

A peaceful home, and where Troy will rise again.
Endure, and save yourselves for happier times."

Aeneas said this, and though he was sick 245
With worry, he put on a good face
And pushed his anguish deep into his heart.
They set about preparing a feast from the kill.
Some did the skinning and butchering
And skewered the still quivering flesh on spits. 250
Others set cauldrons on the shore and tended fires.
The meal revived their strength. Spread out
Along the grass, they took their fill of old wine
And fat venison. When the feast was finished,
They talked long about their lost companions, 255
Hoping they were still alive, but fearing
They had met their end and would hear no more
When their names were called.
Loyal Aeneas grieved especially
For bold Orontes, and lamented in silence 260
The bitter loss of Amycus and Lycus,
Of brave Gyas and brave Cloanthus.

The day was at an end, and Jupiter
Was looking down from heaven's zenith
At the sail-winged sea and at the shores 265
Of all the peopled lands spread far and wide,
And as he looked he paused at the sky's pinnacle
And turned his luminous eyes toward Libya,
Pondering the world's woes. And Venus, sad,
Her eyes shining with tears, said to him: 270

Venus Lord of Lightning, eternal Ruler of Gods and Men,
What has my Aeneas done to offend you?
What have my Trojans done? They have suffered
One disaster after another, and still the whole world
Is barred to them to keep them out of Italy. 275
Surely someday, in the turning of time,
The Romans are to arise from this race.
They will continue Teucer's bloodline

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And give birth to rulers who will hold
Earth and sea under their dominion.
You promised. What has changed your mind, 280
Father? That promise was what consoled me
At Troy's heartrending downfall. I balanced one fate
Against another. But the fortunes of these men,
After all their mishaps, have still not changed.
What end, O Lord, will you grant to their toils? 285
Antenor was able to escape the Greeks,
Cross safely over the Illyrian gulfs,
Pass the Liburnians' inmost realms,
And skirt the springs of the Timavus 290
Where it bursts through nine roaring mouths
And floods the fields under a sounding sea.
There he founded the town of Padua,
Settled his Teucrians, named his race,
And fixed the arms of Troy on a temple wall. 295
Now he is at rest and enjoys peaceful ease.
But we, your own flesh and blood,
To whom you have opened the heights of heaven,
Have lost our ships—O the infamy!—
And because of one deity's anger are betrayed 300
And disbarred from the shores of Italy.
Is this the reward for devotion? Is this
How you restore our ancestral power?"

Smiling at her with the look that calms storms
And clears the sky, the Father of Gods and Men 305
Kissed his daughter lightly and said:

"Spare your fears, Cytherean. Your people's destiny
Remains unmoved. You will see Lavinium
And its promised walls, and you will raise 310
Great-souled Aeneas to the stars on high.
I have not changed my mind. Your son—
I will speak at length, since you are so worried,
Unrolling Fate's scroll and revealing its secrets—
Your son will wage a great war in Italy,
Crush barbarous nations, and set up laws
And city walls for his own people, reigning

FUTURE
315

In Latium until three summers have passed
 And three winters since the Rutulians' defeat.
 But the boy Ascanius, surnamed Iulus—
 His name was Ilus while Ilium still stood— 320
 Will be in power for thirty great cycles
 Of the rolling months, will move his throne
 From Lavinium, and build the mighty walls
 Of Alba Longa. This kingdom will endure
 For three hundred years under Hector's race, 325
 Until Ilia, Vesta's royal priestess,
 Pregnant by Mars, shall give birth to twins.
 Then Romulus, proud in the tawny hide
 Of the wolf who nursed him, will continue
 The lineage, build the walls of Mars, 330
 And call the people, after his own name,
 Romans. For these I set no limits
 In time or space, and have given to them
 Eternal empire, world without end. 335
 Even Juno, who in her spite and fear
 Now vexes earth, sea, and sky, shall adopt
 A better view, and with me cherish the Romans,
 Lords of the world, the people of the toga.
 That is my pleasure. And there will come a time
 As the years glide on, when the descendants 340
 Of Trojan Assaracus shall subdue
 Glorious Mycenae, Phthia, and Argos.
 From this resplendent line shall be born
 Trojan Caesar, who will extend his Empire
 To the Ocean and his glory to the stars, 345
 A Julian in the lineage of great Ilus.
 And you, Venus, free at last from care,
 Will someday welcome him into heaven,
 Laden with Oriental spoils of war, 350
 And his name too will be invoked in vows.
 Then war shall be no more, and the ages
 Will grow mild. Grey-haired Faith, and Vesta,
 And Quirinus with his brother Remus
 Will make laws. The Gates of War,
 Iron upon bolted iron, shall be closed, 355
 And inside, impious Fury will squat enthroned

On the savage weapons of war, hands bound tight
 Behind his back with a hundred brazed knots,
 Howling horrible curses from his blood-filled mouth."

Thus Jupiter, and from heaven he dispatched 360
 Mercury, Maia's winged son, so that Carthage,
 With its newly built towers, would lie open
 To welcome the Trojans, and that Dido,
 In her ignorance of Fate, would not ban them
 From her land. The god wings his way 365
 Through the vast sky, quickly touches down
 On Libya's shore, and just as quickly
 Accomplishes his mission. At the god's will
 The Phoenicians put aside their fighting spirit,
 And, above all, the Queen conceived 370
 A great benevolence toward the Trojans.

Aeneas, meanwhile, aware of his duty,
 Was up thinking the whole night through.
 When Dawn kissed his face with light, he resolved
 To set forth and explore the strange coastline 375
 To see which way the wind had blown him
 And to see who lived there, man or beast,
 In the untilled land that lay before him.
 Then, he would report back to his men.
 He hid the fleet under a rocky overhang 380
 Steeped in a forest's shimmering shade.
 Then he strode forth, with Achates
 His only companion, gripping in his hand
 A pair of javelins tipped with flared iron.

And there, in the middle of the forest, 385
 Was his mother, coming toward him.
 She looked and dressed like a young woman
 And bore a huntress's weapons. She could have been
 A Spartan girl, or Harpalyce of Thrace,
 Who outruns horses and the Hebrus' rapids. 390
 A supple bow was slung over her shoulders
 In the style of a huntress, and she let her hair

Of the murmuring crowd. He chose a mound
From which he could scan all their faces
As they passed by in long procession.

895

"Now I will set forth the glory that awaits
The Trojan race, the illustrious souls
Of the Italian heirs to our name.
I will teach you your destiny.

That youth you see leaning on an untipped spear
Is first in line to be reborn, first in the upper air
From Italian blood mingled with ours,
Silvius, an Alban name, your last child,
Born in your twilight years and reared by your wife,
Lavinia, in a sylvan home,
To be a king and father of kings.
We shall rule through him in Alba Longa.

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Next comes Procas, pride of our race,
Then Capys and Numitor, and then
Your avatar, Aeneas Sylvius,
Equal to you in piety and arms,
If ever he succeeds to Alba's throne.
Look at these young men, their strength,
Their brows shaded with civic oak!
They will build for you Nomentum, Gabii,
And the town of Fidena. They will crown
Collatia's hills with towers and will found
Pometii and Inuus, Bola and Cora,
Famous names someday, now places without names.
Then a son of Mars will support his grandsire—
Romulus, born to Ilia from the line of Assaracus.
Do you see the double plumes on his head,
And how the Father of Gods honors him
As one of his own? Under his auspices,
My son, Rome will extend her renowned empire
To earth's horizons, her glory to the stars.
She will enclose seven hills within the wall
Of one city, blessed with a brood of heroes

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*As the Berecynthian Mother
Is blessed with a brood divine, riding
In her chariot through Phrygian towns,
Wearing her turreted diadem, and embracing
A hundred grandsons, all of them gods,
All of them with homes in high heaven.*

930

Now turn your gaze here and let it rest upon
Your family of Romans. Here is Caesar,
And here are all of the descendants of Iulus
Destined to come under heaven's great dome.
And here is the man promised to you,
Augustus Caesar, born of the gods,
Who will establish again a Golden Age
In the fields of Latium once ruled by Saturn
And will expand his dominion
Beyond the Indus and the Garamantes,
Beyond our familiar stars, beyond the yearly
Path of the sun, to the land where Atlas
Turns the star-studded sphere on his shoulders.

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945

Even now the Caspian Sea trembles
At the oracles that foretell his coming,
As does Persia, and the seven-mouthed Nile.
Not even Hercules ranged so far
Though he shot the bronze-hooved stag, brought calm
To Erymanthus' groves, and made Lerna quake
At his bow. Nor did Bacchus, though he drove
Tigers yoked with vine shoots from Nysa's heights.
And still we shrink from extending our virtue,
And fear to take our stand in Ausonia?

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955

But who is this in the distance, resplendent
In his olive crown and sacred insignia?
I know that white hair and beard.
This is Numa, who will lay a foundation
Of law in our city, sent from a small town
In Sabine country to command a great nation.

960

Living 940

An impression he makes with his crowd of followers!
But the shadow of death enshrouds his head."

And Anchises, tears welling up in his eyes:

1035

"Son, do not seek your people's great grief.
Fate will permit him on earth a brief while,
But not for long. Gods above, you thought Rome
Would be too powerful had your gift endured.
What lamentation of the brave will hang
Over the Field of Mars. O River Tiber,
What a funeral you will see as you glide past
His new tomb. No boy bred of Troy will ever raise
The hope of his Latin forefathers so high,
Nor the land of Romulus ever be so proud
Of any of its sons. O, lament
His devotion, lament his pristine honor
And his sword arm invincible in war!
No enemy would have faced him unscathed,
Whether he fought on foot or dug his spurs
Into the flanks of a foaming stallion.
If only you could shatter Fate, poor boy.
You will be Marcellus! Let me strew
Armfuls of lilies and scatter purple blossoms,
Hollow rites to honor my descendant's shade."

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And so they wandered every region of the wide,
Airy plain, surveying all it contained.
When Anchises had led his son
Through every detail and enflamed his soul
With longing for the glory that was to come,
He told him of the wars he next must wage,
Of the Laurentine people and Latinus' town,
And how to face or flee each waiting peril.

1060

There are two Gates of Sleep. One, they say,
Is horn, and offers easy exit for true shades.
The other is finished with glimmering ivory,
But through it the Spirits send false dreams
To the world above. Anchises escorted his son

1065

As he talked, then sent him with the Sibyl
Through the Gate of Ivory.
Aeneas made his way to the ships,
Rejoined his men, and sailed along the coast
To Caieta's harbor. They cast anchor
From the prow; the sterns faced the shore.

1070