SCENES FROM THE FALL OF TROY

HELEN ARMING PARIS

Troy: on a lonely part of the walls.

PARIS

So, my sweet thing, a little tighter yet.
Look you, it must not rattle or some blow
Given at hazard on my knee-cap here
Would drive the thin edge in my foot. (sighing)
My sweet thing, shall I talk or hold my tongue?

HELEN

Shall I say, Paris, that my heart is faint,
And my head sick? I grow afraid of death:
The Gods are all against us, and some day
The long black ships rowed equal on each side
Shall throng the Trojan bay, and I shall walk
From off the green earth to the straining ship;
Cold Agamemnon with his sickly smile
Shall go before me, and behind shall go
My old chain Menelaus: we shall sit
Under the deck amid the oars, and hear
From day to day their wretched measured beat
Against the washing surges; they shall sit
There in that twilight, with their faces turned
Away from mine, and we shall say no word;
And I shall be too sick at heart to sing,
Though the rough dirt-grimed mariners may sing
Through all their weariness their rowing-song
Of Argo and the Golden Fleece, and Her
That made and marred them all in a short while,
As any potter might do with his clay,
Medea the Colchian. We shall come at last
To land in Greece, and all shall cry at me,
"See her who slew the sons of Priamus,
Who threw to earth that right fair town of Troy,
Who slew full many a mother's son of Greece!
See how she walks still like a Queen! By the Gods!
Is there no faggot for her false white limbs?
No sack, wherein, close sewn and crying out,
She may roll down the steep guls of the sea?
Is there no butcher's knife?"

PARIS

Nay hold, my love!
And let Greek butchers butcher their own lambs,
For you are ours: and let the sea-folk roll
Their own sea-calves in sacks of woven sea-weed,
For you are ours: and let the beechen-wood
Bake bread for Greeks: seeing that you are ours.
Look Helen, hence upon our walls of stone,
Our great wet ditches where the carp and tench
In spite of arblasts and petrariae
Suck at the floating lilies all day long;
Look at the mighty barriers of fir-wood,
And look at Ilium rising over all,
Then at the few white tents and green log-huts
Of the Greek leaguer: listen too, my love
And you shall hear the muster of our men
Down in the streets, and marching toward the gates
Of many a captain. Ah! my sweet Helen,
Full many a day shall we kiss thus and thus
Before that last day when you kiss me dead,
An old man lying where the incense burns.

HELEN

Lips upon lips is surely a sweet game;
But I have ruined you, oh poor Paris,
My poor kind knight, who never for himself
Would look a yard before his sweet grey eyes;
Who taught me how to live, when long ago
I had forgotten that the world was fair
And I was fair: who made my lying down
Right peaceful to my tired heart and limbs,
Who made my waking sweet to rested eyes,
Who gave me joyful hours day by day.
In turn I give you this: no peace at all,
At best your weary anxiousness put off
So that it crushes not, pain and trouble, dear,
To you and all your kin; and at the worst—
O Paris, Paris, what care I for the Greeks?
They will not slay me, as I know well,
And time will stay their babble and hard words.

Yea, I shall live a Queen while you lie slain—
But think of Troy with wolves about the streets,
Some yellow lion couched upon the place
Where first you called out, "Troy, love! this is Troy!"
And men all shouted, "Helen! the fair Dame!"
But on their skulls that lion shall look then
And bones of women that looked out at me
Calling out "Helen!"—bones of young children
Born in the siege, who never knew of peace:
Fair, tall Andromache gone who knows where,
And Hector fallen dead among the spears,
One man to hundreds, when the rest are slain
And Troy is burning: yea good Helenus
Slain at his altar, and Cassandra mocked,
Used like a jester, while the Grecian wine
Stains Priam's golden cups: and Priam slain,
And Troilus slain before his withered hope
Can spring afresh: Deiphobus dead, slain,
Thrust in some ditch the salt sea sometimes fills
When wind and tide are high: Polyxena,
Younger than me and fairer she is now,
Sadder therefore and longer shall she live
As some man's slave—In what way, love Paris
Will they slay you, I wonder? will they call,
"Come Helen, come to this our sacrifice,
For Paris shall be slain at the sea's foot"?
Or will they wake me from my weeping sleep
Dangling your head above me by the hair,
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

Then all day long send women to dress me,
And scent my limbs, and comb my hair and bathe
My dull red eyelids till they grow stone-white,
Then set me at the feast among the wine
In Agamemnon's tent, to hear them tell
Long tales about the war, and hear them sing
Right in mine ears forgotten songs of Greece?

PARIS

Sweet, will you count our love an idle tale,
A thing the years take from us day by day,
A thing that was once but forgotten now?
Love, though indeed the bitter death may come,
And unclasp both my arms from round your neck,
Yet have I lived once. Helen, when I think
The fairest thing the Gods have made will sit
Hours together with her cheek laid on mine
And praises my poor doings, and looks pale
When from the mellay something scratched I come—
Say, lets me love her—why today, Helen,
I feel so light of heart with my great joy
That I can scarce be sober—shall I say,
Half jesting, half in earnest, as I take
Your fair long hand and kiss it, that our folk,
All Trojans, would be glad to die for this?
By God, Helen, but half I deem it true.

HELEN

Do not believe it, Paris: bitterly
Death comes to all, and they have their own wives,
Own loves or children: Paris, you know not
What death can do: pray God you curse me not
When you leave off being happy—do you think
We can be happy in the end, Paris?
I shudder when I think of those fell men
Who every day stand round about Troy Town
And every night wipe the rust off their spears.
They have no thoughts of pleasure or of love;
Each day they rise to see the walls of Troy
Still stand unbreached, and in the dead of night
Awake or dreaming, still they think of it;
Unspoken vows lie coiled about their hearts,
Unspoken wrath is in their heavy hands,
They are become mine enemies, yet still
I am half grieved for their unspoken woes,
And longings for the merry fields of Greece:
They know themselves to be but ruined men
Whatever happens—Doubt not they will win
Their dreadful slow revenge at last, Paris.

PARIS
Look you my love, it is not well to boast
Of anything one has, for fear the Gods
Should take it from us: yet I pray you think
Of that great belt of Priam’s sons, buckled
By shining Hector the great clasp of all:
The unfailling steadfast hearts of my brothers,
Shall they not match the fierce-eyed gloomy Greeks?

HELEN
O me! my brother Hector, kind and true,
How sweet thou art for ever unto me!
Yet sometime shall Achilles have his day:
Better a live dog than a dead lion, dear.

PARIS
Behold him coming, glancing with a smile
Down on the Grecian tents.

HELEN
Is it farewell
To both of you? Would I could weep for love!
But little ever have I used wet eyes
When hurt I have been. Where go you, sweet lords?

HECTOR
The word is, each in arms we meet straightway
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

In Priam's Hall, then out at gates go we;
And goodly tilting shall the Trojan dames
See from the walls: right thick the Greeks are set,
And even now the stones begin to fall
By the Scaean gates from their petrariae.
Why Paris! you look brave in arms today.
See you do well! Helen shall see your works.

Helen! fair Helen!

PARIS

O my God! Hector,
What may all this forbode? She said true now,
She never wept: I never saw her weep;
But now she lies full length upon the stones
And terrible her weeping is to hear,
And terribly the sobs take half her breath:

Kneeling by Helen.

For God's sake, Helen! will you kill me, love?

HELEN

Go out and fight! I cannot speak with you,
No, no, I cannot kiss you: go, Paris.

PARIS

I will not leave you, Helen, till you do.
Tell me what ails you?

HELEN

O, Paris, Paris!
Let me lie still and leave me!

HECTOR

Come, brother!

For time presses. 'Tis better too for her;
She will weep out her full, and go to sleep,
And wake up in your arms tonight smiling.

Exeunt.
THE DEFIANCE OF THE GREEKS

A hall near the Scæan Gate, filled with lords and gentlemen of the Trojans armed; Priam sitting in a throne on the dais, and by him Hecuba, Andromache, Polyxena, Cassandra, Deiphobus, Troilus, Helenus, and a little apart Æneas and Antenor.

PRIAM

My faithful sons, good lords and gentlemen,
Patience a little, while I tell a tale
You all have helped to make a gallant one.
Nine years ago across the wild wan waves
There came a mighty armament of Greeks,
Whom we met straightway; all my knights who fought
That morning on the sands are here, but those
Who fell asleep amid the melody
Of meeting swords; now therefore ye all know
How the Greeks won to land, while at their backs
Broke the whiteheaded waves of the Great King,
And in their faces shone King Priam’s spears;
The sea fell back behind the long black ships,
And we went back and stayed within our gates,
So that they won. What won they, Sirs, but harm?
With hale and how they drew their ships ashore
And made them walls betwixt the grass and the sea;
They pitched their tents upon the soft green grass—
Their tents were white upon the green meadows
Nine years ago. They have not sapped one wall
Nor broken any barrier of Troy Town.
And they, how many of them are dead, slain
By our good spears; the autumn dampes have slain
Full many a mother’s son, those who are left
Keep growing gaunt and ugly as thin wolves
While we feed fat; their white wives left behind
Are childless these nine years, or take new lords
And bear another breed of hostile sons.
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

The houses they all loved, far off in Greece,
Are painted fresh by men they knew not of;
Within the cedar presses the gold fades
Upon the garments they were wont to wear;
Red poppies grow now where their apple-trees
Began to redden in late summer days;
Wheat grows upon their water-meadows now
And wains pass over where the water ran,
The ancient boundaries of their lands are changed.
Yet say I Sirs, and wonder as I speak,
Such strength Jove gives unto the sons of men,
All things being changed about them they change not,
Still with stiff faces set against our walls
They gaze at Troy as if no walls were there
Nor any Trojans but their proper slaves.
Hear the same message you have heard them send
Each year these nine years to the Lords of Troy.

[Enter Talthybius.]

Ho! Ho! Sir Herald of the Grecian Kings
Speak out your message fearlessly and well.

TALTHYBIUS

O Priam King of Troy, and all ye lords,
Thus sayeth Agamemnon King of men:

Give back my brother's wife! You Trojan men
Are overbold to take for your own selves
The fairest woman that the Gods have made.
Yea, when the goldsmith's crucible burns red
Snatch thence a handful of the fine red gold,
Or let Sir Paris go with naked hands
And take the yellow lion's shining teeth
To make chess-kings withal, but leave alone,
For all your pride I bid you leave alone
A Grecian Queen wife of a King of Greece.
For sweet delight and fair to look upon,
Yet deadly shall Queen Helen be to you.
Nevertheless one chance ye have of life;
Send Helen back gold-crowned and robed with gold,
And Paris with his hands in iron bonds,
And pay such tribute yearly as we fix;
So shall Troy stand and all of you do well.
Or else: so many years as we in tents
Have borne the heat and cold, so many days,
So many days the blood-red flame shall lick
The pale white marble of your palaces;
And many a thousand years the frost shall bite
Upon the places where your hearths have stood.
These nine years now upon the Trojan land
We have not seen the faces of our wives,
Therefore hereafter shall your wives, spinning
And weaving white wool in the halls of Greece,
Forget the faces of their lords we slew.
No children of our true line have we seen
These nine long years, so therefore take ye heed
This generation ye have got shall get
But Trojan slaves unto the Lords of Greece.
Behold your doom; your very name shall live
But with our story, and all men shall say
Standing upon some grass-grown mounds of earth,
That look across the sea: This was Troy Town
The Greeks threw down by help of Father Jove.

PRIAM
O Herald of the Greeks, take back these words
And tell your King and all the Grecian host
I would not listen to such speech as this
If all our walls were lying on the ground
And all our spears were broken in our hands;
Moreover say, Be ready, for today
We purpose to drive down towards the sea
These robbers now so overbold in speech.
And in reward of well remembered words
Take you Sir Herald this fair golden cup,
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

And if hereafter safe from all these wars
You sit an old man in the market-place,
Remember then you spoke with Priam once.

TALTHYBIUS
Long live King Priam, but in better mind
Toward my own Lord the mighty King of Men.

PRIAM
Lords, let him have some ringing in his ears:
Which of you will go fight the Greeks today?

ALL shout
Ho Priam! Priam! death to all the Greeks!

Talthybius goes. Enter HECTOR and Paris armed.

HECTOR
As I stood with my hand upon the lock
I heard a shout that truly seemed to me
Better than any singing I have heard.
Good lords and brave, be stiff in arms today
And never faint nor think of things to come,
Nor think of death, nor think of ease and peace,
But only think which side your blows shall fall,
Which side to press the Greeks. Look to your folk
And if ye see them faltering then press on,
Cry out aloud, say “Ho for Priam!” then,
And if ye see them gaining, still press on
Before the foremost, else shall ye be shamed:
Nor ever faint, nor think to take your ease,
Nor ever rest, for so are battles lost.
Nor are these Grecians men to play withal
But stern and stout, a good match for our best.
I say again, lords, think to take no rest,
Nor think of turning more than if there were
A deadly flaming gulf behind your backs.

12
And such a gulf there is, by all the Gods!
Think not to live good days if once ye flee;
To spend your money in this pleasant place;
To live at rest and peace with wife and child.
The frightened man shall have good cause for fear.
Faint not good lords, as ye love me today;
Be full of joy, trust in each other well.

TROILUS
Fair brother Hector, such sad words as these
Were fitter for some other men than we
Who never think to flee before the Greeks.

HECTOR
Fair brother Troilus and all good lords,
I said not this as unto craven men;
But when two meet, one must be slain or yield.
Yield not nor think it possible to yield,
Nor think to save yourselves to fight again
And so is all gained. Yet another word—
Fight so today to make this fight the last,
Beat back the Greeks that gather even now
Up to the gates, and smite their host in two,
Break through Ulysses at the fenced camp,
Scatter old Nestor at the ships to nought,
Light up a beacon ere the night come on
And make their ships a sea-sign unto ships.

Great Jove, I pray thee give me this today,
To break this leaguer in a single fight!
Thou knowest Jove that I would do for thee
A greater thing than this, if I were Jove
And thou wert Hector clad in mortal arms.

CASSANDRA
O Hector brother, what vain words are these?
O Latmian, let me speak or keep me blind;
Woe! Woe! Ye Trojans who believe me not,
Last night Apollo showed me a sad thing,
Hector shall die, shall die before the night.

TROILUS
Cassandra hold thy peace! Afield, afield!
Brother, afield before their cheeks grow white.

CASSANDRA
I say no! no! Press round him all ye lords,
He is your leader, if he falls ye fall.
Alas Troy falls, the pleasant city burns;
And I burn; save me from this bitter pain.

CRIES from without.
Ho Pallas! for Ulysses of the Isle!
The King of men for the Achæan folk!
Ajax, out, out! Teucer for Salamis!
Achilles for the Myrmidons of Greece!

HECTOR
Hear you? Achilles is afield; out! out!
Ho! Hector for the sons of Priamus!
Kind sister leave me, for you fight for Greece
Frightening brave lords that the Greeks cannot fright.

CASSANDRA
Come here Andromache and lay your hand
Upon his breast, your child before his feet,
And I will always hold him by the hand;
Priam and Hecuba, come here and kneel
And pray your son to spare you, and you lords
Whose blood is old and calm, make you a hedge
And stop him; verily now I do not rave,
For if he meet Achilles he shall die.

ANDROMACHE
My lord I pray you stay at home today
Or else I die; look at my tears, sweet lord,
14
AJAX [TELAMON]
Ho Diomed to aid! this way, this way!

TROILUS
Which way goes Diomed? which way, which way?

DIOMEDES
Here am I, Troilus; will you win ought?

TROILUS
Nay I have nought to win, and yet perdie
You may lose something, Pallas to my aid!

HECTOR
Now my good Trojans, follow Hector’s spear.
Long-seeing brother Helenus, say now
If hence the Scæan gates are clear to you.
Can you see ought? The dust is in mine eyes.

HELENUS
Nay shield me Hector while I turn my back.
Lo, lo the spear points shine over the gates!
Now down they go, the door is just ajar.
Ho they are coming! Shout aloud with me
Ho room for Venus, room for Venus there!

Enter Æneas and his company running.
The Trojans opening right and left.

[ÆNEAS]
For mother Venus! out ye thieves of Greece!
Behold your table spread, good fellows mine,
Feast now your full.

AGAMEMNON
Ho, bide them steadily,
These are but men. Go fellow, to the camp
And bid Ulysses run with all his folk.

The Greeks fall back.
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

HECTOR
O Jove, I pray that thou wouldst do for me
What well thou knowest I would do for thee,
If thou wert Hector, I were Jove today.
Ho my good fellows, follow and strike in!
They cannot hold together; ho for peace!

They charge, the Greeks are broken.

Exeunt fighting.

Enter Troilus and rout.

TROILUS
Ho you Sir Knight wearing a lady’s glove,
Is Diomed a-running with the rest?
Turn with your rout and meet me if you dare!

Enter Diomed with rout.*

Exeunt omnes fighting.

Enter Achilles and troops.

ACHILLES
So, sol our headstrong kings are being well beat
As they might well have thought to be: but I
No stroke have struck, nor any of my men,
Nor will we till I meet my foe alone
Or worsted somewhat by mere numbers—ah
What din and shouts! by God! I just half doubt
I might [have] done a wiser thing and helped.

* The author evidently intended to write this episode.—Ed.
18
They'll burn the ships and if he should come back
With no one after him but his own men
Why I must run or die. Go we aside
And lurk behind the hawthorn bushes thick
Where the fight has not been today as yet.

Exeunt.

Enter Hector with his helmet in his hand.

HECTOR
Well I have done enough today I think;
Rest, head, thou wagget merrily as yet
On Hector's shoulders. Jove, how hot it is!
Pray you O Goddess of these trodden flowers,
Keep well my hawberk and my wambeson.
Here will I rest me for a little while
Till Troilus come. Ah but he comes at once.

Enter Achilles.

ACHILLES
Caught Hector, caught! ho Myrmidons spread round!
Look now, that man there rising to his knees
Unarmed and all alone, the same is he
Has slain your kindred by the twenty: Sirs,
Can ye not shout? have ye no words for that?
I am as happy as a man can be.

HECTOR
Little thought I that I should ever pray
Not to be slain by you, Achilles: thus
Pray I this day by Jove and all the Gods.

ACHILLES
Upon your knees, my Hector, now pray out.
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

HECTOR
Upon my knees I pray you to spare me
For knighthood's sake, yea make me not ashamed
When I go down with Hermes 'neath the earth,
That ever in the field I met with you
As man to man. Well will you be apaid,
No ounce of gold will stay behind in Troy
If I say, Give.

ACHILLES
Hector, am I a fool
To come to Troy and suffer many things,
Forgetting Troy and all that is within,
And then when Troy lies here within my hand
Let it slip out? and yet go [on] I pray;
Your speaking is as music to mine ears.

HECTOR
O Troy and light of day farewell, farewell,
With all I fought for! Nay I will not dance
To this man's piping, nay I will not wait
Till slowly he shall come and cut my throat,
Unhelmed unfenced: yet have I my good sword.
Ho Hector for the sons of Priamus!
Who will be first of you—what, not a man
But ye behind who finger your bowstrings!
O Jove I thank thee that I die hot blood.
Ho Hector for the sons of Priamus!
HECTOR BROUGHT DEAD TO TROY

The Streets of Troy near the Scaean Gates.

Many women lamenting: Enter Paris, T[roilus], D[ephobus], Æ[neas], and others armed, with the body of Hector borne on a litter in his arms.

FIRST WOMAN
Yea as I said: such greeting as we can
We give you, lords.

SECOND WOMAN
Where were you, Troilus?
Where were you, Paris, why do you come back?

THIRD WOMAN
Nay mother, but he weeps.

SECOND WOMAN
Why dry-eyed then?

FOURTH WOMAN
Another chance, another chance today
Not ending here, Zeus! women, pray with me
He is not dead: pray that the leech may find
Some spark: where is he? Stand aside you there
Æneas from the body.

TROILUS
Good women,
Look here at me; I am your fighting man,
Best man of Troy; I fight that I may die.

FOURTH WOMAN
Gods spare the city, keep our children safe!
Cry harrow friends, let’s shriek our prayers aloud.
PARIS
Ah cry aloud, but who shall hearken you,
Promise great gifts and goodly lives henceforth?
Stretch out your hands beneath the golden shrines,
Take no thought, mothers, when a child is born
How you may feed him ere a month is gone,
Take no thought, maidens, what day you shall wed,
Take no thought, children, how you shall grow up,
Take no thought, dames, which day your deathday is:
Think of today—no further, I rede you.

FIFTH WOMAN
Ah master Paris, who wrought all this work?

SIXTH WOMAN
Yea who! yea who!

[PARIS] Good women, who but I?
Content you, I am dead or all as dead.

[A VOICE] Die without kissing then; give back Helen.

TROILUS turning sharply
A man said that; who backs him?

[A VOICE] Dame Helen to the Greeks!

TROILUS
Shame, beaten hounds!
Nay friends give ear—

[A VOICE] Dame Helen back again—
Back to the Greeks!
DEIPHOBUS
Ho brother Hector, help!
They brawl here; give the word fair mouth I pray.

PARIS (drawing)
Ulysses and you Diomedes there,
Who crowd about and give me no fresh air,
No standing place, I might say, all you Greeks
You wish to see a man die, then you shall:
Only stand back—you must slay me at last.

ÆNEAS
Alas he raves! Fair Paris, come with me.

PARIS
No prisoner, by the Gods! I will not live
To be a prisoner—

ÆNEAS
Paris, know your friends.

PARIS
Give me fresh air and I will fight it out.
Why should you grudge me space in killing me?
I never was hard, but willingly gave gifts.
You will not? see then—ah my sword is gone!
This is some dream, nevertheless with hands (struggling)
And teeth and feet I fight for air today—
For air, and Helen with her cool soft hands
About my forehead. Helen the good dame—
Out out, ye thieves of Greece! Ah death at last.

TROILUS
Now who says Helen back again I pray?
Is this some clown who knows not what he does
Or gentle Paris driven mad with grief?
Hector is dead: ye women, back from him;
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

Let be your gasping, and you men, say now, Say now who dares send Helen to the Greeks. Where are the Greeks? where are the walls of Troy And Priam's sons Aeneas, Menon here, Antenor, Polydamas, Pandarus? Ask Menon where Achilles is this tide, Who like a lion when her whelp is touched Flew on him: Gods how the mail went atwain! How the bones rattled! Lord Achilles cried— Lord thief, lord traitor—Help me Myrmidons! This man is two, each side of me he comes— Ho fellows, strike in quick.

AENEAS

Yea Sirs, a word, For my lord Troilus of himself says nought: Into the press came Diomed softly And like a cunning fighter, on each side He put the strokes that met him: traversing With little labour till his turn might chance. Then comes my lord King Priam's youngest son, With no hair on his face, Sirs, as you see, Who all day long had struck the greatest strokes And bent his knees and stiffened up his back; But when his eye caught Diomedes' eye He cried and leapt—crur, how the handles jarred! "Ah Sir," says Diomed—

TROILUS (aside) Nay hold thy peace: My heart is not all steel.

[ÆNEAS] Tush man, I know I will but lie. "Ah Sir," says Diomed, "Take this for Helen on our side." Coolly Drawn back a little, with a measured stroke
He swung his sword as at a beechen tree Hector
A woodman might his axe; but Troilus, brought
That wearied Knight, with a great straightforth stroke Dead to
Smote right across the face of Diomed Troy
And felled him.

ACHILLES' LOVE-LETTER
Troy. Priam's Palace.
Hecuba and Paris.

HECUBA (laying down a letter)
Paris my son, what do they in the field?

PARIS
Fair Mother, nothing.

HECUBA
Who went out today?

PARIS
I know not. Nobody I think—Glaucus—Scarce anyone—

HECUBA
Why when did you go out?
I have not seen you armed these many days.

PARIS
A week ago I went out.
HECUBA
Where's Helen, Paris?
Why Paris, not in the field or with Helen?
What is it, my fair son?

PARIS
Sooth I forgot,
Or yesterday I should have seen her.

HECUBA
Son
What ails you? are you ill now?

PARIS
No, Mother.

HECUBA
Yet you grow thinner and your cheeks are pale,
You scarcely speak who used to be so gay;
No naming now of Helen makes you start,
You neither kiss nor fight.

PARIS
Why I am sick,
Sick unto death, nay but far worse than death—
If indeed ought is worse, for death will come,
For death will come at last.

HECUBA
For your sickness
There is some remedy perchance at hand,
If you are sick of mind and soul like me,
Sick as our fields are with the Grecian heels
Upon their hearts. I wonder though of you:
The others mostly are but glad or sad
Just as the day brings weal or woe with it,
But nothing moves you, neither some Greek slain
Nor some great lord with his outlandish men
Come to our aid with many wains of corn.

26
PARIS
Why should it? even in hell there is some change,
Or I suppose so—all the days are not
One quite alike another; like enough
The days are here however; fitter so,
'Tis more like hell.

HECUBA
Speak good words, fair my son.

PARIS
Mother, I say we have slipped down to hell
Not knowing it; yea each man in his place,
Houses and cattle, slaves and goods and all,
Greeks, leaguers, all have fallen into hell
Unwitting—Mother, as they sapped and breached
And we drew bow and arblast, we fell down,
And here we are, glaring across the walls,
Across the tents, with such hate in our eyes
As only damned souls have, and uselessly
We make a vain pretence to carry on
This fight about the siege which will not change
However many ages we stay here.

HECUBA
I pray you Paris, do not speak to me
As if you would shriek presently, nor look
With such fierce eyes as if you hated me.

PARIS
Mother, see now why I go not to fight:
It is no use, I tell you; yea see now
Why I cannot see Helen. I loved her
And do not wish to drive her mad with fear.
If she should weep I think I should kill her.

HECUBA
Ah times are changed: the merry days are gone
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

When 'twixt the east wind and the cold bright sun
You grew a stout youth on the mountain tops.
Ah times are changed: the merry days are gone
When 'twixt the sunny houses and the sun
You rode with Helen through the streets of Troy.
Ah times are changed: the merry days are gone
When sitting 'twixt the fair bed and the wall
I left you kissing Helen on the mouth.
Ah times are changed: the merry days are gone
When 'twixt the spears and blazoned shields of Kings
I watched you fighting from the walls of Troy—
Ah times are changed since first I bore you, dear!

PARIS
Mother go on and you will make me weep—
Sing to me as the nurses did of old.

She sings:

YEA, in the merry days of old
The sailors all grew overbold:
Whereof should days remembered be
That brought bitter ill to me?
Days agone I wore but gold,
Like a light town across the wold
Seen by the stars, I shone out bright:
Many a slave was mine of right.

Ah but in the days of old
The Sea Kings were waxen bold,
The yellow sands ran red with blood,
The town burned up both brick and wood;
In their long-ship they carried me
And set me down by a strange sea:
None of the Gods remembered me.

Ah in the merry days of old
My garments were all made of gold,
Now have I but one poor gown
Woven of black wool and brown.
I draw water from the well,
I bind wood that the men fell:
Whoso willeth smiteth me,
An old woman by the sea.

What, will the shrill pipe of an old woman's voice
Draw forth your tears, my merry son that was?
Weep Paris, weep that we are fallen so low
Achilles dares to write these words to me.

PARIS
What what, Mother?
(reads) "Again I write to you
In spite of all your bitter words; again
I beg the fair Polyxena to wife"—
I wish he was in hell.

HECUBA
Read through, Paris.

PARIS reads
"Thou knowest how many men there are with me
And how I am right strong and brave [withal]:
Lo I can save Troy—am I not the pin
That holds the axle to the tree for them?
Yea I can save Troy—will you have it saved?
And after all for this, Polyxena:
Give her me now and Troy is saved I say;
Withhold her, and by God that made my soul
She shall be brought naked before my men
And wedded to me in your very bed,
While yet my fellows set fire to your house
And both my hands are painted with your blood.
I am a plain man, hear my words: again—
Give me Polyxena in loving wise:"
Then shall you see the merry eastern wind
Fill the Greek sails. Or else I swear shall be
Nothing but fire and sword on you and yours:
All men know now you cannot hold out long."

Achilles, Troy may burn, but by Jove’s head
Its flames shall never sparkle in your eyes!
O innocent and white Polyxena,
By your pure life I swear this man shall die!
O glorious Hector, by your life and death
I swear that this your murderer shall die!
O faithful good and true knight Troilus
Bright as your true love shineth evermore
In vain, ah! who shall doubt in vain, in vain!
Ah Mother mine if but one year ago
It had been said: Meet not this man in arms
But smite him unawares—I had spat out,
But now—alas! my honour is all gone
And all the joy of fight that I had once
Gone mouldy like the bravery of arms
That lie six feet under the Trojan turf.
Ah when I think of that same windy morn
When the Greeks landed with the push of spears:
The strange new look of those our enemies,
The joyous clatter, hurry to and fro,
And if a man fell it was scarce so sad—
"God pity him" we said and "God bless him,
He died well fighting in the open day"—
Yea such an one was happy I may think,
Now all has come to stabbing in the dark.

Lo I will do this for the Trojan town—
Jove give us joy of it. If the worst should come
It is but one more man to make the tale
That must be slaughtered ere the story ends.
Speak Mother, tell us how it must be done.
HECUBA
Son, I will answer these his bitter words
Saying how hard it is to yield to him
But that I cannot longer bear against—

PARIS
Amid our butchery and filth and lies
I swear by all your love this man shall die:
Fairly or foullly he shall die by me.

HECUBA
Well said, my son, and he might say perdie
That whether or no he maketh peace with us
Small help shall he be to the Greeks henceforth.

PARIS
So Mother, shall I send a herald back
And challenge him to meet me in the field?
Or next day that we fight shall I go forth
And in his sight trail this most foul letter
In mire of the Trojan fields, and then
Meet spear to spear, with God to help the right?

HECUBA
Now listen son Paris, nor start aside
At what I say: did you not say just now
Fairly or foullly? Dear, I fear me much
You are no match in muscles and rude skill
To this same butcher, yet he must be slain.

PARIS
How Mother, and must I turn stabber too?

HECUBA
Like begets like, Paris; he began first:
What fairness did he use with my two sons,
God curse him! and shall you stand opposite

Achilles’ Love-Letter
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

And feel his blows fall heavier as you grow weaker and weaker calling upon God! This weight of ills yet shall not be, have fair Polyxena sent to him there lest but his handmaid she become to be and not his wife, whereby it might well come when he was weary of her some years hence to some Sidonian merchant oversea she might be sold—so let him come to town and in Apollo’s temple wed with her and with this message would I send my ring to be true sign. Paris, you know your part—

PARIS

And in Apollo’s temple her white feet shall creep and curdle as Achilles’ blood across the marble glides to make them red.

HELEN’S CHAMBER

Helen, Paris.

PARIS

Another life I dreamed about, no doubt, shepherding sheep on Ida; other dreams were in my heart when Priam sent me forth, and ’twixt the rowers in my arms I stood, the merry sound of trumpets in mine ears and on my face the sprinkling of the spray when the first wave outside the harbour mouth ran in a green ridge up against the oars. the feat of arms I did in Cythera, did that begin the life I dreamed about and ended all my dreams of such a life in a long dream-like year of peace and love?
HELEN
I would that all might come again, Paris,
For sometimes I grow weary, growing old.
You stay with me today.

PARIS
No arms today:
Deiphobus thinks that something may be done
Worthy the high beginning of the siege.

HELEN
Then I shall sing that you may go merry.

PARIS
No, keep your song till I come back in peace,
And on your fingers count my slaughtered Greeks.

HELEN
Again no: someone else has armed you now
Yet you shall listen to my arming song:

OVE, within the hawthorn brake
Pray you be merry for my sake
While I last, for who knoweth
How near I may be my death.
Sweet, be long in growing old
Life and love in age grow cold,
Hold fast to life, for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death.
Trouble must be kept afar
Therefore go I to the war;
Less trouble, love, among the spears
Than with harsh words about your ears.
Love me then, my sweet and fair
And curse the folk that drive me there,
Kiss me sweet, for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death.
PARIS

Tomorrow by about this time, my love,
I think I shall know that I have a hope:
I shall remember you.

HELEN

Tell me Paris,
What will you do, what will you do today,
And are you going now to slay yourself
Or throw yourself among the Grecian spears?
Life is not pleasant as it used to be,
But will you make it worse to me, Paris?

PARIS

Take off my helmet and sit down by me
And kiss me in the old way with your lips,
Holding my face between your hands again—
So like a picture nothing will make move
This seems at first; ah Helen, as you kiss
I live again! I have not lived for months.
Breathe life into my body: [as] of old
Sing sweet and let me sing, and bid your maids
Behind the arras play upon the harp—
Yet stop awhile and think—ought I to live?
Helen of Lacedaemon was my love,
Achilles of the Myrmidons I slew,
Hector and Troilus were my liefbrothers,
The third lord was I in the town of Troy:
What shall I be if I should live a year
Or over deserts fleeing for my life
To Africa where Menon was a king,
Scarce life from day to day? my love shall be gone
Sitting a scolded child in Grecian halls,
And none of all my house shall be alive,
The dust of Troytown shall be blown across
The bitter waters by the cold East wind
That over Syrtes shall blow hot on me—

34
Alas these kisses sweet and this music
Shall be remembered but to bitter grief
When weaponless I hide me in some cave
Until the terrible lion shall be past,
And speechless, seeing I know not their tongue,
Before the blacks I kneel upon my knees
Praying for life. Yea, shall I hope for this?

HELEN
Comfort you Paris, hope for better days
And live, my sweet, live with me this one day
Merrily, sound the harps with some sweet strain:
Is not this living? to forget all woes
And stay at home today and do not die.
Time will there be for dying after all
When the first Greek sets hostile foot in Troy.

PARIS
No time for dying then upon the walls,
No time for dying when our comrades hand,
Laid light upon our shoulder, through the steel
Feels hot and heavy as we run to meet
The long spears of the Greeks thrust out in Troy.

I should escape and being fled from Troy
No more a Lord, should grow to such a wretch
As through all wretchedness would strive to live.
God help me—Comfort me, you say, and hope!
Three months ago I hoped for better days—
Not now, not now. And yet today, my love,
I shall not throw myself among the spears
Or on the bitter iron of my sword,
Only I have a deeming of my death.
Trust me, today my fence shall be right good,
And every buckle of my armour, love
See you it is well strained, that locked in steel
I may live over this one day at least,
And for a little live thus in your arms
With merry music such as now they sing.

HELEN
Paris my love, you break my heart I think—
And yet 'tis broken, and the music sounds,
Albeit so merry, like sweet merry bells
That set one weeping. Lo again my love
My fingers dull your shining steel harness,
And in a little all will be well done
For this ill parting. Still again, again,
Kiss me again and now I ope the door,
Lift up the curtain—will you really go?

PARIS
Farewell Helen—God keep all true lovers!

HELEN
Farewell my love. [Paris goes.]
And he is gone at last—
Turned down and sealed the letter is at last
And shall I ever see those words again?
Ho there my maids! come with me to the walls
To see which way the fight will go this tide.
HELEN'S CHAMBER

[SECOND VERSION]

Paris, Helen.

HELEN

PARIS in arms again! alas my heart!
Why go you forth to fret me? stay with me.

PARIS
I may not choose but go or lose fair fame;
All men go forth today and I with them:
Deiphobus hath hope, though I have none.

HELEN
Ah Paris, always harping on that string?
We are not worsted yet; though we have lost
Our Hector and our Troilus, no less
The terrible Achilles is but dust
And many another.

PARIS

Yea, Achilles, yea—
Would I could see thee and know how it fares
With thee and those that go beneath the earth!
Helen farewell, and have no hope for me.

HELEN
Hold thy peace Paris of such evil words!
What is thy madness—heavy dreams again?

PARIS
I have not dreamed at all of good or bad,
But on my heart a dreadful weight is laid
That nothing moves; horrible thoughts come thick
And scare me as I stand alive and well.
Yea, like some man am I that lies and dreams
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenes from the Fall of Troy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That he is dead, and turning round to wake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is slain at once without a cry for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yea I am all as dead, sweet, for nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But even this shadow of the mighty death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can make my life so poor a thing to have.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HELEN
Alas Paris, and death indeed is strong
When this same shadow of him can slay love.
You gaze with other eyes than you were wont,
You do not look at me, and scarce even
You speak but to yourself.

PARIS
Yea why not die?
I have seen men that did not fear to die,
Yea I myself have never feared to meet
Sharp death among the spears; I have seen men
Who said that life was nothing unto them,
They had outlived all joy and longed to die.
And what joy will be left to me, Paris,
If I should live another year on earth?
Helen of Lacedaemon was my love,
Achilles of the Myrmidons I slew,
Hector and Troilus were my lief brothers,
The third lord was I in the Town of Troy;
What shall I be if I should live a year
Or over deserts fleeing for my life,
Scarce live from day to day, my sweet love gone
Sitting a scolded child in Grecian halls?
The dust of Troytown shall be blown across
The bitter waters by the cold east wind
That over Syrtes shall blow hot on me:
And all the sweet sweet music of my life
Shall be remembered but to bitter grief
When weaponless I hide me in some cave
Until the terrible lion shall be past,

38
And speechless (seeing I know not their tongue)  
Before the blacks I kneel upon my knees 
Praying for life—Yet shall I pray for life 
And so I pray, now death is come on me.

HELEN  
O Paris would you have your life again  
If so you might, or any piece of it?

PARIS  
O Helen in such wise I cherish it  
My dear sweet life, that but for death itself  
I would forget death and be merry now.

HELEN  
Forget it love, and as in winter cold  
Folk sit about the fire and shut out  
The bitter blustering east wind and the frost,  
So here within my arms be merry now  
A little while the last hours of your life.

PARIS  
Helen farewell, for I am grown like one  
Who sees across the fordless swift river  
His brothers stand in arms while at his back  
The clatter of the chase grows loud. Helen  
You were my life and you would be my life,  
But life and all is going. Hear you now  
The footsteps of the captains and the cries—  
Now must I go where Jove will send me to.  
One kiss at last, one bitter bitter kiss,  
O life and death together. Sweet Helen!  

[He goes]

HELEN  
Now have I lost my love!—yet perchance not;  
If he comes back then will I say to him
What now I should have said: Paris, tonight
With twenty chosen men come forth with me,
Come down upon the beach and sail we forth
Where Jove shall lead us and the mighty winds,
And let the Greeks and Trojans fight their fight
Or do whatso they list, but we will live
Apart from strife till we grow old and die.

LOVE, within the hawthorn brake
Pray you be merry for my sake
While I last, for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death.

Sweet, be long in growing old,
Life and love in age grow cold;
Hold fast to life for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death.

Trouble must be kept afar
Therefore go I to the war.
Less trouble is there among spears
Than mid hard words about your ears.

Love me then my sweet and fair
And curse the folk that drive me there,
Kiss me sweet! for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death.
THE DESCENT FROM THE WOODEN HORSE

Troy: In the Wooden Horse.
Agamemnon, Menelaus, Diomedes, Ulysses, Nestor, Ajax
Telamon, Teucer, Ajax Oileus, and others.

AJAX to ULYSSES

Now may we speak? are they not gone away?
It must be dead night now. I am nigh dead:
By the Gods their stupid singing of loud hymns
Nigh made me mad, nigh was I screaming out.

TEUCER
And we heard Helen we have fought about
These ten years: sickening for a caged man
To hear her speak and not to see her face—
Gods how I burn with fever!

ULYSSES

Hist, heroes—

No words. (listening)

[ ] What is it, Prince of Ithaca?

[One sings from without]

O my merchants, whence come ye
Landing laden from the sea?

ULYSSES
Sinon I hope, but wait what followeth.

[Outside]

O my merchants, whence come ye
Landing laden from the sea?
Behold we come from Sicily,
Corn and wine and oil have we,
Blue cloths and cloths of red
Merry merchants, when you are dead
We shall gain that you have lorn.
Out, merchants from the sea
Your graves are not in Sicily;
The corn for me, the wine for thee,
The blue and the red for our ladies free.

[              ]
There there, 'tis Sinon—give the counter sign—
Three blows on the head, on the breast three.

ULYSSES (striking with a hammer on the breast of the horse)
These for the fair fame that the Gods give us,
(On the head)
And these that we have gained the thing we sought.
Unbolt, Ajax, be ready with your spears,
(They open the horse)
This dark night seemeth like the bright noon day:
We are alive in Troy. Down, my sweet lords.

AJAX (leaping down)
First man in Troy. O Jove I give thee thanks!

TEUCER
O the free merry wind and driving rain!
This is like gaining heaven after hell.

PYRRHUS
Ah did you hear them how they praised the Gods
Because the Greeks were gone?—in yonder house
They dream no doubt of walking quietly
In the sweet meads again. Shall we slay them?
I long to begin killing.

[DIOMEDES] Soft, fair Sir,
We are not yet so many men in Troy
As to do that we will: speak not so loud.
I can tell you now, Ulysses, now we are 42
Here in the open air and streets of Troy,
That while we squatted in the horse's ribs
More than one time was I well nigh minded
To give a shout and use my spear on you,
So maddened was I with the hope and fear,
And ever wait and wait—but peace, fair Sir,
We are some thirty men amid our foes,
Here must we stay and hold the gate at least;
Sinon is gone to bring the others up.

[AGAMEMNON]
Then shall we finish all our bitter siege,
And this last day of ugly nightmare dreams
That vexed us in the belly of the horse
Shall be a thing to laugh at three hours hence.
The rain falls softly after the bright day
And ever from the sea the southwest wind
Blows over us from Greece where we would be.
Noiseless as this same rain has God set us
Down here in Troy, and as the steady wind
Shall we prevail.

O Trojan folk,
The end of your wrong-doing draweth near:
No crying mercy now the end is come!
Yea, is the end come of our ten years' siege.
We may go home and sit beside our wives,
And by our hearths tell all our deeds of arms:
Yea, if we never do another deed
Worthy of note in all our lives henceforth
We still have won us a right noble name,
And men hereafter may well say of us,
Whate'er the Gods send turn ye not aside,
Thus was it that the Greeks won Troy at last.

MENELAUS
There is a certain one in this doomed town
Who thinks the worst is over, and fears now

Descent from the Wooden Horse
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

Nothing but coming end and death at last:
I shall be as a ghost to her tonight.

Brother, fear not for me, I must away
To talk with Helen—maybe to unclasp
Her arm from round the neck of Priam's son.
O faithful friends who now so long have fought
For me and my dear right, I pray to Zeus
Your swords be sharp on this wild rainy night!

HELEN AND MENELAUS

Troy. The house of Deiphobus. Helen lying by Deiphobus who is asleep.

HELEN

HOW is it that I cannot sleep tonight?
Behold beside me how Deiphobus
Sleeps well, his hearty day's work being well done,
But I, I am too full of thought to sleep—
I wonder if this carefulness may mar
My shining beauty as the days go on.
Do I grow old? I wonder. Sick and hot
I feel beneath the coverlet of wool—
Better to walk upon the cool hard tiles
And feel the night air cool upon my breast,
That I may sleep at last and wake betimes,
Then help our feast upon the second day
Because the Greeks are gone, and like them too
Shall all hard thoughts be driven from my heart.

(Goes to window and opens it)

O cool night! raining, is it? I must feel

(Stretching out her arm)

Yea how the drops fall thick upon my arm—

44
Three hours after midnight, I should think,
And I hear nothing but the quiet rain.
The Greeks are gone: think now, the Greeks are gone.
Never again now shall I hear the cry
Of warder shouting in the Grecian tongue
Borne faint upon the fitful dying wind;
The very warders of the town are still.
O me! tomorrow how the folk will burst
Out at the gates and wonder with great eyes
Staring upon the place where Diomed
Has worn the grass away with his great tent:
How they will walk along the sounding sea
And strain their eyes in looking out for Greece
As even now I strain mine through the dark
Striving to think I see the wooden horse.
Behold the siege is done and I may sit
Holding my eyes and think of what is gone.
Henceforward a new life of quiet days
In this old Town of Troy is now for me.

I shall note it as it goeth past
Quietly as this rain does day by day—
Eld creeping on me; shall I live sometimes
In these old days whereof this is the last,
Yea shall I live sometimes with sweet Paris
In that old happiness 'twixt mirth and tears,
The fitting on of arms and going forth,
The dreadful quiet sitting while they fought,
The kissing when he came back to my arms
And all that I remember like a tale?
O Love, shall I forget thee? doubt it not
That but for minutes I shall nigh forget
What thing thy face was like. Yea even now
I mind but thee and thine growing all dim
But as a well-told tale that brings sweet tears.

I would I could remember, but for me
It shall be always so, and like a dream,
When in the old town eld shall come on me
In quiet days, shall all my beauty be.
Nor shall I much remember or regret,
Gathering the warm robe to my puckered throat,
This red and white smooth skin and tender feet;
But when I eat and drink I shall be glad
And when sweet smells float in upon the wind
In the spring weather, and when music sounds,
I may remember of these other days
And think of Paris for a little while.

(Enter Menelaus stealthily and unarmed)
They fought to gain me and are gone away
But have not taken off the heavy weight
From my sad heart: Paris my love is dead

(turning round)
And I feel waked to live another life.

MENELAUS (.touches her)
Helen!

HELEN
O God! but am I mad at last?
Who's this?

MENELAUS
Nay hold thy peace or die straightway.
This is my hand that once held yours in it—
Give me a sword—quick, reach across the bed—
Nay, or by Zeus—

(She reaches out. Deiphobus stirs in his sleep)
Who is it wallows there?
Helen you shall speak to me, but speak low,
Speak in a whisper—yet will I hear your voice—
Nay, you shall answer me or die, Helen
Say who lies there.
46
HELEN

Deiphobus.

MENELAUS

The hound—
Give me the sword. Ah so, was that the hilt?
—I tell your fingers by their being soft,
They are no warmer than the shapen brass:
What, your teeth chatter? I must hasten then;
Go to his feet, Helen, and hold them fast—
No knees to me, I say—go to the feet,
This head is mine now. Clasp the feet, Helen;
In the name of God I do myself this right.

(slays Deiphobus)

Paris is dead and you are dead also;
This bed hath burned you—ho come forth from it!

(drag the body out)

HELEN

Are you the Menelaus that I knew
And scarcely hated once in days gone by,
Or in God’s name are you some evil thing
Sent here to drive me mad for all my sins?

MENELAUS

I am the Menelaus that you knew,
Come back to fetch a thing I left behind.
You think me changed: it is ten years ago
And many weary things have happened since.
Behold me lying in my own place now—

(laying in the bed)

A-bed, Helen, before the night goes by!

HELEN

I cannot lie there in the blood, my lord—
—I loved it once; yea smite, but slay me out
Scenes from the Fall of Troy

And not so with your unarmed hand, my lord.
Here give it me, feel here upon my breasts,
Smite so betwixt them with the sword I pray.

MENELAUS
Ah struggle, Helen, nought shall it avail.
Yea but I am the stronger in the wrists:
Feel the steel sword-point cold against your skin
And so lie quiet—ah but you hate me—
—I loved you once—

HELEN
May the Gods pity me
That ever you should love me! Ah that shout!

(GSHOUT FROM OUTSIDE)

[GREEKS] outside
The Kings! the Kings! Jove fights for us tonight!

[TROJANS]
Ho Pallas help! out, arm, good people all!
Ho bolts and bars, ho spears and bows to aid!
Ho Pallas Pallas! out, ye thieves of Greece!

MENELAUS
Helen, tonight the Gods have given us Troy;
You will see Greece again.

HELEN
My God, my God,
How happy I was once!

[TROJANS]
Troy! Troy!
To aid, ye sons of Priam!

[GREEKS]
Diomed!
Town won! town won! ho torches to the wood!
Come out ye women! God has sent you dawn
Four hours before the daylight: let us see
What fashion Trojan ladies lie abed.

[TROJANS]
Ho ho Æneas! Will you see your wives
Dragged naked through the streets? Out, out, ye thieves!

MENELAUS
Come Helen, let us see this play begun;
Soon will they burn the stage itself I trow.

(at the window)
There see Æneas with his goodly men
Stand well together—

(a Trojan shoots at them)

Ha, an arrow there,
It cut your hair through, Helen, as I think.

HELEN (weeping)
O God they hate me!—not without due cause.
I have no help.

[TROJANS]
Come forth Deiphobus!
Come forth and lead us.

MENELAUS
Ah ye shall have him:
Behold this is but as Troy is, ye dogs!

(thrusts out body: cries from the window)
Who cometh here? Some shield and sword, Helen.

Shouts. Enter Teucer and Pyrrhus with their arms bloody. A rout of Greeks with them.

[PYRRHUS]
So Menelaus, wived again! come forth,
A brave jest truly! Well we wrought this night;
These are no beaten hounds I promise you:
Many a brave man has been sped ere this

xxiv. e
Scenes
from the
Fall of
Troy

By tiles and stones from house-tops, and they stand
Right bravely here and there as you shall see.

While Diomedes went to burn and slay
In the common streets, this Teucer here and I Went round about and shortly here came we
To Priam's palace, burst the rotten gate:
There were the women and the old men crouched
Nigh dead with fear in Phoebus' bright temple;
But at the threshold did old Priam stand,
Unarmed but upright like a brisk young man.
Gods! when I saw the old gray-head traitor,
The thought of my dead father done to death
There in that temple wrought in such a guise
That all my blood seemed fire. I struck out,
Cursing with shut eyes, but my sword knew well
The way it had to go. I slew him there,
And all about we slew them old and young
But some few women. Noted you, Teucer?

TEUCER
Then as their screams rung all about the roof
Came Agamemnon, and he saw a hand
Clutching Apollo's foot from underneath
Some heap of women's raiment; down he stooped
And drew thenceforth Cassandra by the wrists
Who called upon the God in bitter strain.
As pale as privet was she to my eyes
Dark-haired and ox-eyed, tall and strong of limb.
Right many a bitter curse she called on him
And struggled in a mad way without hope.
So Agamemnon bore her off at last
And looking at her I saw not the rest.
(enter a Messenger)

[MESSENGER]
Ho haste Sir Knights! Æneas stands at bay
And groweth stronger. Menon is with him
50
And Helenus the priest. They bar the way,
And to them draw much folk and gather heart.
Needs must ye slay them, if ye will burn Troytown.

MENELAUS
Take Helen to the ships—Now Sirs go we:
I have but slain one man yet, big though he was.

(Exeunt)

CRIES from without
Æneas and Antenor for Troytown!

Ho Greeks, why go ye back?

See here,
Is not this Diomed in the front rank? ho!

Lay on now, Trojans, for the life!

To the ships!

Æneas and Antenor—to the ships!—