

Virgil Extracts 6



Your set text now omits a number of lines. In the omitted passage Aeneas and his Trojan companions make offerings at a shrine to Apollo and hold sacred games. Setting off again for Italy they reach Buthrotum, in Chaonia. This is in modern day Albania and is now called Butrint. The Roman ruins there are pictured above. Here, Aeneas is astonished to discover that Helenus, one of the Trojan king Priam's sons, has become king of a Greek city. Helenus and his wife Andromachē had been taken by the Greek, Pyrrhus, as prizes of war. They had managed to seize power over part of their captor's kingdom after he was killed.

Andromachē tell Aeneas the story of her own and Helenus's captivity. Then Helenus, a seer, gives Aeneas advice on the path ahead. Andromachē also warns Aeneas. He must go right round the island of Sicily to reach the the western coast of Italy, she says. There is a narrow gap of water between Sicily and Italy but it is guarded by two terrible dangers which he must avoid: Charybdis, a whirlpool, and Scylla, a six-headed monster. "The originals" says my old commentary, "of these two fabulous beings (suggested by the rocks, breakers and edding current of the strait) are to be found in Homer, *Odyssey* XII. 85-106. Homer's description of Charybdis is as follows: "And on the other cliff is a great fig-tree growing, and beneath it mighty Charybdis sucks down black water, for thrice a day she spouts it forth and thrice a day she sucks it down in terrible wise." (And again 1. 237.) "As often as she belched it forth, like a cauldron on a great fire she would seethe up through all her troubled deeps, and overhead the spray fell on the tops of either cliff. But oft as she gulped down the salt sea water, within she was all plain to see through her troubled deeps, and the rocks around roared horribly and beneath the earth was manifest swart with sand." Aeneas accordingly sails along the southern coast of Italy to Sicily, where they land. In the distance they can see Mount Etna erupting.



Your set lines continue:

*Postera iamque dies primo surgebat Eoo
umentemque Aurora polo dimoverat umbram,
cum subito e silvis macie confecta suprema
ignoti nova forma viri miserandaque cultu
procedit supplexque manus ad litora tendit.
respicimus. dira inluvies immissaque barba,
consertum tegimen spinis: at cetera Graius,
et quondam patriis ad Troiam missus in armis.*

We'll work through this starting with the first two lines:

Postera iamque dies primo surgebat Eoo
Postera “next” *primo* “early” *Eos* is the Greek form of *Aurora* “dawn”.

umentemque Aurora polo dimoverat umbram,
umbra “shadow” *dimovere* “to take away” *umens* “moisture” “damp” *polus* “sky”

Try to translate and then compare with my attempt on the next page.

Now the next day was rising/breaking with the early dawn and Aurora had dispersed the damp shadows from the sky.

(Next the companions get a surprising visitor.)

cum subito e silvis

macie confecta suprema

confectus “worn out” “finished” *supremus* “highest” “greatest” “uttermost” “upmost” *macies* “leanness” i.e. starvation (*macie* is the ablative) keep this phrase back for the moment as it qualifies *forma*.

ignoti nova forma viri

ignotus “unknown” (goes with *viri*) *novus* “strange” “extraordinary”

miserandaque cultu procedit

cultus “dressed” *miserandus* “pitifully”

supplexque manus ad litora tendit.

Supplex “begging” “in supplication”. Add “ex” to *tendit*.



Have a go at this and then look at my attempt on the next page.

We look back at him. He was dreadfully filthy and his beard was shaggy, his clothes were fastened with thorns but in all else [he was] a Greek and once sent to Troy in his country's armour.

(My old commentary explains: "*patriis armis*,—from other passages it appears there was a difference between Greek and Trojan amour; thus in the next lines [see the next lesson] the stranger is able to recognize the Trojans." Who is the strange Greek? What is he doing here? How will the Trojans react to finding one of their enemies in dire need and at their mercy? Find out in the next lesson!)

Write down the Latin words related to the English words below which can be found in this lesson's extract:

<i>armour</i>	_____
<i>barber</i>	_____
<i>emaciated</i>	_____
<i>extend</i>	_____
<i>humid</i>	_____
<i>manual</i>	_____
<i>misery</i>	_____
<i>mission</i>	_____
<i>novel</i>	_____
<i>primary</i>	_____
<i>proceed</i>	_____
<i>resurgence</i>	_____
<i>spine</i>	_____
<i>supplication</i>	_____
<i>supreme</i>	_____
<i>sylvan</i>	_____
<i>umbrella</i>	_____
<i>virile</i>	_____