it the chief centre of his school but was later expelled from the city, when his supporters fell from power. It conquered the Sybarites in 510BC, and became subject to Syracuse in 299BC. Hannibal embarked there after his retreat from Rome.)

Ctesylla

Bk VII:350-403. The daughter of Alcidamas of Ceos. She gave birth to a dove.

Cumae

The site of an oracle of Apollo, and its prophetess, the Sibyl. A legendary entrance to the underworld. Daedalus rested there after his flight from Crete, and built a temple to Apollo, before going on to Sicily, where he made the golden honeycomb, for the goddess at Eryx. An ancient Euboean colony on the sea coast of Campania. (See Michael Ayrton's drawings and paintings of the site.)

Bk XIV:101-153. The site of the Sibyl's cave, the oracular priestess of Apollo. She guides Aeneas through the underworld, showing him the golden bough that he must pluck from the tree.

Bk XIV:154-222. The Sibyl guides Aeneas back to the city.

Cumaea

[Bk XIV:101-153](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). An epithet of the [Sibyl](#) of [Cumae](#) who guided [Aeneas](#) to the Underworld.

Cupid, Cupido, [Amor](#)

[Bk I:438-473](#). The god of love, son of [Venus](#) (Aphrodite). He is portrayed as a blind winged child armed with a bow and arrows, and he carries a flaming torch. He causes [Apollo](#) to fall in love with [Daphne](#).

[Bk IV:317-344](#). [Hermaphroditus](#) is compared with him, for beauty, by [Salmacis](#).

[Bk V:332-384](#). [Venus](#) asks him to make [Dis](#) fall in love with [Proserpine](#).

[Bk VII:1-73](#). As love, or passion affects [Medea](#).

[Bk IX:439-516](#). [Bk IX:517-594](#). [Byblis](#) names him.

[Bk X:298-355](#). He is not responsible for [Myrrha](#)'s incestuous passion.

[Bk X:503-559](#). He accidentally wounds his mother [Venus](#) with a loose arrow in his quiver, and she falls in love with [Adonis](#).

Cures

Bk XIV:772-804. The chief city of the Sabines.

Bk XV:1-59. Numa's native city.

Curetes

Bk IV:274-316. They or the Dactyls guarded the infant Jupiter. They were the sons of Rhea, and stood around the golden cradle, hung on a tree, clashing their spears and shouting, to drown the noise of his wailing (like the sound of heavy rain?). They seem to have been associated with rain-making ceremonies.

Curetis

Bk VIII:152-182. Of Crete. From Cer, the Cretan Great Goddess. See her followers the Curetes.

Cyane

Bk V:385-424 A fountain nymph of Sicily whose stream flowed into the River Anapis, near Syracuse. She was loved by Anapis and wedded him. She obstructs Dis in his abduction of Proserpine and Dis opens up a way to Tartarus from the depths of her pool.

Bk V:425-486. She wastes away from grief and the desecration of her pool, but shows Ceres a sign of Persephone's rape.

Cyaneae, Symplegades

Bk VIII:1-80. Two small rocky islands at the entrance to the Euxine Sea, that clashed together when anything approached them.

Cyane

Bk IX:439-516. A nymph, the daughter of Maeander, and mother of Caunus and Byblis by Miletus.

Cybele

The [Phrygian](#) great goddess, personifying the earth in its savage state, worshipped in caves and on mountaintops. Merged with Rhea, the mother of the gods. Her consort was [Attis](#), slain by a wild boar like [Adonis](#). His festival was celebrated by the followers of Cybele, the Galli, or Corybantes, who were noted for convulsive dances to the music of flutes, drums and cymbals, and self-mutilation in an orgiastic fury.

[Bk X:86-105](#). The pine tree is sacred to her, since it embodies the transformed Attis. It is one of the trees that gather to hear [Orpheus](#).

[Bk X:681-707](#). [Hippomenes](#) and [Atalanta](#) desecrate her sacred cave, with its wooden images of the elder gods. She is adorned with a turreted crown. The two sinners are turned into the lions that pull her chariot.

[Bk XIV:527-565](#). She transforms [Aeneas](#)'s fleet of ships into [Naiads](#), since their timbers were cut on her sacred Mount [Ida](#).

Cyclades

[Bk II:227-271](#). The scattered islands of the southern Aegean off the coast of the Greece, forming a broken circle.

Cyclopes

[Bk I:244-273](#). A race of giants living on the coast of Sicily of whom [Polyphemus](#) was one. They had a single eye in the centre of their foreheads. They forged [Jupiter](#)'s lightning-bolts.

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). [Bk XIII:789-869](#). [Bk XIII:870-897](#).

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). [Bk XIV:154-222](#). [Polyphemus](#), who loves [Galatea](#) and is blinded by [Ulysses](#).

[Bk XV:60-142](#). [Pythagoras](#) compares meat-eating to the practices of [Polyphemus](#).

Cycnus(1)

[Bk II:367-380](#). Son of [Sthenelus](#) King of [Liguria](#), mourns [Phaethon](#) and is changed into a swan.

Cycnus(2)

Bk VII:350-403. The son of Apollo and Hyrie, a great hunter of Tempe. He is turned into a swan when he attempts suicide to spite Phylus.

Cycnus(3)

Bk XII:64-145. The son of Neptune, deemed invulnerable. He is defeated by Achilles, who chokes him to death, and turned by his father Neptune into a white swan.

Bk XII:146-209. He is unique in his invulnerability to weapons in his generation.

Cydonaeus

Bk VIII:1-80. Of Cydonia, a town in northern Crete. Hence used to mean Cretan.

Cyllarus

Bk XII:393-428. A centaur, loved by Hylonome. Inseparable in life they died together.

Cyllene

[Bk I:199-243](#). A mountain in [Arcadia](#), [Mercury](#)'s birthplace, hence Cyllenius, an epithet of Mercury. (Pausanias, VIII, xvii, noting it as the highest mountain in Arcadia mentions the ruined shrine of Hermes-Mercury on its summit, and says it got its name from Cyllen son of Elatus. Mercury's statue was of juniper (*thuon*) and stood eight feet tall. Pausanias says that Cyllene was famous for its white (*albino*?) blackbirds.)

[Bk I:689-721](#). Mercury lulls [Argus](#) to sleep and kills him.

[BkII:812-832](#). Mercury turns [Aglauros](#) to stone.

[Bk V:572-641](#). Passed by [Arethusa](#) in her flight.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The place where [Menephron](#) committed incest with his mother.

[Bk XI:266-345](#). Mercury's sacred mountain.

Cyllenius

[Bk V:149-199](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). [Bk XIV:223-319](#). An epithet of [Mercury](#) from Mount [Cyllene](#).

[Bk V:294-331](#). The [Emathides](#) pretend that he fled to Egypt in the war between the giants and the gods, and there he hid in the form of a winged ibis.

Cymelus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). One of the Lapithae.

Cynthia

[Bk II:441-465](#). [Bk XV:479-546](#). An epithet of [Diana](#) as the Moon goddess, derived from Mount Cynthus on [Delos](#) her birthplace. She expels [Callisto](#) from her band of virgin followers because Callisto is pregnant by [Jupiter](#).

[Bk VII:661-758](#). [Procris](#) is her follower.

[Bk XV:479-546](#). She hides [Hippolytus](#) and sets him down at Nemi.

Cynthus

Bk II:201-226. A mountain on the island of Delos sacred to Apollo and Artemis(Diana).

Bk VI:204-266. Latona speaks to her two children Apollo and Diana there.

Cyparissus

Bk X:106-142. A youth loved by Apollo. He accidentally killed a beloved stag, sacred to the nymphs, and begged to mourn forever. Phoebus turned him into a cypress tree.

Cyprus

Bk XIV:623-697. The Island off the south coast of Asia Minor sacred to Venus.

Bk X:220-242. The city of Amathus was there.

Bk X:243-297. The whole island celebrates the festival of Venus.

It is called Paphos, after Pygmalion's daughter.

Bk X:638-680. It contains the sacred field with the golden tree at Tamasus.

Bk X:708-739. Venus's destination prior to the death of Adonis.

Cytherea, Cythereias, Cythereis, Cythereius, Venus, Aphrodite

Bk IV:190-213. Of Cythera, the Aegean island, sacred to Venus- Aphrodite who rose from the sea there. (See Botticelli's the Birth of Venus: see Baudelaire's poem 'Voyage to Cytherea').

Bk IV:274-316. An epithet for Venus-Aphrodite. She is the mother of Hermaphroditus by Mercury-Hermes.

Bk X:503-559. Sacred to Venus.

Bk X:638-680. Bk X:708-739. Bk XIII:623-639.

Bk XIV:483-511. Bk XV:745-842. Venus.

Bk XIV:566-580. She obtains deification for her son Aeneas.

Bk XV:361-390. Doves are her sacred birds.

Cythereius heros

Bk XIII:623-639. Applied to Aeneas as the son of Venus.

Cythnus

Bk V:250-293. An island of the Cyclades.

Cytoriacus

Bk IV:274-316. Of Cytorus, a mountain in Paphlagonia, with abundant boxwood. Salmacis's comb is made from it.

Bk VI:129-145. Minerva's shuttle is made of it.

Daedalion

Son of Lucifer, brother of Ceyx, father of Chione.

Bk XI:266-345. Mourning his daughter Chione he leaps from the summit of Parnassus but is turned by Apollo into a hawk (probably an eagle, genus: *Accipiter*, since Parnassus was famous for them. Note Byron's letters Nov-Dec 1809. Seeing a flight of eagles on Parnassus he

‘seized the omen’ and wrote some stanzas for *Childe Harold* hoping ‘Apollo had accepted my homage’).

Daedalus

[Bk VIII:152-182](#). The mythical [Athenian](#) architect who built the Labyrinth for King [Minos](#) of [Crete](#).

(See Michael Ayrton’s extended series of sculptures, bronzes, and artefacts celebrating Daedalus, Icarus and the Minotaur)

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). He makes wings of bee’s-wax and feathers to escape from Crete. Warning [Icarus](#), his son, to follow him in a middle course, they fly towards [Ionia](#). Between [Samos](#) and [Lebinthos](#) Icarus flies too high and the wax melts, and he drowns in the Icarian Sea and is buried on the island of Icaria.

[Bk VIII:236-259](#). He had previously caused the death of Talos, his nephew, the son of his sister [Perdix](#), through jealousy throwing him from the Athenian citadel, but [Pallas](#) Athene changed the boy into the partridge, *perdix perdix*.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He finds sanctuary in [Sicily](#) (after reaching Cumae, where he built the temple of Apollo), at the court of King [Cocalus](#) who defends him from [Minos](#). (He threaded the spiral shell for King Cocalus, a test devised by Minos, and made the golden honeycomb for the goddess at Eryx. See Vincent Cronin's book on Sicily – The Golden Honeycomb.).

[Bk IX:714-763](#). His name was synonymous with ingenuity, invention and technical skill.

Damasichthon

[Bk VI:204-266](#). One of [Niobe](#)'s seven sons killed by [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#).

Danaë

The mother of [Perseus](#) by [Jupiter](#), and daughter of [Acrisius](#), King of [Argos](#).

[Bk IV:604-662](#). She was raped by Jupiter in the form of a shower of gold, while imprisoned in a brazen tower by Acrisius, who had been warned by an oracle that he would have no sons but that

his grandson would kill him. (See Titian's painting, Museo del Prado, Madrid: See the pedestal of Benvenuto Cellini's Perseus bronze, Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence, depicting Danaë with the child Perseus: See Jan Gossaert called Mabuse's panel – Danaë - in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich))

[Bk VI:103-128](#). [Arachne](#) depicts her rape by Jupiter.

[Bk XI:85-145](#). She would have been deceived by [Midas](#)'s gold also.

Danaëius heros

[Bk V:1-29](#). [Perseus](#), son of [Danaë](#).

Danai

[Bk XII:1-38](#). [Bk XII:64-145](#). The Greeks, the descendants of Danaus of [Argos](#), the [Pelasgians](#).

Danube, Hister

[Bk II:227-271](#). The Lower Danube running to the Black Sea.

Daphne, Peneis

[Bk I:438-472](#). Daughter of [Peneus](#) the river-god. Loved by Phoebus [Apollo](#).

[Bk I:525-552](#). Turned into the laurel bough. (See Pollaiuolo's painting – Apollo and Daphne – National Gallery, London)

[Bk I:553-567](#). She is honoured by Phoebus.

Daphnis

[Bk IV:274-316](#). A shepherd boy of Mount [Ida](#), the son of [Mercury](#), and inventor of bucolic poetry. His mother was a nymph. [Pan](#) taught him to play the pipes and he was beloved by [Apollo](#), and hunted with [Artemis](#). A nymph named Nomia made him swear loyalty. Her rival Chimera seduced him, and Nomia (or Mercury) turned him to stone.

Dardanidae matres

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). Dardanian, that is [Trojan](#) women.

Dardanius

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). An epithet applied to the descendants of Dardanus, the son of [Jupiter](#) and Electra, who came from Italy to the [Troad](#), and was one of the ancestors of the Trojan royal house.

[Bk XV:418-452](#). The [Romans](#), as descendants of [Aeneas](#).

[Bk XV:745-842](#). [Iulus](#), as the son of Aeneas.

Daulis

[Bk V:250-293](#). A city in [Phocis](#) seized by [Pyreneus](#).

Daunus

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). An ancient king of Apulia, [Iapygia](#) in southern Italy. [Diomedes](#) founded Arpi in his kingdom.

Bk XIV:483-511. Diomedes's father-in-law.

Deianira

The daughter of Oeneus, king of Calydon, hence called Calydonis, and the sister of Meleager.

Bk VIII:515-546. She is spared by Diana from being turned into a bird.

Bk IX:1-88. She is wooed by Hercules and Acheloüs.

Bk IX:89-158. She marries Hercules, and is raped by Nessus. Trying to revive Hercules' love for her she unwittingly gives him the shirt of Nessus soaked in the poison of the Hydra. (See Pollaiuolo's painting – The Rape of Deianira – Yale University Art Gallery)

Bk IX:273-323. Hyllus is her son by Hercules.

Deionides, Miletus

Miletus, son of Deione.

Deiphobus

The son of [Priam](#), a Trojan Hero.

[Bk XII:536-579](#). Cited by [Nestor](#) as an enemy.

Delia

[Bk V:572-641](#). An epithet of [Diana](#) from her birthplace, [Delos](#).

Delius, [Apollo](#), [Phoebus](#)

An epithet of [Apollo](#), from his birthplace, [Delos](#).

[Bk V:294-331](#). The [Emathides](#) pretend that he fled to Egypt in the war between the giants and the gods, and there he hid in the form of a crow.

[Bk VI:204-266](#). Apollo helps to punish [Niobe](#).

[Bk XI:172-193](#). He gives [Midas](#) the ears of an ass.

[Bk XII:579-628](#). He helps [Paris](#) destroy [Achilles](#).

[Bk XIII:640-674](#). He gave [Andros](#) the power of prophecy.

Delos

[Bk I:438-473](#). [Bk IX:324-393](#). The Greek island in the Aegean, one of the [Cyclades](#), birthplace of, and sacred to, [Apollo](#) (Phoebus) and [Diana](#) (Phoebe, Artemis), hence the adjective Delian. (Pausanias VIII xlvi, mentions the sacred palm-tree, noted there in Homer's *Odyssey* 6, 162, and the ancient olive.)

[Bk V:572-641](#). Its ancient name was [Ortygia](#).

[Bk VI:146-203](#). [Bk VI:313-381](#). A wandering island, that gave sanctuary to [Latona](#) (Leto). Having been hounded by jealous [Juno](#) (Hera), she gave birth there to the twins Apollo and Diana, between an olive tree and a date-palm on the north side of Mount Cynthus. Delos then became fixed in the sea. In a variant she gave birth to Artemis-Diana on the islet of Ortygia nearby.

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). [Daedalus](#) and [Icarus](#) fly past it after leaving [Crete](#).

Bk XIII:623-639. Aeneas arrives there. Anius is priest on Delos and they sacrifice to the Delian gods.

Bk XV:479-546. Sacred to Diana.

Delphi, Delphicus

Bk I:504-524. Bk IX:324-393. Bk XI:266-345.

Bk XV:622-745. The site of the oracle of Apollo in Phocis.

Bk II:531-565. Phoebus Apollo is called Delphicus.

Bk II:676-701. Phoebus Apollo as lord of Delphi.

Bk X:143-219. The navel stone in the precinct at Delphi was taken as the central point of the known world.

Bk XI:410-473. Delphi was sacked by the Phlegyans.

Bk XV:143-175. Pythagoras is a devotee of the god.

Demoleon

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Deois

[Bk VI:103-128](#). A daughter of Deo, a name of [Ceres](#), so [Proserpina](#).

Deoïus

[Bk VIII:725-777](#). Of [Ceres](#)-Demeter, her oak trees.

Dercetis, Derceto, Atargatis

[Bk IV:31-54](#). A Babylonian goddess worshipped in Syrian Palestine. She was the Syrian goddess Atar-ata, or Atargatis, consort of the Babylonian great god Adad. She was worshipped at Ascalon as half-woman and half-fish, and fish and doves were sacred to her. She was identified, by the Greeks, with Aphrodite. The mother of [Semiramis](#).

Deucalion

Bk I:313-347. King of Phthia. He and his wife Pyrrha, his cousin, and daughter of Epimetheus, were survivors of the flood. He was the son of Prometheus. (See Michelangelo's scenes from the Great Flood, Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome)

Bk VII:350-403. Cerambus also escaped.

Dia

Bk III:638-691. An old name for Naxos.

Bk VIII:152-182. Ariadne is abandoned there by Theseus, but rescued by Bacchus to whom the island was sacred.

Diana, Phoebe, Artemis

Bk II:401-416. Daughter of Jupiter and Latona (hence her epithet Latonia) and twin sister of Apollo. She was born on the island of Ortygia which is Delos (hence her epithet Ortygia).

Goddess of the moon and the hunt. She carries a bow, quiver and arrows. She and her followers are virgins. See [Phoebe](#). She is worshipped as the triple goddess, as [Hecate](#) in the underworld, [Luna](#) the moon, in the heavens, and [Diana](#) the huntress on earth. (Skelton's 'Diana in the leaves green, Luna who so bright doth sheen, Persephone in hell') Callisto is one of her followers. (See Luca Penni's – Diana Huntress – Louvre, Paris, and Jean Goujon's sculpture (attributed) – Diana of Anet – Louvre, Paris.)

[Bk II:441-465](#). She expels [Callisto](#) from her band of virgins because Callisto is pregnant by [Jupiter](#), having been raped by him.

[Bk III:165-205](#). She is seen by [Actaeon](#) while she is bathing and turns him into a stag.

[Bk III:232-252](#). Her anger is only sated when [Actaeon](#) is torn to pieces by his dogs.

[Bk V:294-331](#). The [Emathides](#) pretend that she fled to Egypt in the war between the giants and the gods, and there she hid in the form of a cat.

[Bk V:332-384](#). A virgin goddess.

Bk V:572-641. She conceals her amour-bearer Arethusa in a cloud. Ortygia is an epithet for her.

Bk VII:661-758. She gives Procris a magic hound, Laelaps, and a spear, both of which Procris gives to her husband, Cephalus.

Bk VIII:260-328. Slighted by King Oeneus, she sends a wild boar against Calydon.

Bk VIII:329-375. She steals the point of Mopsus's spear in flight rendering his shot ineffectual.

Bk VIII:376-424. Ancaeus boasts in spite of her.

Bk VIII:515-546. She turns the sisters of Meleager, the Meleagrides, into guinea-hens.

Bk VIII:547-610. Acheloüs compares his anger to Diana's.

Bk IX:89-158. The Naiades dress like her.

Bk X:503-559. Venus dresses like her, and hunts with Adonis.

Bk XI:266-345. She kills Chione for slighting her beauty.

[Bk XII:1-38](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). She is angered by some act of [Agamemnon](#)'s, and keeps the Greek fleet at [Aulis](#) until [Iphigenia](#) is sacrificed. She then snatches Iphigenia away in a mist, and leaves a hind for the sacrifice.

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). Orestes carried her image to [Aricia](#) in Italy where she was worshipped.

[Bk XV:176-198](#). The moon-goddess.

[Bk XV:479-546](#). She was worshipped at the sacred grove and lake of Nemi in [Aricia](#), as Diana Nemorensis, and the rites practised there are the starting point for Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' (see Chapter I et seq.) She hid [Hippolytus](#), and set him down at [Aricia](#) (Nemi), as her consort [Virbius](#).

Dictaeus

[Bk VIII:1-80](#). [Bk IX:714-763](#). Of Mount Dicte, in [Crete](#), hence Cretan.

Dictynna

[Bk II:441-465](#). An epithet of Britomartis in [Crete](#), ‘goddess of the net’, identified with [Diana](#).

Dictys(1)

[Bk III:597-637](#). A seaman, companion of [Acoetes](#).

Dictys(2)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Dido

The Phoenician Queen of Carthage, a manifestation of Astarte, the Great Goddess.

[Bk XIV:75-100](#). A [Sidonian](#), she founded Carthage, loved [Aeneas](#), and committed suicide when he deserted her. (See Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book IV, and Marlowe’s *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage*: See also Purcell’s operatic work ‘*Dido and Aeneas*’.)

Didyme

Two small islands near [Syros](#) in the Aegean.
[Bk VII:453-500](#). Not allied to [Crete](#).

Dindyma, Dindymus

[Bk II:201-226](#). A mountain in [Mysia](#) in Asia Minor, sacred to [Ceres](#).

Diomedes(1)

[Bk XII:579-628](#). The son of Tydeus king of [Argos](#), a Greek hero in the war against [Troy](#). See Homer's Iliad. He dare not compete for the arms of [Achilles](#).

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). He reproached his friend [Ulysses](#) for abandoning [Nestor](#) in the thick of the fighting.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). He shared in [Ulysses](#)'s deeds.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Ulysses claims his friendship and support.

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). He founded Arpi in southern Italy ([Iapygia](#)). [Turnus](#) sends [Venulus](#) to seek

his help in the war with [Aeneas](#), but he pleads lack of resources and unacceptable risk.

[Bk XIV:483-511](#). He tells how his friends were changed into birds.

[Bk XIV:512-526](#). He completes his story, and Venulus leaves.

[Bk XV:745-842](#). He wounded [Venus](#) at [Troy](#), and Venus once saved [Aeneas](#) from his attack.

Dirce

[Bk II:227-271](#). A famous spring near [Thebes](#) in [Boeotia](#).

Dis

[Bk IV:416-463](#). A name for [Pluto](#), king of the Underworld, brother of [Neptune](#) and [Jupiter](#). His kingdom in the Underworld described.

[Bk V:332-384](#). At [Venus](#)'s instigation [Cupid](#) strikes him with an arrow to make him fall in love with [Prosperpine](#).

[Bk V:385-424](#). He rapes and abducts her, re-entering [Hades](#) through the pool of [Cyane](#).

Bk V:533-571. Jupiter decrees that she can only spend half the year with him and must spend the other half with Ceres.

Bk X:1-85. Lord of the Underworld, visited by Orpheus to plead for the life of Eurydice.

Bk XV:479-546. He is angered when Aesculapius restores the life of Hippolytus.

Dodona

The town in Epirus in north western Greece, site of the Oracle of Jupiter-Zeus, whose responses were delivered by the rustling of the oak trees in the sacred grove. (After 1200BC the goddess Naia, worshipped there, who continued to be honoured as Dione, was joined by Zeus Naios. The sanctuary was destroyed in 391AD.)

Bk VII:614-660. The oak at Aegina is seeded from it, and sacred to Jupiter.

Bk XIII:705-737. Aeneas passes it.

Dodonaeus

Bk VII:614-660. Dodonis, of Dodona.

Dolon

A Phrygian sent by the Trojans to spy on the Greek camp.

Bk XIII:1-122. He was captured by Ulysses and Diomede and killed. Hector had promised him the horses and chariot of Achilles for his night's spying.

Dolopes

Bk XII:290-326. A people of Thessaly. Amyntor is their king.

Don, Tanais

Bk II:227-271. The River in Scythia.

Doris

Bk II:1-30. The daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, wife of Nereus the old man of the sea

who is a shape-changer, and mother of the fifty [Nereids](#), the attendants on [Thetis](#). The Nereids are mermaids.

[Bk II:227-271](#). Hid from the sun when [Phaethon](#)'s chariot scorched the earth.

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). The mother of [Galatea](#).

Dorylas(1)

[Bk V:107-148](#). A rich man from [Nasamonia](#). A friend of [Perseus](#), killed by [Halcyoneus](#).

Dorylas(2)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur, killed by [Peleus](#).

Draco, The Dragon (ancient Serpens)

[Bk II:150-177](#). The constellation of the Dragon, once confusingly called Serpens. It is said to be the dragon Ladon killed by [Hercules](#) when stealing the golden apples of the [Hesperides](#). It contains the north pole of the ecliptic (ninety degrees from the plane of earth's orbit) and represents the icy north.

Dryades, Dryads

Bk III:474-510. The wood-nymphs. They mourn for Narcissus.

Bk VIII:725-776. They inhabit the oak trees in Ceres sacred grove and dance at her festivals. One of them prophesies the doom of Erysichthon who had violated the grove and destroyed her.

Bk VIII:777-842. The Dryads mourn the oak and demand punishment for Erysichthon.

Bk XI:1-66. They mourn for Orpheus.

Bk XIV:320-396. They are attracted to Picus.

Dryas

The son of Mars, and brother of the Thracian Tereus.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk XII:290-326. He is present at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Dryope

The daughter of [Eurytus](#), king of [Oechalia](#), mother of [Amphissus](#) by [Apollo](#), wife of [Andraemon](#).

[Bk IX:324-393](#). She unwittingly offends the nymphs and is turned into a lotus-tree.

Dulichius

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Bk XIII:399-428](#). [Bk XIII:705-737](#).

[Bk XIV:223-319](#) An epithet of [Ulysses](#) from Dulichium, an (unidentified) island near [Ithaca](#).

Dymantis

[Bk XI:749-795](#). [Hecuba](#), the daughter of [Dymas](#) and the nymph Eunoë, and wife of [Priam](#), king of [Troy](#).

Dymas

[Bk XI:749-795](#). The father of [Hecuba](#).

Echeclus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Echidna

A monster half-woman, half-snake mother of [Cerberus](#), Chimacra, the [Hydra](#), and the Sphinx.

[Bk IV:464-511](#). Her venom is part of [Tisiphone](#)'s poisonous brew.

[Bk VII:404-424](#). Mother of Cerberus.

Echinades

A group of islands off the mouth of the River [Acheloüs](#), in [Acarmania](#), opposite the island of Cephallenia.

[Bk VIII:547-610](#). They were nymphs turned into islands by the river-god.

Echion(1)

Bk III:115-137. One of the five surviving heroes sprung from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus. He married Agave, the daughter of Cadmus.

Bk III:511-527. Bk III:692-733. He was the father of Pentheus.

Bk X:681-707. He built a temple to Cybele.

Echion(2)

Son of Mercury. The swiftest runner.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:329-375. He throws his spear ineffectually at the boar.

Echionides

Bk III:511-527. Bk III:692-733. An epithet of Pentheus as son of Echion.

Echo

[Bk III:339-358](#). A nymph whose voice gave rise to the name for a reverberating sound.

[Bk III:359-401](#). [Juno](#) limits her powers of speech. She falls in love with [Narcissus](#) and is rejected. She dwindles to sound alone.

[Bk III:474-510](#). She pities Narcissus and echoes his farewells and mourns for him and echoes his sister's lamentations.

(See John William Waterhouse's painting – Echo and Narcissus – Walker Art Gallery, Merseyside, England)

Edoni, Edonians, Edonides

[Bk XI:67-84](#). The Edonians were a Thracian people, ruled at one time by [Lycurgus](#) who was destroyed by [Bacchus](#) for opposing his worship. The Edonides, the women of the Edoni, and worshippers of Bacchus, murdered [Orpheus](#), and were turned into oak trees.

Eetion

Bk XII:64-145. The king of Thebes, in Mysia, and father of Andromache the wife of Hector.

Egeria

Bk XV:479-546. An Italian nymph, wife of Numa. Unconsoled at his death she is turned into a fountain, and its attendant streams (at Le Mole, by Nemi in Aricia). She was worshipped as a minor deity of childbirth at Aricia, and later in Rome. (outside the Porta Capena: see Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' Chapter I.)

Elatus

Bk XII:146-209. Bk XII:429-535. A prince of the Lapithae, father of Caenis.

Eleleus

Bk IV:1-30. A name for Bacchus from the wild cries of the Bacchantes.

Eleusin, Eleusis

A city in Attica, famous for the worship of Ceres-Demeter.

Bk V:642-678. Triptolemus is the son of the king there, though Eleusis is not mentioned by name at this point in the Latin text.

Bk VII:425-452. Sacred to Ceres, the Mother, and Persephone, the Maiden. The place where Theseus defeated Cercyon.

Elis

Bk II:676-701. A city and country in the western Peloponnese.

Bk V:487-532. The native country of Arethusa.

Bk V:572-641. Land of the river-god Alpheus.

Bk V:572-641. The city reached by Arethusa in her flight.

Bk VIII:260-328. Sends Phyleus to the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk IX:159-210. In the Fifth Labour Hercules cleanses the stables of King Augeas of Elis.

Bk XII:536-579. Hercules destroyed the city.

Bk XIV:320-396. Site of the quinquennial games.

Elpenor

Bk XIV:223-319. A comrade of Ulysses. The Odyssey describes his death when he tumbles from the roof of Circe's house, the morning after a heavy bout of drinking. His ghost begs Ulysses for proper burial, and for the oar that he pulled with his comrades to be set up over his grave. His ashes were entombed on Mount Circeo.

Elymus

Bk XII:429-535. A centaur.

Elysium

[Bk XIV:101-153](#). The Paradise of the afterlife, home of the blessed spirits in the Underworld.

Elysus

[Bk XIV:101-153](#). Of [Elysium](#), the paradise of the Underworld.

Emathides, The Pierides

The daughters of [Pierus](#), king of Emathia in [Macedonia](#).

[Bk V:294-331](#). They challenge the [Muses](#) to a contest, and one sings of [Typhoeus](#) and the flight of the gods to Egypt.

[Bk V:642-678](#). They are defeated and turned into magpies for their insolence.

Emathion

[Bk V:74-106](#). An old man killed by [Chromis](#) in the fight between [Phineus](#) and [Perseus](#).

Emathius

[Bk XII:429-535](#). [Bk XV:745-842](#). Of Emathia, a district of [Macedonia](#).

Enaesimus

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). [Bk VIII:329-375](#). Son of [Hippocoön](#), killed at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Enipeus

[Bk I:568-587](#). A river in [Thessaly](#).

[Bk VI:103-128](#). Disguised as the river-god, [Neptune](#) rapes Iphimedia and begets the [Aloïdae](#).

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Medea](#) gathers magic herbs there.

Ennomus

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). A [Lycian](#), killed by [Ulysses](#).

Envy, Invidia

Bk II:752-786. She is sent by Minerva to punish Aglauros.

Eoüs

Bk II:150-177. One of the four horses of the Sun.

Epaphus

Bk I:747-764. The son of Io and Jupiter, grandson of Inachus, worshipped as a god in Egypt alongside his mother. Io is therefore synonymous with Isis (or Hathor the cow-headed goddess with whom she was often confused), and Epaphus with Horus.

Ephyre, Corinth

Bk II:227-271. Bk VII:350-403. The city north of Mycenae, on the Isthmus between Attica and the Argolis. Ephyre is an ancient name for the city.

Epidaurus, Epidaurius, Epidauros

[Bk III:273-315](#). A city in [Argolis](#), sacred to [Aesculapius](#). (The pre-Greek god Maleas was later equated with Apollo, and he and his son Aesculapius were worshipped there. There were games in honour of the god every four years, and from 395BC a drama festival. The impressive ancient theatre has been restored and plays are performed there. From the end of the 5th c. BC the cult of Asklepios spread widely through the ancient world reaching Athens in 420BC and Rome (as Aesculapius) in 293BC.

[Bk VII:425-452](#). The scene of [Theseus](#)'s defeat of [Periphetes](#).

[Bk XV:622-745](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). The home of [Aesculapius](#).

Epimetheus

[Bk I:381-415](#). A [Titan](#), the brother of [Prometheus](#). He was the father of [Pyrrha](#), wife

to [Deucalion](#) her cousin. He married Pandora who opened the box that Prometheus had warned them to keep closed, releasing illness, old age, work, passion, vice and madness into the world.

Epimethis

[Bk I:381-415](#). [Pyrrha](#), the daughter of [Epimetheus](#), brother of [Prometheus](#).

Epirus

A region in northern Greece containing [Dodona](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). Described as grassy. Noted for its massive bulls.

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). Contains the city of [Buthrotos](#).

Epopheus

[Bk III:597-637](#). A seaman, companion of [Acoetes](#).

Epytus

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). One of the [Alban](#) kings.

Erasinus

[Bk XV:259-306](#). A river in [Argolis](#). The river Stymphelos, in [Arcadia](#), that reappears in the Argolis, on Mount Chaon, after running underground. (See Pausanias II 24, and VIII 22)

Erebus

[Bk V:533-571](#). [Bk X:1-85](#). [Bk XIV:397-434](#). A name for the underworld.

Erectheus

King of [Athens](#), son of [Pandion](#), father of [Orithyia](#) and [Procris](#).

[Book VI:675-721](#). He inherits the kingdom from Pandion, and is noted for his sound government and military effectiveness.

[Bk VII:425-452](#). Used to signify Athens and the Athenians.

Bk VII:661-758. He married his daughter Procris to Cephalus.

Bk VIII:547-610. His kingship of Athens remembered.

Erichthonius

Bk II:531-565. A son of Vulcan (Hephaestus), born without a mother (or born from the Earth after Hephaestus the victim of a deception had been repulsed by Athene). Legendary king of Athens and a skilled charioteer. He is represented by the constellation Auriga the charioteer, containing the star Capella. (Alternatively the constellation represents the she-goat Amaltheia that suckled the infant Jupiter, and the stars ζ (zeta) and η (eta) Aurigae are her **Kids**. It is a constellation visible in the winter months.)

Bk IX:418-438. His father Vulcan (Mulciber) wishes he might have a second life.

Eridanus

[Bk II:301-328](#). God of the River Po in northern Italy. His river receives the body of [Phaethon](#) after the destruction of the sun chariot.

He is represented by the constellation Eridanus, south of Taurus, which meanders across the sky.

Erigdupus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Erigone

[Bk VI:103-128](#). The daughter of [Icarius](#), loved by [Bacchus](#), and depicted by [Arachne](#) on her web. Her country is [Panchaia](#).

[Bk X:431-502](#). She was set in the sky as the constellation Virgo, after her suicide, by hanging, in despair at finding her father Icarius's body. Icarius is identified with the constellation [Boötes](#). Ovid is contrasting her piety and love for her father with [Myrrha](#)'s

impiety and carnal desire for hers. In northern latitudes Boötes and Virgo, which are near to each other in the sky, would be declining from the zenith at midnight in late April. Virgo, the second largest constellation, is associated with the goddess of justice holding the scales, but she is also [Ceres](#)-Demeter and holds the ear of wheat, the star Spica. (See the Ceres entry). It would not make sense for Virgo to be in the sky at the time of the Greek harvest festival, the Thesmophoria, since that took place in autumn when the sun was in Virgo. However it does make sense for countries where the harvest time is different, as presumably in Panchaia. (The Egyptian harvest for example, geared to the Nile flood-cycle, was in March-April.)

Erinys, Erinnys, Eumenides

[Bk I:199-243](#). A Fury. The Furies, The Three Sisters, were Alecto, Tisiphone and Megaera, the daughters of Night and Uranus. They were the personified pangs of cruel conscience that pursued the guilty. (See Aeschylus – The

Eumenides). Their abode is in Hades by the Styx.

Bk IV:416-463. Juno summons them at the gate of hell.

Bk IV:464-511. Tisiphone maddens Ino and Athamas.

Bk VI:401-438. They attend (invisibly) the wedding of Tereus and Procne.

Bk VI:653-674. Tereus calls on them in his grief and desire for revenge.

Bk VIII:451-514. Althaea calls on them to aid her vengeance.

Bk X:1-85. They weep for the first time at the sound of Orpheus's song.

Bk X:298-355. They pursued Myrrha.

Bk XI:1-66. A synonym for the madness of the Maenads.

Eriphyle

The wife of Amphiaräus whom she betrayed to Polynices.

Bk VIII:260-328. Her husband is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk IX:394-417. Themis prophesies her murder by her son Alcmaeon in vengeance for his father's death.

Erycina

An epithet of Venus from Eryx, a mountain in Sicily sacred to her.

Bk V:332-384. She asks Cupid to make Dis fall in love with Proserpine.

Erymanthus

Bk II:227-271. A river and mountain in Arcadia.

Bk II:496-507. Arcas meets his mother Callisto, who is transformed into a bear, while hunting in the woods of Erymanthus.

Bk V:572-641. Passed by Arethusa in her flight.

Bk IX:159-210. In the Fourth Labour, Hercules captured a giant wild boar that lived there.

Erysichthon

The son of the Thessalian king Triopas. His daughter is Mestra.

Bk VIII:725-776. He violates the grove of Ceres.

Bk VIII:777-842. In punishment Ceres torments him with Hunger.

Bk VIII:843-884. After living off Mestra's skills he ends by consuming himself.

Erytus, Eurytus(4)

Bk V:74-106. The son of Actor, companion of Phineus. There is possibly confusion here with Eurytus(3).

Eryx(1)

Bk II:201-226. A mountain on the north-western tip of Sicily sacred to Venus Aphrodite. Daedalus made a golden honeycomb for her

shrine there, after fleeing from [Crete](#) via [Cumae](#).

Eryx(2)

[Bk XIV:75-100](#). [Acestes](#). A son of [Venus](#) ([Eryx](#)), half-brother of [Aeneas](#).

Eryx(3)

[Bk V:149-199](#). An opponent of [Perseus](#), petrified by the [Gorgon](#)'s head.

Eteocles

[Bk IX:394-417](#). The son of Oedipus and Iocasta, brother of Polynices who fights against him in the war of the Seven against Thebes. The two brothers kill each other.

Ethemon

[Bk V:149-199](#). A [Nabatean](#) opponent of [Perseus](#), killed by him.

Ethiopia, Aethiopia

Bk I:765-779. The country in northeast Africa.

Bk II:227-271. The people acquire black skins.

Bk IV:663-705. The country of Cepheus.

Etna, Aetna

Bk II:201-226. The volcanic mountain in eastern Sicily.

Etruria, Etruscus

A country in Central Italy. Its people are the Etrurians or Etruscans. Hence Tuscany in modern Italy.

Bk XIV:445-482. The Tyrrhenians. They go to war with Aeneas and his Trojans.

Bk XV:552-621. Noted for their seers' ability to tell the future.

Euagrus

Bk XII:290-326. One of the Lapithae.

Euander

The son of Carmentis, emigrated from Pallantium in [Arcadia](#) before the [Trojan War](#) and founded the city of Pallanteum in [Latium](#), on the future site of [Rome](#) (The [Palatine Hill](#)).

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). He gives help to [Aeneas](#) in the war.

Euboea

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Bk XIII:898-968](#). The large island close to eastern Greece separated from it by the Euboean Gulf. It contains Eretria and Aegae. [Anthedon](#) is on the mainland across the Gulf from Euboea.

[Bk IX:89-158](#). [Hercules](#) conquers King [Eurytus](#) at [Oechalia](#) and sacrifices to [Jupiter](#) at [Cenaeum](#) in the north-west of the island.

[Bk IX:211-272](#). [Lichas](#) becomes an island of that name in the Euboean Gulf.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). [Aulis](#) faces it.

[Bk XIII:640-674](#). Two of [Anius](#)'s daughters flee there from [Delos](#).

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). [Glaucus](#) fishes it waters.

Bk XIV:154-222. Euboean colonists founded Cumae in Italy.

Euenus

Bk VIII:515-546. A river of Aetolia near Calydon.

Bk IX:89-158. The scene of the rape of Deianira.

Euhan

Bk IV:1-30. An epithet for Bacchus from the cries of his followers.

Euippe

Bk V:294-331. The wife of Pierus, and mother of the Pierides.

Eumelus

Bk VII:350-403. The father of Botres.

Eumenides, Erinyes, Furies

Bk VI:401-438. ‘The kindly Goddesses’, an ironic euphemism for the Furies or Erinyes.

Bk VIII:451-514. Althaea calls on them to aid her vengeance.

Bk IX:394-417. Themis prophesies that they will pursue Alcmaeon.

Bk X:1-85. They weep for the first time at the sound of Orpheus’s song.

Eumolpus

A mythical Thracian singer, priest of Ceres-Demeter, who brought the Eleusinian mysteries to Attica.

Bk XI:85-145. He was taught the rites along with Midas by Orpheus.

Eupalamas

Bk VIII:329-375. One of the heroes in the Calydonian Boar Hunt. Knocked down by the boar’s charge.

Euphorbus

The son of [Panthoüs](#), a [Trojan](#) killed by [Menelaüs](#).

[BkXV:143-175](#). A previous incarnation of [Pythagoras](#).

Euphrates

[Bk II:227-271](#). The river of ancient Babylon in modern Iraq.

Europa

[Bk II:833-875](#). Daughter of [Agenor](#), king of Phoenicia, abducted by [Jupiter](#) disguised as a white bull. (See Paolo Veronese's painting – The Rape of Europa – Palazzo Ducale, Venice)

[Bk VI:103-128](#). Depicted by [Arachne](#).

[Bk VIII:1-80](#). [Minos](#) is her son.

Eurotas

[Bk II:227-271](#). A river in [Laconia](#) in southern Greece.

Bk X:143-219. Phoebus haunts it when in love with Hyacinthus.

Eurus

Bk I:52-68. Bk VIII:1-80. The East Wind. Auster is the South Wind, Zephyrus the West Wind, and Boreas is the North Wind.

Eurydice

Bk X:1-85. The wife of Orpheus, died after being bitten by a snake. Orpheus went to the Underworld to ask for her life, but lost her when he broke the injunction not to look back at her. (See Rilke's poem, 'Orpheus, Eurydice, Hermes', and his 'Sonnets to Orpheus', and Gluck's Opera 'Orphée').

Bk XI:1-66. Orpheus finds her again after his death.

Eurylochus

Bk XIV:223-319. A companion of Ulysses, who escapes Circe's transformation of Ulysses's crew.

Eurymides

Bk XIII:738-788. Telemus, son of Eurymus.

Eurynome

Bk IV:190-213. The primal Goddess, mother of the Graces (Charites). A goddess, with Thetis, of the sea. Ovid makes her the mother of Leucothoë, by Orchamus of Babylon and Persia. In all her manifestations she is the Great Goddess.

Bk IV:214-255. Sol disguises himself as her to approach Leucothoë.

Eurynomus

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Eurypylus(1)

Bk VII:350-403. A king of Cos, slain by Hercules. His city was Astypalaea.

Eurypylus(2)

A Thessalian hero at Troy.

Bk XIII:1-122. He does not compete for the arms of Achilles.

Eurystheus

The king of Mycenae, son of Sthenelus.

Bk IX:159-210. Jupiter boasted that he had fathered a son who would be called Heracles (Hercules) the ‘glory of Hera (Juno)’ and rule the house of Perseus. Juno made him promise that any king born before nightfall would be High King. She then hastened the birth of Eurystheus to Nicippe wife of King Sthenelus. Eurystheus ruled Hercules and set him the Twelve Labours to perform. Hercules treats him and Juno as endlessly hostile to himself.

Bk IX:273-323. He pursues his hatred of Hercules through the generations.

Eurytides

Bk VIII:329-375. Hippasus, son of Eurytus, one of the heroes in the Calydonian Boar Hunt. His thigh is ripped open but the boar's tusk.

Eurytion

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Eurytis

Bk IX:394-417. Iole, daughter of Eurytus.

Eurytus(1)

Bk IX:89-158. Bk IX:324-393. The father of Iole and Dryope. The king of Oechalia. He names his grandson, Dryope's child, Amphissus.

Eurytus(2)

Bk XII:210-244. The centaur. He precipitates the battle between the Lapithae and the Centaurs by attempting to carry off Hippodamia.

Eurytus(3)

Bk VIII:260-328. The son of Actor, and the father of Hippasus and brother of Cleatus. Possibly there is confusion here with Eurytus(4).

Eurytus(4), Erytus

Bk V:74-106. The son of Actor. A companion of Phineus. He is killed by Perseus, with a heavy mixing bowl. Possibly there is confusion here with Eurytus(3).

Exadius

Bk XII:245-289. One of the Lapithae. He killed Gryneus at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Fama

Bk IX:89-158. Rumour, personified. She comes to Deianira.

Bk XII:39-63. The House of Rumour described.

Bk XV:1-59. The harbinger of glory.

Fames

Bk VIII:777-842. Famine, a hag, the personification of hunger. Ceres sends her to torment Erysichthon.

Bk VIII:843-884. She leaves him with an incurable and growing hunger.

Farfarus

Bk XIV:320-396. A tributary of the Tiber.

Fates, The Three Goddesses, The Parcae

Bk II:633-675. The three Fates were born of Erebus and Night. Clothed in white, they spin, measure out, and sever the thread of each human life. Clotho spins the thread. Lachesis measures it. Atropos wields the shears.

Bk XV:745-842. The gods cannot overrule them, and prevent Caesar's assassination.

Faunigena

Bk XIV:445-482. Latinus, son of Faunus.

Fauni

Bk I:177-198. The fauns. Demi-gods. Rural deities with horns and tails.

Faunus(1)

Bk XIII:738-788. Father of Acis. An ancient king of Latium.

Bk XIV:445-482. Father of Latinus.

Faunus(2)

[Bk VI:313-381](#). A god of the fields and flocks, identified with Pan. Worshipped by country people.

Faunus(3)

[Bk I:177-198](#). [Bk VI:382-400](#) . Fauni, Demigods, ranked with [Satyrs](#).

Favonius

[Bk IX:595-665](#). The west wind, bringer of warmth and spring.

Fortuna

[Bk II:111-149](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#). Goddess of fortune, chance, fate. Her attributes are the wheel, the globe, the ship's rudder and prow, and the cornucopia. She is sometimes winged, and blindfolded. (See Leonardo's drawings.)

Furies

See [Erinys](#) and [Eumenides](#).

Galanthis

[Bk IX:273-323](#). Handmaid to [Alcmena](#). She deceives [Lucina](#) the goddess of childbirth, and is punished by being turned into a weasel, with the same tawny hair. (Weasels in England are reddish-brown. Ovid says 'flava comus' which suggests reddish-yellow. The birth of its young through its mouth has, of course, no biological validity, but Graves suggests it derives from the weasel's habit of carrying its young in its mouth from place to place!)

Galatea

A sea nymph, daughter of [Nereus](#) and [Doris](#). (See the fresco 'Galatea' by Raphael, Rome, Farnesina)

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). She tells her story to [Scylla](#). Loving [Acis](#), she is pursued by [Polyphemus](#).

[Bk XIII:789-869](#). She hears [Polyphemus](#)'s complaint.

[Bk XIII:870-897](#). When [Acis](#) is crushed by the rock, thrown at him by Polyphemus, she changes Acis into his ancestral form of a river.

[Bk XIII:898-968](#). She ends her story to [Scylla](#) and departs.

Ganges

[Bk II:227-271](#). [Bk IV:1-30](#). [Bk V:30-73](#). The sacred river of northern India.

[Bk VI:619-652](#). The area along its banks is inhabited by tigers.

Ganymedes

The son of Tros, brother of [Ilus](#) and [Assaracus](#), loved by [Jupiter](#) because of his great beauty.

[Bk X:143-219](#). [Bk XI:749-795](#). Jupiter, in the form of an eagle, abducted him and made him his cup-bearer, against [Juno](#)'s will. Ganymede's name was given to the largest moon of the planet Jupiter.

Gargaphie

[Bk III:138-164](#). A valley and sacred spring in [Boeotia](#) sacred to [Diana](#), where [Actaeon](#) sees her bathing.

Gaul, Gallicus

[Bk I:525-552](#). The Roman province, in the region of modern France.

Geryon

[Bk IX:159-210](#). The monster with three bodies, killed by [Hercules](#). In the Tenth Labour, Hercules brought back Geryon's famous herd of cattle after shooting three arrows through the three bodies. Geryon was the son of [Chrysaor](#) and [Callirhoë](#), and King of Tartessus in Spain.

Gigantes, The Giants

[Bk I:151-176](#). [Bk I:177-198](#). [Bk X:143-219](#). Monsters, sons of [Tartarus](#) and Earth, with

many arms and serpent feet, who made war on the gods by piling up the mountains, and overthrown by [Jupiter](#). They were buried under [Sicily](#).

[Bk X:143-219](#). [Orpheus](#) sang their war with the gods.

Glaucus

[Bk VII:179-233](#). A fisherman of [Anthedon](#) in [Boeotia](#).

[Bk XIII:898-968](#). He is transformed into a sea god, and tells the story of his transformation to [Scylla](#) who rejects him.

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). He asks [Circe](#) for a charm to make Scylla love him, but she transforms Scylla into a sea-monster instead.

Gorge

The daughter of [Oeneus](#), king of [Calydon](#), sister of [Meleager](#).

[Bk VIII:515-546](#). She is spared by [Diana](#) from being turned into a bird.

Gorgo, Medusa

The best known of the Three Gorgons, the daughters of Phorcys. A winged monster with snake locks, glaring eyes and brazen claws whose gaze turns men to stone. Her sisters were Stheino and Euryale.

Bk IV:604-662, Bk IV:663-705. Perseus has been helped by Athene and Hermes to overcome Medusa. He was not to look at her head directly but only in a brightly-polished shield. He cut off her head with an adamantine sickle, at which Pegasus the winged horse and the warrior Chrysaor sprang from her body. He now uses her head to petrify Atlas, and tells Cepheus and Cassiope of the exploit.

Bk IV:753-803. Perseus tells of how he took her severed head, and of how Minerva placed snakes on her head, because Medusa was violated by Neptune in Minerva's temple.

Bk V:149-199 . Perseus uses the head against his enemies.

Gortyniacus

Bk VII:759-795. From Gortyn in Crete, hence Cretan. Its bows noted for the swiftness of the arrow in flight.

Gradivus

Bk VI:401-438. Bk XIV:805-828. An epithet of Mars.

Bk XV:843-870. Mars, the father of Romulus (Quirinus).

Graeae

The three daughters of Ceto and Phorcys, sisters of the Gorgons, fair-faced and swanlike but with hair grey from birth and one eye and one tooth between them. Their names were Deino, Enyo and Pempredo.

Bk IV:753-803. Perseus visits them in their cave under Mount Atlas and steals the single eye.

Graecia, Greece

Bk XIII:123-381. The country in southern Europe, bordering on the Ionian, Cretan and Aegean Seas.

Graïus

Bk XV:622-745 et.al. Grecian.

Granicus

Bk XI:749-795. A river and river god of Asia Minor, father of Alexiroë. Site of a famous victory of Alexander the Great.

Gratiae, The Graces

The three sisters, daughters of Jupiter and Eurynome, attendants to Venus, used collectively, Gratia. Often depicted with arms entwined in dance (See Botticelli's 'Primavera') their names were Aglaia, Euphrosyne, and Thalia. They signified *giving*, *receiving*, and *thanking*, later the Platonic triad, *love, beauty, truth*.

Bk VI:401-438. Attendant on wedding ceremonies.

Gryneus

Bk XII:245-289. A centaur. He kills Broteas, and Orios the son of Mycale. He is killed by Exadius at the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs.

Gyarus

Bk V:250-293. An island of the Cyclades.

Bk VII:453-500. Not allied to Crete.

Hades

Bk IV:416-465. The underworld, the kingdom of Dis.

Haedi

Bk XIV:698-771. The Kids, two stars in Auriga the Charioteer, treated as a constellation by the ancients. See Erichthonius.

Haemonia

Bk I: 568-587. Bk V:294-331. The ancient name for Thessaly.

Bk II:63-89. Used as an adjective for the constellation Sagittarius the Archer, the zodiacal sign formed when the Thessalian centaur Chiron was placed among the stars by Zeus.

Bk VII:159-178. The parents of the Argonauts are Haemonians.

Bk VIII:777-842. The land of Erysichthon.

Bk XI:221-265. Thetis's cave is on its shores.

Bk XI:346-409. The land of Acastus, king of Iolchos.

Bk XI:650-709. Trachin in Haemonia.

Bk XII:210-244. The country of Caeneus and Pirithoüs.

Haemonius

Thessalian, from Haemonia.

Bk VII:100-158. Used of Jason.

Bk XII:64-145. Used of Achilles.

Haemus

Bk II:201-226. A mountain in Thrace.

Bk VI:70-102. Supposed to be a mortal turned into a mountain for assuming the name of a great god.

Bk X:1-85. Orpheus flees there after losing Eurydice a second time.

Halcyoneus

Bk V:107-148. A companion of Phineus from Bactria, killed by Perseus.

Halesus

Bk XII:429-535. One of the Lapithae.

Halius

Bk XIII:123-381. A Lycian, killed by Ulysses.

Hamadryas

Bk I:689-722. A wood nymph.

Hammon

See [Ammon](#).

Harmonia, Harmony

[Bk III:115-137](#). The wife of [Cadmus](#) and daughter of [Mars](#) and [Venus](#).

[Bk IV:563-603](#). She is turned with him into a snake.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). At her marriage to Cadmus, [Venus](#) gave her the fatal necklace that conferred irresistible beauty.

Harpies

[Bk VII:1-73](#). The ‘snatchers’, Aellopus and Ocypete, the fair-haired, loathsome, winged daughters of Thaumias and the ocean nymph Electra, who snatch up criminals for punishment by the [Furies](#). They live in a cave in Cretan Dicte. They plagued [Phineus](#) of Salmydessus, the blind prophet, and were chased away by the winged sons of [Boreas](#).

Bk XIII:705-737. An alternative myth has Phineus drive them away to the Strophades where Ovid has Aeneas meet the harpy Aëlo, and Virgil, Celaeno. They are foul-bellied birds with girls' faces, and clawed hands, and their faces are pale with hunger. (See Virgil Aeneid III:190-220)

Harpocrates

Bk IX:666-713. The infant Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris. The Egyptian god, misinterpreted as a god of silence by the Greeks, as he is represented sitting on his mother's lap with his thumb in his mouth.

Hebe

The daughter of Iuno, born without a father.

Bk IX:394-417. She is the wife of Hercules after his deification, and has the power to renew life.

Hebrus

[Bk II:227-271](#). [Bk XI:1-66](#). The river in [Thrace](#) down which [Orpheus](#)'s head was washed to the sea.

Hecate

The daughter of the Titans Perses and [Asterie](#), [Latona](#)'s sister. A [Thracian](#) goddess of witches, her name is a feminine form of [Apollo](#)'s title '*the far-darter*'. She was a lunar goddess, with shining [Titans](#) for parents. In [Hades](#) she was Prytania of the dead, or the Invincible Queen. She gave riches, wisdom, and victory, and presided over flocks and navigation. She had three bodies and three heads, those of a lioness, a bitch, and a mare. Her ancient power was to give to or withhold from mortals any gift. She was sometimes merged with the lunar aspect of [Diana](#)-Artemis, and presided over purifications and expiations. She was the goddess of enchantments and magic charms, and sent demons to earth to torture mortals. At night she appeared with her retinue of infernal dogs,

haunting crossroads (as [Trivia](#)), tombs and the scenes of crimes. At crossroads her columns or statues had three faces – the Triple Hecates – and offerings were made at the full moon to propitiate her.

[Bk VI:129-145](#). Goddess of magical herbs, used by [Minerva](#).

[Bk VII:74-99](#). [Medea](#) the Thracian witch makes [Jason](#) promise to marry her, taking his oath on the altar of Hecate, and gives him magic herbs to carry out his tasks.

[Bk VII:159-178](#). Medea invokes her aid in her attempt to renew [Aeson](#)'s life.

[Bk VII:179-233](#). Goddess of witchcraft.

[Bk VII:234-293](#). [Medea](#) sacrifices to her.

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). [Bk XIV:397-434](#). [Circe](#) invokes her spells and her presence.

Hector

[Bk XI:749-795](#). The [Trojan](#) hero, son of [Priam](#) and [Hecuba](#).

[Bk XII:1-38](#). Sacrifices at the empty tomb of [Aesacus](#) his half-brother.

[Bk XII:64-145](#). He killed [Protesilaüs](#), the first Greek to fall in the [Trojan](#) War. His own fate is delayed till the end of the war.

[Bk XII:429-535](#). [Nestor](#) compares himself in his prime with Hector.

[Bk XII:536-579](#). Nestor cites him as a famous enemy of the Greeks.

[Bk XII:579-628](#). [Neptune](#) reminds [Apollo](#) of Hector's body dragged around the walls of [Troy](#).

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). He torched the Greek ships, and terrifies the Greeks in battle, bringing the gods with him to the battlefield.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). He promised [Dolon](#) the horses of [Achilles](#).

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). [Hecuba](#) takes his ashes with her from Troy. His son [Astyanax](#) is murdered as the city falls.

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). The agony of his mother Hecuba.

Bk XIII:640-674. His presence had allowed Troy to hold out for so long.

Hecuba

The daughter of Dymas, and wife of Priam, king of Troy.

Bk VII:350-403. Bk XIII:399-428. Changed to a black bitch of Hecate, Maera, and spreading terror with her barking.

Bk XI:749-795. The mother of Hector.

Bk XIII:399-428. She gathers Hectors's ashes as Ulysses takes her away from Troy.

Bk XIII:429-480. She sees her daughter Polyxena sacrificed to appease the ghost of Achilles.

Bk XIII:481-575. She laments Polyxena, finds and laments the body of Polydorus, kills Polymestor, and turns into the maddened dog, Maera. Here undeserved fate is pitied by the Trojan women, the Greeks, and all the gods, even Juno (who sought the downfall of Troy).

Bk XIII:576-622. Only Aurora's thoughts are elsewhere.

Helena, Helen

The daughter of [Leda](#) and [Jupiter](#) (Tyndareus was her putative father), sister of [Clytemnaestra](#), and the [Dioscuri](#). The wife of [Menelaüs](#).

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). She was taken, by [Paris](#), to [Troy](#), instigating the Trojan War. [Ulysses](#) and [Menelaüs](#) demanded her return in front of the Trojan senate.

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). Noted for her many suitors.

[Bk XV:199-236](#). She bemoans old age, and the ravages of time.

Helenus

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). The son of [Priam](#), an augur, captured by [Ulysses](#) and [Diomedes](#) along with [Pallas](#)'s sacred image, the [Palladium](#).

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). [Aeneas](#) visits him at [Buthrotos](#) in [Epirus](#) where he has built a second [Troy](#), and Helenus foretells his future.

Bk XV:418-452. He prophesied Aeneas's future, and that of Rome.

Heliades, The Heliads

Bk II:329-343. The seven daughters of the Sun god and Clymene.

Bk II 344-346. They mourn their brother Phaethon. Two of them are named. Lampetia and the eldest Phaethüsa. Turned into poplars as they mourn Phaethon their brother, their tears become drops of amber.

Bk X:86-105. The trees are among those gathering to hear Orpheus's song.

Bk X:243-297. They shed amber tears, and amber adorns Pygmalion's ivory statue.

Helice(1)

Bk XV:259-306. A seaport of Achaea, near Aigion, on the Corinthian Gulf now submerged after an earthquake. Pausanias gives the background. (See Pausanias VII 24)

Helice(2)

A name for the constellation of the Great Bear, [Ursa Major](#).

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). [Icarus](#) is warned not to fly too near the constellation.

Helices

[Bk V:74-106](#). A companion of [Phineus](#), killed by [Perseus](#).

Helicon

[Bk II:201-226](#). The mountain in [Boeotia](#) near the Gulf of [Corinth](#) where the [Muses](#) lived. The sacred springs of Helicon were [Aganippe](#) and [Hippocrene](#), both giving poetic inspiration. The Muses' other favourite haunt was Mount [Parnassus](#) in [Phocis](#) with its [Castalian](#) Spring. They also guarded the oracle at [Delphi](#).

[Bk V:250-293](#). [Minerva](#) visits it to see the fountain of Hippocrene sprung from under the hoof of [Pegasus](#), the winged horse.

[Bk V:642-678](#). A haunt of the Muses.

Bk VIII:515-546. The domain of poetic genius.

Helle

Bk XI:194-220. The daughter of Athamas and Nephele, sister of Phrixus. Escaping from Ino on the golden ram, she fell into the sea and was drowned, giving her name to the Hellespont.

Hellespont, Hellespontus.

The straits that link the Propontis with the Aegean Sea.

Bk XI:194-220. Named after Helle, and close to the site of Troy.

Bk XIII:399-428. The scene of Hecuba's appearance as the black bitch Maera.

Helops

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Hennaeus

[Bk V:385-424](#). Of Henna (Enna) a town in Sicily. The plains around it.

Herculaneum

[Bk XV:622-745](#). The Roman town near Naples on the slopes of Vesuvius, destroyed with Pompeii by the eruption of 79AD and rediscovered in 1709. It was a residential town surrounded by the villas of wealthy Romans, with a rich artistic life.

Hercules, Heracles

The Hero, son of [Jupiter](#). He was set in the sky as the constellation Hercules between Lyra and Corona Borealis.

[Bk VII:404-424](#). He drags the dog [Cerberus](#) out of the underworld.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). The son of Jupiter and [Alcmena](#), the wife of [Amphitryon](#). Called [Alcides](#) from Amphitryon's father Alceus. Called also [Amphitryoniades](#). Called also [Tyrrhinus](#) from

Tiryns his home city in the [Argolis](#). Jupiter predicted at his birth that a scion of [Perseus](#) would be born, greater than all other descendants. [Juno](#) delayed Hercules birth and hastened that of [Eurystheus](#), grandson of Perseus, making Hercules subservient to him. Hercules was set twelve labours by Eurystheus at Juno's instigation, [Bk IX:159-210](#):

1. The killing of the [Nemean](#) lion.
2. The destruction of the [Lernean Hydra](#). - [Bk IX:1-88](#). He uses the poison from the Hydra for his arrows - [Bk IX:89-158](#).
3. The capture of the stag with golden antlers.
4. The capture of the [Erymanthian](#) Boar.
5. The cleansing of the stables of Augeas king of [Elis](#).
6. The killing of the birds of the [Stymphalian](#) Lake in [Arcadia](#).
7. The capture of the [Cretan](#) wild bull.
8. The capture of the mares of Diomedes of [Thrace](#), that ate human flesh.

9. The taking of the girdle of [Hippolyte](#), Queen of the [Amazons](#).

10. The killing of [Geryon](#) and the capture of his oxen.

11. The securing of the apples from the Garden of the [Hesperides](#). He held up the sky for [Atlas](#) in order to deceive him and obtain them.

12. The bringing of the dog [Cerberus](#) from [Hades](#) to the upper world.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). He fights with [Acheloüs](#) for the hand of [Deianira](#).

[Bk IX:89-158](#). [Bk XII:290-326](#). He marries Deianira, kills [Nessus](#), falls in love with [Iole](#), daughter of [Eurytus](#) who has cheated him, and receives the shirt of Nessus from the outraged Deianira. (See Cavalli's opera with Lully's dances – Ercole Amante)

[Bk IX:159-210](#). He is tormented by the shirt of Nessus.

(See T.S. Eliot's The Four Quartets – Little Gidding:

'Who then devised the torment? Love.

Love is the unfamiliar Name
Behind the hands that wove
The intolerable shirt of flame
Which human power cannot remove.

We only live, only suspire
Consumed by either fire or fire')

Bk IX:159-210. He also killed Busiris, King of Egypt brother of Antaeus, who sacrificed strangers at the altars, to fulfil a prophecy that an eight-year drought and famine would end if he did so.

Bk IX:159-210. He killed King Antaeus of Libya, brother of Busiris, who was a giant, child of mother Earth, by lifting him from the ground that gave him strength, and, cracking his ribs, held him up until he died.

Bk IX:159-210. He fought the Centaurs.

Bk IX:159-210. Tormented by the shirt of Nessus he rages among the mountains.

Bk IX:211-272. He kills the servant Lichas who brought the fatal shirt, then builds a funeral pyre, and becomes a constellation and is

deified. (See Canova's sculpture – Hercules and Lichas – Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Rome)

[Bk IX:273-323](#). He had asked his son [Hyllus](#), by [Deianira](#) to marry [Iole](#). His birth is described when the sun is in the tenth sign, Capricorn, i.e. at midwinter, making him a solar god. His mother's seven night labour would also make his birth at the new year, a week after the winter solstice.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). His nephew and companion is [Iolaüs](#).

[Bk XI:194-220](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#). He captured Troy and rescued [Hesione](#), with the help of [Telamon](#), and gave her to Telamon in marriage.

[Bk XI:573-649](#). He is hero of the city of [Trachin](#).

[Bk XII:536-579](#). [Tlepolemus](#) is his son. Hercules exploits are retold by [Nestor](#).

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Philoctetes](#) received his bow and arrows after his death, destined to be needed at [Troy](#).

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). [Ulysses](#) goes to fetch Philoctetes and the arrows.

[Bk XV:199-236](#). He is a symbol of strength.

[Bk XV:259-306](#). He shot the centaur Pylonor with a poisoned arrow.

Hermaphroditus

[Bk IV:274-316](#). The son of [Mercury](#) and [Venus](#), loved by [Salmacis](#).

[Bk IV:346-388](#). Salmacis dives into the pool to pursue him, and is merged with him, and he prays for the waters of the pool to weaken anyone who bathes there.

Herse

[Bk II:531-565](#). One of the three daughters of King [Cecrops](#).

[Bk II:708-736](#). The most beautiful of the [Athenian](#) virgins and admired by [Mercury](#).

Hersilia

[Bk XIV:829-851](#). The wife of [Romulus](#), deified as [Hora](#).

Hesione

A daughter of [Laomedon](#), exposed to a sea monster at [Neptune](#)'s command.

[Bk IX:211-272](#). [Hercules](#) rescued her when passing by [Troy](#).

[Bk XI:194-220](#). She was given in marriage to [Telamon](#).

Hesperides

[Bk XI:85-145](#). The three nymphs who tended the garden with the golden apples on a western island beyond Mount [Atlas](#). Their names were Hespere, Aegle, and Erytheis, the daughters of Night, or of Atlas and Hesperis, the daughter of [Hesperus](#).

[Bk IV:604-662](#). The orchard of Atlas described.

[Bk IX:159-210](#). In the Eleventh Labour, [Hercules](#) obtains the golden apples by deceiving [Atlas](#).

Hesperie

[Bk XI:749-795](#). A nymph, daughter of the river god [Cebren](#), loved by [Aesacus](#). She runs from him, and is killed by the bite of a snake.

Hesperus

[Bk II:111-149](#). [Bk IV:604-662](#). [Bk V:425-486](#). The evening star (the planet Venus). It sets after the sun.

Hiberus

[Bk VII:294-349](#). Hiberian, Spanish. Used to denote the oceans of the west, where the sun sets.

[Bk XV:1-59](#). Hercules returns from there with the herds of Geryon.

Hippalmus

The correct reading for [Eupalamas](#).

Hippasus(1)

Son of [Eurytus](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk VIII:329-375](#). His thigh is ripped open by the boar's tusk.

Hippasus(2)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Hippocoön

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). King of [Amyclae](#), father of [Enaesimus](#), and others of his sons who were at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk VIII:329-375](#). Enaesimus is killed by the boar.

Hippocrene

[Bk V:250-293](#). A famous spring on Mount [Helicon](#), sacred to the [Muses](#).

Hippodamas

Bk VIII:547-610. The father of Perimele.

Hippodame, Hippodamia

The daughter of Adrastus, and wife of Pirithoüs.

Bk XII:210-244. Bk XIV:623-697. Eurytus attempts to carry her off at her wedding and precipitates the battle between Lapiths and Centaurs.

Hippolyte

Queen of the Amazons, warrior maidens living near the Rivers Tanaïs and Thermodon in Scythia, based on Greek knowledge of the Scythian princesses of the Sarmatian people of the Black Sea region. Burials of warrior princesses have been excavated from the tumuli of the area around Rostov, and north west of the Sea of Azov. See Herodotus IV 110-117, for the Amazons and Scythians.

Bk IX:159-210. In the Ninth Labour, Hercules obtained the golden girdle of Hippolyte.

Hippolytus

Bk XV:479-546. The son of Theseus and the Amazon Hippolyte. He was admired by Phaedra, his step-mother, and was killed at Troezen, after meeting ‘a bull from the sea’. He was brought to life again by Aesculapius, and hidden by Diana (Cynthia, the moon-goddess) who set him down in the sacred grove at Arician Nemi, where he became Virbius, the consort of the goddess (as Adonis was of Venus, and Attis of Cybele), and the King of the Wood (*Rex Nemorensis*). All this is retold and developed in Frazer’s monumental work, on magic and religion, ‘The Golden Bough’ (see Chapter I et seq.). (See also Euripides’s play ‘Hippolytos’, and Racine’s ‘Phaedra’.)

Hippomenes

The son of [Megareus](#). Great-grandson of [Neptune](#).

[Bk X:560-637](#). Falling in love with [Atalanta](#), he determines to race against her, on penalty of death for failure.

[Bk X:638-680](#). By means of the golden apples he wins the race and claims Atalanta.

[Bk X:681-707](#). He desecrates [Cybele](#)'s sacred cave with the sexual act and is turned, with Atalanta, into a lion.

Hippotades

[Bk XI:410-473](#). [Bk XIV:75-100](#). [Bk XIV:223-319](#).

[Bk XV:622-745](#). [Aeolus](#), as son of Hippotas.

Hippothis

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Hister, Danube

[Bk II:227-271](#). The Lower Danube running to the Black Sea.

Hodites(1)

[Bk V:74-106](#). An [Ethiopian](#) in the court of [Cepheus](#), the most senior next to the king, killed by [Clymenus](#) a follower of [Phineus](#).

Hodites(2)

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Hora

[Bk XIV:829-851](#). The name given to [Hersilia](#) after her deification and reunion with [Romulus](#).

Horae

[Bk II:1-30](#). The Hours, attendants of the [Sun](#).

[Bk II:111-149](#). Yoke up the Sun-god's horses to his chariot.

Hyacinthia

[Bk X:143-219](#). A festival in honour of [Hyacinthus](#), at [Amyclae](#).

Hyacinthus

Son of Amyclas, king of [Amyclae](#), hence he is called [Amyclides](#).

[Bk X:143-219](#). His home was Amyclae, in [Taenarus](#), near [Sparta](#). Loved by [Phoebus](#), he was killed by a discus while they were competing. Phoebus turned him into a hyacinth (the blue larkspur, *hyacinthos grapta*) that has the marks AI AI (woe! woe!) of early Greek letters on the base of its petals, and was sacred to [Cretan](#) Hyacinthus. Later it was linked to [Ajax](#). Sparta celebrated the [Hyacinthia](#) festival in his honour.

[Bk XIII:382-398](#). He shares the flower with Ajax whose name has similar markings, ΑΙΑΣ.

Hyades

Bk III:572-596. The daughters of Atlas and Aethra, half-sisters of the Pleiades. They lived on Mount Nysa and nurtured the infant Bacchus. The Hyades are the star-cluster forming the 'face' of the constellation Taurus the Bull. The cluster is used as the first step in the distance scale of the galaxy.

Bk XIII:123-381. The stars are engraved on Achilles's shield.

Hyale

Bk III:165-205. One of Diana's nymphs.

Hyantëus, Hyantius

Bk III:138-164. Boeotian, applied to Actaeon.

Bk V:294-331. Applied to the Heliconian fountain of Aganippe.

Bk VIII:260-328. Home of Iolaüs, present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Hydra

[Bk II:633-675](#). The many-headed water-serpent, born of Typhon and [Echidna](#), that lived at [Lerna](#) near [Argos](#). Its destruction was the Second Labour of [Hercules](#)(Heracles).

[Bk IX:159-210](#).Hercules used the Hydra's venom to tip his poisoned arrows, and struck [Chiron](#) his old friend inadvertently while fighting the [Centaur](#)s (The Fourth Labour). Chiron was in agony but could not die. [Prometheus](#) offered to die in his place. Zeus approved and Chiron was able to choose death.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). Hercules describes his fight with the Hydra while taunting [Acheloüs](#). (See Gustave Moreau's painting – Hercules and the Lernean Hydra – in the Art Institute of Chicago)

[Bk IX:89-158](#). The shirt of [Nessus](#) is soaked with its venom.

Hyles

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Hyleus

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Hyleüs

[Bk XIII:675-704](#). From Hyle, a town in [Boeotia](#). The home town of [Alcon](#) the engraver.

Hyllus

[Bk IX:273-323](#). The son of [Hercules](#) and [Deianira](#). Hercules has him marry [Iole](#).

Hylonome

[Bk XII:393-428](#). A female centaur, loved by [Cyllarus](#). Inseparable in life, they died together, she killing herself to join him.

Hymen, Hymenaeus

[Bk I: 473-503](#). [Bk IV:753-803](#). [Bk VI:401-438](#).

God of marriage.

[Bk IX:764-797](#). He attends the wedding with [Venus](#), the goddess of love, and [Juno](#), the goddess of brides.

[Bk X:1-85](#). He attends the wedding of [Orpheus](#) and [Eurydice](#) but fails to bring his usual blessings.

Hymettus, Hymettos

A mountain in [Attica](#) south of [Athens](#). It was famous for its wild-flower pasture for bees (See Pausanias I 32 i.) and had a shrine and statue of Zeus of Rain and Far-seeing. (The long Hymettos ridge bounds the plain of Attica on the east, made up of bluish-grey Hymettian marble overlying Pentelic marble, which was worked in ancient times. The hills were then heavily forested.)

[Bk VII:661-758](#). [Aurora](#) sees [Cephalus](#) from there.

[Bk X:243-297](#). Its bees' wax is used for moulding casts for statues etc.

Hypaepae

[Bk VI:1-25](#) A town in [Lydia](#). The home of [Arachne](#).

[Bk XI:146-171](#). It is overlooked by Mount [Tmolus](#).

Hypanis

[Bk XV:259-306](#). A river in Sarmatia. A main tributary of the Dnieper. The waters are sweet in their higher reaches, but are joined by a bitter stream flowing out of [Scythia](#). See Herodotus IV 52.

Hyperboreüs, Hyperborean

[Bk XV:307-360](#). Belonging to the extreme north. The Hyperboreans, a mythical people living beyond the north wind. They cover their bodies with feathers by plunging nine times in [Minerva](#)'s pool. Herodotus has some interesting

chapters on the Hyperboreans in IV 32-36. In 31 he speculates on the confusion of feathers with snowflakes. (See also Robert Graves 'The White Goddess' p.284)

Hyperion(1)

[Bk IV:214-255](#). A Titan, the son of Coelus and Terra, and father of the [sun-god](#).

Hyperion(2)

The Sun god himself. Heliopolis in Egypt, Hyperion's city.

[Bk VIII:547-610](#). The sun.

[Bk XV:391-417](#). The sun-god at Heliopolis, to which the phoenix flies.

Hypseus

[Bk V:74-106](#). A companion of [Phineus](#) killed by [Lyncides](#).

Hypsipyle

The daughter of [Thoas](#), king of [Lemnos](#).

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). [Ulysses](#) sails for the island to bring back the arrows of Hercules. [Thoas](#) was king there when the Lemnian women murdered their menfolk because of their adultery with [Thracian](#) girls. His life was spared because his daughter Hypsipyle set him adrift in an oarless boat.

Hyrie

[Bk VII:350-403](#). A lake and the town near it in [Boeotia](#), named from the mother of [Cycnus\(2\)](#) by [Apollo](#). She turns into a lake weeping for her son, whom she thinks dead.

Iacchus

[Bk IV:1-30](#). A name for [Bacchus](#) from the shouts of his worshippers.

Ialysius

Bk VII:350-403. Of Ialysos, a city on the north eastern coast of the island of Rhodes.

Ianthe

Bk IX:714-763. The daughter of Telestes of Dicte, who is loved by Iphis, a girl reared as a boy, and betrothed to her.

Bk IX:764-797. Iphis is transformed into a boy by Isis, and marries her.

Ianus

The Roman two-headed god of doorways and beginnings, equivalent to the Hindu elephant god Ganesh. The Janus mask is often depicted with one melancholy and one smiling face.

Bk XIV:320-396. The father of Canens.

Bk XIV:772-804. The naiades have a spring by his (later) temple.

Iapetionides

Bk IV:604-662. Atlas, the son of Iapetus.

Iapetus

[Bk I:68-88](#). [Bk IV:604-662](#). A [Titan](#), father of [Prometheus](#), [Atlas](#) and [Epimetheus](#).

Iapygia

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). [Bk XIV:483-511](#). [Bk XV:1-59](#).

[Bk XV:622-745](#). The region in the heel of Italy. Apulia. Its king was [Daunus](#). Named after [Iapyx](#).

Iapyx

[Bk XV:1-59](#). A son of [Daedalus](#), who ruled in Apulia in southern Italy.

Iasion

Son of [Jupiter](#) and Corythus's wife Electra.

[Bk IX:418-438](#). [Ceres](#) fell in love with him and lay with him in the thrice-ploughed field. She wishes she could obtain a renewal of his youth.

Iason, Jason

The son of [Aeson](#), leader of the Argonauts, and hero of the adventure of the Golden Fleece. The fleece is represented in the sky by the constellation and zodiacal sign of Aries, the Ram. In ancient times it contained the point of the vernal equinox (The First Point of Aries) that has since moved by precession into [Pisces](#).

[Bk VII:1-73](#). Reaches [Colchis](#) and the court of King [Aeetes](#).

[Bk VII:74-99](#). Accepts [Medea](#)'s help and promises her marriage.

[Bk VII:100-158](#). Completes the tasks and wins the Golden Fleece, and marries Medea, before returning to [Iolchos](#).

[Bk VII:159-178](#). He asks Medea to lengthen his father's life.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). He acquires the throne of [Corinth](#), and marries a new bride Glauce. Medea in revenge for his disloyalty to her sends Glauce a wedding gift of a golden crown and white robe, that burst into flames when she puts

them on, and consume her and the palace. Medea then kills her own sons by Jason, and flees his wrath.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk VIII:329-375](#). He throws his spear at the boar, but overshoots.

[Bk VIII:376-424](#). He wounds a hound by accident.

Icarus(1)

[Bk VIII:183-235](#).The son of [Daedalus](#) for whom his father fashioned wings of wax and feathers like his own in order to escape from [Crete](#). Flying too near the sun, despite being warned, the wax melts and he drowns in the Icarian Sea, and is buried on the island of Icaria. (See W H Auden's poem 'Musée des Beaux Arts' referring to Brueghel's painting, Icarus, in Brussels)

Icarus(2), =Icarius

Bk X:431-502. The father of Erigone.

Icelos

The son of Somnus (Sleep), and a god of dreams.

Bk XI:573-649. He takes the shape of creatures.

Ida

Bk II:201-226. One Mount Ida is near Troy. There is a second Mount Ida on Crete.

Bk IV:274-316. Hermaphroditus is raised there.

Bk VII:350-403. Liber hides his son's theft of a bullock by changing the animal to a stag.

Bk X:1-85. Olenus and Lethaea are turned to stones there.

Bk XI:749-795. Birthplace of Trojan Aesacus.

Bk XII:429-535. The scene of Nestor's tale at Troy.

Bk XIII:1-122. The mountain near Troy.

Bk XIV:527-565. Trojan Ida is sacred to Cybele. Aeneas's ship timbers were felled there.

Idalia

Bk XIV:623-697. An epithet of Venus from Mount Idalium, her sacred mountain in Cyprus.

Idas(1)

Proles Aphareïa. A son of Aphareus, king of Messene.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Idas(2)

Bk V:74-106. A courtier of Cepheus, killed by Phineus, though a neutral in the fight with Perseus.

Idas(3)

Bk XIV:483-511. A companion of Diomedes. Venus transforms him into a bird.

Idmon

[BkVI:1-25](#). [Bk VI:129-145](#). Of [Colophon](#), the father of [Arachne](#).

Idomeneus

King of [Crete](#), leader of the Cretan contingent fighting against [Troy](#).

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). He does not compete for the arms of [Achilles](#).

Iliades(1)

[Bk X:143-219](#). An epithet of [Ganymedes](#), son of Tros. Trojan.

Iliades(2)

[Bk XIV:772-804](#). [Bk XIV:805-828](#). An epithet of [Romulus](#), as son of Ilia.

Ilion, Ilium, Troy

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). [Bk XIII:399-428](#). [Bk XIV:445-482](#). See [Troia](#).

Bk XIII:481-575. Hecuba mourns the end of Troy.

Ilioneus

Bk VI:204-266. One of Niobe's seven sons killed by Apollo and Diana.

Ilithyia

Bk IX:273-323. The Greek goddess of childbirth, corresponding to Lucina who was an aspect of Juno, as the Great Goddess.

Illyricus

Of Illyria (Illyris), a country on the Adriatic, north of Epirus.

Bk IV:563-603. The country where Cadmus and Harmonia are turned into serpents.

Ilus

Bk XI:749-795. The son of Tros, builder of Troy (Ilium). The father of Laomedon.

Imbreus

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Inachides

A male descendant of Inachus.

Bk IV:706-752. Perseus as deriving from the royal line of Argos.

Inachis

Bk IX:666-713. Io, the daughter of Inachus, worshipped as a manifestation of Isis, the Egyptian goddess.

Inachus

Bk I:568-587. A river in Argolis. The river-god, father of Io (Inachis).

Inarime

[Bk XIV:75-100](#). An island off the coast of Campania (Southern Italy).

Indiges

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). The name under which the deified [Aeneas](#) was worshipped (the national deity).

Indigetes

[Bk XV:843-870](#). Deified heroes, worshipped as deities of their native countries.

Indus

[Bk I:765-779](#). [Bk V:30-73](#). [Bk VIII:260-328](#).
[Bk XI:146-171](#) Of India.

Ino

[Bk III:273-315](#). The daughter of [Cadmus](#), wife of [Athamas](#), and sister of [Semele](#) and [Agave](#). She fosters the infant [Bacchus](#).

Bk III:692-733. She participates in the killing of Pentheus.

Bk IV:416-463. She incurs the hatred of Juno.

Bk IV:512-542. Maddened by Tisiphone, and the death of her son Learchus, at the hand of his father, she leaps into the sea, and is changed to the sea-goddess Leucothoë by Neptune, at Venus's request.

Io

Bk I:587-600. Daughter of Inachus a river-god of Argolis, chased and raped by Jupiter.

Bk I:601-621. Changed to a heifer by Jupiter and conceded as a gift to Juno.

Bk I:622-641. Guarded by hundred-eyed Argus.

Bk I:722-746. After Mercury kills Argus, and driven by Juno's fury Io has reached the Nile, she is returned to human form.

Bk I:747-764. With her son Epaphus she is worshipped in Egypt as a goddess. Io is therefore synonymous with Isis (or Hathor the cow-headed goddess with whom she was often confused), and Epaphus with Horus.

Bk IX:666-713. Worshipped in Crete as a manifestation of Isis.

Iolaüs

The son of Iphicles, nephew and companion of Hercules.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk IX:394-417. He is returned to life by Hebe. (He is the grandson of Alcmene, since his father Iphicles is her son by Amphitryon, and Hercules mortal half-brother, the twin or *tanist* of the sun-god. Iolaüs's renewal and appearance at the threshold may indicate his cult as a representative of the risen sun of the new year. His cult was celebrated in Sardinia where he was linked to Daedalus.)

Bk IX:418-438. Jupiter explains that this is through the power of fate as well.

Iolchos, Iolciacus

A seaport town in [Thessaly](#) from which the [Argonauts](#) sailed.

[Bk VII:100-158](#). They return there with [Medea](#) and the Golden Fleece.

Iole

[Bk IX:89-158](#). The daughter of [Eurytus](#), king of [Oechalia](#), whom [Hercules](#) was enamoured of.

[Bk IX:273-323](#). Hercules asks his son [Hyllus](#), by [Deianira](#), to marry her.

[Bk IX:324-393](#). She tells her mother-in-law [Alcmena](#) the story of her half-sister [Dryope](#).

[Bk IX:394-417](#). She weeps for Dryope and is comforted by Alcmena.

Ionia

The region of ancient Greek territory bordering the Eastern [Aegean](#), containing [Lydia](#) and [Caria](#) and the islands of Samos and [Chios](#).

Ionium, aequor, mare

The Ionian Sea, west of the Greek mainland.

Bk IV:512-542. Ino leaps into its waters.

Bk XV:1-59. Myscelus sails it.

Bk XV:622-745. Aesculapius crosses it to Italy.

Iphigenia

The daughter of Agamemnon, king of Mycenae, and Clytaemnestra. She is called Mycenis.

Bk XII:1-38. Bk XIII:123-381. She is sacrificed by her father at Aulis, to gain favourable winds for the passage to Troy but snatched away by Diana. (to Tauris)

Iphinoüs

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Iphis(1)

Bk IX:666-713. Daughter of Ligdus, a Cretan and his wife Telethusa. Her mother is visited by a prophetic dream of Isis before her birth. She

is named after the grandfather, the father being deceived into believing she is a boy.

Bk IX:714-763. She laments her inability to consummate her passion for Ianthe whom she loves.

Bk IX:764-797. She is transformed into a boy, by Isis, and marries Ianthe.

Iphis(2)

A youth of Cyprus who loved Anaxarete.

Bk XIV:698-771. He commits suicide when she disdains him.

Iphitides

Coeranus, the son of Iphitus.

Bk XIII:123-381. A Lycian, killed by Ulysses.

Iris

Bk I:244-273. Juno's messenger, the Rainbow. (See Shakespeare's *Tempest* – the masque).

Bk IV:464-511. Purifies Juno after her visit to Hades.

Bk XI:573-649. Goes to Somnus, god of Sleep, to command him to send a dream to Alcyone.

Bk XIV:75-100. At Juno's command she attempts to destroy Aeneas's ships (see Virgil The Aeneid V 600)

Bk XIV:829-851. Juno sends her to Hersilia.

Isis

Bk IX:666-713. The Egyptian Goddess, in Greek mythology the deified Io and identified also with Ceres-Demeter. The wife of Osiris. Goddess of the domestic arts. Her cult absorbed the other great goddesses and spread through the Graeco-Roman world as far as the Rhine. Isis was the star of the sea, and the goddess of travellers. She visits Telethusa in a dream. She is accompanied by Anubis, the jackal-headed god, associated with Mercury; Bubastis, or Bast (Bastet), the lion or cat-headed goddess, associated with Diana; Apis the sacred Bull; Harpocrates the child Horus; and Osiris her husband, whom she searches for, in the great vegetation myth of Egypt. She has the sacred

rattle or sistrum; the serpent that she fashioned, that poisoned the sun-god Ra, whom she cured in exchange for his true name; and on her forehead she carries the horns, moon disc, and ears of corn symbolising her moon, fertility and cow attributes.

Bk IX:764-797. She protects Paraetonium, Pharos, the Nile and the Mareotic fields.

Ismarius

Bk II:227-271. From Mount Ismarus in Thrace. Thracian.

Bk IX:595-665. The Bacchantes perform the rites there.

Bk X:298-355. The Thracian race to which Orpheus belongs.

Bk XIII:481-575. Polymestor is the king of Thrace.

Ismenis

Bk III:165-206. Crocale, the daughter of Ismenus, the Boeotian river god.

Ismenus(1), Ismenides

Bk II:227-271. The river and river-god of Boeotia, near Thebes. The women of Thebes, being near the river. Crocale one of Diana's nymphs is the daughter of the river-god and therefore called Ismenis.

Bk III:692-733. Bk IV:31-54. The women of Thebes, who now worship the new religion of Bacchus.

Bk IV:543-562. Followers of Ino who are turned to stone.

Bk VI:146-203. The women of Thebes exhorted to worship Latona, and her children, Apollo and Diana.

Bk XIII:675-704. The country of Therses.

Ismenus(2)

Bk VI:204-266. One of Niobe's seven sons killed by Apollo and Diana.

Isse

The daughter of [Macareus\(1\)](#).

[Bk VI:103-128](#). Raped by [Phoebus](#), disguised as a shepherd, and depicted by [Arachne](#).

Isthmus

[Bk VI:401-438](#). The Isthmus of [Corinth](#) between the Gulf of Corinth and the Saronic Sea.

[Bk VII:404-424](#). Cleansed of robbers by [Theseus](#).

[Bk XV:479-546](#). Crossed by [Hippolytus](#) at his death.

Italia

[Bk XV:622-745](#). Italy.

Ithaca

The island off the coast of Greece, in the Ionian Sea (to the *west* of mainland Greece), home of [Ulysses](#).

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). Home of [Penelope](#).

Bk XIII:705-737. Passed by Aeneas.

Bk XIV:154-222. Dear to Macareus of Neritos.

Ithacus

Bk XIII:1-122. A name for Ulysses, as king of Ithaca.

Itys

Bk VI:401-438. The son of Tereus and Procne. His birthday is named as a festival.

Bk VI:619-652. Bk VI:653-674. He is murdered by his mother in revenge for Tereus's rape of Philomela, and his flesh is served to his father at a banquet.

Iuba

Bk XV:745-842. King of Numidia. Aligned with Scipio and beaten by Caesar in North Africa where the remnants of the Pompeian party were being reorganised.

Iulus

Bk XIV:566-580. Ascanius, the son of Aeneas, from whom the Iulian clan claimed their origin.

Bk XV:418-452. Bk XV:745-842. The ancestor of Julius Caesar.

Iuno, Juno

Bk I:244-273. The daughter of Rhea and Saturn, wife of Jupiter, and the queen of the gods. A representation of the pre-Hellenic Great Goddess. (See the Metope of Temple E at Selinus – The Marriage of Hera and Zeus – Palermo, National Museum.)

Bk I: 601-621. Catching Jupiter deceiving her with Io, asks the girl, transformed into a heifer by Jupiter, as a gift.

Bk I: 722-746. Relenting, she returns Io to human form.

Bk II:466-495. Turns Callisto into a bear after her rape by Jupiter.

Bk II:508-530. After Callisto is set in the heavens as the Great Bear by Jupiter, she requests Tethys and Oceanus not to allow the

constellation to enter their waters (and fall below the horizon).

Bk II:531-565. Her chariot is drawn by peacocks.

Bk III:253-272. She sets out to punish Semele.

Bk III:273-315. She deceives Semele.

Bk III:316-338. She blinds Tiresias for his judgement.

Bk III:359-401. She limits Echo's powers of speech.

Bk IV:167-189. Vulcan is her son.

Bk IV:416-463. She is angered by Ino sister of Semele.

Bk IV:464-511. She asks Tisiphone, the Fury, to madden Ino and Athamas, her husband, and sees them come to grief.

Bk IV:543-562. She turns Ino's protesting servants into stone.

Bk VI:70-102. Turned the Queen of the Pygmies into a crane and forced her to war against her own people, and turned Antigone of Troy into a stork.

[Bk VI:313-381](#). She pursued [Latona](#) in jealousy.

[Bk VI:401-438](#). She is the goddess who attends brides in the wedding ceremony.

[Bk VII:501-613](#). Jealous of [Aegina](#), because of her affair with [Jupiter](#), Juno sends a plague to the [island of Aegina](#) named after her where, her son [Aeacus](#) is king.

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). The island of [Samos](#) is sacred to her.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). [Bk IX:159-210](#). The stepmother, and in some myths foster-mother of [Hercules](#). She is inimical to him because of Jupiter's adultery with [Alcmena](#) his mother. She instigates his Twelve Labours through [Eurystheus](#).

[Bk IX:211-272](#). She resents Hercules's deification.

[Bk IX:273-323](#). She had previously made Alcmena's labour difficult in giving birth to Hercules.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). Her daughter is [Hebe](#).

Bk IX:439-516. She married her brother Jupiter.

Bk IX:764-797. She attends weddings with Venus and Hymen.

Bk X:143-219. She objects to Ganymede becoming Jupiter's cup-bearer.

Bk XI:573-649. She sends Iris goddess of the rainbow, her messenger, to Somnus, Sleep, ordering him to send a dream to Alcyone telling her of the death of Ceyx.

Bk XII:429-535. Ixion had attempted to seduce her.

Bk XIII:481-575. She admits that Hecuba does not deserve the fate that befell her.

Bk XIV:75-100. She sends Iris to destroy Aeneas's ships.

Bk XIV:101-153. Proserpina is 'the Juno of Avernus'.

Bk XIV:566-580. She accepts Aeneas's deification.

Bk XIV:772-804. She unbars the Roman citadel to the Sabines. (Pursuing her vendetta against the descendants of Aeneas.)

Bk XIV:829-851. She sends Iris to Hersilia.

Bk XV:143-175. She has a temple at Argos.

Bk XV:361-390. Her bird is the peacock.

Bk XV:622-745. She had a famous temple at Lacinium.

Bk XV:745-842. Venus says she was on Turnus's side during the wars in Latium.

Iunonigena

Bk IV:167-189. Vulcan, the son of Iuno.

Iuppiter, Jupiter, Jove

Bk I:89-112. The sky-god, son of Saturn and Rhea, born on Mount Lycaeum in Arcadia and nurtured on Mount Ida in Crete. The oak is his sacred tree. His emblems of power are the sceptre and lightning-bolt. His wife and sister is Juno (Iuno). (See the sculpted bust(copy) by Brassides, the Jupiter of Otricoli, Vatican)

Bk I:113-124. Creates the seasons.

Bk I:587-600. Chases and rapes Io.

Bk I:668-688. Father of Mercury by the Pleiad Maia.

Bk I:722-746. After Juno transforms Io into a heifer, he employs Mercury to dispose of Argus, and though Juno sets Io wandering, he eventually prevails on her to return Io to human form, when she has reached the Nile.

Bk I:747-764. Father of Epaphus, by Io.

Bk II:301-328. Rescues the earth by destroying Phaethon and the runaway sun chariot.

Bk II:401-416. Sees Callisto in the woods of Arcadia.

Bk II:417-440. He rapes Callisto.

Bk II:496-507. He sets Callisto and her son Arcas among the stars as the constellations of Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, the Great and Little Bear.

Bk II:833-875. Jupiter abducts Europa.

Bk III:273-315. He unwillingly destroys Semele who has been deceived by Juno but rescues their son Bacchus who is sewn into his thigh to come to full term.

Bk III:316-338. He gives Tiresias the power of prophecy.

Bk III:359-401. He often lies with the mountain nymphs.

Bk IV:274-316. He was guarded in his cradle by the Dactyls ('fingers'), one of whom was Celmis, born when Rhea was bearing Jupiter and pressed her fingers into the earth.

Bk IV:663-705. As Jupiter Ammon his oracle sentenced Andromeda to be chained to the rock for her mother's fault.

Bk V:294-331. The Emathides pretend that he fled to Egypt in the war between the giants and the gods, and there as Libyan Ammon hid in the form of a ram.

Bk V:332-384. He is subject to Cupid, as are the other gods.

Bk V:487-532. Ceres asks him to restore their daughter Proserpine.

Bk V:533-571. He decrees that Proserpine must spend half the year with Dis and half with Ceres.

Bk VI:26-69. Minerva (Pallas Athene) is his daughter.

Bk VI:70-103. He is head of the court of the gods that judges between Neptune and Pallas regarding their right to the city of Athens.

Bk VI:103-128. Arachne depicts his rapes of Europa, Leda, Asterie, Antiope, Alcmena, Danaë, Aegina, Mnemosyne, and Proserpine.

Bk VI:486-548. Bk XV:361-390. The eagle is his representative bird.

Bk VII:350-403. He sank the Telchines of Rhodes under the sea.

Bk VII:501-613. The sacrifices to him during the plague at Aegina have no effect.

Bk VII:614-660. He finally answers Aeacus's prayer and repopulates the city by changing the ants into people, the Myrmidons.

Bk VII:796-865. Procris would prefer Cephalus's bed to his.

Bk VIII:81-151. Minos calls Crete the cradle of Jove. Minos is his son by Europa.

Bk VIII:260-328. The Athenians pray to him, and the other gods.

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). Disguised as a mortal he visits [Philemon and Baucis](#) with [Mercury](#), his son.

[Bk VIII:679-724](#). Jupiter is referred to as Saturnius, the son of Saturn. He transforms [Philemon](#) and [Baucis](#) into trees, an oak and a lime-tree.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). [Bk IX:89-158](#). [Bk IX:211-272](#). [Bk IX:273-323](#).

[Bk XV:1-59](#). He is the father of [Hercules](#) by [Alcmena](#). Hercules sacrifices to him at [Cenaenum](#) in [Euboea](#).

[Bk IX:211-272](#). He addresses the gods before setting Hercules in the sky as a new constellation.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). [Themis](#) prophesies he will intervene in the war of the Seven against [Thebes](#), destroying [Capaneus](#), and aiding the subsequent chain of revenge.

[Bk IX:418-438](#). [Bk IX:439-516](#). He explains the power of fate to the other gods. He recognises the piety and love for him displayed

by [Aeacus](#), and the just nature of the lawgivers [Minos](#) and [Rhadamanthus](#).

[Bk IX:439-516](#). [Bk XIII:481-575](#). He married his sister [Juno](#).

[Bk X:143-219](#). [Bk XI:749-795](#). In the form of an eagle he abducted [Ganymede](#).

[Bk XI:194-220](#). [Bk XI:266-345](#). The grandfather of [Peleus](#) (through [Aegina](#)) and his father-in-law (through [Thetis](#)). There was an altar of [Panomphaean](#) ('source of all oracles') Jupiter the Thunderer ([Tonaus](#)) near [Troy](#).

[Bk XI:221-265](#). He yields Thetis to Peleus because of a prophecy.

[Bk XII:39-63](#). The creator of distant thunder.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). The father of [Aeacus](#), by [Aegina](#). He aids the Trojans in attacking the Greek ships.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). [Ajax](#) and [Ulysses](#) are both great-grandsons of Jupiter through the male line. Ajax through [Telamon](#) and [Aeacus](#), Ulysses through [Laërtes](#) and [Arcesius](#).

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). [Agamemnon](#) dreamed that Jupiter ordered him to abandon the war.

Bk XIII:399-428. Priam is murdered at his altar as Troy falls.

Bk XIII:576-622. He grants Aurora's request and creates the Memnonides, a flock of warring birds, to commemorate Memnon.

Bk XIII:705-737. He plagues Aeneas's people on Crete until they are forced to leave. (See Virgil's Aeneid III:130-160)

Bk XIII:705-737. He saves Munichus, the Molossian king, and his family changing them into birds.

Bk XIII:789-869. Polyphemus compares himself in size to Jove.

Bk XIV:75-100. Jupiter changes the Cercopes into monkeys.

Bk XIV:566-580. He allows the deification of Aeneas.

Bk XIV:805-828. He agrees to the deification of Romulus.

Bk XV:60-142. Pythagoras questioned as to whether thunder and lightning were merely natural phenomena, and not caused by Jupiter.

Bk XV:745-842. Jupiter grants Caesar deification, and prophesies Augustus's achievements.

Bk XV:843-870. Jupiter surpasses his father Saturn, as Augustus surpasses Julius Caesar. He is worshipped on the Tarpeian citadel, the Capitoline Hill.

Bk XV:871-879. Ovid's work is secure from Jupiter's, and therefore also Augustus's anger, he being Jupiter incarnate, implying perhaps that Ovid may have retouched the envoi after Augustus's death in AD14, and before his own death in AD17, as his last word, never having been pardoned by Augustus, but claiming now his own immortality.

Ixion

King of the Lapithae, father of Pirithoüs, and of the Centaurs.

Bk IV:416-463. Punished in Hades for attempting to seduce Juno. He was fastened to a continually turning wheel.

[Bk VIII:376-424](#). [Bk VIII:611-678](#). The father of [Pirithoüs](#).

[Bk IX:89-158](#). The father of [Nessus](#) and the other centaurs.

[Bk X:1-85](#). His punishment in the underworld ceases for a time at the sound of [Orpheus](#)'s song.

[Bk XII:210-244](#). [Bk XII:290-326](#). His son is Pirithoüs.

[Bk XII:429-535](#). He had attempted to seduce Juno, but [Jupiter](#) created a false image of her, caught Ixion in the act with this simulacrum, and bound him to a fiery wheel that rolls through the sky (or turns in the Underworld).

Ixionides

[Bk VIII:547-610](#). [Pirithoüs](#), as the son of [Ixion](#).

Laconia, Laconis, Lacedaemonian, Lacedaemionius

[Bk II:227-271](#). The area around [Sparta](#). Of Sparta, the chief city also called Lacedaemon.

Lacinius

[Bk XV:1-59](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). Of Lacinium, a promontory near [Crotona](#) in Italy. (Near modern Capo Colonna on the ‘heel’ of Italy.) It had a famous temple of [Juno](#).

Laconis

[Bk III:206-231](#). [Spartan](#), Lacedaemonian, Laconian.

Ladon

[Bk I:689-721](#). A river in [Arcadia](#). (Pausanias says, VIII xx, that its springs derive from the Phenean Lake and that it has the finest water of any river in Greece.)

Laërtes

The father of [Ulysses](#), and son of [Arcesius](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt. He is father-in-law to [Penelope](#).

[Bk XII:579-628](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). The father of Ulysses.

Laertiades

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Ulysses](#), son of [Laërtes](#).

Laërtius heros

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). [Ulysses](#), son of [Laërtes](#).

Laestrygones

[Bk XIV:223-319](#). An ancient people of Campania in Italy, fabled to be cannibals. See [Lamus](#). They attack [Ulysses](#) and his comrades.

Laiades, Oedipus

[Bk VII:759-795](#). Oedipus, son of Laius. He was exposed as an infant on Mount [Cithaeron](#). Later, he unknowingly killed his father and

married his mother, to become King of [Thebes](#), and from that Sophocles's great tragedies are developed. Oedipus guessed the answer to the Sphinx's riddle, that it is Humankind that goes on four legs at dawn, two in the afternoon, and three at evening (a crawling child, an adult, an aged person with a staff). The Sphinx was the monstrous daughter of Typhon and [Echidne](#), and came to Thebes from [Ethiopia](#). She had a woman's head, a lion's body, a serpent's tail, and eagle's wings. The Sphinx leapt to her death from Mount Phicium. (See Sophocles plays, 'The Theban cycle', Ingres's painting Oedipus and the Sphinx, Louvre, Paris, Gustave Moreau's painting in the Metropolitan Gallery, New York, and Charles Ricketts pen and ink drawing of the same subject, Carlisle Art Gallery, England)

Lampetia, Lampetie

[Bk II:344-366](#). One of the [Heliads](#), daughters of [Clymene](#) and the [Sun](#), who are turned into poplar trees while mourning [Phaethon](#).

Lampetides

[Bk V:107-148](#). A musician at the court of [Cepheus](#), killed by [Pegasus](#).

Lamus

[Bk XIV:223-319](#). Mythical king of the [Laestrygonians](#), and founder of Formiae. (The Laestrygonian country has been placed in Sicily, here at Formia on the coast of Campania, or, as Ernle Bradford suggests in 'Ulysses Found' Ch.12, from the details of the natural harbour described by Homer in the Odyssey, at Bonafacio in Corsica, in the sea-gate between Corsica and Sardinia.)

Laomedon

Bk XI:749-795. The king of Troy, son of Ilus the younger, father of Priam, Hesione and Antigone.

Bk VI:70-102. Father of Antigone of Troy.

Bk XI:194-220. He reneges on his agreement to reward Apollo and Neptune for building the walls of Troy. His daughter Hesione is chained to a rock to be taken by a sea-monster. Hercules rescues her and is also denied his reward. He seizes Troy and marries Hesione to Telamon.

Lapithae

Bk XII:245-289. Bk XIV:623-697. An ancient people of south western Thessaly. The marriage of Pirithoüs and Hippodamia was disrupted by Eurytus one of the centaurs invited to the feast, leading to the battle between the Lapiths and Centaurs. (See the sculpture from the west pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia – e.g. the detail, Lapith Woman and Centaur)

Bk XII:536-579. Nestor finishes telling the story of the battle.

Larissaeus, Larissa

[Bk II:531-565](#). Of Larissa a town in [Thessaly](#).

Latialis, Latinus

Of Latium, Latian, Latin, Roman.

Latinus(1)

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). The son of [Faunus](#), grandson of [Picus](#), king of [Laurentum](#) in [Latium](#), and father of [Lavinia](#). [Aeneas](#) marries his daughter and becomes king.

Latinus(2)

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). One of the [Alban](#) kings.

Latium

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). A country in Central Italy, containing [Rome](#). (The modern Lazio region. It originally designated the small area between the

mouth of the Tiber and the Alban Hills. With the Roman conquest it was extended south-east to the Gulf of Gaeta, and west to the mountains of Abruzzo, forming the so-called *Latium novum* or *adiectum*.)

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). At war with [Etruria](#).

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). [Pomona](#)'s country.

[Bk XV:622-745](#). Suffers the plague.

Latius, Latian, Latin

[Bk XIV:320-396](#) [Bk XIV:397-434](#). [Bk XIV:829-851](#). Of [Latium](#). Roman.

Latois

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). [Diana](#), the daughter of [Latona](#).

Latoius

[Bk XI:194-220](#). [Apollo](#), the son of [Latona](#).

Latona, Leto

Bk I:689-721. Daughter of the Titan Coeus, and mother of Apollo and Artemis (Diana) by Jupiter.

Bk VI:146-203. Worshipped at Thebes.

Bk VI:204-266. Offended by Niobe she asks her children to exact punishment.

Bk VI:267-312. They pursue vengeance on her behalf, killing all Niobe's children. Niobe is turned to stone, and her husband Amphion commits suicide in his grief.

Bk VI:313-381. Bk XIII:623-639. Pursued by a jealous Juno, she was given sanctuary by Delos, a floating island. There between an olive tree and a date-palm she gave birth to Apollo and Diana-Artemis, by Mount Cynthus. Delos became fixed. A variant has Artemis born on the nearby islet of Ortygia.

Ovid also tells how Latona turned the Lycian countrymen into frogs, for refusing to allow her to drink at their pool.

Bk VII:350-403. The island of Calaurea is sacred to her.

Latonia

[Bk I:689-721](#). [Bk VIII:376-424](#). [Bk VIII:515-546](#). [Diana](#), as the daughter of [Latona](#).

Latonigenae

[Bk VI:146-203](#). [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#), the twin children of [Latona](#), worshipped at [Thebes](#).

Lataoüs

Of [Latona](#), her altar. Also of her son [Phoebus](#) Apollo.

[Bk VI:382-400](#). An epithet for Apollo.

Latreus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Laurens

Of Laurentum, an ancient city of [Latium](#), seat of king [Latinus](#). Possibly identified with ancient Lavinium between modern Ostia and Anzio.

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). [Picus](#) comes from there.

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). [Venus](#) descends there.

Lavinia

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). [Bk XIV:566-580](#). The daughter of [Latinus](#). She married [Aeneas](#), and the disappointed [Turnus](#) initiated the war in [Latium](#).

Lavinium

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A city of [Latium](#) founded by [Aeneas](#).

Learchus

The son of [Athamas](#) and [Ino](#).

[Bk IV:512-542](#). Killed by his father, maddened by [Tisiphone](#).

Lebinthus

An island in the eastern [Aegean](#), one of the Sporades.

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). [Daedalus](#) and [Icarus](#) fly to the north of it after leaving [Crete](#).

Leda

The daughter of Thestius and wife of the [Spartan](#) king Tyndareus. She had twin sons Castor and Polydeuces (Pollux), the [Tyndaridae](#), following her rape by [Jupiter](#) in the form of a swan. Castor and Pollux are represented in the sky by the two bright stars in the constellation of Gemini, the Twins. They were the protectors of mariners appearing in the rigging as the electrical phenomenon now known as St Elmo's fire. Gemini contains the radiant of the Geminid meteor shower. (See the painting Leda, by Gustave Moreau in the Gustave Moreau Museum Paris)

[Bk VI:103-128](#). Depicted by [Arachne](#).

Bk VIII:260-328. The mother of the Tyndaridae.

Leleges

A Pelasgic people of Greece and Asia Minor.

Bk VII:425-452. Builders of the walls of Megara.

Bk IX:595-665. Armed inhabitants of Caria.

Lelex

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:547-610. Described as a hero of Troezen, he is present when Acheloüs offers Theseus his hospitality.

Bk VIII:611-678. He tells the story of Baucis and Philemon.

Bk VIII:725-776. He completes his tale.

Lemnicola

Bk II:752-786. Vulcan, whose favourite dwelling-place was Lemnos.

Lemnos

[Bk II:752-786](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#). The Greek island. The home of [Vulcan](#) the blacksmith of the gods.

[Bk IV:167-189](#). Vulcan is called the Lemnian.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Philoctetes](#) was bitten by a snake there, and on [Ulysses](#) advice was abandoned there. He had inherited the bow and arrows of [Hercules](#).

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). [Ulysses](#) sails for the island to bring back the arrows of Hercules. [Thoas](#) was once king there when the Lemnian women murdered their menfolk because of their adultery with [Thracian](#) girls. His life was spared because his daughter [Hypsipyle](#) set him adrift in an oarless boat.

Lenaeus

[Bk IV:1-30](#). [Bk XI:85-145](#). An epithet for [Bacchus](#) as god of the vineyards.

Leo

[Bk II:63-89](#). The constellation and zodiacal sign of the Lion. It contains the star Regulus ‘the heart of the lion’, one of the four guardians of the heavens in Babylonian astronomy, which lies nearly on the ecliptic. (The others are Aldebaran in Taurus, Antares in Scorpius, and Fomalhaut ‘the Fish’s Eye’ in Piscis Austrinus. All four are at roughly ninety degrees to one another). The constellation represents the lion killed by [Hercules](#) as the first of his twelve labours.

Lerna

[Bk I:587-600](#). [Bk IX:1-88](#). [Bk IX:89-158](#). The marshland in [Argolis](#), the home of the [Hydra](#).

Lesbos

[Bk II:566-595](#). The island in the eastern [Aegean](#). Among its cities were Mytilene and Methymna. Famous as the home of Sappho the

poetess, whose love of women gave rise to the term *lesbian*. Here the home of [Nyctimene](#).

[Bk XI:1-66](#). [Orpheus](#)'s (prophetic) head is washed ashore there.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Captured by [Achilles](#).

Lethaea

[Bk X:1-85](#). The wife of [Olenus](#). She was punished for her pride in her beauty and he chose to share her guilt. They were turned into stones on Mount [Ida](#).

Lethe

A river of the Underworld, whose waters bring forgetfulness.

[Bk VII:100-158](#). Used of the magic juice (juniper?) that [Jason](#) uses to subdue the dragon that guards the Golden Fleece.

[Bk XI:573-649](#). Its stream flows from the depths of the House of [Sleep](#), and induces drowsiness with its murmuring. (Hence the stream of forgetfulness)

Letoïs

Bk VII:350-403. Of Leto, or Latona, applied to Calaurea an island to the east of Argolis sacred to her.

Letoius

Bk VIII:1-80. Phoebus Apollo, as the son of Latona (Leto).

Leucas

An island off the coast of Acarmania in western Greece, in the Ionian Sea north of Ithaca.

Bk XV:259-306. Once joined to the mainland. (The Corinthians bored a channel through the isthmus in the 7th century BC, see Ernle Bradford's 'Ulysses Found' Appendix II)

Leucippus

The brother of Aphareus.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Leuconoë

Bk IV:31-54. One of the daughters of Minyas who rejected the worship of Bacchus and was changed into a bat.

Bk IV:167-189. She tells the story of Mars and Venus.

Leucosia

Bk XV:622-745. An island, near Paestum in Italy.

Leucothoë(1)

Bk IV:190-213. The daughter of Orchamus, king of Babylon loved by Sol.

Bk IV:214-255. Raped by Sol, and buried alive by her father, Sol changes her into a tree with incense-bearing resin (frankincense, genus *Boswellia*?)

Leucothoe(2)

The White Goddess, the sea-goddess into whom Ino was changed, who as a sea-mew helps Ulysses (See Homer's *Odyssey*). She is a manifestation of the Great Goddess in her archetypal form. (See Robert Graves's 'The White Goddess')

Bk IV:512-542. Venus intercedes for Ino, after she has leapt into the sea with her son, and Neptune changes them into sea-deities.

Liber

Bk III:511-527. An ancient rural god of Italy who presided over planting and fructification. He became associated (as Liber Pater) with Bacchus-Dionysus.

Bk III:597-637. An epithet of Bacchus in the story of Acoetes.

Bk VI:103-128. The ensnaring of Erigone is depicted by Arachne.

Bk VII:294-349. Medea restores the youth of the Nyseides for him.

Bk VII:350-403. He hides the bullock his son has stolen, concealing it in the form of a stag.

Bk VIII:152-182. He rescues Ariadne.

Bk XIII:640-674. He gave Anius's daughters the power to change everything into corn, wine and olives.

Libya

Bk II:227-271. The country in North Africa. Turned to desert when Phaethon loses control of the sun chariot.

Bk IV:604-662. The drops of blood falling from the Gorgon's head as Perseus flies over its sands infest it with poisonous snakes.

Bk V:74-106. Amphimedon's native country.

Bk XIV:75-100. Carthage is sited there, supposedly founded by Dido, originally a Phoenician trading post. Aeneas is driven there from Sicily by adverse winds.

Libys(1)

Bk III:597-637. A seaman, companion of Acoetes.

Libys(2)

Bk V:294-331. African, applied to Ammon.

Lichas

Bk IX:89-158. A servant of Hercules entrusted with the shirt of Nessus which he unwittingly gives to his master.

Bk IX:211-272. He is thrown into the Euboean Gulf by Hercules and becomes a sacred island, called by his name.

Ligdus

Bk IX:666-713. A Cretan. His wife is Telethusa. She has a daughter who he wishes to be exposed, but he is deceived into believing the daughter is a male child and names it Iphis.

Ligures, Liguria

[Bk II:367-380](#). A people and country of northern Italy.

Lilybaeon, Lilybaeum

[Bk V:332-384](#). [Bk XIII:705-737](#). A promontory on the southern coast of [Sicily](#).

Limnaee

[Bk V:30-73](#). A nymph of the River [Ganges](#), daughter of the river god, and mother of [Athis](#).

Limyre

[Bk IX:595-665](#). A city in [Lycia](#).

Liriope

[Bk III:339-358](#). Raped by the river-god [Cephisus](#) she gives birth to [Narcissus](#).

Liternum

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A city in Campania in Italy. Famous for its mastic bearing lentisk trees. (The gum mastic from lentisk trees for which the island of [Chios](#) was also famous, formed the basis of ‘Turkish Delight’, the sweet of the Sultan’s harem.) (The modern Lago di Patria near Cumae was once the harbour of the Roman colony.)

Lotis

[Bk IX:324-393](#). A nymph, daughter of [Neptune](#). Changed into a lotus tree while fleeing from [Priapus](#).

Lucifer

[Bk II:111-149](#). [Bk XV:176-198](#). The morning star (the planet Venus). It sets with the rising sun and vanishes as [Phaethon](#) begins his ride. (Lucifer the ‘Son of Morning’)

[Bk II:708-736](#). The brightest star, but outshone by the moon.

[Bk IV:604-662](#) Wakes [Aurora's](#) fires to begin the day.

[Bk VIII:1-80](#). [Bk XI:85-145](#). He dispels the night.

[Bk XI:266-345](#). His sons are [Ceyx](#) and [Daedalion](#).

[Bk XI:346-409](#). His son Ceyx tells the story of Daedalion.

[Bk XI:474-572](#). Ceyx calls to him *in extremis*. He hides his face, when Ceyx is drowned, in mourning.

[Bk XV:745-842](#). His face is darkened as an omen of [Caesar's](#) assassination.

Lucina

[Bk IX:666-713](#). 'The light bringer', the Roman goddess of childbirth, a manifestation of [Juno](#), but also applied to [Diana](#), as the Great Goddess.

[Bk V:294-331](#). Appealed to, for help in childbirth, by [Euiippe](#).

[Bk IX:273-323](#). Her Greek equivalent was [Ilithyia](#).

[Bk IX:273-323](#). [Alcmena](#) calls out to her in childbirth. Her companion gods, the guardians of women in labour, are the [Nixi](#).

She squats on the altar and, using sympathetic magic, clasps her crossed knees to retard the childbirth at Juno's orders.

[Bk X:503-559](#). She assists at the birth of [Adonis](#).

Luna

[Bk II:201-226](#). The moon goddess. A manifestation of Artemis-[Diana-Phoebe](#), sister of [Apollo-Sol-Phoebus](#). Amazed at the sun chariot running amok with [Phaethon](#).

[Bk VII:179-233](#). At the eclipse, bronze weapons etc were clashed to ease the birth-pangs of the moon as she brought forth renewed light, in order to ensure a safe outcome to the eclipse.

[Bk VII:501-613](#). A synonym for the moon.

Lyaeus

Bk IV:1-30. An epithet of Bacchus meaning ‘the deliverer from care’.

Bk VIII:260-328. King Oeneus pours libations of wine to him.

Bk XI:67-84. Bacchus turns the Maenads who killed Orpheus into oak trees.

Lycabas(1)

Bk III:597-637. A seaman, companion of Acoetes.

Lycabas(2)

Bk V:30-73. An Assyrian, companion of Phineus, killed by Perseus trying to avenge his friend and lover Athis.

Lycabas(3)

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Lycaeus

[Bk I:689-721](#). A mountain in [Arcadia](#). (Pausanias, VIII xxxviii, has a long section on this mountain, the Holy Peak, sacred to Zeus-[Jupiter](#), and [Pan](#). In the precinct of Zeus no shadow is cast.)

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). The home of [Atalanta \(1\)](#) who is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Lycaon

[Bk I:151-176](#). Son of [Pelasgus](#). Lycaon was a king of primitive [Arcadia](#) who presided over barbarous cannibalistic practises. He was transformed into a wolf by Zeus, angered by human sacrifice. His sons offered Zeus, disguised as a traveller, a banquet containing human remains. They were also changed into wolves and Zeus then precipitated a great flood to cleanse the world.

[Bk II:466-495](#). The father of [Callisto](#).

Lycetus

Bk V:74-106. A native of the River Spercheos. A companion of Phineus, killed by Perseus.

Lyceum

Bk II:708-736. The gymnasium at Athens amongst fountains and groves frequented by the philosophers.

Lycia

Bk IV:274-316. A country in Asia Minor, south of Caria, bordering the Mediterranean.

Bk VI:313-381. Home of the Chimaera. Scene of Latona's transformation of the farmers into frogs.

Bk IX:595-665. The country of Byblis's final transformation on Mount Chimaera home of the monster. Landmarks are Mount Cragus and Limyre, and the plain of Xanthus.

Bk XII:64-145. The country of Menoetes.

Bk XIII:123-381. The country of Sarpedon.

Lycidas

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Lycopes

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Lycormas(1)

[Bk II:227-271](#). A river in [Aetolia](#).

Lycormas(2)

[Bk V:107-148](#). A follower of [Perseus](#), kills [Pedasus](#).

Lyctius

[Bk VII:453-500](#). Of Lyctos, a city in [Crete](#).
Used of the Cretan fleet under [Minos](#).

Lycurgus

[Bk IV:1-30](#). King of the [Edonians](#) (Edoni) of [Thrace](#) who opposed [Bacchus](#)'s entry into his

kingdom at the River [Strymon](#). Lycurgus was driven mad and killed his own son Dryas with an axe thinking he was a vine. He pruned the corpse, and the Edonians, horrified, instructed by Bacchus, tore Lycurgus to pieces with wild horses on Mount Pangaeum.

Lycus(1)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Lycus(2)

[Bk XIV:483-511](#). A companion of [Diomede](#). [Venus](#) transforms him into a bird.

Lycus(3)

[Bk XV:259-306](#). A river in [Phrygia](#), a tributary of the [Maeander](#). The Lycus plunges into a chasm, runs underground for some distance, and reappears before entering the Maeander. (See Herodotus VII 30, where it is visited by Xerxes, on the march.)

Lydia

A country in Asia Minor, containing Ephesus, with its temple of Artemis-[Diana](#), and Smyrna. Famous for its wealth.

[Bk VI:1-25](#). The country of [Arachne](#).

[Bk VI:146-203](#). The country of [Niobe](#).

[Bk XI:85-145](#). The country of [Midas](#).

Lyncestius

[Bk XV:307-360](#). Of the Lyncestae, a people in [Macedonia](#). Lyncestian.

Lynceus

The son of Aphareus.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Lyncides

[Bk V:74-106](#). A descendant of [Lynceus](#), father of [Abas](#), whose great grandson was [Perseus](#). A follower of Perseus (or Perseus himself?) in the fight against [Phineus](#).

Bk V:149-199. As an epithet of Perseus.

Lyncus

King of Scythia.

Bk V:642-678. He attacks Triptolemus and is changed into a lynx.

Lyrceus

Bk I:587-600. The land near Mount Lyrceum between Argolis and Arcadia.

Lyrnesius

Of Lyrnessus, a town in the Troad, near Mount Ida.

Bk XII:64-145. Bk XIII:123-381. Sacked by Achilles.

Macareis

Bk VI:103-128. Isse, the daughter of Macareus(1).

Macareus(1)

An inhabitant of [Lesbos](#).

[Bk VI:103-128](#). His daughter is [Isse](#).

Macareus(2)

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Macareus(3)

[Bk XIV:154-222](#). Of Neritos. A companion of [Ulysses](#) who settled in Italy at [Caieta](#), after their wanderings.

[Bk XIV:223-319](#). He tells the story of their wanderings, and warns [Aeneas](#) not to encounter [Circe](#).

[Bk XIV:435-444](#). He ends his story.

Macedonia, Macedonius

[Bk XII:429-535](#). The country bordering the northern [Aegean](#).

Maeandrus, Maeandrius

[Bk II:227-271](#). The Maeander river in [Lydia](#) in Asia Minor famous for its wandering course, hence ‘meander’. Also its river-god. (Pausanias mentions, VIII vii, a boiling hot spring that comes out of the riverbed and out of a rock mid-stream. Also, V xiv, that it is famous for its many huge tamarisk trees.)

[Bk VIII:152-182](#). Its windings are compared to the [Cretan](#) maze.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). [Cyaneë](#) is his daughter.

[Bk IX:517-594](#). [Caunus](#) is his grandson.

Maenades, Maenads, [Bacchantes](#)

The female followers of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus, noted for their ecstatic worship of the god. Dionysus brought terror and joy. The Maenads’ secret female mysteries may indicate older rituals of ecstatic human sacrifice.

[Bk III:692-733](#). Led by [Agave](#) and [Autonoë](#) they destroy [Pentheus](#).

Bk XI:1-66. They kill Orpheus.

Bk XI:67-84. They are turned into oak trees.

Maenalos, Maenala

Bk I:199-243. A mountain range in Arcadia. (Pausanias, VIII xxxvi, says it is sacred to Pan, and the people living there hear him piping.)

Bk II:401-416. Bk II:441-465. The haunt of Diana the goddess of the hunt and her virgin companions.

Bk V:572-641. Passed by Arethusa in her flight.

Maeonias, Maeonia

Bk II:227-271. An ancient name for Lydia.

Bk VI:1-25. The country of Arachne.

Bk VI:146-203. The country of Niobe, and Mount Sipylos.

Maeonis

Bk VI:103-128. An epithet of Arachne, as a native of Maeonia.

Maera

Bk VII:350-403. Hecuba, changed into a black bitch of Hecate, in Thrace, where she was taken by Ulysses after the fall of Troy. She murdered Polymestor her son-in-law, who had killed her son Polydorus. She terrified the Thracians who tried to kill her, by her howling.

Magnetes

Bk XI:346-409. The inhabitants of Magnesia in Thessaly.

Maia

Bk II:676-701. The daughter of Atlas, a Pleiad, and mother of Mercury by Jupiter.

Bk XI:266-345. The mother of Mercury.

Manto

A Theban prophetess, the daughter of Tiresias.
Bk VI:146-203. Calls the women of Thebes to the worship of Latona and her children, Apollo and Diana.

Marathon

A town and plain on the east coast of Attica. Site of the famous Greek victory in the war against Persia.

Bk VII:425-452. Theseus overcame a white bull of Poseidon there, brought by Hercules from Crete. He then sacrificed it at Athens on the Acropolis.

Mareoticus

Bk IX:764-797. Of Mareota, a lake and city in Lower Egypt. (See Shelley 'The Witch of Atlas') Protected by Isis.

Marmarides

From Marmarica, in Egypt.

Bk V:107-148. Corythus comes from there.

Mars, Mavors

The war god, son of Jupiter and Juno. An old name for him is Mavors.

Bk III:1-49. The snake killed by Cadmus is sacred to him.

Bk IV:167-189. Venus commits adultery with him and he is caught in a net with her by her husband Vulcan.

Bk XII:64-145. His armour is decorative only.

Bk XIV:772-804. The father of Romulus.

Bk XIV:805-828. He asks for Romulus's deification.

Marsyas

A Satyr of Phrygia who challenged Apollo to a contest in musical skill, and was flayed alive by the God when he was defeated. (An analogue for the method of making primitive flutes,

Minerva's invention, by extracting the core from the outer sheath) (See Perugino's painting – Apollo and Marsyas – The Louvre, Paris)

Bk VI:382-400. He repents, and the tears of all those who mourn for him become a river with his name in Phrygia.

Mavors, Mars

An old name for Mars, the war god, son of Jupiter and Juno.

Bk III:528-571. Pentheus calls the Thebans the people of Mavors.

Bk VII:100-158. The field of Mars in Colchis.

Bk VIII:1-80. A term for military might.

Bk XIV:805-828. He asks for Romulus's deification.

Mavortius

Of or descended from Mars, as applied to the Thebans descended from the Echionides, the dragon's teeth of Mars sacred serpent. The *proles Mavortia*.

Bk VI:70-103. Applied to Ares's Hill in Athens, seat of the court of the Aeropagus. (see Herodotus VIII 52). Here the Olympian gods judge the rights of Poseidon-Neptune and Pallas-Athene to own and name the city of Athens. Pallas depicts the scene on her web in the contest with Arachne.

Bk VIII:425-450. Meleager as the great-grandson of Mars.

Medea

Bk VII:1-73. The daughter of Aeetes, king of Colchis and the Caucasian nymph Asterodeia. She is called Aeetias. A famous sorceress. She conceives a passion for Jason and agonises over the betrayal of her country for him. (See Gustave Moreau's painting 'Jason and Medea', Louvre, Paris: Frederick Sandys painting 'Medea', Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, England: and Castiglione's painting, 'Medea casting a spell', Wadsworth Athanaeum, Hartford, Connecticut)

Bk VII:74-99. She determines to help Jason and makes him swear on the altar of Triple Hecate to marry her. She gives him magic herbs to facilitate his tasks (probably including the Colchian crocus, meadow saffron, *colchicum autumnale*, that sprang from the blood of the tortured Prometheus. The plant is highly toxic, and the seeds and corms were collected for the extraction of the narcotic drug *colchicine*, *tinctura colchici*, used as a specific against gout.)

Bk VII:100-158. Jason carries out his tasks using the magic herbs, including magic juice (juniper?) to subdue the dragon, and takes Medea back with him to Iolchos.

Bk VII:159-178. She offers to attempt to renew Aeson's life at Jason's request.

Bk VII:234-293. She makes a magic potion and restores Aeson's youth.

Bk VII:294-349. She rejuvenates the nymphs of Mount Nysa. She then deceives Pelias's daughters and employs them to help destroy him.

Bk VII:350-403. She flees through the air with her winged dragons, making a clockwise journey round the Aegean, the Cyclades, the Peloponnese, Aetolia, and Arcadia, to reach Corinth. There she kills Glauce her rival, and then sacrifices her own sons, before fleeing to Athens where she marries King Aegeus.

Bk VII:404-424. She attempts to poison Theseus using aconite, but Aegeus recognises Theseus's sword as his own, and dashes the cup away in time. Medea vanishes in a mist conjured by her magic spells.

Medon(1)

Bk III:597-637. A seaman, companion of Acoetes.

Medon(2)

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Medusa, Phorcynis, Gorgo

One of the three Gorgons, daughter of Phorcys the wise old man of the sea. She is represented in the sky by part of the constellation Perseus, who holds her decapitated head.

Bk IV:604-662. Perseus turns Atlas to stone with her severed head.

Bk IV:706-752. He protects it from damage.

Bk V:200-249. It turns Phineus and his followers, and Proetus, and Polydectes to stone.

Bk VI:103-128. Neptune lay with her in the form of a bird, and she produced Pegasus.

Medusaeus

Bk V:200-249. Of Medusa. Her severed head.

Bk V:250-293. Bk V:294-331. The winged horse Pegasus born from her blood.

Bk X:1-85. Cerberus, as a putative child of Medusa.

Megareius heros

Bk X:638-680. Hippomenes, son of Megareus.

Megareus

Bk X:560-637. The father of Hippomenes, and grandson of Neptune, called Onchestius from the town of Onchestus near Lake Copais in Boeotia.

Melaneus(1)

Bk V:107-148. A friend of Perseus, killed in the fight with Phineus.

Melaneus(2)

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Melantho

Daughter of Deucalion.

Bk VI:103-128. Raped by Neptune as a dolphin. Depicted by Arachne.

Melanthus

Bk III:597-637. A seaman, companion of Acoetes.

Melas

Bk II:227-271. A Thracian river.

Meleager

King of Calydon, the son of Oeneus, and Althaea, daughter of Thestius.

Bk VIII:260-328. As prince, a hero of Calydon. He joins the Calydonian Boar hunt. He falls in love with Atalanta.

Bk VIII:376-424. He kills the boar.

Bk VIII:425-450. In an argument over the spoils he murders his uncles, Plexippus and Toxeus.

Bk VIII:515-546. His mother Althaea punishes him, with death, by throwing the brand, that is linked to his life, into the fire.

Bk IX:89-158. Deianira is his sister.

Meleagrides

[Bk VIII:515-546](#). The sisters of [Meleager](#). They are turned into guinea hens by [Diana](#), while mourning for their brother. The birds are the helmeted guinea fowl of Africa, *numida meleagris*, worshipped as icons of Artemis on Leros, probably the East African blue-wattled variety, not the red-wattled, tufted guinea fowl variants introduced into Italy, though wattle colour varies in Africa. The squeaky cackling of these noisy birds was taken to represent mourning, and the birds were prohibited from being eaten by devotees of Artemis or Isis.

Melicertes

The son of [Athamas](#) and [Ino](#).

[Bk IV:512-542](#). His mother Ino, maddened by [Tisiphone](#) and the sight of her son [Learchus](#)'s death, at the hands of his father, leaps into the sea with him. He is changed by [Neptune](#), at [Venus](#)'s request, into the sea-god [Palaemon](#).

Memnon

The son of [Tithonus](#) and [Aurora](#), fought for [Troy](#) in the Trojan War with Greece.

[Bk XIII:576-622](#). He was killed by [Achilles](#), but his mother [Aurora](#) begged [Jupiter](#) for funeral honours, and he created the warring flock of birds, the [Memnonides](#), from his ashes.

Memnonides

[Bk XIII:576-622](#). The birds that sprang from [Memnon](#)'s ashes, fated to appear annually and enact the [Trojan](#) War in a battle of the birds as a ritual ceremony in memory of Memnon.

Mendesius

Of Mendes, a city in Egypt.

[Bk V:107-148](#). An epithet of [Celadon](#).

Menelaüs

The younger son of [Atreus](#), brother of [Agamemnon](#), hence called [Atrides](#) *minor*.

Paris's theft of his wife Helen instigated the Trojan War.

Bk XII:579-628. Bk XIII:1-122. He does not dare to compete for the arms of Achilles.

Bk XIII:123-381. He is part of the embassy to the Trojan senate when Ulysses demands the return of Helen.

Bk XV:143-175. He killed Euphorbus in the Trojan War, an incarnation of Pythagoras.

Menephron

Bk VII:350-403. An Arcadian who committed incest with his mother on Mount Cyllene.

Menoetes

Bk XII:64-145. A Lycian, killed by Achilles.

Menthe

Bk X:708-739. A nymph loved by Proserpina who turned her into a herb, the mint.

Mercury, Mercurius, Hermes

Bk I:689-721. The messenger god, Hermes, son of Jupiter and the Pleiad Maia, the daughter of Atlas. He is therefore called Atlantiades. His birthplace was Mount Cyllene, and he is therefore called Cyllenius. He has winged feet, and a winged cap, carries a scimitar, and has a magic wand, the caduceus, with twin snakes twined around it, that brings sleep and healing. The caduceus is the symbol of medicine. (See Botticelli's painting Primavera.) He is summoned by Jupiter to lull Argus to sleep and kills him.

Bk II:676-701. Called Atlantiades and son of Maia (Atlantis). He steals Apollo's cattle and turns Battus the countryman into a touchstone (flint, the 'informer').

Bk I:689-721. Mercury lulls Argus to sleep and kills him.

Bk II:708-736 . Sees Herse in the sacred procession.

Bk II:737-751. Called the grandson of Atlas and Pleione. Elicits help from Aglauros to seduce Herse.

BkII:812-832. Mercury turns Aglauros to stone.

Bk IV:274-316. Hermaphroditus is his son by Venus-Aphrodite.

Bk IV:346-388. With Venus he grants Hermaphroditus's prayer that the pool of Salmacis weaken anyone bathing there.

Bk IV:753-803. Perseus builds an altar to him.

Bk V:149-199. Perseus employs the curved scimitar Mercury has given him.

Bk VIII:611-678. Disguised as a mortal he visits Philemon and Baucis with Jupiter, his father.

Bk XI:266-345. He loves Chione, and she bears him Autolycus.

Bk XIII:123-381. The divine father of Ulysses through Mercury's seduction of Autolycus's daughter, Anticleia, Ulysses's mother, and wife of Laërtes.

Bk XIV:223-319. He gives his son Ulysses the plant *moly* to protect him from Circe's spells.

Meriones

A companion of [Idomeneus](#), from [Crete](#).

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). He does not compete for the arms of [Achilles](#).

Mermeros

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur. Noted for his fleetness of foot.

Merops

[Bk I:747-764](#). King of Ethiopia, husband of [Clymene](#). Putative father of [Phaethon](#).

[Bk II:178-200](#). Phaethon regrets he is not merely Merops's son.

Messanius

[Bk XIV:1-100](#). Of Messana, a city in Sicily.

Messapius

[Bk XIV:512-526](#). Of the Messapians, a people of lower Italy. Calabrian.

Messenia, Messene

[Bk II:676-701](#). The country and city in the western [Peloponnese](#).

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children. It is described as warlike.

[Bk XII:536-579](#). [Hercules](#) razed its walls.

Mestra

[Bk VIII:725-776](#). The daughter of [Erysichthon](#), grand-daughter of Triopas, and wife of [Autolycus](#) who possessed the power of shape-changing.

[Bk VIII:843-884](#). [Neptune](#) took her virginity and in turn gave her the power to deceive. It saves her from becoming a slave, or prostituting herself.

Methymnaeus

Bk XI:1-66. Of Methymna, one of the cities of Lesbos.

Metion

Bk V:74-106. The father of Phorbas, of Syene.

Midas

The king of Phrygia, son of Gordius and Cybele, called Berecyntius heros from Mount Berecyntus in Phrygia, sacred to Cybele.

Bk XI:85-145. In reward for returning Silenus to him, Bacchus grants Midas a gift. He chooses the golden touch, and when it plagues him Bacchus takes it away again. He is instructed to bathe in the waters of the Pactolus to cleanse himself. (Lines 131-141 suggest that Ovid was aware of early confession and baptism rites, from Christianity or some other religion, or, less likely, that there has been rewriting by a later Christian scribe)

[Bk XI:146-171](#). [Bk XI:172-193](#). [Phoebus](#) gives him the ears of an ass, and a servant gives away the secret

Miletis

[Bk IX:595-665](#). [Byblis](#), the daughter of [Miletus](#).

Miletus, Deionides

The son of [Phoebus](#) and the nymph Deione, founder of the city of Miletus in [Caria](#) in Asia Minor.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). He flees from [Minos](#) and [Crete](#) to Asia Minor. There he loves [Cyaneë](#), who gives birth to [Byblis](#) and [Caunus](#).

Milon

[Bk XV:199-236](#). An athlete of [Crotona](#). He bemoans old age.

Mimas

[Bk II:201-226](#). A mountain range in [Ionia](#).

Minerva, Pallas, Athene

Bk II:531-565. The Roman name for Athene the goddess of the mind and women's arts (also a goddess of war and the goddess of boundaries – see the Stele of Athena, bas-relief, Athens, Acropolis Museum)

Bk II:566-595. Saves Cornix her servant from rape and turns her into the Crow.

Bk II:708-736. Athens is her sacred city.

Bk II:752-786 . She calls on Envy to punish Aglauros.

Bk IV:31-54. She is the goddess of weaving and working in wool.

Bk IV:753-803. Perseus builds an altar to her. He tells how she changed Medusa's hair to snaky locks because Neptune had violated the girl in her temple.

Bk V:250-293. She visits the Muses on Helicon to see the fountain of Hippocrene.

Bk V:642-678. Her sacred city is Athens.

BkVI:1-25. She is offended by Arachne's rejection of her.

Bk VI:382-400. She invented the flute.

Bk VIII:236-259. She changes Talus, Daedalus's nephew, into the partridge, *perdix perdix*.

Bk VIII:260-328. The Athenians call on her as goddess of war. King Oeneus of Calydon offers libations of oil from the olive harvest to her.

Bk VIII:611-678. Philemon and Baucis are visited by the gods, Jupiter and Mercury, disguised as mortals, and offer them the olives of pure Minerva as part of their meal.

Bk XIII:1-122. Ulysses and Diomede stole her sacred image the Palladium from her sanctuary in Phrygia.

Bk XIII:640-674. The olive is her gift.

Bk XIV:445-482. She punished the Greeks on the way back from Troy because of Ajax's rape of virgin Cassandra.

Bk XIV:445-482. She rescues Diomede on his way back from Troy.

Bk XV:307-360. The Hyperboreans cover their bodies with plumage by plunging nine times in Minerva's pool.

Bk XV:622-745. Her promontory near Capri.

Minois

Bk VII:159-178. Ariadne, the daughter of Minos.

Minos

Bk VII:453-500. The King of Crete, ruler of a hundred cities. Son of Jupiter and Europa. he prepares for war with Athens after his son Androgeos is killed by Aegeus. He obtains the allegiance of many of the islands of the Aegean, but fails to win over Aeacus at Aegina.

Bk VII:501-613. He is assumed to be seeking control of all Greece.

Bk VIII:1-80. He attacks Megara.

Bk VIII:81-151. Scylla, the daughter of King Nisus betrays the city to him out of love, but he rejects her and sails away. Scylla berates him and reminds him of his wife Pasiphaë's illicit love for the bull from the sea, and her bearing of his son Asterion, the Minotaur. He imposes

laws on the conquered peoples. The Cretans said that Minos made their laws, and was divinely inspired, see Pausanias III ii.

Bk VIII:152-182. He sacrifices to Jove on returning to Crete, and imprisons his shameful son, the Minotaur, in the labyrinth built by Daedalus.

Bk VIII:183-235. He keeps Daedalus effectively a prisoner, but Daedalus plans his escape.

Bk VIII:260-328. He makes war on King Cocalus of Sicily where Daedalus has taken refuge after his escape from Crete.

Bk IX:418-438. Jupiter, recognising his love of justice, wishes he could enjoy perpetual youth.

Bk IX:439-516. In old age he fears Miletus who flees of his own accord to Asia Minor.

Minotauros, Asterion

Bk VIII:152-182. The son of Pasiphaë, wife of Minos, and the white bull from the sea. A man-headed bull, imprisoned in the Labyrinth built

by [Daedalus](#) at [Cnossos](#) and destroyed by [Theseus](#). (See the sculpture and drawings of Michael Ayrton, and Picasso's variations on the theme in the Vollard Suite)

Minturnae

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A city of [Latium](#) on the border of Campania. The chief [Tyrrhenian](#) river-port of the [Ausoni](#), becoming a Roman colony in 295BC, crossed by the Appian Way. (Near modern Minturno, and built amidst malarial marshes formed by the overflowing River Garigliano, the ancient Liris. Here the proscribed Marius, taken prisoner in 88BC, daunted the would-be assassin sent by Sulla.)

Minyas, Minyae, Minyeïdes, Minyeïas (Alcithoë), Minyeïas proles

[Bk IV:1-30](#). The Minyae, a people named from their king Minyas who ruled [Orchomenus](#) in [Boeotia](#).

Bk IV:31-54. His three daughters, the Minyeïdes, Alcithoë, Arsippe and Leuconoë, reject Bacchus.

Bk IV:389-415. They are changed into bats.

Book VI:675-721. Bk VII:1-73. Bk VII:100-158. A name for the Argonauts since they sailed from Iolchos in Minyan territory.

Misenus

Bk XIV:101-153. A mortal son of Aeolus, a trumpeter of Aeneas. He lost his life near Cumae and was buried there. (He gave his name to Cape Miseno between Naples and Ischia).

Mithridates

Bk XV:745-842. King of Pontus. Mithridates the Great, sixth king of Pontus of that name, defeated by Lucullus and Pompey. Caesar crushed his son Pharnaces in a swift battle at Zela in 47BC (So swift a victory that Caesar

spoke the famous words ‘*veni, vidi, vici* ‘ = ‘I came, I saw, I conquered.’).

Mnemonides

Bk V:250-293. The nine Muses, the daughters of Mnemosyne, Memory.

Mnemosyne

The mother, by Jupiter, of the nine Muses.

Bk VI:103-128. Arachne depicts how Jupiter lay with her as a shepherd.

Molossus

Bk I:199-243. Belonging to the Molossi, a people of Epirus.

Bk XIII:705-737. Munichus the king was attacked by robbers and his palace set on fire. To save his family Jupiter changed them into birds.

Molpeus

Bk V:149-199. Of Chaonia, a friend of Phineus, wounded by Perseus.

Monychus

Bk XII:429-535. A centaur.

Mopsopius

Bk V:642-678. Bk VI:401-438. Athenian. From Mopsopus an ancient king.

Mopsus

The son of Ampyx. Ampycides. A soothsayer among the Lapithae.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:329-375. He strikes the boar but Diana steals the point of his spear in flight.

Bk XII:429-535. He fights at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, and sees Caeneus transformed into a bird with tawny wings.

Morpheus

The son of [Somnus](#). A god of Dreams.

[Bk XI:573-649](#). He is sent as a dream-messenger to [Alcyone](#) in the form of her husband [Ceyx](#).

[Bk XI:650-709](#). He reveals himself as Ceyx in a dream and tells her of his death.

Mulciber

[Bk II:1-30](#). A name for [Vulcan](#), the smith, as a metal-worker.

(See Milton's Paradise Lost Book I, as the architect of the towers of Heaven. 'From Morn to Noon he fell...')

[Bk IX:211-272](#). A synonym for fire. He consumes the mortal part of [Hercules](#).

[Bk IX:418-438](#). He wishes a second life for his son [Erichthonius](#).

[Bk XIV:527-565](#). A synonym for fire. His flames burn [Aeneas](#)'s fleet.

Munychius

Bk II:708-736 . Of Munychia, the Athenian port, hence Athenian.

Muses

Bk II:201-226. The nine Muses are the virgin daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne (Memory). They are the patronesses of the arts. Clio(History), Melpomene(Tragedy), Thalia(Comedy), Enterpe(Lyric Poetry), Terpsichore(Dance), Calliope(Epic Poetry), Erato(Love Poetry),Urania(Astronomy), and Polyhymnia(Sacred Song). Mount Helicon is hence called Virgineus. Their epithets are Aonides, and Thespiades.

Bk V:250-293. Mount Helicon is one of their haunts.

Bk V:642-678. Calliope wins the singing contest with the Emathides (Pierides), and the Muses change the Emathides into magpies.

BkVI:1-25. Minerva approves their song.

Bk X:143-219. Calliope is the mother of Orpheus, and inspires him.

Bk XV:622-745. Ovid invokes them.

Mutina

Bk XV:745-842. A city in Cisalpine Gaul. Antony fought Decimus Brutus there, and was in turn defeated by Octavian in 43BC.

Mycale(1)

Bk II:201-226. A promontory in Ionia.

Mycale(2)

Bk XII:245-289. A Thessalian witch, the mother of Orios, who could draw down the moon with her incantations.

Mycenae

The city in the [Argolis](#), near [Argos](#) and Tiryns. Excavated by Schliemann who opened the beehive tombs of the royal tomb circle. Famous for its Lion Gate once topped perhaps by a statue of the Cretan Great Goddess.

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children.

[Bk XV:418-452](#). A symbol of vanished power.

Mycenis

A woman of [Mycenae](#).

[Bk XII:1-38](#). [Iphigenia](#).

Myconos

An island in the [Cyclades](#), near [Delos](#). Described as low-lying.

[Bk VII:453-500](#). Allied to [Crete](#).

Mygdonis, Mygdonius

[Bk II:227-271](#). Of the Mygdonians, a [Thracian](#) people.

[Bk VI:26-69](#). They emigrated to [Phrygia](#) in Asia Minor, near Lydia, hence = Phrygian.

Myrmidones

The Myrmidons, a race of men created out of ants. Led by [Achilles](#) to the war against [Troy](#).

[Bk VII:614-660](#). Created from ants on the island of [Aegina](#) by [Jupiter](#), and named after the Greek word for an ant, *μύρμηξ*.

Myrrha

The daughter of [Cinyras](#), mother of [Adonis](#), incestuously, by her father.

[Bk X:298-355](#). She conceives an incestuous passion for her father.

[Bk X:356-430](#). She attempts suicide, and is rescued by her nurse who promises to help her.

[Bk X:431-502](#). She sleeps with her father, is impregnated by him, and when discovered flees

to [Sabaea](#), and is turned into the myrrh-tree, weeping resin. Adonis is born from the tree.

Myscelus

The son of [Alemon](#) of [Argos](#), and founder of [Crotona](#).

[Bk XV:1-59](#). The story of his founding of the city.

Mysus, Mysia, Mysian

[Bk II:227-271](#). Of the country of Mysia in Asia Minor containing the city of Pergamum.

[Bk XII:64-145](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). Contains the city of Mysian [Thebes](#).

[Bk XV:259-306](#). The river there, that flows underground to appear as the [Caicus](#).

Nabateus

Of Nabatea, a country in Arabia containing Petra.

[Bk V:149-199](#). [Ethemon](#) comes from there.

Naiades, Naides (singular Naias, Nais)

[Bk II:301-328](#). The water nymphs, demi-goddesses of the rivers, streams and fountains. The Italian nymphs of the River Po bury [Phaethon](#)'s body and compose his epitaph.

[Bk III:339-358](#). [Liriope](#) gives birth to [Narcissus](#).

[Bk III:474-510](#). They mourn for Narcissus, as his sisters.

[Bk IV:31-54](#). Ovid mentions a Naiad whose spells turned youths to fish until she herself was also changed.

[Bk IV:274-316](#). The Naiads nurse [Hermaphroditus](#).

[Bk VI:313-381](#). Country people dedicate altars to them.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). They consecrate the broken-off horn of [Acheloüs](#).

[Bk IX:89-158](#). A Naiad serves food to Acheloüs's guests.

[Bk X:1-85](#). A crowd of Naiads accompany [Eurydice](#).

Bk X:503-559. They assist at the birth of Adonis.

Bk XI:1-66. They mourn for Orpheus.

Bk XIII:576-622. River-fogs are exhaled by the naiads.

Bk XIV:320-396. They are attracted by Picus.

Bk XIV:527-565. Cybele turns Aeneas's ships into naiads.

Bk XIV:772-804. They inhabit the springs by the temple of Janus in Ausonia.

Nar

Bk XIV:320-396. A river of Umbria.

Narcissus

Bk III:339-358. The son of the Naiad Liriope and the river-god Cephisus.

Bk III:359-401. He rejects Echo out of pride and self-love and she wastes away.

Bk III:402-436. He falls in love with his own reflected image. (See the painting by Caravaggio- Palazzo Barberini, Rome).

[Bk III:437-473](#). He laments the pain of unrequited love.

[Bk III:474-510](#). He turns into the narcissus flower.

Narycius

Of Naryx, a city of the Locrians of Central Greece.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). Home of [Lelex](#), present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). A city of [Ajax](#).

[Bk XV:622-745](#). The Italian city of Narycia, probably Locri (near modern Locri), at the toe of Italy, the famous *Locri Epizephyrii*, founded by Greek colonists in 710BC or 683BC. It was the first Greek city to possess a written code of laws, and was praised by Pindar as a model of good government. It contained a sanctuary of [Persephone](#). Cicero mentions that Dionysius the Elder, Tyrant of Syracuse, pillaged the temple of Proserpina at Locri. ('On the Nature of the Gods BkIII 82')The Locrians conquered the

Crotonians, allied themselves to Syracuse, and finally surrendered to Rome in 205BC.

Nasamoniacus

Of the Nasamones, a Libyan people living south west of Cyrenaïca.

Bk V:107-148. Dorylas, is their richest man. It is a spice country.

Naupliades

Bk XIII:1-122. Palamades son of Nauplius.

Nauplius

Bk XIII:1-122. A king of Euboea, father of Palamades. See Caphareus.

Naxos

Bk III:597-637. The largest island of the Cyclades, and the home of Bacchus.

Nedymnus

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Neleius

[Bk XII:536-578](#). [Nestor](#), the son of [Neleus](#).

Neleus

[Bk II:676-701](#). King of [Pylos](#), son of [Neptune](#) and the nymph Tyro. Father of [Nestor](#) and his eleven brothers including [Periclymenus](#).

[Bk XII:536-579](#). Neptune founded his bloodline.

Neleüs

Belonging to Neleus.

[Bk VI:401-438](#). The city of [Pylos](#), founded by him.

Nelides

Bk XII:536-579. The twelve sons of Neleus. They were killed by Hercules, all except Nestor.

Nemeaeus

Of Nemea, a town in Argolis.

Bk IX:159-210. In the First Labour, Hercules destroys the Nemean Lion and takes its pelt that is proof against stone, bronze, and iron. He wrestled with it and choked it to death.

Bk IX:211-272. Hercules spreads the lion's pelt, and lies down on it, on the summit of his funeral pyre.

Nemesis, Rhamnusia

Bk III:402-436. Bk XIV:623-697. The Goddess of retribution. She punishes mortal pride and arrogance (*hubris*) on behalf of the gods.

Neoptolemus

Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles.

Bk XIII:429-480. He watches the sacrifice of Polyxena to appease his father's ghost.

Nephele(1)

Bk III:165-205. One of Diana's nymphs.

Nephele(2)

Bk XI:194-220. The wife of Athamas, mother of Phrixus and Helle.

Nepheleis

Bk XI:194-220. Helle, the daughter of Nephele.

Neptunius

Bk IX:1-88. An epithet of Theseus as the supposed son of Neptune.

Neptunus, Neptune, Poseidon

Bk I:274-292. God of the sea, brother of Pluto and Jupiter. The trident is his emblem. He helps

to initiate the Great Flood (see Leonardo Da Vinci's notebooks for the influence of Book I on his descriptions of the deluge, and his drawing Neptune with four sea-horses, Royal Library, Windsor: See the Neptune Fountain by Bartolomeo Ammannati, Piazza della Signoria, Florence.)

[Bk II:227-271](#). Cannot lift his head or arms from the sea because of the heat of the sun chariot when [Phaethon](#) falls.

[Bk IV:512-542](#). At the request of [Venus](#), he changes [Ino](#) and her son into sea-deities.

[Bk IV:753-803](#). He raped [Medusa](#) in the temple of [Minerva](#), fathering [Pegasus](#) and [Chrysaor](#), for which Minerva filled Medusa's hair with snakes.

[Bk VI:70-103](#). [Pallas](#) Athene depicts the ancient dispute between herself and Neptune-Poseidon as to their rights to [Athens](#). Poseidon made a 'sea', a well of seawater on the Acropolis, but Athene planted an olive-tree and asked [Cecrops](#) to witness her claim to the land. She was judged

by the Gods to have the right to the city. (See Herodotus VIII 55, and Apollodorus III 14,1)

Bk VI:103-128. Arachne depicts his rapes of Canace, Iphimedia, Theophane, Ceres, Medusa, and Melantho.

Bk VIII:547-610. He turns Perimele into an island.

Bk VIII:843-884. He gives Mestra the power to change her shape.

Bk X:560-637. Bk X:638-680. Hippomenes is descended from him, through Megareus.

Bk XI:194-220. He and Apollo build the walls of Troy for Laomedon. He floods the land when Laomedon refuses to pay, and demands the sacrifice of Hesione to a sea-monster.

Bk XII:1-38. He is thought to be protecting Troy.

Bk XII:64-145. Cygnus(3) is his son, and is turned by him into a white swan, when Achilles defeats him.

Bk XII:536-579. He gave Periclymenus, his descendant the power to change shape.

Bk XIII:789-869. The father of Polyphemus and the Cyclopes.

Nereids

Bk I:293-312. The fifty mermaids, attendants on Thetis. they are the daughters of Doris and Nereus. They are astonished by the Flood.

Bk II:1-30 Depicted on the palace of the Sun.

Bk V:1-29. Their ruler is Neptune.

Bk XI:346-409. They have a temple at Trachin in Thessaly. Psamathe is one of them.

Bk XIII:898-968. Galatea swims off with them.

Bk XIV:223-319. They are servants of Circe.

Nereïis

Bk XI:221-265. Bk XII:64-145. A sea nymph, a daughter of Nereus. Thetis.

Bk XIII:738-788. Bk XIII:789-869. Galatea.

Nereïus

Bk VII:661-759. Belonging to Nereus. Used of Phocus.

Bk XIII:123-381. Thetis, *genetrix Nereia*.

Neretum

Bk XV:1-59. A town in Calabria.

Nereus

Bk I:177-198. A sea-god. The husband of Doris, and, by her, the father of the fifty Nereids, the mermaids attendant on Thetis.

Bk II:227-271. Hides from the sun chariot's heat.

Bk XI:346-409. He has a temple near Trachin in Thessaly.

Bk XII:64-145. He is ruled by Neptune.

Bk XIII:738-788. He is Galatea's father.

Neritius

Bk XIII:705-737. Of Neritos, a mountain in Ithaca, and a small island nearby passed by Aeneas. = Ithacan.

Bk XIV:154-222. Macareus comes from there.

Bk XIV:527-565. Ulysses.

Nessus

Bk IX:89-158. A centaur, the son of Ixion. He attempts to steal Hercules's bride Deianira, and is killed by Hercules, who reminds him of his father Ixion's punishment in Hades, tied to a wheel. Dying he soaks his shirt in blood mixed with the Hydra's poison, from Hercules's arrow that has killed him, and gives it to Deianira, telling her it will revive a dying love.

Bk XII:290-326. He is present at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs where Asbolus the augur foretells his fate.

Bk XII:429-535. He kills Cymelus in the battle.

Nestor

King of Pylos, son of Neleus.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:329-375. He escapes the boar's charge by vaulting into a tree.

[Bk XII:146-209](#). He tells the story of [Caeneus-Caenis](#). He is noted for his eloquence and wisdom.

[Bk XII:536-579](#). He tells of the evil deeds of [Hercules](#), and the death of his brother [Periclymenus](#).

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). Abandoned by [Ulysses](#) on the battlefield but rescued.

Nileus

[Bk V:149-199](#). An opponent of [Perseus](#), who boasted of his descent from [Nilus](#) the river god of the Nile, turned to stone by the [Gorgon's](#) head.

Nilus

[Bk I:416-437](#). The river Nile and its god. The river was noted for its seasonal flooding in ancient times.(See the Hellenistic sculpture, ‘The Nile’, in the Vatican, from the Temple of [Isis](#) in the Campus Martius, Rome)

[Bk I:722-746](#). Provides a sanctuary for [Io](#).

[Bk II:227-271](#). Its mouths dried up by the sun chariot when [Phaethon](#) falls. Hides its head. (Its source unknown in ancient times).

[Bk V:149-199](#). Seven-mouthed, the source of [Nileus](#)'s people.

[Bk V:294-331](#). Seven-mouthed, a refuge for the gods.

[Bk IX:764-797](#). Seven-mouthed, protected by [Isis-Io](#).

[Bk XV:745-842](#). Sailed by [Caesar](#)'s victorious fleet. He defeated Ptolemy XIII and placed [Cleopatra](#) on the throne of Egypt in 47BC.

Ninus

[Bk IV:55-92](#). Shamshi-Adad V, King of Assyria. The husband of [Semiramis](#), historically Sammuamat, Queen of Babylon. She reigned after him as regent from 810-805 BC.

Niobe

The daughter of the [Phrygian](#) king [Tantalus](#), and Dione one of the [Pleiades](#), daughters of [Atlas](#). The wife of [Amphion](#), king of [Thebes](#).

[Bk VI:146-203](#). She rejects [Latona](#) and boasts of her children.

[Bk VI:204-266](#). Her seven sons are killed by [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#), the children of Latona(Leto), and her husband commits suicide.

[Bk VI:267-312](#). Still unrepentant, her daughters are also killed, and she is turned to stone and set on top of a mountain in her native country of [Lydia](#) where she weeps eternally. (A natural stone feature exists above the valley of the Hermus, on Mount [Sipylus](#), which weeps when the sun strikes its winter cap of snow – See Freya Stark ‘Rome on the Euphrates’ p9.)

Niseia virgo

Scylla, the daughter of Nisus.

Nisus

[Bk VIII:1-80](#). The King of Megara, besieged by [Minos](#). He had a purple lock of hair on his head, on which his life, and the safety of his kingdom, depended. His daughter was [Scylla](#).

[Bk VIII:81-151](#). Scylla cuts off the sacred lock and betrays the city. He is turned into the white-tailed eagle or sea eagle, *haliaeetus albicilla*, while she becomes the rock dove, *columba livia*, which is the common prey of the sea eagle, and no doubt nested on the rocks of the citadel of Megara or its coastline. The sea eagle does not hover but has a flapping flight like a heron or vulture, and soars and dives from the air. See the entry on [Scylla](#) for further information.

Nixi

[Bk IX:273-323](#). The three guardian deities of women in labour. Their statues stood in the Capitol in Rome, representing the gods kneeling. They are companions of [Lucina](#),

goddess of childbirth, whom [Alcmena](#) calls out to in childbirth.

Nixus genu

[Bk VIII:152-182](#). The constellation of [Hercules](#), ‘the one with knee bent’.

Noëmon

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). A [Lycian](#), killed by [Ulysses](#).

Nonacria, Nonacrinas, Nonacris

[Bk I:689-721](#). Mount Nonacris in [Arcadia](#). Also a town in the same region.

[Bk II:401-416](#). Home of [Callisto](#) the Arcadian nymph and follower of [Diana](#).

[Bk VIII:425-450](#). The home of [Atalanta](#)(1), the warrior girl.

Noricus

Of Noricum, a country lying between the Danube and the Alps.

Bk XIV:698-771. Known for its well-tempered steel.

Notus

Bk I:244-273. The south wind, that brings rain.

Nox

Bk IV:416-464. Bk XI:573-649. Bk XV:1-59. The goddess of night, daughter of Chaos and mother of the Furies. She scatters the dew of sleep.

Bk XIV:397-434. Circe summons her and the gods of Night.

Numa Pompilius

Bk XV:1-59. The second king of Rome. He searches for knowledge.

He hears the story of the founding of Crotona.

Bk XV:479-546. Having been instructed by Pythagoras, he returns to Latium, rules there, teaches the arts of peace, and dies. His wife is Egeria, the nymph.

Numicius

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). A small river in [Latium](#).

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). The river-god purges [Aeneas](#) of his mortality.

Numidae

[Bk XV:745-842](#). A people in North Africa, conquered by [Caesar](#) at the battle of Thaspus.

Numitor

[Bk XIV:772-804](#). The king of [Alba](#), driven from the throne by his brother [Amulius](#) and reinstated by [Romulus](#).

Nycteis

[Antiope](#), daughter of the [Boeotian](#) king Nycteus, mother by [Jupiter](#) of Zethus and [Amphion](#).

[Bk VI:103-128](#). Her rape by Jupiter as a [satyr](#) depicted by [Arachne](#).

Nyctelius

Bk IV:1-30. An epithet of Bacchus from the performance of his rituals at night.

Nycteus

Bk XIV:483-511. A companion of Diomedes. Venus transforms him into a bird. (Note: not the father of Antiope)

Nyctimene

Bk II:566-595. The daughter of Epopeus king of Lesbos who unknowingly slept with her father. She fled to the woods and was changed by Minerva to her sacred bird the Little Owl, often depicted on ancient Athenian coins.

Nymphae

Bk I:177-198. The nymphs. Semi-divine maidens inhabiting rivers, springs, seas, hills,

trees and woodlands, or attendants on greater deities.

[Bk III:359-380](#). The mountain nymphs often lie with [Jupiter](#).

[Bk IX:324-393](#). [Lotis](#) is a nymph changed to a lotus tree when pursued by [Priapus](#).

[Bk XIII:675-704](#). They are depicted weeping on [Alcon](#)'s cup.

[Bk XIV:223-319](#). They are servants of [Circe](#).

[Bk XIV:512-526](#). A shepherd is transformed into the wild olive tree for mocking their dance.

Nysa, Nyseïdes

[Bk III:273-315](#). [Heliconian](#) Mount Nysa. The Nyseïds were the nymphs Macris, Erato, Bromie, Bacche and Nysa who hid [Bacchus](#) in their cave and nurtured him. They became the [Hyades](#).

[Bk VII:294-349](#). [Medea](#) restores their youth.

Nyseus

[Bk IV:1-30](#). An epithet of [Bacchus](#), from Mount [Nysa](#).

Oceanus

[Bk II:508-530](#). [Bk XV:1-59](#). The Ocean, personified as a sea-god, son of Earth and Air, and husband of [Tethys](#) his sister. Oceanus and Tethys are also the [Titan](#) and Titaness ruling the planet Venus. Some say from his waters all living things originated and Tethys produced all his children. Visited by [Juno](#) for help in punishing [Callisto](#).

[Bk IX:439-516](#). He married his sister, Tethys.

[Bk XIII:898-968](#). With Tethys, he purges [Glaucus](#).

Ocyrhoë

Bk II:633-675. Daughter of Chiron the Centaur and the water-nymph Chariclo, and named after the river where she was born.

A prophetess of Apollo, she foretells Aesculapius's fate and that of her father Chiron. She is turned into a horse by the gods for her pains.

Odrysius

Bk VI:486-548. An epithet from a tribe in Thrace, used for Thracian.

Bk XIII:481-575. Polymestor, the Thracian king.

Oeagrius, Oeagrus

Bk II:201-226. Of Oeagrus an ancient king of Thrace. Supposedly the father of Orpheus and of Linus his brother. Their mother was the Muse Calliope.

Oebalides, Oebalius

[Bk X:143-219](#). [Bk XIII:382-398](#). [Spartan](#), from Oebalus, king of [Sparta](#). See [Hyacinthus](#).

Oechalia

A city in [Euboea](#).

[Bk IX:89-158](#). Ruled by King [Eurytus](#) who offered his daughter [Iole](#) to whoever won an archery contest, but he refused [Hercules](#) the prize. Hercules killed his eldest son Iphitus, and fell in love with Iole. He had to appease [Jove](#) for this breach of his role as a guest.

[Bk IX:324-393](#). [Bk IX:324-393](#). Iole's city.

Oechalides

[Bk IX:324-393](#): The women of [Oechalia](#).

Oeclides

[Amphiaräus](#) as the son of Oecleus.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Oedipodioniae

Bk XV:418-452. An epithet of Thebes, as the city of Oedipus.

Oeneus

King of Calydon, son of Parthaon, husband of Althaea, father of Meleager, Tydeus, and Deianira.

Bk VIII:260-328. He slights Diana, and she sends the wild boar against him.

Bk VIII:451-514. Althaea ends the life of their son, Meleager.

Bk IX:1-88. Hears the suitors for Deianira's hand.

Oenides

A male descendant of Oeneus.

Bk VIII:376-424. Meleager, son of Oeneus, brother of Tydeus.

Bk XIV:512-526. Diomede, grandson of Oeneus, son of Tydeus.

Oenopia

Bk VII:453-500. Bk VII:453-500. An older name for the island of Aegina.

Oetaeus

Bk XI:346-409. An epithet of king Ceyx, because Trachin his city was near Mount Oeta.

Oete, Oeta

Bk I:313-347. A mountain range between Aetolia and Thessaly.

Bk IX:159-210. Bk IX:159-210. Hercules endures the torment of the shirt of Nessus there.

Bk IX:211-272. Hercules builds his own funeral pyre there.

Oileus

[Bk XII:579-628](#). The king of the Locrians and father of [Ajax\(2\)](#).

Olenides

[Bk XII:429-535](#). [Tectaphus](#), the son of [Olenus](#).

Olenius(1)

[Bk III:572-596](#). Of Olenus, whose daughter Aege is identified with [Capella](#), the ‘she-goat’, the sixth brightest star in the sky (a binary yellow giant) in the constellation Auriga, the Charioteer. Auriga is now usually associated with [Erichthonius](#), and Capella with Amaltheia who suckled the infant Zeus.

Olenius(2)

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). Of Olenos, a town in [Aetolia](#), hence Aetolian. Scene of the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Olenus

Bk X:1-85. The husband of Lethaea. She was punished for her pride in her beauty, and he chose to share her guilt. They were turned into stones on Mount Ida.

Bk XII:429-535. The father of Tectaphos?

Oliarus

An island of the Cyclades.

Bk VII:453-500. Not allied to Crete.

Olympus

Bk I:151-176. Bk XIII:738-788. A mountain in northern Thessaly supposed to be the home of the gods.

Bk VI:486-548. The heavens, themselves.

Bk VII:179-233. Medea gathers magic herbs there.

Bk IX:439-516. Jupiter is the ruler of Olympus.

Onchestius

Bk X:560-637. Of Onchestus, a city in Boeotia near Lake Copais, not far from Helicon. The home city of Megareus.

Onetor

Bk XI:346-409. A Phocian herdsman, servant of Peleus.

Opheltes

Bk III:597-637. A seaman, companion of Acoetes.

Ophias

Bk VII:350-403. Combe, daughter of Ophius.

Ophionides

Bk XII:245-289. Amycus, a centaur, son of Ophion.

Ophiuchus

[Bk VIII:152-182](#). The constellation, ‘The Serpent Holder’. See [Aesculapius](#).

Ophiusius

[Bk X:220-242](#). Of Ophiusa, an old name for [Cyprus](#).

Ops

Goddess of plenty, an old Italian deity, wife of [Saturn](#) and patroness of husbandry.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). She married her brother Saturn.

Orchamus

[Bk IV:190-213](#). King of [Babylon](#), father of [Leucothoë](#).

[Bk IV:190-213](#). Ruled Achaemenian Persia in line from [Belus](#).

Orchomenus

A city in [Boeotia](#).

Bk V:572-641. Passed by Arethusa in her flight.
Bk VI:401-438. Its ruler goes to Thebes to show sympathy for the death of Amphion and his children. It is described as fertile.

Orcus

Bk XIV:101-153. The Underworld, the house of the dead, and a name for Pluto (Dis) as the god of the Underworld.

Oreas

Bk VIII:777-842. An Oread. One of the mountain nymphs. Sent by Ceres to relay her orders to Famine.

Orestea

Bk XV:479-546. Of Orestes, son of Agamemnon, applied to Diana because Orestes took the image of Diana from Taurus to Aricia in Italy. The rites of the sanctuary there, at

Nemi, are the starting point for Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' (see Chapter I et seq.)

Orion

The mighty hunter, one of the giants, now a constellation with his two hunting dogs and his sword and glittering belt. The brightest constellation in the sky, it is an area of star formation in a nearby arm of the Galaxy centred on M42 the Orion Nebula, which marks Orion's sword. He is depicted as brandishing a club and shield at [Taurus](#) the Bull. He was stung to death by a scorpion, and now rises when [Scorpio](#) sets and vice versa. His two dogs are Canis Major, which contains Sirius the brightest star in the sky after the sun, and Canis Minor, which contains the star Procyon, forming an equilateral triangle with Sirius and Betelgeuse the red giant in Orion.

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). [Icarus](#) is warned not to fly too near the constellation.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). The stars are engraved on [Achilles](#)'s shield.

Bk XIII:675-704. Orion's daughters, Menippe and Metioche, killed themselves as an offering to the gods to relieve the city of Thebes from plague.

Orios

Bk XII:245-289. One of the Lapithae. The son of Mycale, killed by Gryneus at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Orithyia

The daughter of the Athenian king Erectheus, and the sister of Procris.

Book VI:675-721. Stolen away by Boreas, and married to him. She becomes the mother of Calais and Zetes. (See Evelyn de Morgan's painting—Boreas and Orithyia—Craggside, Northumberland)

Bk VII:661-758. Mentioned as Procris's more famous sister.

Orneus

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Orontes

[Bk II:227-271](#). A river in Syria.

Orpheus

The mythical musician of [Thrace](#), son of [Oeagrus](#) and [Calliope](#) the [Muse](#). His lyre, given to him by [Apollo](#), and invented by Hermes-[Mercury](#), is the constellation Lyra containing the star Vega.

(See John William Waterhouse's painting – Nymphs finding the head of Orpheus – Private Collection, and Gustave Moreau's painting – Orpheus – in the Gustave Moreau Museum, Paris: See Peter Vischer the Younger's Bronze relief – Orpheus and Eurydice – Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg: and the bas-relief – Hermes, Eurydice and Orpheus – a copy of a votive stele attributed to Callimachus or the school of Phidias, Naples, National

Archaeological Museum: Note also Rilke's -
Sonnets to Orpheus – and his Poem - Orpheus,
Eurydice and Hermes.)

Bk X:1-85. He summons Hymen to his
wedding with Eurydice. After she is stung by a
snake and dies he travels to Hades, to ask for
her life to be renewed. Granted it, on condition
he does not look back at her till she reaches the
upper world, he falters, and she is lost. He
mourns her, and turns from the love of women
to that of young men.

Bk X:106-142. He sings the stories of:
Ganymede, Hyacinthus, the Cerastae, the
Propoetides, Pygmalion, Myrrha, Venus and
Adonis, and through Venus's 'tale within a tale'
Atalanta and Hippomenes.

Bk XI:1-66. He is killed by the Maenads of
Thrace and dismembered, his head and lyre
floating down the river Hebrus to the sea, being
washed to Lesbos. (This head had powers of
prophetic utterance) His ghost sinks to the
fields of the Blessed where he is reunited with
Eurydice.

Bk XI:85-145. He taught Midas and Eumolpus the Bacchic rites.

Orphne

Bk V:533-571. A nymph of the Underworld, mother of Ascalaphus by Acheron.

Ortygia(1)

Bk I:689-721. An ancient name for the island of Delos, originally of an islet nearby (Quail Island), and an epithet of Diana, the Delian goddess.

Bk XV:307-360. Once a floating island.

Ortygia(2)

Bk V:487-532. Part of the city of Syracuse in Sicily on an island in the harbour.

Bk V:572-641. Arethusa is pleased by its name, since it reflects that of her goddess Diana, from her birthplace on Delos.

Osiris

The Egyptian god, Ousir, identified with [Dis](#) and [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus. A nature god, the son of Geb and Nut, born in Thebes in Upper Egypt. His consort was [Isis](#). The story is of his death initiated by his brother Set, and his resurrection thanks to Isis, Thoth, Anubis and Horus.

[Bk IX:666-713](#). He was searched for by Isis

Ossa

[Bk I:151-176](#). [Bk II:201-227](#). A mountain in [Thessaly](#) in Northern Greece.

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Medea](#) gathers magic herbs there.

[Bk XII:290-326](#). [Aphidas](#) is lying on the skin of a bear from Ossa.

Othrys

[Bk II:201-226](#). A mountain in [Thessaly](#) in Northern Greece.

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Medea](#) gathers magic herbs there.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The region where [Cerambus](#) came from.

[Bk XII:146-209](#). The region where [Caeneus](#) came from.

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A haunt of the [Centaur](#)s.

Pachynus

[Bk V:332-384](#). [Bk XIII:705-737](#). The south eastern promontory of [Sicily](#).

Pactolides

[Bk VI:1-25](#). Nymphs of the River [Pactolus](#).

Pactolus

[Bk VI:1-25](#). A river in northern [Lydia](#), a tributary of the River Hermus.

[Bk XI:85-145](#). The site of the royal capital of Lydia is at [Sardis](#) nearby, and both are near Mount [Tmolus](#). Its waters become a gold-bearing stream at the touch of [Midas](#).

Padus

[Bk II:227-271](#). The River Po in northern Italy.

Paeon

[Bk I:553-567](#). [Bk XV:479-546](#). A name for [Apollo](#) the Healer.

[Bk XIV:698-771](#). A religious hymn in his honour.

Paeones

The Paeonians, a people of northern [Macedonia](#).

[Bk V:294-331](#). The native country of [Euipe](#).

Paeonius

Of [Apollo](#) as god of healing, and of [Aescalapius](#) his son.

Paestum

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A city of Lucania in Italy. The site is near modern Agropoli on the Bay of Salerno, a ruin in a wilderness, with Doric temples that surpassed those of Athens. Originally called Poseidonia, the city of [Neptune](#), it was founded by Greeks from [Sybaris](#) in the 6th c. BC. It became Paestum when it passed into the hands of the Lucanians in the 4th century. It was taken by the Romans in 273BC. In antiquity it was famous for its roses, which flowered twice a year, and its violets. Malaria eventually drove away its population.

Pagasaesus

[Bk VII:1-73](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#). Of Pagasae, a seaport of [Thessaly](#), on the Pagasaean Gulf, where the [Argo](#) was built.

[Bk VIII:329-375](#). An epithet of [Jason](#).

[Bk XII:393-428](#). [Hylonome](#) bathed in a mountain stream nearby.

Palaemon

Bk XIII:898-968. The sea god into whom Melicertes was changed.

Bk IV:512-542. Ino, his mother leaps with him into the waves, but Venus intercedes, and Neptune, at her request, changes him and his mother into sea-deities.

Palaestinus

Bk IV:31-54. Bk V:107-148. Of Palestine, identified as Syrian.

Palamedes

Bk XIII:1-122. The son of Nauplius, Naupliades. He revealed Ulysses pretence of madness and drew him into the expedition against Troy. Ulysses subsequently hid gold in Palamedes's tent, and claimed it was a bribe from Priam. Palamedes died dishonoured. Ulysses defends his action.

Palatium, Palatine, Palatinus

[BkI: 151-176](#). [Bk XV:552-621](#). The Palatine Hill, one of the seven hills of Rome, the prestigious location where Augustus built his palace, the Palatia.

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). The hill where [Venilia](#) bore [Canens](#).

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). The Romans.

[Bk XIV:805-828](#). The hill where [Mars](#) lands, and where [Romulus](#) is dispensing justice.

Palici

The sons of [Jupiter](#) and the nymph Thalia, worshipped in [Sicily](#) at Palica, where a temple and two lakes were sacred to them.

[Bk V:385-424](#). [Dis](#) passes through the sulphurous swamps there while abducting [Proserpine](#).

Palilia

Bk XIV:772-804. The feast of Pales, the god of shepherds, celebrated on April 21st, the day on which Rome was founded. (753BC)

Palladium

Bk XIII:1-122. An image of Pallas, said to have fallen from the sky at Troy. The safety of Troy depended on its preservation according to an oracle. It was stolen by Ulysses and Diomedes.

Palladius

Of Pallas.

Pallantias, Pallantis

Bk IX:418-438. Bk XV:176-198. Aurora as daughter of the Titan, Pallas.

Bk XV:622-745. The dawn.

Pallas(1), Minerva, Athene

Bk II:531-565. The goddess Athene, patron goddess of Athens. She is a representation of the Phoenician triple Goddess Astarte of Asia Minor. She was born beside lake Tritonis in Lybia and nurtured by the nymphs. She killed her playmate Pallas ('youth') when young and her name is a memorial to him. She carries the aegis, a magical goat-skin bag containing a snake and covered by a Gorgon mask. She is the goddess of the Mind and of women's arts. She hides the infant Erichthonius in a box and gives it to the daughters of Cecrops to guard.

Bk III:95-114. She instructs Cadmus to sow the dragon's teeth.

Bk III:115-137. And then ends the war of the earth-born warriors.

Bk V:30-73. She protects Perseus with her shield, the aegis.

Bk V:332-384. She asks the Muses to sing the song they sang to defeat the Emathides.

Bk V:332-384. A virgin goddess.

[BkVI:1-25](#). The goddess of wool-working, spinning, weaving etc. who taught [Arachne](#).

[Bk VI:26-69](#). Pallas takes up Arachne's foolish challenge.

[Bk VI:70-103](#). She weaves her web. Its main feature is the Aeropagus in [Athens](#) and the court where the twelve Olympians declared her right over Neptune to the city. (see the [Neptune](#) entry)

[Bk VI:129-145](#). She turns [Arachne](#) into a spider.

[Bk VI:313-381](#). [Latona](#) has the help of her olive tree and a date palm, between which she gives birth at [Delos](#) to [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#).

[Bk VII:350-403](#). [Bk VII:661-758](#). Athens is her city.

[Bk XII:146-209](#). [Achilles](#) sacrifices to her.

[Bk XII:290-326](#). She protects [Theseus](#), according to himself.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Ulysses](#) and [Diomedes](#) stole her sacred image at [Troy](#), the [Palladium](#).

Pallas(2)

An [Athenian](#) prince, son of [Pandion](#).

[Bk VII:453-500](#). His sons [Clytos](#) and [Butes](#) go on an embassy to [Aegina](#) with [Cephalus](#).

Pallas(3)

A [Titan](#), the father of [Aurora](#).

Pan

[Bk I:689-721](#). The god of woods and shepherds. He wears a wreath of pine needles. He pursues the nymph [Syrinx](#) and she is changed into marsh reeds. He makes the syrinx or pan-pipes from the reeds. He is represented by the constellation Capricorn, the sea-goat, a goat with a fish's tail. Pan jumped into a river to escape the monster Typhon.

[Bk XI:146-171](#). He competes with [Apollo](#), but his reeds are inferior to the music of the lyre.

[Bk XIV:512-526](#). He inhabits caves.

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). Woodland deities (plural) who pursue [Pomona](#).

Panchaeus

Of Panchaia, an island east of Arabia.

[Bk X:298-355](#). The source of cinnamon, incense, myrrh etc.

[Bk X:431-502](#). The country of [Myrrha](#).

Pandion

[Bk VI:401-438](#). [Bk VI:619-652](#). A king of [Athens](#), father of [Procne](#) and [Philomela](#). He marries Procne to [Tereus](#), king of [Thrace](#).

[Bk VI:486-548](#). He entrusts his daughter Philomela to Tereus, who violates her.

[Book VI:675-721](#). The subsequent tragedy sends him to an early grave.

Pandioniae

[Bk XV:418-452](#). An epithet of [Athens](#) from its king, [Pandion](#).

Pandrosus

[Bk II:531-565](#). One of the three daughters of King [Cecrops](#).

Panomphaeus

[Bk XI:194-220](#). An epithet of [Jupiter](#) ‘as origin of all oracles’.

Panope

[Bk III:1-49](#). A city in [Phocis](#) passed by [Cadmus](#) as he follows the heifer on his way to found [Thebes](#).

Panopeus

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Panthoïdes

[Bk XV:143-175](#). [Euphorbus](#), son of Panthoüs, an incarnation of [Pythagoras](#).

Paphius

Bk X:243-297. Of Paphos, a city on Cyprus sacred to Venus-Aphrodite. Paphius heros, Pygmalion.

Paphos(1)

A city on the island of Cyprus, sacred to Venus-Aphrodite.

Bk X:243-297. Pygmalion's home city.

Bk X:503-559. A haunt of Venus.

Paphos(2)

The son of Pygmalion, and Galatea, the ivory statue that changed into a woman.

Bk X:243-297. He gave his name ('foam') to the island of Cyprus, sacred to foam-born Venus-Aphrodite.

Bk X:298-355. The father of Cinyras.

Paraetonium

Bk IX:764-797. A seaport on the coast of North Africa under the protection of Isis.

Parcae, Fates, Moerae

The Three Fates. The Three Sisters, the daughters of Night. Clotho, the spinner of the thread of life, Lachesis, chance or luck, and Atropos, inescapable destiny. Clotho spins, Lachesis draws out, and Atropos shears the thread. Their unalterable decrees may be revealed to [Jupiter](#) but he cannot change the outcome.

[Bk V:487-532](#). They have made a decree that [Persephone](#) can return to heaven so long as she has not eaten anything in the underworld, and Jupiter is subject to the decree.

[Bk VIII:451-514](#). They prophesy the span of [Meleager](#)'s life, linking it to the burning brand of wood in the fire.

Paris

Prince of [Troy](#), son of [Priam](#) and [Hecuba](#), brother of [Hector](#). His theft of [Menelaüs](#)'s wife [Helen](#) provoked the Trojan War.

Bk VII:350-403. He lies buried under a heap of sand near Mount Ida, having been shot by Philoctetes's arrows and been refused help by the nymph Oenone whom he had deserted.

Bk XII:1-38. Absent from the mourning for Aesacus. The cause of the Trojan War because of his abduction of Helen.

Bk XII:579-628. Bk XIII:481-575. With Apollo's help he destroys Achilles (shooting him through the vulnerable heel).

Bk XIII:123-381. Denounced by Ulysses in the senate-house of Troy.

Bk XV:745-842. He was once saved from death at the hands of Menelaüs, when Venus veiled him in cloud.

Parnasus, Parnassus, Parnasius

Bk I:313-347. A mountain in Phocis sacred to Apollo and the Muses. Delphi is at its foot where the oracle of Apollo and his temple were situated. Themis held the oracle in ancient times.

Bk IV:604-662. Site of the oracle of Themis.

[Bk V:250-293](#). Haunt of the Muses. (See Raphael's fresco 'Parnassus' in the Vatican, Stanza della Segnatura, which includes the figure of Ovid among the poets.)

[Bk XI:146-171](#). Its laurel crowns [Phoebus's](#) hair.

[Bk XI:266-345](#). It is the scene of [Daedalion's](#) transformation.

Paros

[Bk III:402-436](#). One of the [Cyclades](#). An island celebrated for its marble quarries.

[Bk VII:453-500](#). Allied to [Crete](#).

[Bk VIII:183-235](#). [Daedalus](#) and [Icarus](#) fly past it after leaving [Crete](#).

Parrhasis, Parrharsius

[Bk II:441-465](#). Of the town in [Arcadia](#), hence Arcadian.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). Home of [Ancaeus](#), present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Parthaon

Bk VIII:515-546. King of Calydon, father of Oeneus. His house was destroyed through Diana, and the actions of Meleager.

Bk IX:1-88. Oeneus is his son.

Parthenius

Bk IX:159-210. A mountain in Arcadia. In the Third Labour Hercules captures the Ceryneian Hind there, sacred to Diana, that had bronze hooves and golden antlers like a stag, so that some called it a stag.

Parthenope

Bk XIV:101-153. Bk XV:622-745. An ancient name for the Italian city of Naples. Aeneas and Aesculapius pass it on their way north.

Pasiphaë

Bk VIII:81-151. Bk IX:714-763. The daughter of the Sun and the nymph Crete (Perseis). She

was the wife of King [Minos](#) of Crete and mother of [Phaedra](#) and [Ariadne](#).

She was inspired, by Poseidon, with a mad passion for a white bull from the sea, and [Daedalus](#) built for her a wooden frame in the form of a cow, to entice it. From the union she produced the [Minotaur](#), Asterion, with a bull's head and a man's body.

Pasiphaëia

[Bk XV:479-546](#). [Phaedra](#), the daughter of [Pasiphaë](#).

Patara, Patareüs

[Bk I:504-524](#). A town in [Lydia](#).

Patrae

An ancient city in [Achaia](#).

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children.

Patroclus

Achilles beloved friend whose death causes him to re-enter the fight against the Trojans.

Bk XIII:123-381. He pushed the Trojans back from the Greek ships, dressed in Achilles's armour.

Pedasmus

Bk V:107-148. See Pettalus.

Pegasus

Bk IV:753-803. The winged horse, sprung from the head of Medusa when Perseus decapitated her. At the same time his brother Chrysaor the warrior was created. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Pegasus.

Bk V:250-293. The sacred fountain of Hippocrene on Mount Helicon, haunt of the Muses, springs from under his hoof.

Bk VI:103-128. Created by Neptune's union with Medusa.

Pelagon

[Bk VIII:329-375](#). One of the Calydonian Boar hunters. He is knocked down by the boar's charge.

Pelasgus, Pelasgian, Pelasgi

An ancient Greek people (Pelasgi) and their king Pelasgus, son of Phoroneus the brother of [Io](#). He is the brother of [Agenor](#) and Iasus.

[Bk VII:1-73](#). Used of Greece as a whole.

[Bk VII:100-158](#). Used of the [Argonauts](#).

[Bk XII:1-38](#). [Bk XII:579-628](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#).

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). [Bk XIV:527-565](#). The Greeks who set sail for [Troy](#).

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). They are moved by [Hecuba's](#) fate.

[Bk XV:418-452](#). They conquered Troy, but by doing so ensured that, through [Aeneas](#), [Rome](#) would conquer them, and the world.

Pelates(1)

Bk V:107-148. A companion of Phineus, struck by Corythus and killed by Abas.

Pelates(2)

Bk XII:245-289. One of the Lapithae. He kills Amycus.

Pelethronius

Bk XII:429-535. Of the region in Thessaly inhabited by Lapiths and Centaurs.

Peleus

Bk VII:453-500. The son of Aeacus, king of Aegina, brother of Telamon and Phocus. He comes to meet Minos. As the son of Aeacus, called Aeacides. The husband of Thetis and father by her of Achilles. (See Joachim Wttewael's – The Wedding of Peleus and

Thetis - Alte Pinakothek, Munich: see W.B Yeats poem 'News for the Delphic Oracle, verse III)

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:376-424. He steps in to help Telamon.

Bk XI:194-220. He is married to the goddess, Thetis.

Bk XI:221-265. He wins Thetis with the help of Proteus and they conceive the hero Achilles.

Bk XI:266-345. Bk XIII:123-381. He killed his brother Phocus and fled to Trachin, where Ceyx gave him sanctuary.

Bk XI:346-409. He fights the wolf from the marshes.

Bk XII:146-209. The father of Achilles.

Bk XII:290-326. His armour bearer was Crantor, a gift from Amyntor as a peace-pledge.

Bk XIII:1-122. He is Ajax's uncle.

Bk XV:843-870. His son Achilles surpasses him in fame.

Pelias

Bk VII:294-349. The half-brother of Aeson whom he drove from the throne of Iolchos in Thessaly. Medea pretends to rejuvenate him but instead employs his daughters to help destroy him.

Pelides

Bk XII:579-628. Achilles, the son of Peleus.

Pelion

Bk I:151-176. A mountain in Thessaly in Northern Greece.

Bk VII:179-233. Medea gathers magic herbs there.

Bk VII:350-403. Medea passes its shadowy slopes, the home of Chiron the Centaur, when fleeing.

Bk XII:64-145. Achilles's spear is made from an ash-tree of Pelion.

Bk XII:429-535. A haunt of the Centaurs.

Pellaeus

Of Pella, a city in [Macedonia](#).

[Bk V:294-331](#). The native place of [Pierus](#).

[Bk XII:245-289](#). The native city of [Pelates](#) the Lapith.

Pelopeias, Pelopeius

[Bk VI:401-437](#). [Bk VIII:611-678](#). Of [Pelops](#).

Peloponnese

The region of Southern Greece containing [Sparta](#).

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Contains [Mycenae](#).

Pelops

[Bk VI:401-438](#). The son of [Tantalus](#), and brother of [Niobe](#). He was cut in pieces and served to the gods at a banquet by his father to test their divinity. [Ceres](#)-Demeter, mourning for [Persephone](#), did not perceive the wickedness and ate a piece of the shoulder. The gods gave

him life again and an ivory shoulder. He gave his name to the [Peloponnese](#).

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). The father of [Pittheus](#), king of [Troezen](#).

Pelorus

[Bk V:332-384](#). [Bk XIII:705-737](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). A promontory on the north east coast of [Sicily](#).

Penates

[Bk III:528-571](#). The old Latin household gods, two in number, whose name derives from *penus* a larder, or storage room for food. They were closely linked to the family and shared its joys and sorrows. Their altar was the hearth, which they shared with [Vesta](#). Their images were placed at the back of the atrium in front of the Genius, the anonymous deity that protected and was the creative force in all groups and families, and, as the Genius of the head of the house and represented as a serpent, was placed

between the Lar (Etruscan guardian of the house) and Penates. At meals they were placed between the plates and offered the first food. The Penates moved with a family and became extinct if the family did.

[Bk V:149-199](#). Polluted by violence.

[Bk V:487-532](#). [Arethusa](#)'s household gods have moved with her to her new home in [Sicily](#).

[Bk V:642-678](#). [Triptolemus](#) enters the palace: *'regis subit ille penates'*.

[Bk VII:501-613](#). The people of [Aegina](#) afflicted with plague abandon their houses.

[Bk VIII:81-151](#). [Scylla](#) betrays her city and her gods.

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). [Philemon](#) and [Baucis](#) are visited by the gods, [Jupiter](#) and [Mercury](#), disguised as mortals, so that heavenly gods meet the humblest of household gods.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). The just [Minos](#) cannot deny [Miletus](#) access to his home (*'est patriis arcere penatibus ausus'*)

[Bk IX:595-665](#). [Byblis](#) flees her home.

Bk XII:536-579. Nestor's household gods overthrown by Hercules.

Bk XV:418-452. Aeneas carried his gods away from Troy.

Bk XV:843-870. Vesta is worshipped amongst Caesar's ancestral gods.

Peneis, Peneia

Of the river god Peneus.

Bk I:438-473. Bk I:525-552. Bk II:496-508. Daphne his daughter.

Bk I:525-552. His waters.

Bk XII:146-209. His fields.

Penelope, Arnea, Arnacia

The wife of Ulysses, and daughter of Icarius and the Naiad Periboa.

(See J R Spencer Stanhope's painting-Penelope – The De Morgan Foundation)

Bk VIII:260-328. Her father-in-law Laertes is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk XIII:481-575. Hecuba imagines herself Penelope's servant after Ulysses takes her as a prize at the fall of Troy.

Bk XIV:623-697. She is pestered by many suitors (a hundred and eight, in Homer), while she waits faithfully for Ulysses to return from Troy.

Peneus

Bk I:438-473. A river in Thessaly flowing from Mount Pindus through the valley of Tempe, and its river-god, the father of Daphne.

Bk I:553-567. Transforms his daughter Daphne into the laurel.

Bk I: 568-587. Receives condolences from the other river-gods after the loss of Daphne.

Bk II:227-271. Peneus scorched by the sun chariot when Phaethon loses control of it.

Bk VII:179-233. Medea gathers magic herbs there.

Pentheus

Bk III:511-527. The son of [Echion](#) and [Agave](#), the grandson of [Cadmus](#) through his mother. He is King of [Thebes](#). [Tiresias](#) foretells his fate at the hands of the [Maenads](#).

[Bk III:528-571](#). He rejects the worship of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus and orders the capture of the god.

[Bk III:572-596](#). He interrogates [Acoetes](#) the priest of [Bacchus](#).

[Bk III:692-733](#). He is torn to pieces by the [Bacchantes](#).

Peparethos

An island north of [Euboea](#) in the north western [Aegean](#).

[Bk VII:453-500](#). Not allied to [Crete](#). Rich in olives.

Perdix

[Bk VIII:236-259](#). The sister of [Daedalus](#). Her son Talus was killed by Daedalus in a fit of

jealousy, thrown from the Athenian citadel, but Pallas turned him into the partridge, which takes its name from his mother, *perdix perdix*.

Pergamum

Bk XII:429-535. Bk XII:579-628. Bk XIII:123-381.

Bk XIV:445-482. Bk XV:418-452. Pergama, the citadel of Troy. Troy itself.

Bk XIII:481-575. Hecuba mourns its end.

Pergus

Bk V:385-424 A lake in Sicily near the city of Enna.

Periclymenus

The son of Neleus, brother of Nestor and grandson of Neptune.

Bk XII:536-579. Neptune granted him the power to change shape, but Hercules killed him, when he was in the form of an eagle.

Perimele

Bk VIII:547-610. The daughter of Hippodamas, loved by the river god Acheloüs. Her father threw her into the Ionian Sea, but she was rescued by Acheloüs, and changed by Neptune into an island.

Periphas(1)

Bk VII:350-403. An ancient Attic king. He was held in such high esteem by his people that Jupiter would have killed him, but changed him into an eagle and his wife Phene into an osprey at Apollo's request.

Periphas(2)

Bk XII:429-535. One of the Lapithae.

Periphetes

Bk VII:425-452. A monstrous son of Vulcan who lived at Epidaurus killing travellers with a bronze club. He was killed by Theseus.

Perrhaebus

Bk XII:146-209. Of Perrhaebia, a district in Thessaly, hence Thessalian.

Perseis

Bk VII:74-99. Hecate, daughter of the Titan Perseus.

Perseius

Bk V:107-148. Of Perseus.

Persephone

Bk V:425-486. Proserpina, Proserpine, daughter of Ceres-Demeter.

Ceres searches for her after she is abducted by [Dis](#).

[Bk X:1-85](#). The co-ruler of the Underworld with Dis.

[Bk X:708-739](#). She turned [Menthe](#) into a herb, the mint.

Perseus

The son of [Jupiter](#) and [Danaë](#), grandson of [Acrisius](#), King of [Argos](#). He was conceived as a result of Jupiter's rape of Danaë, in the form of a shower of gold. He is represented by the constellation Perseus near [Cassiopeia](#). He is depicted holding the head of the [Medusa](#), whose evil eye is the winking star Algol. It contains the radiant of the Perseid meteor shower. His epithets are [Abantiades](#), [Acrisioniades](#), [Agenorides](#), [Danaëius](#), [Inachides](#), [Lyncides](#).

(See Burne-Jones's oil paintings and gouaches in the Perseus series particularly The Arming of Perseus, The Escape of Perseus, The Rock of Doom, Perseus slaying the Sea-Serpent, and

The Baleful Head.)(See Benvenuto Cellini's bronze Perseus - the Loggia, Florence)

Bk IV:604-662. His divine origin is rejected by Acrisius, his grandfather. He returns from defeating the Gorgon, Medusa, carrying her snaky head, that turns people to stone on sight.

Bk IV:604-662. He turns Atlas to stone with the Gorgon's head. He is equipped with the wings and curved sword (scimitar) of Mercury.

Bk IV:663-705. He offers to rescue Andromeda.

Bk IV:706-752. He defeats the sea serpent, wins Andromeda and is promised a kingdom as a dowry by Cepheus.

Bk IV:753-803. At his marriage feast he relates his adventures, the theft of the Graeae's single eye, and the taking of Medusa's head. He tells how Medusa acquired her snaky hair. He is aided by Minerva, and equipped with her bronze shield.

Bk V:30-73. He is attacked by Phineus, who escapes him. He kills Athis and Lycabas, a pair of friends and lovers.

Bk V:74-106. Bk V:107-148. He kills many of Phineus's followers.

Bk V:149-199. He is forced to use the Gorgon's head.

Bk V:200-249. He petrifies Phineus, overcomes Proetus who has seized the kingdom of his grandfather Acrisius, and petrifies him, and turns Polydectes king of Seriphus to stone.

Persis

Bk I:52-67. Persian.

Petraeus

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Pettalus, correctly Pedasmus

Bk V:107-148. A companion of Phineus, killed by Lycormas.

Peucetius

[Bk XIV:512-526](#). Of Peucetia, a region in Apulia.

Phaeaces

[Bk XIII:705-737](#)The Phaeacians, the fabled inhabitants of the island of Scheria, where Ulysses lands. See Homer's *Odyssey*. (Possibly identified with Corfu). [Aeneas](#) passes by.

Phaedimus

[Bk VI:204-266](#). One of [Niobe](#)'s seven sons killed by [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#).

Phaedra

[Bk XV:479-546](#). The daughter of King [Minos](#) of [Crete](#) and [Pasiphaë](#), sister of [Ariadne](#). She loves [Hippolytus](#) her stepson, and brings him to his death. (See Racine's play – *Phaedra*).

Phaeocomes

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Phaestias

[Bk IX:666-713](#). [Bk IX:714-763](#). Phaestius, of Phaestos, a city on the southern coast of [Crete](#).

Phaëthon

[Bk I:747-764](#). Son of [Clymene](#), daughter of [Oceanus](#) and [Tethys](#) whose husband was the Ethiopian king [Merops](#). His true father is [Sol](#), the sun-god (Phoebus). Asks his mother for proof of his divine origin.

[Bk II:31-48](#). Goes to the courts of the Sun to see his father who grants him a favour. He asks to drive the Sun chariot.

[Bk II:178-200](#). He loses control of the chariot.

[Bk II:301-328](#). He is destroyed by [Jupiter](#) in order to save the earth from being consumed by fire.

[Bk IV:214-255](#). His father remembers his death when [Leucothoë](#) dies.

Phaëthontëus

Bk IV:416-463. Of Phaethon, his fires.

Phaëthontis

Bk XII:579-628. Of Phaëthon. His bird, the swan.

Phaethüsa

Bk II:344-366. The eldest of the Heliads, the daughters of Clymene and the Sun, sisters of Phaethon, who are turned into poplar trees as they mourn for him, their tears becoming drops of amber.

Phantasos

Son of Somnus. A god of sleep.

Bk XI:573-649. He takes the shape of inanimate things.

Pharos

[Bk IX:764-797](#). An island near Alexandria in Egypt, site of the lighthouse. Protected by [Isis](#) as goddess of the sea.

[Bk XV:259-306](#). Subsequently silted up and linked to the mainland.

Pharsalia

[Bk XV:745-842](#). The region around Pharsalus, a city in [Thessaly](#), where [Julius Caesar](#) defeated Pompey the Great. (9th August 48BC)

Phasias

[Bk VII:294-349](#). An epithet of [Medea](#), from the [Phasis](#), a river of her native [Colchis](#).

Phasis

[Bk II:227-271](#). A river in [Colchis](#), in Asia, east of the Black Sea.

[Bk VII:1-73](#). Reached by the [Argonauts](#).

Phegeïus

Of Phegeus king of Psophis in [Arcadia](#). Father of Alphasiboea, the first wife of [Alcmaeon](#), who left her to marry [Callirhoë](#) and was killed by the brothers of Alphasiboea.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). His sword in his son's hands kills Alcmaeon and punishes him for the murder of [Eriphyle](#).

Phegiacus

[Bk II:227-271](#). Of the city of Phegia in [Arcadia](#).

Phene

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The wife of [Periphas](#), changed into an osprey.

Pheneos

[Bk XV:307-360](#). A place in [Arcadia](#) near Mount [Cyllene](#). See Pausanias VIII 14.

Pheretiades

Admetus, son of Pheres, king of Pherae in Thessaly.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Phiale

Bk III:165-205. One of Diana's nymphs.

Philammon

Bk XI:266-345. The son of Apollo and Chione, famous for his voice and lyre.

Philemon (and Baucis)

A pious old man of Phrygia.

Bk VIII:611-678. He is the husband of Baucis. They are visited by the gods, Jupiter and Mercury, disguised as mortals.

Bk VIII:679-724. They are both turned into trees, he into an oak, and she into a lime tree.

Philippi

Bk XV:745-842. A city in Macedonia where, during the Triumvirate in 42 BC, Octavian and Antony defeated Brutus and Cassius after the assassination of Julius Caesar.

Philoctetes

Bk IX:211-272. The son of Poeas. He lights Hercules's funeral pyre and receives from him the bow, quiver and arrows that will enable the Greeks to finally win at Troy, and that had been with Hercules when he rescued Hesione there.

Bk XIII:1-122. Bitten by a snake on Lemnos, he is abandoned there on Ulysses advice. Ulysses accepts that Philoctetes and his weapons are essential for the defeat of Troy.

Bk XIII:399-428. Ulysses brings Philoctetes and the weapons to Troy.

Philomela

The daughter of Pandion, sister of Procne, raped by her sister's husband Tereus.

[Bk VI:438-485](#). Convinces her father to allow her to visit her sister Procne, unaware of Tereus's lust for her.

[Bk VI:486-548](#). Tereus violates her, and she vows to tell the world of his crime.

[Bk VI:549-570](#). He severs her tongue and tells Procne she is dead.

[Bk VI:571-619](#). Philomela communicates with [Procne](#) by means of a woven message, and is rescued by her during the [Bacchic](#) revels.

[Bk VI:619-652](#). She helps Procne to murder [Itys](#), the son of Tereus and Procne.

[Bk VI:653-674](#). Pursued by [Tereus](#) she turns into a swallow, with a red throat. (*pectus* is translated here as throat, to correspond with the English swallow, *hirundo rustica*, though in Egypt and elsewhere this bird has a chestnut red underbody as well). Having no tongue, the swallow merely screams and flies around in circles.

Philyra

[Bk II:676-701](#). The mother of the centaur, [Chiron](#). A nymph, the daughter of [Oceanus](#) whom [Saturn](#) loved. he changed himself into a stallion and her into a mare, and their son Chiron was half-horse, half-man, and a demi-god.

[Bk VI:103-128](#). She is not referred to directly, but her union with Saturn is alluded to in [Arachne](#)'s weaving.

Philyreïus heros

[Bk II:676-707](#): [Chiron](#), the son of [Philyra](#).

Phineus(1)

The brother of the Ethiopian king [Cepheus](#), uncle of [Andromeda](#).

[Bk V:1-29](#). He complains that [Perseus](#) has stolen Andromeda his promised bride.

[Bk V:30-73](#). He attacks Perseus and his own brother Cepheus, but escapes from Perseus by taking refuge behind the altars.

[Bk V:74-106](#). Many of his followers are killed by [Perseus](#). He dares not fight Perseus but kills [Idas](#) a neutral by mistake.

[Bk V:107-148](#). He kills [Broteas](#) and [Ammon](#), and [Ampycus](#) the priest.

[Bk V:149-199](#). He attempts to mob [Perseus](#) with his many followers.

[Bk V:200-249](#). He is finally turned to stone, a statue in the Palace of [Cepheus](#).

Phineus(2)

[Bk VII:1-73](#). King of Salmydessus in [Thrace](#), a blind prophet, who had received the gift of prophecy from [Apollo](#). He was blinded by the gods for prophesying the future too accurately, and was plagued by a pair of [Harpies](#). [Calais](#) and [Zetes](#), the sons of [Boreas](#), rid him of their loathsome attentions, in return for advice on how to obtain the Golden Fleece. The two winged sons chased the Harpies to the [Strophades](#) islands, were some say their lives were spared.

Phlegethon

[Bk V:533-571](#). [Bk XV:479-546](#). One of the rivers of the Underworld.

Phlegon

[Bk II:150-177](#). One of the four horses of the [Sun](#).

Phlegraeus(1)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Phlegraeus(2)

Of Phlegra, a region of [Macedonia](#).

[Bk X:143-219](#). The site of [Jupiter](#)'s overthrow of the [Giants](#).

Phlegyae

[Bk XI:410-473](#). A robber people of [Thessaly](#) who destroyed the temple at [Delphi](#).

Phlegyas

Bk V:74-106. A companion of Phineus, killed by Perseus.

Phobetor, Icelos

A son of Somnus. A god of sleep.

Bk XI:573-649. He takes the shape of creatures.

Phocis

Bk I:313-347. The land between Aetolia and Boeotia in Greece.

Bk II:566-595. Home of Corone, daughter of Coroneus.

Bk V:250-293. Seized by Pyreneus.

Bk VI:1-25. A source of murex shellfish for purple dye.

Bk XI:346-409. The country of Onetor, Peleus's herdsman.

Phocus

Bk VII:453-500. The son of Aeacus, king of Aegina. He comes to meet Minos. As the son of

Aeacus by the Nereid [Psamathe](#), he is half brother of [Peleus](#) and [Telamon](#).

[Bk VII:661-758](#). He is host to Cephalus.

[Bk VII:759-795](#). He listens to [Cephalus](#)'s tale of Laelaps the hound and asks about Cephalus's magic spear.

[Bk VII:796-865](#). He hears the sad tale of [Procris](#)'s death.

[Bk XI:266-345](#). He was killed by his brother Peleus.

[Bk XI:346-409](#). His mother Psamathe pursues Peleus.

Phoebe

[Bk I:1-30](#). The [Titaness](#) who rules the moon. Her daughter [Leto](#) bore [Phoebus](#) Apollo and Artemis ([Diana](#)) to Zeus. Phoebe is therefore another name for Artemis, and for the moon itself.

[Bk I:473-503](#). As virgin huntress.

[Bk II:401-416](#). [Callisto](#) is one of her followers. She has the epithet Trivia, of the crossways, as she is worshipped where three ways meet.

Bk VI:204-266. Diana helps to punish Niobe for her rejection of her mother Latona (Leto).

Bk XII:1-38. Diana.

Phoebus, Apollo

Bk I:313-347. Bk V:385-424. Bk VI:486-548.

Bk VII:294-349. Bk XV:176-198. Bk XV:418-452. A familiar name for Apollo as the sun-god, and so the sun itself.

Bk I:438-473. Destroys the Python and founds the Pythian games. Falls in love with and pursues Daphne. Failing to catch her turns her into the laurel tree. Institutes the use of laurel for ceremonial crowns. (See Bernini's sculpture – Apollo and Daphne – Galleria Borghese, Rome)

Bk II:531-565. Loves Coronis of Larissa who is unfaithful to him.

Bk II:612-632. Having killed her, he rescues their unborn son Aesculapius and entrusts him to Chiron the Centaur.

Bk III:1-49. His oracle reveals to Cadmus how he will found Thebes in Boeotia.

[Bk VI:103-128](#). His disguises and his rape of [Isse](#) are depicted by [Arachne](#).

[Bk VI:204-266](#). Helps to punish [Niobe](#) for her rejection of his mother [Latona](#).

[Bk VI:382-400](#). Defeats [Marsyas](#) in a contest of flute-playing and flays him alive.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). Loves [Rhodes](#), and Rhode the nymph of the island.

[Bk VIII:1-80](#). He built the walls of Megara, and where he rested his lyre the stones afterwards gave out a resonant, musical, note.

[Bk VIII:329-375](#). [Mopsus](#) prays to him for help against the Calydonian wild boar.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). Fathered [Miletus](#) on the nymph Dione.

[Bk IX:595-665](#). [Byblis](#), Miletus's daughter is his grandchild.

[Bk X:106-142](#). He turns [Cyparissus](#) into a cypress tree.

[Bk X:143-219](#). He turns [Hyacinthus](#) into the hyacinth (blue larkspur, *hyacinthos grapta*) with the marks AI on the base of its petals.

Bk XI:1-66. He rescues the head of Orpheus who was his poet.

Bk XI:146-171. He competes on the lyre with Pan on his reed-pipes.

Bk XI:266-345. He loves Chione and she bears him a son Philammon. He turns Daedalion into a hawk.

Bk XIII:481-575. He aids Paris in killing Achilles.

Bk XIII:623-639. Bk XIII:640-674. Anius is his high priest on Delos.

Bk XIII:675-704. Aeneas consults the oracle, and is told to seek out his ancient mother, and ancestral shore.

Bk XIV:101-153. Phoebus grants the Sibyl of Cumae eternal life, but she forgets to ask for eternal youth, and is doomed to wither away, until she is merely a voice.

Bk XV:622-745. Bk XV:622-745. His oracle is at Delphi. Aesculapius is his son.

Bk XV:843-870. Vesta, as the Tauric Diana, is worshipped alongside himself.

Phoenissa

[Bk III:1-49](#). [Bk XV:259-306](#). Phoenix, of Phoenicia, hence Phoenician.

Phoenix(1)

The son of [Amyntor](#) of [Thessaly](#), and companion of [Achilles](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Phoenix(2)

The mythical bird, symbol of continually renewed existence.

Pholus

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Phorbas(1)

[Bk V:74-106](#). A companion of [Phineus](#), killed by [Perseus](#).

Phorbas(2)

[Bk XI:410-473](#). The leader of the [Phlegyae](#) who plundered [Delphi](#).

Phorbas(3)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Phorcides

[Bk IV:753-803](#). The [Graeae](#), the daughters of Phorcys, who had one eye between them.

Phorcynis

[Bk IV:706-752](#). [Bk V:200-249](#). [Medusa](#) as the daughter of Phorcys.

Phoronis

[Bk I:668-688](#). An epithet of [Io](#), sister of Phoroneus the son of [Inachus](#) king of [Argos](#).

[Bk II:508-530](#). Used by Juno in reference to Io, the Argive.

Phrixea vellera

Bk VII:1-73. The Golden Fleece of the winged ram on which Phrixus son of Athamas and Nephele and brother of Helle, escaped, with his sister, from his stepmother Ino, and fled to Colchis, in order to avoid being sacrificed. Helle fell into the sea and the Hellespont is named after her. Phrixus reached Colchis where Sol stables his horses, and sacrificed the ram to Zeus, or in other versions Ares (Mars), and it hung in the temple of Mars where it was guarded by a dragon. Its return was sought by Jason and the Argonauts.

Phryges

Bk XI:85-145. The Phrygians, and more restrictedly the Trojans.

Phrygia

A region in Asia Minor, containing Dardania and Troy, and Mysia and Pergamum. Ovid uses

the term for the whole of Asia Minor bordering the Aegean.

[Bk VI:146-203](#). Used for Greek Asia Minor.

[Bk VI:382-400](#). The river [Marsyas](#), its clearest river, is formed there from the tears wept for him.

[Bk VIII:152-182](#). The [Maeander](#) river runs there.

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). The country of [Baucis](#) and [Philemon](#).

[Bk X:143-219](#). The country of [Trojan Ganymede](#).

[Bk XI:194-220](#). [Bk XII:1-38](#). [Bk XIII:576-622](#). The country of [Laomedon](#) and [Troy](#).

[Bk XII:64-145](#). [Bk XII:146-209](#). [Bk XII:579-628](#). The land of the Trojans.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). The country of [Dolon](#), the spy.

[Bk XIII:429-480](#). [Thrace](#) is across the [Hellespont](#), and opposite [Troy](#) is the country of the [Bistones](#).

[Bk XIV:75-100](#). [Bk XIV:527-565](#). [Bk XV:418-452](#). The country of [Aeneas](#).

Phthia

Bk XIII:123-381. A city in Thessaly, birthplace of Achilles, and ruled by his father Peleus.

Phyleus

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Phylleüs

Bk XII:429-535. An epithet of Caeneus from the Thessalian town of Phyllos.

Phyllius

Bk VII:350-403. The friend of Cycnus(2), who brings him presents of tamed animals and birds, but when his love is spurned refuses a last gift. Cycnus attempts suicide but is turned into a swan.

Picus

The son of [Saturn](#), and ancient king of [Latium](#), husband of [Canens](#).

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). He is loved by [Circe](#), and turned by her into a woodpecker that bears his name. (*Picus viridis* is the green woodpecker, distinguished by its red nape and crown, and its golden-green back.)

[Bk XIV:397-434](#). His companions are turned into wild beasts, and Canens wastes away with grief.

Pierus

[Bk V:294-331](#). King of [Emathia](#). His nine daughters were the [Emathides](#), or the Pierides, in fact the [Muses](#), from the earliest place of their worship, in Pieria, in northern Greece ([Macedonia](#)).

Pindus

[Bk II:201-226](#). [Bk XI:474-572](#). A mountain in [Thessaly](#). The [Centaur](#)s took refuge there after their battle with the [Lapiths](#).

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Medea](#) gathers magic herbs there.

Piraeus

[Bk VI:438-485](#). The harbour of [Athens](#).

Pirene, Pirenis, Peirene

[Bk II:227-271](#). [Bk VII:350-403](#). The Pirenian Spring. A famous fountain on the citadel of [Corinth](#) sacred to the [Muses](#), where Bellerephon took [Pegasus](#) to drink. Pausanias says (II:iii, Corinth) that Peirene was a human being who became a spring, through weeping for her son Cenchrias, killed by accident by Artemis, and that the water is sweet to taste. (It has Byzantine columns, and was once the private garden of the Turkish Bey.). The spring was said never to fail. It was also the name of a

fountain outside the city gates, towards Lechaeum, into whose waters the Corinthian bronzes were dipped red-hot on completion.

Pirithoüs

Son of [Ixion](#). King of the [Lapithae](#) in [Thessaly](#) and friend of [Theseus](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the [Calydonian Boar Hunt](#).

[Bk VIII:376-424](#). He is warned away from the boar by his friend Theseus.

[Bk VIII:547-610](#). He is with Theseus when [Acheloüs](#) offers them hospitality.

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). He is scornful of the ability of the gods to alter human forms.

[Bk XII:210-244](#). He marries [Hippodamia](#), and invites the [centaurs](#) to the wedding. [Eurytus](#) attempts to carry her off, and starts a fight.

[Bk XII:290-326](#). He fights in the battle with the centaurs.

Pisa

[Bk V:385-424](#). A city in [Elis](#), near Olympia.

[Bk V:487-532](#). Native city of [Arethusa](#).

Pisces, Piscis

The constellation of the fishes, the twelfth sign of the Zodiac. An ancient constellation depicting two fishes with their tails tied together. It represents [Venus](#) and [Cupid](#) escaping from the monster Typhon. It contains the spring equinox, formerly in Aries. The vernal equinox has moved into Pisces since ancient times due to the effects of precession (the ‘wobble’ of the earth on its polar axis).

[Bk X:1-85](#). [Bk X:143-219](#). The last sign of the solar year, preceding the spring equinox in ancient times. A water sign.

Pisenor

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Pitane

[Bk VII:350-403](#). A city on the Aeolic coast of Asia Minor, near [Lesbos](#).

Pithecusae

[Bk XIV:75-100](#). An island not far from [Cumae](#) in Italy. The modern Ischia. It was called Pithecusa by its Greek colonists, then Inarime by the Romans. It is the largest island in the Bay of Naples.

Pittheus

[Bk VI:401-438](#). [Bk XV:259-306](#). [Bk XV:479-546](#). King of [Troezen](#), son of [Pelops](#), grandfather of [Theseus](#).

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). He once sent [Lelex](#) to [Phrygia](#).

Pleiades

[Bk I:668-688](#). The Seven Sisters, the daughters, with the [Hyades](#) and the [Hesperides](#), of [Atlas](#) the [Titan](#). Their mother was [Pleione](#) the naiad.

They were chased by [Orion](#) rousing the anger of Artemis to whom they were dedicated and changed to stars by the gods. The Pleiades are the star cluster M45 in the constellation [Taurus](#). Their names were [Maia](#), the mother of [Mercury](#) by [Jupiter](#), [Taygeta](#), Electra, Merope, Asterope, Alcyone (the brightest star of the cluster), and Celaeno.

[Bk VI:146-203](#). [Niobe](#) claims one of the Pleiads as her mother, Dione; or, in an alternative reading, Ovid would make Dione a sister of the Pleiades, but not one of them. (Traditionally she is a Pleiad: an alternative name for one of the seven sisters above?)

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). The stars are engraved on [Achilles](#)'s shield.

Pleione

[Bk II:737-751](#). The daughter of [Atlas](#) and [Oceanus](#), and mother of the [Pleiades](#).

Pleuron

[Bk VII:350-403](#). A city in [Aetolia](#).

[Bk XIV:483-511](#). The home of [Acmon](#).

Plexippus

The son of Thestius, brother of [Althaea](#), uncle of [Meleager](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk VIII:425-450](#). He is killed by [Meleager](#), his nephew, in an argument over the spoils.

Plough, [Ursa Major](#), The Great Bear, The Big Dipper

[Bk II:150-177](#). The constellation of Ursa Major. It represents [Callisto](#) turned into a bear by [Jupiter](#). The two stars of the ‘bowl’ furthest from the ‘handle’, Merak and Dubhe, point to Polaris the pole star. The ‘handle’ points to Arcturus in [Bootës](#), who is the Herdsman or Bear Herd (Arcturus means the Bearkeeper).

Pluto, Dis, Hades

The God of the Underworld, elder brother of Jupiter and Neptune, and like them the son of Saturn and Rhea.

Poeantiades, Poentia Proles

Bk XIII:1-122. Philoctetes, son of Poeas.

Poeas

Bk IX:211-272. Bk XIII:1-122. The father of Philoctetes.

Polites

Bk XIV:223-319. A companion of Ulysses.

Polydaemon

An incorrect reading for Polygdemon in V:85.

Polydamas

A Trojan, son of Panthoüs, a friend of Hector.

Bk XII:536-579. Cited by Nestor as an enemy.

Polydectes

Bk V:200-249. A ruler of the island of Seriphos, who rejects Perseus and is turned to stone.

Polydegmon

Bk V:74-106. A descendant of Queen Semiramis. A companion of Phineus, killed by Perseus.

Polydeuces, Pollux

The son of King Tyndareus of Sparta, and Leda, and one of the twin Dioscuri, brother of Castor.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:329-375. The brothers hurl their spears.

Polydorus

The son of [Priam](#) and [Hecuba](#).

[Bk XIII:429-480](#). Sent by his father to the court of [Polymestor](#) king of [Thrace](#) who had married his sister Ilione, and murdered there by Polymestor for the sake of the treasure sent with him.

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). His body is thrown up on the beach where [Hecuba](#) is mourning [Polyxena](#), and the event precipitates her madness.

[Bk XIII:623-639](#). [Aeneas](#) leaves the shores drenched by his blood.

Polymestor

King of [Thrace](#), husband of Ilione daughter of [Priam](#).

[Bk XIII:429-480](#). He murders his young foster child [Polydorus](#), sent to him by Priam.

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). [Hecuba](#) in turn murders him, and tears out his eyes.

Polypemon

[Bk VII:350-403](#). The father of [Sciron](#), and by some lineage, presumably maternal, a grandfather of [Alcyone](#) (neptem Polypemonis). Sometimes claimed as the father of [Sinis](#). He himself is identified with [Procrustes](#).

Polyphemus

One of the [Cyclopes](#), sons of [Neptune](#), one-eyed giants living in Sicily.

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). He falls in love with [Galatea](#).

[Bk XIII:789-869](#). He complains of her rejection of him.

[Bk XIII:870-897](#). He kills [Acis](#) with a rock.

[Bk XIV:154-222](#). He was feared by [Achaemenides](#), and roamed [Aetna](#), blinded by [Ulysses](#), seeking revenge.

Polyxena

The daughter of [Priam](#) and [Hecuba](#).

[Bk XIII:429-480](#). She is sacrificed to appease the ghost of [Achilles](#).

Pomona

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). A beautiful wood nymph (hamadryad) of [Latium](#), devoted to horticulture. She is loved by [Vertumnus](#) who sets out to woo her, in disguise.

[Bk XIV:698-771](#). He reveals his true form and she loves him also.

Pompeius Sextus

[Bk XV:745-842](#). The second son of Pompey the Great conquered in the sea battles, off Sicily, between Mylae and Naulochus, by Agrippa, [Augustus](#)'s admiral, in 36BC.

Pontus

[Bk XV:745-842](#). The Black Sea, and the kingdom in Asia Minor bordering it. Ruled by [Mithridates](#).

Priamaeïa coniunx

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). [Bk XIII:481-575](#). [Hecuba](#), the wife of [Priam](#).

Priamides

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Bk XIII:705-737](#). [Bk XV:418-452](#). [Helenus](#), son of [Priam](#).

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). The Priamidae, the children of Priam.

Priamus, Priam

[Bk XI:749-795](#). [Bk XIV:445-482](#). The King of [Troy](#) at the time of the Trojan War, the son of [Laomedon](#), husband of [Hecuba](#), by whom he had many children. In the *Metamorphoses* Ovid mentions [Hector](#), [Helenus](#), [Paris](#), [Polydorus](#), [Deiphobus](#), [Cassandra](#) and [Polyxena](#). [Aesacus](#) was his son by [Alexiroë](#).

[Bk XII:1-38](#). He mourns for Aesacus, thinking him dead.

[Bk XII:579-628](#). [Achilles](#)'s death alone brings him pleasure after the death of Hector.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Heard [Ulysses](#)'s case for [Helen](#)'s return in front of the Trojan senate.

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). He is murdered at [Jupiter](#)'s altar as [Troy](#) falls.

[Bk XIII:429-480](#). He had sent his son [Polydorus](#) to be brought up in the court of [Polymestor](#) of Thrace who had married his daughter Ilione.

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). [Hecuba](#) counts him lucky to have died with Troy.

[Bk XIII:576-622](#). The uncle of [Memnon](#), since Memnon's father [Tithonus](#) is his brother.

Priapus

The Pan of [Mysia](#) in Asia Minor, venerated as Lampsacus. God of gardens and vineyards. His phallic image was placed in orchards and gardens. He presided over the fecundity of fields, flocks, beehives, fishing and vineyards. He became part of the retinue of [Dionysus](#).

[Bk IX:324-393](#). Pursues [Lotis](#) who is changed into a lotus-tree.

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). He pursues [Pomona](#).

Proca

Bk XIV:609-622. An Alban king, father of Numitor and Amulius.

Prochyte

Bk XIV:75-100. An island off the coast of Campania (Southern Italy).

Procne

Bk VI:401-438. The daughter of Pandion, king of Athens, married to Tereus, king of Thrace.

Bk VI:438-485. Persuades Tereus to bring her sister Philomela to stay with her.

Bk VI:549-570. Tereus rapes and mutilates her sister, and tells Procne that Philomela is dead.

Bk VI:571-619. Philomela communicates with her by means of a woven message, and she rescues her during the Bacchic rites.

Bk VI:619-652. She murders her son Itys and serves the flesh to Tereus.

Bk VI:653-674. Pursued by Tereus she turns into a nightingale. The bird's call, mourning Itys, is said to be 'Itu! Itu!' which is something like the occasional 'chooc, chooc' among its wide range of notes.

Procris

The daughter of Erectheus king of Athens.

Book VI:675-721. Married happily to Cephalus, the grandson of Aeolus.

Bk VII:661-758. Cephalus is unfaithful and tempts her into unfaithfulness but they are reconciled. She gives him a magic hound and a magic javelin, gifts of Diana.

Bk VII:796-865. Through an error she is killed by Cephalus, with the spear that was her gift to him.

Procrustes

Bk VII:425-452. A famous robber who trimmed or stretched his guests' bodies to the size of his bed. Theseus served him in the same way,

destroying him. Possibly identical with [Polpemon](#).

Proetides

[Bk XV:307-360](#). The daughters of [Proetus](#) king of [Tiryns](#), Lysippe, Iphinoë, and Iphianassa, who were maddened by the gods, and whose madness Melampus purged. ([Clitor](#), [Nonacris](#) and the [Styx](#) are in the Mount Chelmos area, described interestingly by Pausanias, VIII 18, where he also describes the purification of the Proetides at Lousoi, in the sanctuary of Artemis.)

Proetus

[Bk V:200-249](#). The son of [Abas](#), twin brother of [Acrisius](#) who drove the latter from his throne of [Argos](#). He is turned to stone by [Perseus](#).

Prometheus

[Bk I:68-88](#). The son of [Iapetus](#) by the nymph Cleomene, and father of [Deucalion](#). Sometimes

included among the seven [Titans](#), he was the wisest of his race and gave human beings the useful arts and sciences. [Jupiter](#) first withheld fire and Prometheus stole it from the chariot of the [Sun](#). Jupiter had Prometheus chained to the frozen rock in the Caucasus where a vulture tore at his liver night and day for eternity. (See Aeschylus's 'Prometheus Bound', and Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound')

Promethides

[Bk I:381-415](#). [Deucalion](#), son of [Prometheus](#).

Propoetides

[Bk X:220-242](#). Girls of [Amathus](#) who denied [Venus](#)'s divinity. They became public prostitutes, and turned to stone, as they lost their sense of shame. This is a tale based on the ritual public prostitution which was a feature of the worship of [Diana](#) (at Ephesus) and Astarte, etc. and at the Temple in Jerusalem during the

deviations from the worship of Jehovah, by the Jews.

Proreus

[Bk III:597-637](#). A seaman, companion of [Acoetes](#).

Proserpina, Proserpine, Persephone

The daughter of [Ceres](#)-Demeter and [Jupiter](#).

[Bk V:332-384](#). Aspires to be a virgin like [Pallas](#) and [Diana](#), but [Venus](#) asks [Cupid](#) to make [Dis](#) fall in love with her.

[Bk V:385-424](#). She is raped and abducted by Dis. (See Rembrandt's painting The Rape of Proserpine – panel, Berlin-Dahlem)

[Bk V:487-532](#). [Jupiter](#) decrees she can return to heaven subject to her not having eaten anything in the underworld.

[Bk V:533-571](#). Having eaten seven pomegranate seeds, she is only allowed to return to the world for six months of each year,

and Jupiter decrees she must spend the other six months with Dis.

Bk VI:103-128. Arachne depicts how Jupiter lay with her disguised as a spotted snake.

Bk XIV:101-153. The queen of the underworld, called 'the Juno of Avernus'.

Protesilaüs

Bk XII:64-145. A Thessalian chief killed by Hector, the first of the Greeks to be slain in the Trojan War.

Proteus

Bk II:1-30. Bk XIII:898-968. The sea-god who can shift his form. His image is depicted on the palace of the Sun.

Bk VIII:725-776. Acheloüs, the river-god, tells of his many transformations.

Bk XI:221-265. He helps Peleus to win Thetis.

Prothoënor

Bk V:74-106. A courtier of Cepheus, killed by Hypseus a follower of Phineus.

Prytanis

Bk XIII:123-381. A Lycian, killed by Ulysses.

Psamathe

A Nereid, mother of Phocus by Aeacus, whom his half brother Peleus accidentally killed.

Bk XI:346-409. She pursues Peleus, and ultimately relents.

Psecas

Bk III:165-205. One of Diana's nymphs.

Psophis

A city in Arcadia.

Bk V:572-641. Passed by Arethusa in her flight.

Pudor

Bk I: 601-621. Shame, opposes Amor (Love) in Jupiter's mind, over the gift of Io to Juno.

Pygmaeus, Pygmies

A Pigmy, one of the dwarf peoples.

Bk VI:70-102. The Queen of the Pygmies turned into a crane by Juno and forced to war against her own people.

Pygmalion

A Cyprian who fashioned an ivory statue of a beautiful girl that he brought to life, calling her Galatea. (See the sequence of four paintings by Burne-Jones, 'Pygmalion and the Image', Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, England, titled: The Heart Desires, The Hand Refrains, The Godhead Fires, The Soul Attains: See also Rameau's operatic work 'Pygmalion')

Bk X:243-297. Venus brings her to life, and he marries her. She gives birth to a daughter,

Paphos who gives her name to the island of Cyprus, sacred to Venus.

Pylos

Bk II:676-701. The city in Elis in the western Peloponnese, the home of Nestor the wise, in the Iliad and Odyssey.

Bk VI:401-438. Its ruler goes to Thebes to show sympathy for the death of Amphion and his children. It is described as Nelean, after its founder Neleus.

Bk VIII:329-375. Nestor joins the Calydonian boar hunt.

Bk XII:536-579. The home of Nestor.

Bk XII:536-579. Hercules destroyed it and killed Nestor's brothers.

Pyracmus

Bk XII:429-535. A centaur.

Pyraethus

Bk XII:429-535. A centaur.

Pyramus

[Bk IV:55-92](#) . A fictional [Babylonian](#) boy. The story of Pyramus and [Thisbe](#).

[Bk IV:93-127](#). His death is described.

Pyreneus

King of [Thrace](#).

[Bk V:250-293](#). He offered the [Muses](#) shelter, and then attempted violence. They flew away: he tried to follow and was killed.

Pyroïs

[Bk II:150-177](#). One of the four horses of the [Sun](#).

Pyrrha

[Bk I:348-380](#). Wife and cousin to [Deucalion](#), and the only woman to survive the Great Flood. Daughter of the [Titan Epimetheus](#), hence called Titania.

Pyrrhus

Bk XIII:123-381. The son of Achilles and Deïdamia, daughter of Lycomedes king of the Aegean island of Scyros.

Pythagoras

The famous Greek philosopher of Samos, the Ionian island, who took up residence at Crotona in Italy, where Numa came to be his pupil. His school was later revived at Tarentum. He flourished in the second half of the 6th century BC.

Bk XV:60-142. He teaches the vegetarian ethic based on the sanctity of life.

Bk XV:143-175. He teaches the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, metempsychosis, and was Euphorbus at the time of the Trojan War.

Bk XV:176-198. He teaches the doctrine of eternal flux. This is the *panta rei* (πάντα ρει), ‘all things flow’, taught by Heraclitus the

Ephesian, (flourished c500BC), but not apparently original with him: he also said ‘you cannot step in the same river twice’ as attested by Plato.

[Bk XV:199-236](#). He teaches the four ages of man.

[Bk XV:237-258](#). He teaches here a theory of the rarefaction and condensation of the four ‘elements’ that is attributed to Anaximenes of the Milesian school of philosophers. (Founded by Thales, and ended by the fall of Miletus in 494BC) Anaximenes also taught that air was the primary *Urstoff*. His theory introduced the idea of changes of quantity creating changes of quality. Like other Ionian philosophers the eternity of matter, and its transformations, is assumed.

Pythia

[Bk I:438-473](#). The Pythian games were instituted at [Delphi](#) by [Apollo](#). They were celebrated every four years.

Python

[Bk I:438-473](#). The huge serpent created by earth after the Flood, destroyed by [Apollo](#), giving its name to the [Pythian](#) games.

Quirinus

[Bk XIV:805-828](#). [Bk XV:843-870](#). The name for the deified [Romulus](#).

[Bk XIV:829-851](#). He receives his wife [Hersilia](#) in heaven, deified as [Hora](#).

[Bk XV:552-621](#). [Bk XV:745-842](#). The [Romans](#) are his people.

Quirites, Quires

[Bk XV:552-621](#). The [Sabines](#), or Cures, the Romans after the union with the Sabines.

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). They worship the deified [Aeneas](#) as [Indiges](#).

Remulus

Bk XIV:609-622. An Alban king, killed by a lightning bolt.

Rhadamanthus

The son of Jupiter and Europa, brother of Minos, with his brother a judge of the dead in the Underworld.

Bk IX:418-438. Bk IX:439-516. Jupiter, recognising his love of justice, wishes he could enjoy perpetual youth.

Rhamnusia, Rhamnysis

Bk III:402-436. A name for Nemesis from her temple at Rhamnus in Attica. She punishes Narcissus.

Bk XIV:623-697. She is angered by those who are too proud and self-sufficient.

Rhanis

Bk III:165-205. One of Diana's nymphs.

Rhegion, Rhegium

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). A city (modern Reggio) in the southern part of Ausonia (modern Calabria), on the [Sicilian](#) Strait. (The Straits of [Messina](#)) It was founded c 723BC by the Chalcidians, who were later joined by the Messenese, was sacked by Syracuse, and repopulated by the Romans.

Rhenus

[Bk II:227-271](#). The River Rhine in northern Europe.

Rhesus

A [Thracian](#) king of whom the oracle had said that if his horses drank of the [Xanthus](#), [Troy](#) would not be taken.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). He was killed by [Ulysses](#) and [Diomedes](#), and his horses captured before they could drink of Xanthus.

Rhexenor

[Bk XIV:483-511](#). A companion of [Diomede](#). [Venus](#) transforms him into a bird.

Rhodanus

[Bk II:227-271](#). The River Rhone in [Gaul](#), modern France.

Rhodope

[Bk II:201-226](#). A mountain in [Thrace](#).

[Bk VI:70-102](#). Supposed to be a mortal turned into a mountain for assuming the name of a great god.

[Bk VI:571-619](#). The scene of the triennial festival of [Bacchus](#), the *trietericus*.

[Bk X:1-85](#). [Orpheus](#) flees there after losing [Eurydice](#) a second time.

Rhodopeiüs

[Bk X:1-85](#). An epithet of [Orpheus](#), from Mount Rhodope in his native [Thrace](#).

Rhodos, Rhodes

[Bk IV:190-213](#). The island in the [Aegean](#) off the coast of Asia Minor. [Sol](#) loved Rhode, the nymph of the island.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). His love is of the island itself.

[Bk XII:536-579](#). The leader of the Rhodian fleet is [Tlepolemus](#).

Rhoeteüs

[Bk XI:194-220](#). Of Rhoeteum, a promontory in the Troad.

Rhoetus(1)

[Bk V:30-73](#). A companion of [Phineus](#), killed by [Perseus](#), who aimed at Phineus the spear which he had thrown at him.

Rhoetus(2)

[Bk XII:245-289](#). A centaur. He killed [Cometes](#) and his friend [Charaxus](#) at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Bk XII:290-326. He killed Euagrus and Corythus, a boy, but wounded by Dryas, he fled the battle.

Ripheus

Bk XII:290-326. A centaur.

Roma, Rome

Bk I:199-243. The city on the Tiber, capital of the Empire.

Bk XIV:772-804. Founded by Romulus in 753BC on the feast of Pales, the Palilia, April 21st.

Bk XV:418-452. Its future greatness prophesied.

Bk XV:552-621. Cipus puts its good before his own.

Bk XV:622-745. Aesculapius ends the plague.

Bk XV:871-879. Ovid claims immortality wherever Rome's *potentia*, that is its power, but equally its authority, or its influence, extends,

over the lands, *terris domitis*, that it has conquered, or equally tamed, that is civilised.

Romanus

[Bk XV:622-745](#). [Bk XV:745-842](#). The [Roman](#) people.

Romethium

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A place in Italy between [Scylaceum](#) and [Caulon](#).

Romuleüs

[Bk XIV:829-851](#). Of [Romulus](#). The Quirinal hill.

Romulus

The son of [Mars](#) and Ilia, hence [Iliades](#), the father of the Roman people (genitor).

[Bk XIV:772-804](#). He reinstates [Numitor](#), and makes peace with the [Sabines](#), sharing the rule of [Rome](#) with [Tatius](#) the Sabine king.

Bk XIV:805-828. He is deified, as Quirinus.

Bk XIV:829-851. His hill is the Quirinal. As Quirinus, he receives his deified wife Hersilia into heaven, as Hora.

Bk XV:552-621. His spear was magically transformed into a tree.

Bk XV:622-745. Rome is his city.

Rutuli

Bk XIV:445-482. A people of Latium whose chief city was Ardea, and whose hero was Turnus. They fight Aeneas and the Trojans.

Bk XIV:527-565. They set fire to the Trojan ships.

Bk XIV:566-580. They persist with the war.

Sabaeus

Bk X:431-502. Of the Sabaeans, a people in Northern Arabia. Myrrha reaches their land.

Sabini

The Sabines, a people of Central Italy who merged with the people of [Romulus](#). (See Giambologna's sculpture – The Rape of the Sabines – Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence)

[Bk XIV:772-804](#). Their king is [Tatius](#). They make peace.

[Bk XIV:829-851](#). They are absorbed into the [Roman](#) people.

[Bk XV:1-59](#). [Numa](#) desires knowledge beyond theirs.

Sagittarius

[Bk II:63-89](#). The constellation and zodiacal sun sign of the Archer, half man and half beast, formed when [Chiron](#) the centaur was placed by [Jupiter](#) among the stars. He aims his stellar arrow at the heart of [Scorpio](#). The star-rich constellation contains the centre of the galaxy. It is full of star clusters and nebulae (Trifid, Lagoon, Horseshoe etc). The sun is in Sagittarius at the winter solstice.

Salamis

A city on the island of [Cyprus](#), founded by [Teucer](#), who came from the island of Salamis in the Saronic Sea, site of the famous naval battle where the Greeks defeated the Persians.

[Bk XIV:698-771](#). It contains [Anaxarete](#)'s statue, and a temple to [Venus](#) Prospiciens – ‘she who looks out’.

Sallentinus

[Bk XV:1-59](#). Of the Sallentines, a people of Calabria.

Salmacis

[Bk IV:274-316](#). A pool in [Caria](#) whose waters were enervating, and the nymph of the pool who loved [Hermaphroditus](#).

[Bk IV:346-388](#). Salmacis dives into the pool to pursue Hermaphroditus, and is merged with him. He prays that the pool will weaken anyone who bathes there.

Bk XV:307-360. Its waters have enervating powers.

Samius

Bk XV:60-142: An epithet of Pythagoras, the philosopher. from Samos.

Samos(1)

An island off the coast of Asia Minor opposite Ephesus, sacred to Juno, and the birthplace of Pythagoras (at Pythagóron = Tigáni). Samos was famous for its Heraion, the great sanctuary of the goddess Hera-Juno.

Bk VIII:183-235. Daedalus and Icarus fly towards it after leaving Crete.

Bk XV:60-142. Pythagoras flees from Samos and enters voluntary exile at Crotona.

Samos(2), Same

Bk XIII:705-737. An island in the Ionian Sea under the dominion of Ulysses, passed by Aeneas.

Sardes, Sardis

Bk XI:85-145. The ancient capital of Lydia on the River Pactolus.

Bk XI:146-171. It is overlooked by Mount Tmolus.

Sarpedon

A Lycian chief, the son of Jupiter and Europa, killed by Patroclus in the war with the Greeks.

Bk XIII:123-381. His ranks decimated by Ulysses.

Saturn, Saturnus, Saturnius (Of Saturn)

Bk I:151-176. Son of Earth and Heaven (Uranus) ruler of the universe in the Golden Age. Saturn was deposed by his three sons Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto who ruled Heaven, Ocean and the Underworld respectively. He was banished to Tarturus. He was the father also of Juno, Ceres and Vesta by Ops.

Bk V:385-424. Dis (Pluto) as son of Saturn.

[Bk VI:103-128](#). He fathers [Chiron](#) the Centaur on [Philyra](#), while disguised as a horse, and is depicted by [Arachne](#).

[Bk IX:211-272](#). [Jupiter](#) as son of Saturn.

[Bk IX:439-516](#). Saturn married his sister [Ops](#), a personification of the Earth.

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). The father of [Picus](#).

[Bk XV:843-870](#). Jupiter his son, surpasses him.

Saturnia, [Juno](#)

[Bk I:601-621](#). [Bk XIV:772-804](#). An epithet for [Juno](#), daughter of [Saturn](#).

[Bk II:531-565](#). Her chariot is drawn by peacocks.

[Bk V:294-331](#). The [Emathides](#) pretend that she fled to Egypt in the war between the giants and the gods, and there she hid in the form of a white cow.

[Bk IX:159-210](#). As [Hercules](#) stepmother she sets him onerous tasks, pursuing him as a punishment for [Jupiter](#)'s affair with his mother [Alcmena](#).

Satyri

[Bk I:177-198](#). The Satyrs. Demi-gods. Woodland deities of human form but with goats' ears, tails, legs and budding horns. Sexually lustful.

[Bk IV:1-30](#). [Bk XI:85-145](#). They are followers of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus.

[Bk VI:382-400](#). [Marsyas](#) is one of them, and they weep when he is flayed by [Phoebus](#)-Apollo.

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). They pursue [Pomona](#).

Schoeneia

[Bk X:560-637](#). [Bk X:638-680](#). [Atalanta](#), the daughter of Schoeneus, king of [Boeotia](#).

Sciron

[Bk VII:425-452](#). A famous robber on the coast between [Megaris](#) and [Attica](#) who threw his victims into the sea. [Theseus](#) did the same to him, and his bones eventually became the sea cliffs near the Molurian Rocks.

Scorpio, Scorpius

[Bk II:63-89](#). The constellation and zodiacal sun sign of the Scorpion. It contains the red giant Antares ('like Mars'), one of the four Babylonian guardian stars of the heavens, lying nearly on the ecliptic. (The others are Regulus in [Leo](#), Aldebaran in [Taurus](#), and Fomalhaut 'the Fish's Eye' in Piscis Austrinus. All four are at roughly ninety degrees to one another). Scorpius, because of its position, is one of the two 'gateways' to the Milky Way, the other being the opposite constellation of [Orion](#). The Scorpion men attacked Osiris in Egyptian legend, and the Scorpion's sting killed Orion in Greek myth.

[Bk II:178-200](#). In ancient Greek times Scorpius was a larger constellation extending over two star signs, Scorpio and Libra.

Scylaceus

[Bk XV:622-745](#). Of Scylaceum, a place on the [Bruttian](#) coast. (This is the modern town of Squillace overlooking the Gulf of Squillace, between the ‘heel’ and ‘toe’ of Italy. The Greek city of Schilleton, it was renamed Solacium by the Romans.)

Scylla(1)

[Bk VII:1-73](#). [Bk XIV:75-100](#). The daughter of Phorcys and the nymph Crataeis, remarkable for her beauty. [Circe](#) or [Amphitrite](#), jealous of [Neptune](#)’s love for her changed her into a dog-like sea monster, ‘the Render’, with six heads and twelve feet. Each head had three rows of close-set teeth. Her cry was a muted yelping. She seized sailors and cracked their bones before slowly swallowing them.

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). She threatens [Aeneas](#)’s ships. She was once a nymph who rejected many suitors and spent time with the ocean nymphs who loved her.

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). She listens to [Galatea](#)’s story.

[Bk XIII:898-968](#). She meets [Glaucus](#) and hears his story.

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). She is changed by [Circe](#)'s poisons into a monster with a circle of yelping dogs around her waist. Finally she is turned into a rock. (The rock projects from the Calabrian coast near the village of Scilla, opposite Cape Peloro on Sicily. See Ernle Bradford 'Ulysses Found' Ch.20)

Scylla(2)

[Bk VIII:1-80](#). The daughter of [Nisus](#) of Megara, who loved [Minos](#). She decides to betray the city to him.

[Bk VIII:81-151](#). She cuts off the purple lock of Nisus's hair that guarantees the safety of his kingdom and his life. Minos rejects her and she is changed into the rock dove, *columba livia*, with its purple breast and red legs, while her father is changed into the sea eagle, *haliaeetus albicilla*. Her name Ciris, from *κείρω*, 'I cut', reflects her shearing of Nisus's hair, as does the purple breast of the bird. But she is also an

embodiment of the [Cretan](#) Great Goddess, Car, Ker or Q're, to whom doves were sacred. Pausanias I xxxix says that Kar founded Megara, Nisus's city and was king there. The acropolis was named Karia, and Kar built a great hall to Demeter ([Ceres](#)) there, Pausanias I xxx. His tumulus was decorated with shell-stone sacred to the goddess at the command of an oracle, Pausanias I xxxiii. The rock dove no doubt nested on the rocks of the citadel and coastline. Pausanias II xxxiv says that Cape Skyllaion (Skyli) was named after Scylla. Hair cutting reflects ancient ritual and the [Curetes](#) were the 'young men with shaved hair' the devotees of the moon-goddess Cer, whose weapon clashing drove off evil spirits at eclipses and during the rites.

Scyros(1)

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). An island in the central [Aegean](#) off the coast of [Euboea](#), ruled by [Pyrrhus](#).

Scyros(2)

A town in Asia Minor.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Captured by [Achilles](#).

Scythia

The country of the Scythians of northern Europe and Asia to the north of the Black Sea. Noted for the Sarmatian people, their warrior princesses, and burial mounds in the steppe (kurgans). They were initially horse-riding nomads. See (Herodotus, The Histories).

[Bk II:201-226](#). Scorched by the chariot of [Phaethon](#).

[Bk V:642-678](#). Ruled by [Lyncus](#), the barbarian king.

[Bk VII:404-424](#). There is a dark cave there, a path to the underworld by which [Hercules](#) drags the dog [Cerberus](#) to the light.

[Bk VIII:777-842](#). The haunts of [Famine](#).

[Bk X:560-637](#). The Scythians were famous bowmen, noted for the swiftness and surety of their arrows.

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). Scythian [Diana](#) was worshipped at [Aricia](#) in Italy, to which Orestes carried her image, from Taurus.

[Bk XV:259-306](#). Contains the river [Hypanis](#).

[Bk XV:307-360](#). The Scythian women cover their bodies with plumage by sprinkling themselves with magic drugs. See Herodotus IV 31 where he suggests the feathers are snowflakes.

Semele

[Bk III:253-272](#). The daughter of [Cadmus](#), loved by [Jupiter](#). The mother of [Bacchus](#) (Dionysus). (See the painting by Gustave Moreau – Jupiter and Semele – in the Gustave Moreau Museum, Paris)

[Bk III:273-315](#). She is consumed by [Jupiter](#)'s fire having been deceived by [Juno](#). Her unborn child [Bacchus](#) is rescued.

Semeleius

An epithet of [Bacchus](#) from his mother, [Semele](#).

[Bk V:294-331](#). The [Emathides](#) pretend that he fled to Egypt in the war between the giants and the gods, and there he hid in the form of a goat.

[Bk IX:595-665](#). The [Thracian](#) women perform his rites.

Semiramis

[Bk IV:31-54](#). The daughter of [Dercetis](#) or Atargatis, the Syrian goddess. She was said to have been cast out at birth and tended by doves. Doves were sacred to her, as they were to Dercetis. Historically she is Sammuamat, Queen of Babylon, and wife of Shamshi-Adad V (Ninus). She reigned after him as regent from 810-805 BC.

[Bk V:74-106](#). [Polydegmon](#) is her descendant.

Seriphos

[Bk V:200-249](#). [Bk V:250-293](#). An island of the [Cyclades](#), ruled by [Polydectes](#).

[Bk VII:453-500](#). Allied to [Crete](#). Described as flat.

Serpens, The Dragon, Draco

[Bk II:150-177](#). The constellation of the Dragon, once confusingly called Serpens. It is said to be the dragon Ladon killed by [Hercules](#) when stealing the golden apples of the [Hesperides](#). It contains the north pole of the ecliptic (ninety degrees from the plane of earth's orbit) and represents the icy north.

Serpent, Anguem

[Bk II:111-149](#). [Bk VIII:152-182](#). The constellation of the Serpent, north of the ecliptic in the northern hemisphere. It is separated into two parts, Serpens Cauda, and Serpens Caput, the tail and the head. It contains M5 the finest globular star cluster in the northern sky, and M16 a cluster in the Eagle Nebula.

Sibylla

Bk XV:622-745. The priestess of Apollo in the temple at Cumae built by Daedalus. She prophesied perched on or over a tripod.

Bk XIV:101-153. She guides Aeneas through the underworld and shows him the golden bough that he must pluck from the tree. She tells him how she was offered immortality by Phoebus, but forgot to ask also for lasting youth, dooming her to wither away until she is merely a voice.

Bk XIV:154-222. She leads Aeneas back from the Underworld.

Sicania, Trinacris

A name for Sicily. The Mediterranean island, west of Italy.

Bk VIII:260-328. Daedalus finds refuge there at the court of King Cocalus, noted for his peacableness. It is at war with Crete.

Bk XIII:705-737. Aeneas passes it.

Bk XV:259-306. The river Amenanus flows there.

Sicelis, Siculus

[Bk VII:1-73](#). [Bk XIII:738-788](#). [Bk XV:745-842](#). Of [Sicily](#). Sicilian.

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). Sicily noted for its large bulls.

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). The Straits of Messina ([Zancle](#)) divide Sicily from [Ausonia](#) in Italy.

Sicyonius

[Bk III:206-231](#). Of the city of Sicyon in the [Peloponnesus](#), near [Corinth](#). (The home of the sculptor Lysippos. It is near modern Vasilikó.)

Sidon

[Bk II:833-875](#). The city of the Phoenicians in the Lebanon. Home of [Europa](#).

[Bk IV:543-562](#). [Ino](#)'s closest servants come from there.

[Bk IV:563-603](#). [Cadmus](#) recalls his homeland.

Sidonis

[Bk XIV:75-100](#). An epithet of [Dido](#), from her native Phoenician city of [Sidon](#).

Sidonius

[Bk III:115-137](#). An epithet of [Cadmus](#) who came from Phoenician [Sidon](#) and [Tyre](#).

[Bk IV:543-562](#). An epithet of the [Theban](#) companions of [Ino](#) because they were of Phoenician origin, followers of Cadmus.

Sigeïus, Sigeüs

[Bk XI:194-220](#). [Bk XII:64-145](#). A promontory in the Troad, near [Troy](#), and by the mouth of the Scamander.

[Bk XIII:1-122](#). The scene of the debate over the arms of [Achilles](#) in front of the Greek ships.

Silenus

[Bk IV:1-30](#). Silenus and his sons the [satyrs](#) were originally primitive mountaineers of northern Greece who became stock comic

characters in Attic drama. He was called an autochthon or son of Pan by one of the nymphs. He was Bacchus's tutor, portrayed usually as a drunken old man with an old pack-ass, who is unable to tell truth from lies.(See the copy of the sculpture attributed to Lysippus, 'Silenus holding the infant Bacchus' in the Vatican)
Bk XI:85-145. He is captured by the Lydians and taken to King Midas. Bacchus grants Midas a gift (he chooses the golden touch) as a reward for returning Silenus to him.

Silvani

Bk I:177-198. Demi-gods. Offspring of Silvanus the deity of uncultivated land.

Silvanus

Bk XIV:623-697. A god of the woodlands who pursues Pomona.

Silvius

Bk XIV:609-622. The son of Ascanius, king of Alba.

Simois

Bk XIII:1-122. A river near Troy, often paired with the Scamander (Xanthus).

Sinis

Bk VII:425-452. An Isthmian robber, the son of Polypemon, who killed his victims by tying them to pine trees bent with ropes, and releasing the ropes. Theseus served him in the same way.

Sinuessa

Bk XV:622-745. A town in Campania, established as a Roman colony in 296BC. (Its site was on the Via Appia, near the modern Mondragone on the Gulf of Gaeta.)

Siphnos

An island of the [Cyclades](#), between [Seriphos](#) and Melos.

[Bk VII:453-500](#). Allied to [Crete](#). Betrayed to [Minos](#) by [Arne](#).

Sipylus

One of the seven sons of [Niobe](#), named after Mount Sipylus in his mother's country.

[Bk VI:146-203](#). The mountain, near Smyrna, is where Niobe lived before her marriage.

[Bk VI:204-266](#). He is killed by [Apollo](#)'s and [Diana](#)'s assault on the seven sons.

Sirenes, Sirens

[Bk V:533-571](#). The daughters of [Achelöüs](#), the [Achelöides](#), companions of [Proserpina](#), turned to woman-headed birds, or women with the legs of birds, and luring the sailors of passing ships with their sweet song. They searched for Proserpine on land, and were turned to birds so

that they could search for her by sea. (There are various lists of their names, but Ernle Bradford suggests two triplets: Thelxinoë, the Enchantress; Aglaope, She of the Beautiful Face, and Peisinoë, the Seductress: and his preferred triplet Parthenope, the Virgin Face; Ligeia, the Bright Voice; and Leucosia, the White One – see ‘Ulysses Found’ Ch.17. Robert Graves in the index to the ‘The Greek Myths’ adds Aglaophonos, Molpe, Raidne, Teles, and Thelxepeia.)

(See Draper’s painting – Ulysses and the Sirens – Ferens Art Gallery, Hull, England, and Gustave Moreau’s watercolour in the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard)

Bk XIV:75-100. Aeneas passes their island, between the Aeolian Islands and Cumae. (This was traditionally Capri, or more likely one of the five Galli islets, the *Sirenusae*, at the entrance to the Gulf of Salerno)

Sirinus

Bk XV:1-59. Of Siris, a town and river in Lucania.

Sisyphus

The son of Aeolus, and brother of Athamas, famous for his cunning and thievery.

Bk IV:416-463. He was punished in Hades, continually having to push a stone to the top of a hill, and then pursuing it as it rolled down again.

Bk X:1-85. His punishment in the underworld ceases for a time at the sound of Orpheus's song.

Bk XIII:1-122. The reputed father of Ulysses.

Sithon

Bk IV:274-316. A person of indeterminate sex, mentioned briefly by Alcithoë.

Sithonius

[Bk VI:571-619](#). [Bk XIII:481-575](#). Of the Sithonians, a [Thracian](#) people.

Smilax

[Bk IV:274-316](#). A nymph who was loved by [Crocus](#), who pined away from hopeless love of her. She was changed into the flowering bindweed and he into the crocus flower.

Smintheus

[Bk XII:579-628](#). An epithet of [Apollo](#), ‘mouse-Apollo’. *Sminthos* is the ancient Cretan word for ‘mouse’, a scared creature at [Cnossos](#), Philistia and [Phocis](#).

Sol

[Bk I:747-764](#). [Bk XIII:789-869](#). [Bk XV:1-59](#). The sun-god, son of [Hyperion](#). Identified with [Phoebus Apollo](#).

[Bk I:765-779](#). [Clymene](#) swears to [Phaethon](#) that he is Sol’s sun. Sol, appealed to as witness here

in Egypt, and by Clymene, married to the king of Ethiopia, is synonymous with Ra, the Egyptian sun-god. He is worshipped with outstretched arms and his glittering rays are depicted in the hieroglyphs as having hands at the end to reach out to his worshippers. Hathor-[Io](#) is sometimes described as the daughter of Ra and wife of Horus, sometimes as the mother or 'dwelling' of Horus, who is himself an incarnation of the sun and identified with [Phoebus](#) Apollo, and the sun-god is enclosed by her each evening to be re-born at dawn.

[Bk II:1-30](#). His son Phaethon visits his palace and is granted a favour. He asks to drive the Sun's chariot for a day.

[Bk II:49-62](#). Sol tries to dissuade Phaethon from driving the chariot.

[Bk II:63-89](#). The Sun progresses annually along the ecliptic through the zodiac in the opposite direction (anti-clockwise) to the daily (clockwise) rotation of the fixed stars.

[Bk II:111-149](#). Sol concedes the sun chariot to Phaethon with dire warnings.

Bk II:381-400. He mourns Phaethon and is reluctantly persuaded to resume his daily driving of the sun chariot.

Bk IV:167-189. He sees the adultery of Venus with Mars and informs Vulcan her husband.

Bk IV:190-213. In revenge for his interference Venus makes him fall in love with Leucothoë.

Bk IV:214-255. She is killed by her father and Sol attempts to restore her, changing her into a tree, with incense bearing resin (frankincense, genus *Boswellia*?).

Bk IV:604-662. The western ocean receives his chariot and his weary horses at the end of each day.

Bk VII:74-99. The father of King Aeetes of Colchis, and of his sister Circe by the Oceanid Perse.

Bk VII:179-233. The grandfather of Medea.

Bk IX:714-763. The father of Pasiphaë by the nymph Crete, or Perseis.

Bk XIII:789-869. Bk XIV:1-74. The father of Circe. In revenge for his tale-bearing, see

above, Venus perhaps made Circe susceptible to passion.

Somnus

[Bk XI:573-649](#). The god of sleep. His cave is in [Cimmeria](#). He has many sons, including [Morpheus](#), [Phobetor](#) and [Phantasos](#) who take on the images of human beings, creatures, and inanimate things respectively. He sends Morpheus to [Alcyone](#).

Sparta

The chief city of [Laconia](#) on the River [Eurotas](#), and also called Lacadaemon.

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children.

[Bk X:143-219](#). [Hyacinthus](#) lives nearby at [Amyclae](#).

[Bk XV:1-59](#). [Tarentum](#) in Italy is a Spartan colony.

[Bk XV:418-452](#). A symbol of vanished power.

Sperchios, Spercheus, Spercheos

Bk I: 568-587. A river in Thessaly.

Bk II:227-271. Scorched by the sun chariot when Phaethon fell.

Bk V:74-106. The native place of Lycetus.

Bk VII:179-233. Medea gathers magic herbs there.

Stabiae

Bk XV:622-745. A city on the bay of Naples.

Stheneleius(1)

Of Sthenelus(2), king of Liguria, hence his son Cycnus(2).

Sthenelus(1)

Bk IX:273-323. King of Mycenae, hence his son Eurystheus.

Sthenelus(2)

Bk II:367-380. King of Liguria, father of Cycnus.

Strophades

Bk XIII:705-737. Two small islands in the Ionian Sea, 'the turning islands', with a dangerous anchorage. Aeneas encounters the Harpies there, foul-bellied birds with girls' faces, with clawed hands and pallid faces (See Virgil Aeneid III:190-220).

Strymon

Bk II:227-271. A river in Thrace and Macedonia.

Stymphalis

Bk V:572-641. Of Stymphalus, a district in Arcadia with a town, mountain and lake of the same name, near Mount Cyllene. It is a haunt of Diana and Arethusa. (Pausanias says, VIII xxii, that there were three temples of Juno-Hera, at

ancient Stymphelos, as the Child, the Perfect One, and the Widow, the moon phases.)

[Bk IX:159-210](#). In the Sixth Labour [Hercules](#) killed or dispersed the brazen beaked and clawed man-eating birds of the Stymphalian Lake that killed men and animals and blighted crops. According to some accounts they were bird-legged women sacred to Artemis-[Diana](#).

Stymphelus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). A centaur.

Styx, Stygian

[Bk I:722-746](#). [Bk XII:290-326](#). A river of the underworld, with its lakes and pools, used to mean the underworld or the state of death itself.

[Bk III:50-94](#). Its mouth exudes a poisonous black breath like the serpent that [Cadmus](#) destroys.

[Bk V:487-532](#). [Arethusa](#) passes its streams while journeying through the deep caverns from [Elis](#) to [Sicily](#). This is the Arcadian river Styx

near [Nonacris](#). It forms the falls of Mavroneri, plunging six hundred feet down the cliffs of the Chelmos ridge. Pausanias says, VIII xvii, that Hesiod (*Theogony* 383) makes Styx the daughter of Ocean and the wife of the Titan [Pallas](#). Their children were Victory and Strength. Epimenedes makes her the mother of [Echidna](#). Pausanias says the waters of the river dissolve glass and stone etc.

[Bk VI:653-674](#). [Bk X:298-355](#). Its valley is home to the [Furies](#).

[Bk X:1-85](#). [Orpheus](#) visits it on his quest for [Eurydice](#), and is prevented from crossing it for a second time by the ferryman, [Charon](#).

[Bk X:681-707](#). [Cybele](#) considers plunging [Hippomenes](#) and [Atalanta](#) beneath its waters.

[Bk XI:474-572](#). Its waters are a dark colour.

[Bk XIV:154-222](#). Visited by [Aeneas](#).

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). Aeneas's visit entitles him to deification.

[Bk XV:143-175](#). [Pythagoras](#) believes it an invention of the poets.

[Bk XV:745-842](#). The screech-owl, whose call is an omen, is said to be Stygian.

Surrentinus

[Bk XV:622-745](#). Of Surrentum, a town on the Bay of Naples. The modern Sorrento, *La Gentile*, perched on a tufa rock and bounded by ravines, in a district famed for its beauty, and its fruit. (Torquato Tasso the poet was born there.)

Sybaris

[Bk XV:1-59](#). [Bk XV:307-360](#). A town in Italy, on the Gulf of [Taranto](#). It probably stood on the left bank of the [Crathis](#) (modern Crati) and was an Achaean colony whose luxury and corruption became a byword (hence *sybaritic*) and was destroyed by the men of [Croton](#) in 510BC. The descendants of the survivors founded Thurii inland, with the help of Athenian colonists, including Lysias the orator and Herodotus who died there. Sybaris was Romanised after 290BC and named Copiae.

Syenites

The inhabitants of Syene in Upper Egypt.

Bk V:74-106. Phorbas's native place.

Symaethis

Bk XIII:738-788. A daughter of the river god Symaethus in Sicily, the mother of Acis.

Symaethius

Bk XIII:870-897. Of Symaethus, a town in Sicily. Acis.

Symphlegades, Symplegades

Bk VII:1-99. Two rocky islands in the Euxine Sea, clashing rocks according to the fable, crushing what attempted to pass between them.

Bk XV:307-360. The Argo had to avoid them.

Syrinx

Bk I:689-721. An Arcadian nymph pursued by Pan and changed to marsh reeds by her sisters in order to escape him. She gave her name to the syrinx, or pan pipes, the reedy flute. (See Signorelli's painting – Court of Pan – Staatliche Museum, Berlin)

Syros

An island of the Cyclades, near Delos. Described as flowering with thyme.

Bk VII:453-500. Allied to Crete.

Syrtis

Bk VIII:81-151. A dangerous series of sandbanks on the north coast of Africa.

Taenarius(1)

Bk II:227-271. Laconian, of the river Eurotas.

Bk X:143-219. The home of Hyacinthus.

Taenarius(2)

[Bk X:1-85](#). [Laconian](#), of the cave reputed to give entry to the Underworld.

Taenarus, Taenarides

[Bk II:227-271](#). The southern part of [Laconia](#) in southern Greece near the mouth of the [Eurotas](#).

[Bk X:1-85](#). One of the traditional gateways to the Underworld.

Tages

[Bk XV:552-621](#). An Etrurian deity, grandson of [Jupiter](#). He sprang from a clod of earth in human form, and taught the [Etruscans](#) the art of divination.

Tagus

[Bk II:227-271](#). The river in Spain and Portugal, reputedly gold bearing.

Tamasenus

Bk X:638-680. Of Tamasus, a city in Cyprus. Its sacred field is sacred to Venus and contains a tree with golden apples

Tanais

Bk II:227-271. The river and river-god of Scythia. The River Don.

Tantalides

Bk XII:579-628. Agamemnon, great grandson of Tantalus.

Tantalus

Bk VI:204-266. Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus.

Tantalus(1)

The king of [Phrygia](#), son of [Jupiter](#), father of [Pelops](#) and [Niobe](#).

[Bk IV:416-463](#). He served his son Pelops to the gods at a banquet and is punished by eternal thirst in [Hades](#).

[Bk VI:146-203](#). Boasted of by Niobe.

[Bk X:1-85](#). His punishment in the underworld ceases for a time at the sound of [Orpheus](#)'s song.

Tantalus(2)

[Bk VI:204-266](#). One of [Niobe](#)'s seven sons killed by [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#).

Tarentum

[Bk XV:1-59](#). A city on the 'heel' of Italy founded by [Lacedaemonians](#), the modern Taranto, and a commercial port. The [Spartan](#) colony of Taras, it was founded in 708BC and became the greatest city of Magna Graecia, famous for its purple murex dyes, wool etc. It

was a centre of [Pythagorean](#) philosophy. It became subject to Rome in 272BC, and surrendered to Hannibal in 209BC for which it was severely punished, on being retaken.

Tarpeïa

[Bk XIV:772-804](#). A [Roman](#) girl who treacherously opened the citadel to the [Sabines](#), and was killed beneath the weight of the weapons, which were thrown on her.

[Bk XV:843-870](#). The Tarpeian citadel was the [Capitoline](#) Hill with its temple of [Jupiter](#).

Tartarus, Tartara

[Bk I:113-124](#). The underworld. The infernal regions ruled by [Pluto](#) ([Dis](#)).

[Bk II:227-271](#). Light penetrates there when Phaethon loses control of the sun chariot.

[Bk V:332-384](#). The third part of the universe.

[Bk V:385-424](#). [Dis](#) re-enters Tartarus through the pool of [Cyane](#) after raping and abducting [Proserpine](#).

Bk X:1-85. Mentioned by Orpheus.

Bk XI:650-709. Bk XII:245-289. Bk XII:429-535.

Bk XII:579-628. The void of the afterlife.

Tartessus

Bk XIV:397-434. Of Tartessus, an old Phoenician colony in Spain.

Tatius

Bk XIV:772-804. A king of the Sabines who fought against Romulus, but afterwards made peace and ruled jointly with him.

Bk XIV:805-828. He dies.

Taurus(1)

Bk II:63-89. The constellation and zodiacal sun sign of the Bull. It represents the white 'Bull from the Sea', a disguise of Jupiter when he carried off Europa. Its glinting red eye is the star Aldebaran one of the four Babylonian guardians of the heavens, lying near the

ecliptic. (The others are Regulus in [Leo](#), Antares in [Scorpius](#), and Fomalhaut ‘the Fish’s Eye’ in Piscis Austrinus. All four are at roughly ninety degrees to one another.)

Taurus(2)

[Bk II:201-226](#). A mountain in Asia Minor.

Täygeta, Täygete

[Bk III:572-596](#). One of the [Pleiades](#), daughter of [Atlas](#).

Tectaphus

[Bk XII:429-535](#). One of the Lapithae.

Tegeaea

[Arcadian](#), from Tegus an ancient town in Arcadia.

An epithet of [Atalanta\(1\)](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). She is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:376-424. She wounds the boar.

Telamon

Bk VII:453-500. The son of Aeacus, king of Aegina, brother of Peleus and Phocus, and father of Ajax. He comes to meet Minos.

Bk VII:614-660. He brings his father news of the Myrmidons having been created.

Bk VIII:260-328. He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

Bk VIII:376-424. He trips over a tree-root and falls.

Bk XI:194-220. He helps Hercules rescue Hesione and is given her in marriage.

Bk XII:579-628. Bk XIII:1-122. The father of Ajax, the great.

Bk XIII:123-381. Ajax's father, and Peleus's brother, exiled with him for the murder of Phocus.

Telamoniades, Telamoni

Bk XIII:123-381. Ajax as son of Telamon.

Telchines

Bk VII:350-403. A fabled family of priests in Ialysus, an ancient city of Rhodes. Neptune fell in love with the nymph Halia, and her six sons committed outrages that led a disgusted Jupiter to sink them below the earth or under the waves.

Teleboas

Bk XII:429-535. A centaur.

Telemus

Bk XIII:738-788. The son of Eurymus, a seer, who prophesies that Ulysses will seize the single eye of Polyphemus.

Telephus

King of Mysia, son of Hercules and the nymph Auge.

[Bk XII:64-145](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). He was wounded and healed by the touch of [Achilles](#)'s spear at [Troy](#).

Telestes

[Bk IX:714-763](#). A [Cretan](#), father of [Ianthe](#).

Telethusa

[Bk IX:666-713](#). The wife of [Ligdus](#), and mother of [Iphis](#). her husband orders to have any female child killed, but she has a prophetic dream of [Isis](#) telling her to save the child in her womb, a daughter, and deceives him into believing her female infant is male.

[Bk IX:764-797](#). She prays to Isis for help.

Tellus

[Bk II:272-300](#). The Earth Mother, the Goddess of the Earth. She appeals to [Jupiter](#) to save the world after [Phaethon](#) has lost control of the sun chariot.

Temese

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). A town in [Bruttium](#), possessing rich copper mines. Source of famous bronzes.

Tempe

[Bk I:568-587](#). The valley in [Thessaly](#) between [Ossa](#) and [Olympus](#) through which the River [Peneus](#) flows. It was celebrated in antiquity for its abundance of water and luxurious vegetation, and as the place where [Apollo](#) came to purify himself after killing [Python](#). (It was the principal route into Greece from the north.)

[Bk VII:179-233](#). [Medea](#) gathers magic herbs there.

Tenedos

[Bk I:504-524](#). An island in the [Aegean](#) near the [Trojan](#) coast. (See Homer's Iliad).

[Bk XII:64-145](#). Sacked by [Achilles](#).

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Captured by [Achilles](#).

Tenos

An island of the Cyclades, between Andros and Myconos.

Bk VII:453-500. Not allied to Crete.

Tereus

Bk VI:401-438. The king of Thrace, husband of Procne.

Bk VI:438-485. Brings her sister, Philomela, to stay with her, while conceiving a frenzied desire for the sister.

Bk VI:486-548. He violates the girl.

Bk VI:549-570. He cuts out her tongue, and tells Procne she is dead.

Bk VI:619-652. Procne serves him the flesh of his murdered son Itys at a banquet.

Bk VI:653-674. Pursuing the sisters in his desire for revenge, he is turned into a bird, the hoopoe, *upupa epops*, with its distinctive feathered crest and elongated beak. Its rapid, far-carrying, ‘hoo-hoo-hoo’ call is interpreted as ‘pou-pou-pou’ meaning ‘where? where? where?’.

Book VI:675-721. His actions sour the relationship between Thrace and Attica.

Terra

Bk I:151-176. The goddess of Earth, mother of the Giants, see Tellus.

Tethys

Bk II:63-89. A Titaness, co-ruler of the planet Venus with Oceanus. She reigns over the sea. The sister and wife of Oceanus, in whose waters some say all gods and living things originated, she is said to have produced all his children. Her waters receive the setting sun.

Bk II:150-177. She lets loose the four horses of the Sun. As father of Phoebus the sun (see above), Phaethon the Sun's child is her grandson.

Bk II:508-530. Visited by Juno for help in punishing Callisto.

Bk IX:439-516. She married her brother Oceanus.

Bk XI:749-795. She turns Aesacus into a diving bird, probably the merganser, *mergus serrator*, from *mergus*, a diver.

Bk XIII:898-968. With Oceanus she purges Glaucus.

Teucer(1)

Bk XIII:705-737. A king of early Troy, originally from Crete. His people the Teucrians.

Teucer(2)

Bk XIII:123-381. The son of Telamon and Hesione, half-brother of Ajax, cousin of Achilles.

Bk XIV:698-771. He founded Salamis in Cyprus, having been born on the Greek island of Salamis that was the scene of the naval battle against the Persians.

Teucri

Bk XIII:705-737. The Trojans, from their king Teucer.

Teuthranteus

[Bk II:227-271](#). Of Teuthrania in [Mysia](#) in Asia Minor. Mysian. Of the river [Caicus](#).

Thaumantea, Thaumantias, Thaumantis

[Bk IV:464-511](#). [Bk XI:573-649](#). [Bk XIV:829-851](#). Epithets of [Iris](#), daughter of [Thaumas](#).

Thaumas(1), Thaumus

The father of [Iris](#). See [Thaumentea](#).

Thaumas(2)

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Thebes(1), Thebae

[Bk III:1-49](#), The city in [Boeotia](#) founded by [Cadmus](#). [Phoebus](#) instructs him how to find the site by following a heifer.

Bk IV:389-415. The Theban women follow Bacchus, but the daughters of Minyas reject him and are changed into bats.

Bk V:250-293. It is near Mount Helicon, home of the Muses.

Bk VI:146-203. Amphion rules there with his wife Niobe.

Bk VI:401-438. Rulers of the cities of the Peloponnese, Boeotia and Attica, go to Thebes to show sympathy at the death of Amphion and his children.

Bk VII:759-795. The city of Oedipus, plagued by the Sphinx and the Teumessian vixen.

Bk IX:394-417. Themis prophesies concerning the war of the Seven against Thebes.

Bk XIII:675-704. The city of seven gates on Alcon's cup. It depicts the sacrifice of the daughters of Orion to save the city from plague.

Bk XV:418-452. A symbol of vanished power. (It was razed to the ground by Alexander, in 335BC, with the exception of the house occupied by the poet Pindar.)

Thebes(2)

[Bk XII:64-145](#). [Bk XIII:123-381](#). A city in [Mysia](#) sacked by [Achilles](#).

Thebaïdes

[Bk VI:146-203](#). The women of [Thebes](#).

Themis

[Bk I:313-347](#). A [Titaness](#), co- ruler of the planet Jupiter, daughter of heaven and earth. Her daughters are the Seasons and the Three [Fates](#). She is the Triple-Goddess with prophetic powers.

[Bk IV:604-662](#). She has prophesied the theft of the golden apples from [Atlas](#)'s orchard in the [Hesperides](#).

[Bk VII:759-795](#). Ovid suggests the Sphinx was sacred to Themis (as the moon-goddess of [Thebes](#)?) who then avenges her death.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). [Bk IX:418-438](#). She prophesies concerning the war of the Seven against [Thebes](#) and its aftermath.

Thereus

[Bk XII:290-326](#). A centaur.

Thermodon

[Bk II:227-271](#). [Bk IX:159-210](#). [Bk XII:579-628](#). A river of [Pontus](#), the Black Sea region where the [Amazons](#) lived.

Therses

[Bk XIII:675-704](#). A friend of King [Anius](#) who sends him the gift of a drinking cup.

Thersites

A Greek at [Troy](#) who used to hurl abuse at the Greek leaders.

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). Punished for his insolence by [Ulysses](#).

Thescelus

Bk V:149-199. A companion of Phineus, turned to stone by the Gorgon's head.

Theseius heros

Bk XV:479-551. Hippolytus, son of Theseus.

Theseus

Bk VII:404-424. King of Athens, son of Aegeus, hence Aegides. His mother was Aethra, daughter of Pittheus king of Troezen. Aegeus had lain with her in the temple. His father had hidden a sword , and a pair of sandals, under a stone (The Rock of Theseus) as a trial, which he lifted, and he made his way to Athens, cleansing the Isthmus of robbers along the way.

Bk VII:404-424. Medea attempts to poison Theseus but Aegeus recognises his sword, and his son, and prevents her.

Bk VII:425-452. Escaping the attempt by Medea to poison him, his deeds are celebrated

by the Athenians: the killing of the Minotaur, and the wild sow of Cromyon, the defeat of Periphetes, Procrustes, Cercyon, Sinis, and Sciron.

Bk VIII:152-182. He kills the Minotaur in the Cretan labyrinth, and abandons Ariadne on Dia (Naxos). (See Canova's sculpture – Theseus and the Dead Minotaur – Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Bk VIII:260-328. Athens no longer pays tribute to Minos since he destroyed the Minotaur. The towns of Achaia beg his help in the Calydonian boar hunt, which he joins.

Bk VIII:376-424. He warns off his friend Pirithoüs, and aims at the boar, but his spear is deflected.

Bk VIII:547-610. He is delayed on his return from the Calydonian Boar Hunt, by the River Acheloüs, and the river-god tells the story of Perimele.

Bk VIII:725-776. He wishes to hear more stories of the god's actions.

[Bk IX:1-88](#). He asks Acheloüs to explain how he lost one of his horns.

[Bk XII:290-326](#). He is present at the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, with his oaken club.

[Bk XV:479-546](#). [Hippolytus](#) is his son, loved by Theseus's wife [Phaedra](#).

[Bk XV:843-870](#). He surpasses his father Aegeus.

Thespiades

[Bk V:294-331](#). A name given to the [Muses](#) from Thespieae a city near Mount [Helicon](#) their haunt in [Boeotia](#).

Thessaly, [Haemonia](#), Haemonius, Thessalis, Thessalus (of Thessaly)

[Bk II:531-565](#). The region in northern Greece. Its old name was Haemonia, hence Haemonius, Thessalian.

[Bk VII:179-233](#). Contains the vale of [Tempe](#).

[Bk VII:234-293](#). One of its valleys is a source of the magic roots used by [Medea](#).

[Bk VIII:725-776](#). The country of [Erysichthon](#).

[Bk XII:146-209](#). The country of [Caenis](#).

[Bk XII:290-326](#). The mountains are the haunt of bears.

Thestiadae

The two sons of Thestius, [Toxeus](#) and [Plexippus](#), the brothers of [Althaea](#), and uncles of [Meleager](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). They are present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk VIII:425-450](#). They are killed by Meleager in an argument.

Thestias

[Bk VIII:451-514](#). [Althaea](#), daughter of Thestius, mother of [Meleager](#).

Thestorides

[Bk XII:1-38](#). [Calchas](#), the son of Thestor.

Thetis

A sea goddess, daughter of [Nereus](#) and [Doris](#).

[Bk XI:194-220](#). She is the wife of [Peleus](#).

[Bk XI:221-265](#). She is a shape-changer, but Peleus overcomes her, and she bears him the hero [Achilles](#).

[Bk XI:346-409](#). She obtains forgiveness for him, for the murder of his half-brother [Phocus](#), from [Psamathe](#).

[Bk XIII:123-381](#). She hid Achilles among the women, foreseeing his early death.

Thisbaeus

[Bk XI:266-345](#). Of Thisbe, a town in [Boeotia](#) in a region famous for doves.

Thisbe

[Bk IV:55-92](#). A fictional [Babylonian](#) girl. The story of [Pyramus](#) and Thisbe.

[Bk IV:128-166](#). Her death is described. The mulberry gets its dark-reddish colour

Thoactes

Bk V:107-148. Armour bearer of Cepheus, killed in the fight between Perseus and Phineus.

Thoas

The king of Lemnos, son of Andraemon, and father of Hypsipyle.

Bk XIII:1-122. He does not compete for the arms of Achilles.

Bk XIII:399-428. Ulysses sails for the island to bring back the arrows of Hercules. Thoas was king there when the Lemnian women murdered their menfolk because of their adultery with Thracian girls. His life was spared because his daughter Hypsipyle set him adrift in an oarless boat.

Thoön

Bk XIII:123-381. A Trojan, killed by Ulysses.

Thrace, and Thracius, Thrax, Threicius(of Thrace)

Bk II:227-271. The country bordering the Black Sea, Propontis and the northeastern Aegean.

Bk VI:70-102. Mount Haemon (Haemus) and Mount Rhodope are sited there.

Bk VI:401-438. Tereus is its king and an ally of Athens.

Book VI:675-721. Boreas is associated with this northern region.

Bk IX:159-210. In the Eighth Labour, Hercules destroys Thracian King Diomedes and his four savage mares that fed on human flesh.

Bk X:1-85. The country of Orpheus, containing Mount Rhodope, and the territory of the Cicones. He introduces homosexual love of young boys into Thrace.

Bk XI:1-66. The country of Orpheus, where he is killed by the Maenads, his severed head floating down the river Hebrus to the sea.

Bk XI:85-145. The country of Orpheus.

Bk XIII:429-480. Ruled by Polymestor of the Bistones. Agamemnon beaches the fleet there

on the way back from [Troy](#), and the ghost of [Achilles](#) appears.

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). [Polydorus](#) was murdered by the Thracians. They attack [Hecuba](#) after her murder of [Polymestor](#).

[Bk XIII:623-639](#). [Aeneas](#) leaves its shores behind.

Thurinus

Of Thurii, a city on the Tarentine Gulf.

Thybris, [Albula](#)

[Bk II:227-271](#). [Bk XV:418-452](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). A poetic form of the River Tiber the river of Rome.

[Bk XIV:397-434](#). [Canens](#) dies by its shore.

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). It is dark-shadowed and yellow with sand.

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). It is named after King [Tiberinus](#) who drowned there.

Thyestae mensae

[Bk XV:453-478](#). A ‘Thyestean meal’, such as that of Thyestes, whose two sons were cooked and served to him, by his brother [Atreus](#), as a revenge.

Thyneïus

Of the Thyni, a people of [Thrace](#) who emigrated to Bithynia.

[Bk VIII:679-724](#). Thynia, the country of [Baucis](#) and [Philemon](#), who are [Phrygians](#). They are both turned into trees, she into a lime tree and he into an oak. It is the region north of the [Hellespont](#) opposite Dardania and [Troy](#).

Thyoneus(1)

[Bk IV:1-30](#). An epithet of [Bacchus](#) from Thyone, a name under which his mother [Semele](#) was worshipped as one of the Wild Women of the rites (at [Athens](#), [Delphi](#) and [Troezen](#)).

Thyoneus(2)

[Bk VII:350-403](#). A son of [Bacchus](#).

Tiberinus

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). [Bk XV:622-745](#). An [Alban](#) king who drowned in and gave his name to the river [Tiber](#).

Timolus

See [Tmolus](#).

Tiresias

[Bk III:316-338](#). The Theban sage who spent seven years as a woman and decides the dispute between [Juno](#) and [Jupiter](#). He is blinded by Juno but given the power of prophecy by Jupiter.

[Bk VI:146-203](#). His daughter is [Manto](#), the prophetess.

Tirynthia

[Bk VII:100-158](#). [Alcmena](#), the mother of [Hercules](#), from Tiryns applied to Hercules as an epithet.

Tirynthus

[Bk VII:404-424](#). [Bk IX:1-88](#). [Bk IX:211-272](#).
[Bk XII:536-579](#).

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). Of Tiryns, a city in [Argolis](#) near [Argos](#), commonly applied as an epithet to [Hercules](#).

Tisiphone

One of the [Furies](#).

[Bk IV:464-511](#). She is sent by [Juno](#) to madden [Athamas](#) and [Ino](#).

Titan

[Bk I:1-30](#). Uranus fathered the Titans on Gaea (Mother Earth). The name Titan is applied to [Sol](#) the sun god, son of the Titan [Hyperion](#), and to [Phoebus Apollo](#), as a sun god and daughter

of [Leto](#) (Latona) whose mother was [Phoebe](#) the Titaness.

[Bk II:111-149](#). [Bk VI:438-485](#). [Bk X:1-85](#). Phoebus Apollo. The Sun god as Titan.

[Bk VII:350-403](#). [Medea](#)'s winged dragons are born of the Titans.

[Bk X:143-219](#). [Bk XI:221-265](#). The sun.

[Titania](#), [Titanis](#)

An epithet for the descendant of a [Titan](#).

[Bk I:381-415](#). [Pyrrha](#) the granddaughter of [Iapetus](#).

[Bk III:165-205](#). [Diana](#) as granddaughter of [Coeus](#).

[Bk VI:146-203](#). [Bk VI:313-381](#). [Latona](#) as a daughter of Coeus.

[Bk XIII:898-968](#). [Bk XIV:1-74](#). [Bk XIV:320-396](#).

[Bk XIV:435-444](#). [Circe](#), daughter of [Titan](#), the Sun.

Tithonus

The son of [Laomedon](#), husband of [Aurora](#), and father of [Memnon](#).

[Bk IX:418-438](#). Aurora, having obtained eternal life for him wishes she could obtain eternal youth for him also.

Tityos

A giant, who attempted violence to [Latona](#), and suffers in [Hades](#).

[Bk IV:416-463](#). Vultures feed on his liver, which is continually renewed.

[Bk X:1-85](#). His punishment in the underworld ceases for a time at the sound of [Orpheus](#)'s song.

Tlepolemus

[Bk XII:536-579](#). A son of [Hercules](#), leader of the [Rhodians](#). He upbraids [Nestor](#) for neglecting to mention Hercules.

Tmolus, Timolus

[Bk II:201-226](#). A mountain in [Lydia](#), near the source of the River [Caÿster](#).

[Bk XI:85-145](#). It is sacred to [Bacchus](#).

[Bk XI:146-171](#). [Bk XI:194-220](#). The sea is visible from the mountain, which overlooks [Sardis](#), and whose god judges the music contest between [Pan](#) and [Apollo](#).

Tonaus

[Bk I:151-176](#). [Bk XI:194-220](#). The Thunderer, an epithet for [Jupiter](#).

Toxeus

The son of Thestius. Brother of [Althaea](#), and uncle of [Meleager](#).

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). He is present at the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Bk VIII:425-450](#). He is killed by his nephew Meleager in an argument over the spoils.

Trachas

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A town in Latium.

Trachin

[Bk XI:266-345](#). [Bk XI:573-649](#). A city in [Thessaly](#), ruled by [Ceyx](#), where [Peleus](#) finds sanctuary after killing his brother. [Hercules](#) is its hero.

Trachinius

[Bk XI:346-409](#). An epithet of [Ceyx](#), king of [Trachin](#).

[Bk XI:474-572](#). Of [Trachin](#).

Tridentifer

[Bk VIII:547-610](#). An epithet of [Neptune](#) from his three-pronged trident.

Trinacria, Trinacris

Bk V:332-384. An ancient name for Sicily. Typhoeus the giant is buried under it by the gods.

Bk V:425-486. Ceres blights it because Persephone is abducted from its soil.

Bk V:487-532. Arethusa loves the land, though a foreigner, and begs Ceres to preserve it from harm.

Triones

Bk II:150-177. Bk X:431-502. The constellations of the Great and Little Bear. See Ursa Major and Ursa Minor.

Triopeis

Bk VIII:843-884. Mestra, the daughter of Erysichthon and granddaughter of Triopas, king of Thessaly.

Triopeiüs

Bk VIII:725-776. Erysichthon, son of Triopas king of Thessaly.

Triptolemus

The son of Celeus, king of Eleusis in Attica.
Bk V:642-678. Ceres sends him to take the gift of her crops to Lyncus king of the Scythian barbarians. He is attacked, but saved by Ceres.

Triton

Bk I:313-347. Bk XIII:898-968. The sea and river god, son of Neptune and Amphitrite the Nereid. He is depicted as half man and half fish and the sound of his conch-shell calms the waves. (See Wordsworth's sonnet 'The world is too much with us; late and soon,')

Bk II:1-30. His image depicted on the palace of the Sun.

Tritonia, Tritonis

[Bk II:752-786](#). [Bk V:250-293](#). [BkVI:1-25](#). An epithet of [Minerva](#) ([Pallas](#) Athene) from her original home near lake Triton in [Libya](#).

[Bk V:642-678](#). [Bk VIII:547-610](#). Applied to her city of [Athens](#).

Tritoniaca harundo

[Bk VI:382-400](#). ‘[Minerva](#)’s reed’, the flute she invented.

Trivia

[Bk II:401-416](#). An epithet of [Diana](#), worshipped at the meeting of three ways, ‘Diana of the crossroads’.

Troezen, Troizen

A city in the southern [Argolis](#).

[Bk VI:401-438](#). Its ruler goes to [Thebes](#) to show sympathy for the death of [Amphion](#) and his children.

[Bk VIII:611-678](#). [Bk XV:259-306](#). Its later ruler is [Pittheus](#).

[Bk XV:259-306](#). The earthquake described here by Ovid is sited by Strabo at Methone. Troizen was a sanctuary of Poseidon- [Neptune](#), god of the sea, the bulls, and earthquakes as were [Helice](#) and [Buris](#), according to Pausanias.

[Bk XV:479-546](#). [Hippolytus](#) is killed near there, when the bull from the sea, rises from the waves.

Troezenius heros

[Bk VIII:547-610](#). [Lelex](#), an inhabitant of [Troezen](#).

Troy, Troia, and Troianus, Troïcus (of Troy), Ilium

Troy in Dardania, the famous city of the Troad in Asia Minor near the northern [Aegean](#) Sea and the entrance to the [Hellespont](#).

[Bk VI:70-102](#). The home city of [Antigone](#), daughter of [Laomedon](#).

Bk VIII:329-375. The future scene of the Trojan War.

Bk IX:211-272. The place where Philoctetes will be needed, to make use of the bow of Hercules, on the Greek side, in the war.

Bk XI:194-220. Apollo and Neptune built its walls for Laomedon.

Bk XI:749-795. Priam was its last king.

Bk XII:1-38. The Greeks set sail from Aulis to make war over the abduction of Helen by Paris.

Bk XII:579-628. The ten-year war. The death of Achilles.

Bk XIII:1-122. Captured by Hercules.

Bk XIII:399-428. Troy falls to the Greeks and is burned.

Bk XIII:429-480. It lies opposite the land of the Bistones.

Bk XIII:481-575. The Trojan women, who aid Hecuba, and are moved by her fate.

Bk XIII:576-622. Its cause was aided by Aurora.

Bk XIII:623-639. Bk XIV:101-153. Bk XV:745-842. Troy's destiny lies with Aeneas.

Bk XIII:640-674. Agamemnon is its ravager.

Bk XIII:705-737. Helenus builds a replica of Troy at Buthrotos.

Bk XIV:445-482. Aeneas and his Trojans wage war in Latium.

Bk XV:143-175. Pythagoras fought in the Trojan war, as his incarnation Euphorbus.

Bk XV:418-452. A symbol of vanished glory, but as its descendant city, Rome, a symbol of glory to come.

Bk XV:622-745. An epithet of the goddess Vesta, a name for Tauric Diana at Nemi.

Troïus

Bk XI:749-795. An epithet of Aesacus, son of Priam.

Bk XIV:154-222. An epithet of Aeneas.

Turnus

King of the Rutulii in Italy, who opposed Aeneas. His capital was at Ardea, south of Rome, near modern Anzio.

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). He goes to war when Aeneas steals his promised bride [Lavinia](#). He sends [Venulus](#) to ask help from [Diomede](#).

[Bk XIV:527-565](#). He burns Aeneas's fleet.

[Bk XIV:566-580](#). [Bk XV:745-842](#). He is defeated.

Tuscan

[Bk III:597-637](#). Tuscan or [Etrurian](#), but also [Tyrrhenian](#) since Etruria was settled by immigrants from [Mysia](#).

[Bk XIV:609-622](#). The [Tiber](#) is a Tuscan stream.

Tydidēs

[Bk XII:579-628](#). [Bk XIII:1-122](#). [Diomede](#), son of Tydeus.

Tyndaridae

[Bk VIII:260-328](#). The twins, Castor and Pollux, the Dioscuri, the sons of [Leda](#) by the [Spartan](#) king Tyndareus, both present at the [Calydonian Boar-Hunt](#).

Tyndaris

[Bk XV:199-236](#). An epithet of [Helen](#), as the daughter of Tyndareus.

Typhoeus

[Bk III:273-315](#). [Bk XIV:1-74](#). The hundred-handed giant, one of the sons of Earth, who fought the gods. Deposed by [Jupiter](#) he was buried under Sicily.

[Bk V:294-331](#). The [Emathides](#) pretend that he chased the gods into [Egypt](#).

[Bk V:332-384](#). [Calliope](#), the [Muse](#), tells how Typhoeus was buried under [Sicily](#) by the gods.

Tyria paelex

[Bk III:253-272](#). An epithet of [Europa](#).

Tyros, Tyre, Tyrius(=Tyrian)

[Bk II:833-875](#). The city of the Phoenicians in the Lebanon.

[Bk V:30-73](#). [Bk VI:26-69](#). [Bk X:243-297](#). Famed for its purple dyes used on clothing, obtained from the murex shell-fish.

[Bk V:385-424](#). The violet flowers of [Enna](#) picked by [Proserpine](#) are compared to the purple dyes.

[Bk VI:204-266](#). [Amphion](#)'s sons have Tyrian dyed horsecloths.

[Bk IX:324-393](#). The flowers of the lotus tree are compared in colour to its dyes.

[Bk X:143-219](#). The colour of [Hyacinthus](#)'s flower.

[Bk XI:146-171](#). [Phoebus](#)'s robes are of Tyrian purple.

[Bk XV:259-306](#). Once an island harbour, subsequently linked to the mainland.

Tyrrhenia, Tyrrhenian

[Bk XV:552-621](#). Inhabitants of [Maeonia](#) in [Lydia](#). The Tyrrhenians migrated into Italy from Lydia (Tyrrha on the River [Cayster](#)) to form the rootstock of the [Etrurians](#) (Etruscans).

Bk III:572-596. Acoetes the priest of Bacchus explains his Tyrrhenian origins.

Bk XIV:1-74. Glaucus crosses the Tyrrhenian Sea to seek out Circe. (Possibly located at Cape Circeo, between Anzio and Gaeta)

Bk XIV:445-482. The Etrurians who go to war with the Trojans under Aeneas.

Ulysses, Ulixes

The Greek hero, son of Laërtes. See Homer's Iliad and Odyssey.

(See Francesco Primaticcio's painting – Ulysses and Penelope – The Toledo Museum of Art)

Bk XII:579-628. He competes for the arms of Achilles.

Bk XIII:1-122. Ajax cites his deficiencies; his cunning; his reluctance to join the expedition against Troy; his desertion of Philoctetes; his desertion of Nestor; his desertion of the ships when Hector torched them; his unworthy victims; and his theft of the Palladium.

Bk XIII:123-381. Ulysses replies by extolling intelligence and ability over ancestry and mere

brawn and courage. He is nobler than [Ajax](#); he discovered the concealed [Achilles](#) and sent him to [Troy](#); influenced [Agamemnon](#) at [Aulis](#) and Troy; went as ambassador to [Priam](#); uncovered a spy, [Dolon](#); killed [Rhesus](#) and others; and made the destruction of Troy possible by obtaining the [Palladium](#), its guarantee of safety. He claims [Diomedes](#) as a true friend.

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). He sets sail for [Lemnos](#) to bring back the arrows of [Hercules](#).

[Bk XIII:399-428](#). He finds [Hecuba](#) among the tombs of her sons at the fall of Troy.

[Bk XIII:481-575](#). Even Ulysses would not want [Hecuba](#) except as the mother of [Hector](#).

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). [Ithaca](#) is his home.

[Bk XIII:738-788](#). [Telemus](#) prophesies that he will destroy the single eye of [Polyphemus](#).

[Bk XIV:154-222](#). [Macareus](#) and [Achaemenides](#) were two of his companions. He blinded [Polyphemus](#), and his ship was nearly wrecked by him.

[Bk XIV:223-319](#). [Aeolus](#) gave him the bag of winds, but opened by his men, he was blown

back to Aeolus, then encountered the [Laestrygonians](#) and came to [Circe](#)'s isle where his men were transformed into beasts. He 'married' Circe, rescued them, and stayed there for a year.

[Bk XIV:527-565](#). The [Trojan](#) ships transformed into naiads rejoice to see the wreckage of his ship.

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). [Penelope](#) waits for him while he is delayed by the war.

Urania

One of the nine Muses, later Muse of Astronomy.

[Bk V:250-293](#). She welcomes [Minerva](#) to [Helicon](#).

Ursa Major, The Great Bear, The Waggon (plaustra), The Wain, [The Plough](#), The Big Dipper, Helice

[Bk II:150-177](#). The constellation of Ursa Major. It represents [Callisto](#) turned into a bear by

Jupiter, or the plough or waggon or cart of Bootës. The two stars of the ‘bowl’ furthest from the ‘handle’, Merak and Dubhe, point to Polaris the pole star. The ‘handle’ points to the star Arcturus in the constellation Bootës, who is the Waggoner or Herdsman or Bear Herd (Arcturus means the Bearkeeper) or Ploughman.

Bk II:496-507. Jupiter turns Callisto into the Great Bear and Arcas her son into the Little Bear, Ursa Minor.

Bk II:508-530. The constellation is prevented, through Juno’s request to Tethys and Oceanus, from dipping below the horizon.

Bk VIII:183-235. Icarus is warned not to fly too near the constellation.

Ursa Minor, Triones

Bk II:150-177. The constellation of the Little Bear or Little Dipper, said to have been introduced by Thales in about 600BC. Close to Polaris the Pole Star it is a smaller version of

the Great Bear, [Ursa Major](#), and represents the far north.

[Bk II:496-507](#). [Jupiter](#) turns [Arcas](#) into the Little Bear and his mother [Callisto](#) into the Great Bear, Ursa Major.

Venilia

[Bk XIV:320-396](#). The wife of [Janus](#), and mother of [Canens](#).

Venulus

[Bk XIV:445-482](#). A messenger from [Turnus](#) to [Diomede](#).

[Bk XIV:512-526](#). He returns having failed to win Diomede's help.

Venus

[Bk I:438-472](#). The Goddess of Love. The daughter of [Jupiter](#) and Dione. She is Aphrodite, born from the waves, an incarnation of Astarte, Goddess of the Phoenicians. The mother of [Cupid](#) by [Mars](#).

(See Botticelli's painting – Venus and Mars – National Gallery, London)

[Bk IV:167-189](#). [Bk XIV:1-74](#). She commits adultery with [Mars](#) and is caught in a net by her husband [Vulcan](#) after [Sol](#) has betrayed their affair.

[Bk IV:190-213](#). She is called [Cytherea](#), from the island of Cythera, and takes her revenge on [Sol](#).

[Bk IV:346-388](#). She is the mother of [Hermaphroditus](#), by [Mercury](#), and grants, with him, their son's prayer that the pool of [Salmacis](#) weaken anyone who bathes there.

[Bk IV:512-542](#). She asks [Neptune](#) her uncle to change [Ino](#) and her son into sea-deities.

[Bk V:294-331](#). The [Emathides](#) pretend that she fled to Egypt in the war between the giants and the gods, and there she hid in the form of a fish.

[Bk VII:796-865](#). [Cephalus](#) would prefer [Procris](#) to her.

[Bk IX:394-417](#). She gave [Harmonia](#) the fatal necklace made by [Vulcan](#) (Hephaestus), that

was Jupiter's love gift to Europa, and that conferred irresistible beauty.

Bk IX:418-438. She wishes to ward off old age from her mortal lover Anchises.

Bk IX:439-516. Bk IX:517-594. Byblis names her.

Bk IX:764-797. She attends weddings with Juno and Hymen.

Bk X:220-242. She turned the Cerastae into wild bullocks, and forced the Propoetides to perform acts of public prostitution. This latter was a feature of the worship of the great goddess as Astarte and Diana(at Ephesus etc). Cyprus was one of her sacred islands.

Bk X:243-297. She brings the ivory girl Pygmalion created to life.

Bk X:503-559. She falls in love with Adonis. (He is a vegetation god, and as her consort, mirrors Attis with Cybele, Tammuz with Astarte etc See Frazer's 'The Golden Bough'.)

Bk X:560-637 . Bk X:638-680. She tells the story of Atalanta and Hippomenes.

Bk X:681-707. She initiates her revenge on Hippomenes, and warns Adonis to avoid the wild beasts of the forest.

Bk X:708-739. Adonis ignores her warning and is killed by a wild boar (sacred to her as the moon goddess) that gores his thigh. She initiates the annual re-enactment of his death (a vegetation ritual, of the death and resurrection of the Goddess's consort), and turns his blood into the fragile anemone, the windflower. (See Frazer: The Golden Bough XXIX).

Bk XIII:623-639. Aeneas is her son by Anchises.

Bk XIII:640-674. She is Aeneas's guardian goddess in his wanderings, and the white doves, into which the daughters of Anius are turned, are sacred to her.

Bk XIII:738-788. Her influence is gentle but powerful, making Polyphemus change his nature after falling in love with Galatea.

Bk XIV:1-74. She perhaps made Circe, Sol's daughter, susceptible to passion, in revenge for her father's tale-bearing, see above.

Bk XIV:445-482. Bk XV:745-842. She punished Diomede for wounding her during the Trojan War.

Bk XIV:483-511. She changes Diomede's friends into birds.

Bk XIV:566-580. She obtains deification for her son Aeneas.

Bk XIV:623-697. She hates hard hearts.

Bk XIV:698-771. Cyprian Salamis has a temple of Venus Prospiciens – 'she who looks out'.

Bk XIV:772-804. She asks the naiades to help the Romans. (Pursuing her support for the descendants of her son Aeneas.)

Bk XV:745-842. She asks the gods to prevent the assassination of her descendant Julius Caesar. Jupiter, however, declares his deification, prophesies the glory of his 'son' Augustus, and allows Venus to snatch him up into heaven, as a comet.

Bk XV:843-870. She sets Julius Caesar among the stars.

Vertumnus

An ancient Italian god, of the seasons and their produce.

[Bk XIV:623-697](#). He sets out to woo [Pomona](#), in disguise.

[Bk XIV:698-771](#). He reveals his true form, and wins her.

Vesta

The daughter of [Saturn](#). The goddess of fire. The 'shining one'. Every hearth had its Vesta, and she presided over the preparation of meals and was offered first food and drink. Her priestesses were the Vestal Virgins. Her chief festival was the Vestalia in June. The Virgins took a strict vow of chastity and served for thirty years. They enjoyed enormous prestige, and were preceded by a *lictor* when in public. Breaking of their vow resulted in whipping and death. There were twenty recorded instances in eleven centuries.

[Bk XV:622-745](#). A name for the Tauric [Diana](#) at Nemi.

Bk XV:745-842. She ‘married’ her high priest the ‘king of Rome’, e.g. Julius Caesar. See Fraser’s ‘The Golden Bough’ Ch1 et seq.

Bk XV:843-870. She is worshipped with her brother Phoebus, and is set among Caesar’s ancestral gods.

Virbius

Bk XV:479-546. The name for the deified Hippolytus in Italy. He was the King of the Wood (*Rex Nemorensis*) at Nemi, near Aricia.

He was Diana’s consort, and a minor deity with Egeria.

Voltumnus

Bk XV:622-745. A river, the modern Volturno, in Campania that runs by the site of ancient Capua.

Vulcan, Mulciber

Bk II:752-786. Son of Juno. The blacksmith of the gods, father of Erichthonius. His home is on Lemnos.

Bk IV:167-189. He catches his adulterous wife Venus in a net.

Bk VII:100-158. Creator of the bronze-footed bulls of King Aeetes.

Bk VII:425-452. Periphetes the cripple was his son by Anticleia. he owned a huge bronze club with which he killed passers by. Theseus defeated him.

Bk IX:211-272. The god of fire. Hercules on his funeral pyre is subject to it only in his mortal part, owed to his mother Alcmene.

Bk XII:579-628. He made for Thetis, the armour of Achilles, and his fire is the flame of Achilles's funeral pyre.

Bk XIII:1-122. Lemnos is his island.

Xanthus, Scamander

[Bk II:227-271](#). A river of [Troy](#) in Asia Minor and the river-god. His brother and companion river is the Simoïs. (See Homer's Iliad). He is a son of Zeus. In the Iliad Achilles drives the Trojans into a bend of the river 'as though a swarm of locusts driven into the river by a raging fire, clustered in the water to escape the flames' and slaughters them till Scamander runs red with blood.

Zancle, Messene, Messana

An older name for the city of Messana (Messina) in [Sicily](#).

[Bk XIII:705-737](#). [Aeneas](#) passes it.

[Bk XIV:1-74](#). [Glaucus](#) leaves it behind. [Scylla](#) is transformed there.

[Bk XV:259-306](#). Once joined to Italy before the formation of the straits of Messina.

Zephyrus

Bk I:52-68. The West Wind. Eurus is the East Wind, Auster is the South Wind, and Boreas is the North Wind.

Zetes

Book VI:675-721. One of the winged sons of Boreas and Orithyia. One of the Argonauts.
Bk VII:1-73. Drives away the Harpies.

Map of Ancient Greece and the Aegean

