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The *Æneids* of Virgil Done into English Verse

Virgil

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THE ÆNEIDS OF VIRGIL
DONE INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

WILLIAM MORRIS

AUTHOR OF 'THE EARTHLY PARADISE'

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THE ÆNEIDS OF VIRGIL.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT.

**ÆNEAS AND HIS TROJANS BEING DRIVEN
TO LIBYA BY A TEMPEST, HAVE GOOD
WELCOME OF DIDO, QUEEN OF CAR-
THAGE.**

*Lo I am he who led the song through slender reed to cry,
And then, come forth from out the woods, the fields that are thereby
In woven verse I bade obey the hungry tillers' need:
Now I, who sang their merry toil, sing Mars and dreadful deed.*

I sing of arms, I sing of him, who from the Trojan land
Thrust forth by Fate, to Italy and that Lavinian strand
First came: all tost about was he on earth and on the deep
By heavenly might for Juno's wrath, that had no mind to sleep:

And plenteous war he underwent ere he his town might
frame

And set his Gods in Latian earth, whence is the Latin name,
[Pg 2] And father-folk of Alba-town, and walls of mighty
Rome.

Say, Muse, what wound of godhead was whereby all this
must come,

How grieving, she, the Queen of Gods, a man so pious drave
To win such toil, to welter on through such a troublous

wave: 10

– Can anger in immortal minds abide so fierce and fell?

There was a city of old time where Tyrian folk did dwell,
Called Carthage, facing far away the shores of Italy
And Tiber-mouth; fulfilled of wealth and fierce in arms was she,

And men say Juno loved her well o'er every other land,
Yea e'en o'er Samos: there were stored the weapons of her hand,

And there her chariot: even then she cherished the intent
To make her Lady of all Lands, if Fate might so be bent;
Yet had she heard how such a stem from Trojan blood
should grow,

As, blooming fair, the Tyrian towers should one day over-
throw, 20

That thence a folk, kings far and wide, most noble lords of fight,

Should come for bane of Libyan land: such web the Parcae
dight.

The Seed of Saturn, fearing this, and mindful how she erst
For her beloved Argive walls by Troy the battle nursed—

– Nay neither had the cause of wrath nor all those hurts of old

Failed from her mind: her inmost heart still sorely did enfold
That grief of body set at nought in Paris' doomful deed,
The hated race, and honour shed on heaven-rapt Gany-
mede—

So set on fire, that Trojan band o'er all the ocean tossed,
Those gleanings from Achilles' rage, those few the Greeks
had lost, 30

She drave far off the Latin Land: for many a year they stray
Such wise as Fate would drive them on by every watery
way.

– Lo, what there was to heave aloft in fashioning of Rome!

Now out of sight of Sicily the Trojans scarce were come [Pg
3]

And merry spread their sails abroad and clave the sea with

brass,
When Juno's heart, who nursed the wound that never thence
would pass,
Spake out:
"And must I, vanquished, leave the deed I have begun,
Nor save the Italian realm a king who comes of Teucer's son?
The Fates forbid it me forsooth? And Pallas, might not she
Burn up the Argive fleet and sink the Argives in the sea 40
For Oileus' only fault and fury that he wrought?
She hurled the eager fire of Jove from cloudy dwelling
caught,
And rent the ships and with the wind the heaped-up waters
drew,
And him a-dying, and all his breast by wildfire smitten
through,
The whirl of waters swept away on spiky crag to bide.
While I, who go forth Queen of Gods, the very Highest's
bride
And sister, must I wage a war for all these many years
With one lone race? What! is there left a soul that Juno fears
Henceforth? or will one suppliant hand gifts on mine altar
lay?"

So brooding in her fiery heart the Goddess went her way 50
Unto the fatherland of storm, full fruitful of the gale,
Æolia hight, where Æolus is king of all avail,
And far adown a cavern vast the bickering of the winds
And roaring tempests of the world with bolt and fetter binds:
They set the mountains murmuring much, a-growling angri-
ly
About their bars, while Æolus sits in his burg on high,
And, sceptre-holding, softeneth them, and strait their wrath
doth keep:
Yea but for that the earth and sea, and vault of heaven the
deep,
They eager-swift would roll away and sweep adown of
space:
For fear whereof the Father high in dark and hollow place 60
Hath hidden them, and high above a world of mountains

thrown [Pg 4]

And given them therewithal a king, who, taught by law well known,

Now draweth, and now casteth loose the reins that hold them in:

To whom did suppliant Juno now in e'en such words begin:

"The Father of the Gods and men hath given thee might enow,

O Æolus, to smooth the sea, and make the storm-wind blow.

Hearken! a folk, my very foes, saileth the Tyrrhene main

Bearing their Troy to Italy, and Gods that were but vain:

Set on thy winds, and overwhelm their sunken ships at sea,

Or prithee scattered cast them forth, things drowned diversedly. 70

Twice seven nymphs are in my house of body passing fair:

Of whom indeed Deïopea is fairest fashioned there.

I give her thee in wedlock sure, and call her all thine own

To wear away the years with thee, for thy deserving shown

To me this day; of offspring fair she too shall make thee sire."

To whom spake Æolus: "O Queen, to search out thy desire

Is all thou needest toil herein; from me the deed should

wend.

Thou mak'st my realm; the sway of all, and Jove thou mak'st my friend,

Thou givest me to lie with Gods when heavenly feast is

dight,

And o'er the tempest and the cloud thou makest me of

might." 80

Therewith against the hollow hill he turned him spear in hand

And hurled it on the flank thereof, and as an ordered band

By whatso door the winds rush out o'er earth in whirling blast,

And driving down upon the sea its lowest deeps upcast.

The East, the West together there, the Afric, that doth hold

A heart fulfilled of stormy rain, huge billows shoreward

rolled.

Therewith came clamour of the men and whistling through
the shrouds [Pg 5]

And heaven and day all suddenly were swallowed by the
clouds

Away from eyes of Teucrian men; night on the ocean lies,
Pole thunders unto pole, and still with wildfire glare the
skies, 90

And all things hold the face of death before the seamen's
eyes.

Now therewithal Æneas' limbs grew weak with chilly dread,
He groaned, and lifting both his palms aloft to heaven, he
said:

"O thrice and four times happy ye, that had the fate to fall
Before your fathers' faces there by Troy's beloved wall!
Tydides, thou of Danaan folk the mightiest under shield,
Why might I never lay me down upon the Ilian field,
Why was my soul forbid release at thy most mighty hand,
Where eager Hector stooped and lay before Achilles' wand,
Where huge Sarpedon fell asleep, where Simoïs rolls along
100

The shields of men, and helms of men, and bodies of the
strong?"

Thus as he cried the whistling North fell on with sudden gale
And drave the seas up toward the stars, and smote aback the
sail;

Then break the oars, the bows fall off, and beam on in the
trough

She lieth, and the sea comes on a mountain huge and rough.
These hang upon the topmost wave, and those may well dis-
cern

The sea's ground mid the gaping whirl: with sand the surges
churn.

Three keels the South wind cast away on hidden reefs that lie
Midmost the sea, the Altars called by men of Italy,

A huge back thrusting through the tide: three others from the
deep 110

The East toward straits, and swallowing sands did miserably
sweep,
And dashed them on the shoals, and heaped the sand
around in ring:
And one, a keel the Lycians manned, with him, the trusty
King
Orontes, in Æneas' sight a toppling wave o'erhung, [Pg 6]
And smote the poop, and headlong rolled, adown the
helmsman flung;
Then thrice about the driving flood hath hurled her as she
lay,
The hurrying eddy swept above and swallowed her from
day:
And lo! things swimming here and there, scant in the un-
measured seas,
The arms of men, and painted boards, and Trojan treasures.
And now Ilioneus' stout ship, her that Achates leal 120
And Abas ferried o'er the main, and old Aletes' keel
The storm hath overcome; and all must drink the baneful
stream
Through opening leaky sides of them that gape at every
seam.

But meanwhile Neptune, sorely moved, hath felt the storm
let go,
And all the turmoil of the main with murmur great enow;
The deep upheaved from all abodes the lowest that there be:
So forth he put his placid face o'er topmost of the sea,
And there he saw Æneas' ships o'er all the main besprent,
The Trojans beaten by the flood and ruin from heaven sent.
But Juno's guile and wrathful heart her brother knew full
well: 130
So East and West he called to him, and spake such words to
tell:

"What mighty pride of race of yours hath hold upon your
minds,
That earth and sea ye turmoil so without my will, O winds;
That such upheaval and so great ye dare without my will?

Whom I – But first it comes to hand the troubled flood to still:
For such-like fault henceforward though with nought so light ye pay.
Go get you gone, and look to it this to your king to say:
That ocean's realm and three-tined spear of dread are given by Fate
Not unto him but unto me? he holds the cliffs o'ergreat,
Thine houses, Eurus; in that hall I bid him then be bold, 140
Thine Æolus, and lord it o'er his winds in barred hold." [Pg 7]

So saying and swifter than his word he layed the troubled main,
And put to flight the gathered clouds, and brought the sun again;
And with him Triton fell to work, and fair Cymothoë,
And thrust the ships from spiky rocks; with triple spear wrought he
To lift, and opened swallowing sands, and laid the waves alow.
Then on light wheels o'er ocean's face soft gliding did he go.
And, like as mid a people great full often will arise
Huge riot, and all the low-born herd to utter anger flies,
And sticks and stones are in the air, and fury arms doth find:
150
Then, setting eyes perchance on one of weight for noble mind,
And noble deeds, they hush them then and stand with pricked-up ears,
And he with words becomes their lord, and smooth their anger wears;
– In such wise fell all clash of sea when that sea-father rose,
And looked abroad: who turned his steeds, and giving rein to those,
Flew forth in happy-gliding car through heaven's all-open way.

Æneas' sore forewearied host the shores that nearest lay
Stretch out for o'er the sea, and turn to Libyan land this
while.

There goes a long firth of the sea, made haven by an isle, 159
Against whose sides thrust out abroad each wave the main
doth send

Is broken, and must cleave itself through hollow bights to
wend:

Huge rocks on this hand and on that, twin horns of cliff, cast
dread

On very heaven; and far and wide beneath each mighty head
Hushed are the harmless waters; lo, the flickering wood
above

And wavering shadow cast adown by darksome hanging
grove:

In face hereof a cave there is of rocks o'erhung, made meet
With benches of the living stone and springs of water sweet,
The house of Nymphs: a-riding there may way-worn ships
be bold

To lie without the hawser's strain or anchor's hookèd hold.
[Pg 8]

That bight with seven of all his tale of ships Æneas gained,
170

And there, by mighty love of land the Trojans sore con-
strained,

Leap off-board straight, and gain the gift of that so longed-
for sand,

And lay their limbs with salt sea fouled adown upon the
strand:

And first Achates smote alive the spark from out the flint,
And caught the fire in tinder-leaves, and never gift did stint
Of feeding dry; and flame enow in kindled stuff he woke;
Then Ceres' body spoilt with sea, and Ceres' arms they took,
And sped the matter spent with toil, and fruit of furrows
found

They set about to parch with fire and 'twixt of stones to
pound.

Meanwhile Æneas scaled the cliff and far and wide he swept
180

The main, if anywhere perchance the sea his Antheus kept,
Tossed by the wind, if he might see the twi-banked Phrygi-
ans row;

If Capys, or Caïcus' arms on lofty deck might show.

Nor any ship there was in sight, but on the strand he saw
Three stags a-wandering at their will, and after them they
draw

The whole herd following down the dales long strung out as
they feed:

So still he stood, and caught in hand his bow and shafts of
speed,

The weapons that Achates staunch was bearing then and oft;
And first the very lords of those, that bore their heads aloft
With branching horns, he felled, and then the common sort,
and so 190

Their army drave he with his darts through leafy woods to
go:

Nor held his hand till on the earth were seven great bodies
strown,

And each of all his ships might have one head of deer her
own.

Thence to the haven gat he gone with all his folk to share,
And that good wine which erst the casks Acestes made to
bear,

And gave them as they went away on that Trinacrian beach,
He shared about; then fell to soothe their grieving hearts
with speech: [Pg 9]

"O fellows, we are used ere now by evil ways to wend;
O ye who erst bore heavier loads, this too the Gods shall end.
Ye, ye have drawn nigh Scylla's rage and rocks that inly roar,
200

And run the risk of storm of stones upon the Cyclops' shore:
Come, call aback your ancient hearts and put your fears
away!

This too shall be for joy to you remembered on a day.
Through diverse haps, through many risks wherewith our

way is strown,

We get us on to Latium, the land the Fates have shown
To be for peaceful seats for us: there may we raise up Troy.
Abide, endure, and keep yourselves for coming days of joy."

So spake his voice: but his sick heart did mighty trouble rack,
As, glad of countenance, he thrust the heavy anguish back.
But they fall to upon the prey, and feast that was to dight,
210

And flay the hide from off the ribs, and bare the flesh to sight.

Some cut it quivering into steaks which on the spits they run,
Some feed the fire upon the shore, and set the brass thereon.

And so meat bringeth might again, and on the grass thereby,
Fulfilled with fat of forest deer and ancient wine, they lie.

But when all hunger was appeased and tables set aside,
Of missing fellows how they fared the talk did long abide;
Whom, weighing hope and weighing fear, either alive they
trow,

Or that the last and worst has come, that called they hear not
now.

And chief of all the pious King Æneas moaned the pass 220
Of brisk Orontes, Amycus, and cruel fate that was
Of Lycus, and of Bias strong, and strong Cloanthus gone.

But now an end of all there was, when Jove a-looking down
From highest lift on sail-skimmed sea, and lands that round
it lie, [Pg 10]

And shores and many folk about, in topmost burg of sky
Stood still, and fixed the eyes of God on Libya's realm at last:
To whom, as through his breast and mind such cares of god-
head passed,

Spake Venus, sadder than her due with bright eyes gathering
tears:

"O thou, who rulest with a realm that hath no days nor years,
Both Gods and men, and mak'st them fear thy thunder lest it
fall, 230

What then hath mine Æneas done so great a crime to call?

What might have Trojan men to sin? So many deaths they bore
'Gainst whom because of Italy is shut the wide world's door.
Was it not surely promised me that as the years rolled round
The blood of Teucer come again should spring from out the ground,
The Roman folk, such very lords, that all the earth and sea
Their sway should compass? Father, doth the counsel shift in thee?
This thing indeed atoned to me for Troy in ashes laid,
And all the miserable end, as fate 'gainst fate I weighed:
But now the self-same fortune dogs men by such troubles driven 240
So oft and oft. What end of toil then giv'st thou, King of heaven?
Antenor was of might enow to 'scape the Achæan host,
And safe to reach the Illyrian gulf and pierce Liburnia's coast,
And through the inmost realms thereof to pass Timavus' head,
Whence through nine mouths midst mountain roar is that wild water shed,
To cast itself on fields below with all its sounding sea:
And there he made Patavium's town and Teucric seats to be,
And gave the folk their very name and Trojan arms did raise:
Now settled in all peace and rest he passeth quiet days.
But we, thy children, unto whom thou giv'st with bowing head 250
The heights of heaven, our ships are lost, and we, O shame!
betrayed,
Are driven away from Italy for anger but of one. [Pg 11]
Is this the good man's guerdon then? is this the promised throne?"

The Sower of the Gods and men a little smiled on her
With such a countenance as calms the storms and upper air;
He kissed his daughter on the lips, and spake such words to tell:

"O Cytherean, spare thy dread! unmoved the Fates shall
 dwell
 Of thee and thine, and thou shalt see the promised city yet,
 E'en that Lavinium's walls, and high amidst the stars shalt
 set
 Great-souled Æneas: nor in me doth aught of counsel shift
 260
 But since care gnaws upon thine heart, the hidden things I
 lift
 Of Fate, and roll on time for thee, and tell of latter days.
 Great war he wars in Italy, and folk full wild of ways
 He weareth down, and lays on men both laws and wallèd
 steads,
 Till the third summer seeth him King o'er the Latin heads,
 And the third winter's wearing brings the fierce Rutulians
 low.
 Thereon the lad Ascanius, Iulus by-named now,
 (And Ilus was he once of old, when Ilium's city was,)
 Fulfilleth thirty orbs of rule with rolling months that pass,
 And from the town Lavinium shifts the dwelling of his race,
 270
 And maketh Alba-town the Long a mighty fencèd place.
 Here when for thrice an hundred years untouched the land
 hath been
 Beneath the rule of Hector's folk, lo Ilia, priestess-queen,
 Goes heavy with the love of Mars, and bringeth twins to
 birth.
 'Neath yellow hide of foster-wolf thence, mighty in his mirth,
 Comes Romulus to bear the folk, and Mavors' walls to frame,
 And by the word himself was called the Roman folk to name.
 On them I lay no bonds of time, no bonds of earthly part;
 I give them empire without end: yea, Juno, hard of heart,
 [Pg 12] Who wearieth now with fear of her the heavens and
 earth and sea, 280
 Shall gather better counsel yet, and cherish them with me;
 The Roman folk, the togaed men, lords of all worldly ways.
 Such is the doom. As weareth time there come those other
 days,
 Wherein Assaracus shall bind Mycenæ of renown,

And Phthia, and shall lord it o'er the Argives beaten down.
Then shall a Trojan Cæsar come from out a lovely name,
The ocean-stream shall bound his rule, the stars of heaven
his fame,
Julius his name from him of old, the great Iulus sent:
Him too in house of heaven one day 'neath spoils of
Eastlands bent
Thou, happy, shalt receive; he too shall have the prayers of
men. 290
The wars of old all laid aside, the hard world bettereth then,
And Vesta and the hoary Faith, Quirinus and his twin
Now judge the world; the dreadful doors of War now shut
within
Their iron bolts and strait embrace the godless Rage of folk,
Who, pitiless, on weapons set, and bound in brazen yoke
Of hundred knots aback of him foams fell from bloody
mouth."

Such words he spake, and from aloft he sent down Maia's
youth
To cause the lands and Carthage towers new-built to open
gate
And welcome in the Teucrian men; lest Dido, fooled of fate,
299
Should drive them from her country-side. The unmeasured
air he beat
With flap of wings, and speedily in Libya set his feet:
And straightway there his bidding wrought, and from the
Tyrians fall,
God willing it, their hearts of war; and Dido first of all
Took peace for Teucrians to her soul, and quiet heart and
kind.

Now good Æneas through the night had many things in
mind,
And set himself to fare abroad at first of holy day
To search the new land what it was, and on what shore he
lay [Pg 13]
Driven by the wind; if manfolk there abode, or nought but

deer,

(For waste it seemed), and tidings true back to his folk to bear.

So in that hollow bight of groves beneath the cavern cleft, 310
All hidden by the leafy trees and quavering shades, he left
His ships: and he himself afoot went with Achates lone,
Shaking in hand two slender spears with broad-beat iron
done.

But as he reached the thicket's midst his mother stood before,
Who virgin face, and virgin arms, and virgin habit bore,
A Spartan maid; or like to her who tames the Thracian horse,
Harpalyce, and flies before the hurrying Hebrus' course.
For huntress-wise on shoulder she had hung the handy bow,
And given all her hair abroad for any wind to blow,
And, naked-kneed, her kirtle long had gathered in a lap: 320
She spake the first:

"Ho youths," she said, "tell me by any hap
If of my sisters any one ye saw a wandering wide
With quiver girt, and done about with lynx's spotted hide,
Or following of the foaming boar with shouts and eager
feet?"

So Venus; and so Venus' son began her words to meet:

"I have not seen, nor have I heard thy sisters nigh this place,
O maid: —and how to call thee then? for neither is thy face
Of mortals, nor thy voice of men: O very Goddess thou!
What! Phœbus' sister? or of nymphs whom shall I call thee
now?

But whosoe'er thou be, be kind and lighten us our toil, 330
And teach us where beneath the heavens, which spot of
earthly soil

We are cast forth; unlearned of men, unlearned of land we
stray,

By might of wind and billows huge here driven from out our
way.

Our right hands by thine altar-horns shall fell full many a
host." [Pg 14]