

# Book 24

Achilles and Priam

# Opening

Patroclus has a funeral, followed by a feast and funeral games.

## Lines 1-25

After the funeral is over, Achilles can't stop thinking of Patroclus. He can't sleep so he goes to his chariot and drags Hector's body around Patroclus's tomb. Apollo takes pity on Hector and protects his skin from ripping.

## Lines 26-46

Some gods want to steal Hector's body but Hera, Poseidon, and Athena do not want to help the Trojans. Hera and Athena are still offended because they were not chosen as the fairest goddesses. Apollo reminds the gods that Hector always honored them and his body should be returned to his family for a proper burial.

## Lines 47-65

Apollo says that Achilles has no decency. Others have suffered greater losses than him and they handle them better. Man's heart was made to endure loss. Achilles will not get his cousin back by what he is doing to Hector. It is senseless.

## Lines 67-77

Hera says that Hector and Achilles are not equal. Hector is mortal and Achilles' mother is a goddess. She doesn't understand why Apollo favors the Trojans who are all mortals.

## Lines 78-95

Zeus tells Hera not to fight with the other gods. He agrees that Achilles and Hector are not equal, but Hector is the gods' favorite Trojan because he always honored the gods. They can't steal Hector's body from Achilles. Thetis always watches over Achilles. Zeus calls for Thetis to ask her to convince Achilles to take ransom and return Hector's body to Priam.

## Lines 96-169

Priam goes to Achilles and offers him a ransom for Hector's body back. He reminds Achilles of his own father, who is old but at least he has the joy of knowing Achilles is alive and will come home. Priam has lost his son and is now kissing the hand of the man who killed him. Priam asks for pity.

## Lines 170-194

Achilles is reminded of his father and Patroclus and feels sad. Achilles honors Priam for being so brave to come alone. Achilles tells Priam that Zeus gives out blessings and troubles. Achilles' father was a wealthy and proud lord and had a goddess for a wife. But his only son is so far from him. Priam was also great but this is his hardship to endure. He should stop crying, it will do no good.

## Lines 195-217

Achilles gets angry and says that he will give back Hector's body because Thetis wants him to. Achilles knows that the gods have helped Priam reach him and he is tempted to break Zeus's laws and kill Priam.

## Lines 218-247

Achilles unties Hector's body from the chariot and tells the women to wash Hector's body. He is scared that Priam's anger at the sight of Hector will set off Achilles' anger. Achilles asks Patroclus to not be angry with him for returning Hector's body and tells him he will share his ransom with Patroclus.

## Lines 248-278

Achilles returns Hector's body to Priam and tells him that they should eat. He tells Priam a story of a woman, Niobe, who lost all nine of her children. They were slaughtered and left unburied for 9 days and even she thought of food.

## Lines 279-303

Achilles and his men slaughter and cook a sheep and they eat with Priam. Achilles and Priam admire each other briefly and then Priam asks to go to bed. He hasn't eaten or slept since Hector was killed and now that he has Hector's body back, he can.

# Italics between lines 303 and 304

Achilles calls for a 12 day truce with the Trojans  
so Hector may have a funeral.

## Lines 304-321

The Trojans rejoice at the sight of Hector's body returning home.

## Lines 322-340

Andromache sees Hector and tells him that he was the protector of Troy and now that he is dead, Troy will be destroyed and the women and children taken.

## Lines 341-355

Andromache says that Astyanax will either become a slave or will be killed by someone who has lost someone to Hector.

## Lines 356-370

Hecuba says that the gods have taken care of Hector after his death. Hector's body looks like he had a gentle death.

## Lines 371-390

Helen says that Hector has always defended her and been good to her while others have cursed her for the war. Now she feels like she has no-one.

## Lines 391-396

Priam tells the Trojans to bring timber into the city and to not fear the Argives because they have sworn to not attack for 12 days.

## Lines 397-403

For 9 days, the Trojans brought timber into the city. On the 10<sup>th</sup> day, they placed Hector's body on the pyre and set it on fire.

## Lines 404-422

The next morning, they put out the fire, buried Hector's bones and had a feast in his honor.