

Your goddess mother Thetis has appeared to you as you prepare to depart for the Trojan War. She is pleading with you not to go, and presents you with a choice. You can travel to Troy, be the best Greek warrior, achieve eternal glory, but die at a young age. Or you can stay home, live a long, happy life as a farmer with only your neighbors knowing who you are, and die a contented old man.

You have a choice to make.

If you ignore your mother's pleas, and continue to the Trojan War, turn to page 10.

If you listen to your mother, and stay home, turn to page 21.

Your mother realizes that she can not convince you to stay out of the war. She departs, and she is sad because she know what fate awaits you. At least she knows now that it is your choice and she has done what she can to help you.

You, however, cannot linger on your mother's disappointment. You must prepare for battle.

Turn to page 4.

Your mother Thetis is very pleased with your decision, and smiles contentedly as she departs. You, however, feel a certain emptiness inside. While you look forward to your life of simple pleasures, you feel that something is missing. You look around your humble home and, while pleased, feel some dissatisfaction with the plainness of it all.

You realize suddenly that you, however long or short your life may be, belong on the battlefield. You run outside to ask your comrades to wait for you as you finish getting ready. But your heart sinks as you see the sails of the Greek ships fading into the horizon. You turn back to your home forlorn, understanding that this life, without any glory or fame, is yours forever.

THE END

You have been at Troy for ten years and have distinguished yourself among your fellow Greeks. Indeed, every Greek knows that Achilles is the best of the Greeks, and the one who will lead them to victory.

But jealousy simmers in the Greek camp, and something is about to happen that will change the course of the war and your life.

Continue to page 7.

Agamemnon, the brother of Helen's husband Menelaus and the leader of the Greek army, has angered the god Apollo. One of Apollo's priests, who is a Trojan, came to Agamemnon to beg for the return of his daughter, who had been taken as a slave in the war. Agamemnon was rude to the priest and insulted him, sending him back to Troy with nothing but ridicule. The priest prayed to Apollo to punish Agamemnon for his insolence and Apollo heard his prayer. The god began striking down the Greeks with his arrows; the Greeks could do nothing to stop their own destruction.

Finally, a Greek priest revealed to Agamemnon both the cause and the solution to the plague afflicting the Greeks: Agamemnon must return the priest's daughter.

Continue to page 9.

[page 8 is an illustration in the ms. I use with my classes]

Agamemnon is enraged that he must return his slave-girl. But he realizes its necessity for the success of the Greek army; he unhappily sends her back with her father.

But Agamemnon, now without a slave-girl, seeks a replacement for his own. His eyes turn to yours, whom you won in battle fair and square. Indeed, he insists that it is his right to take your slave girl to replace his, and does so without even asking your permission.

You now are the enraged one, insulted before your Greek peers. Your honor is at stake. But is your honor worth the price of the war itself? You have a choice to make.

If you choose to swallow your pride for the sake of the war and ignore Agamemnon's slight to your honor, turn to page 5.

If you choose to stand up to your leader and preserve your honor, turn to page 24.

Agamemnon smiles triumphantly as he leads your slave-girl away to his tent. You burn with anger but take comfort in your self-sacrifice. You feel satisfied because you put aside your own desires for a greater good: that of your comrades and the war. You will not let Agamemnon's foolish behavior provoke you unnecessarily.

You return to your tent, awaiting tomorrow's battle, eager to rejoin the fight with your men, even if your confidence in your leader has been shaken.

Turn to page 49.

You awaken the next day refreshed and eager for the battle. But as your squire dresses you for battle, you feel a gnawing inside: something doesn't feel right. You push it aside, chalking it up to pre-battle nerves. Dressed in all your splendor, you emerge to lead your men into battle.

As you survey your men before you, you recognize that something has changed. It is unspoken. It is subtle. But you can see in their eyes that they are looking at you differently.

Turn to page 19.

You understand immediately the look in your men's eyes: it is distrust, shaken confidence, fear, disgust. It is the same look with which you followed Agamemnon's back as he left you yesterday with your slave girl.

His slight to your honor has done irreparable damage to your reputation in the eyes of your men. Tragically, you realize that you can no longer lead them effectively. Without a word you return to your tent and ask your squire to remove your armor.

You will leave Troy immediately and return home disgraced.

THE END

Your anger is too great. You cannot allow Agamemnon to insult you so blatantly before your men. Immediately, your warrior instinct kicks in. Your sword is drawn. It is raised above the head of Agamemnon, prepared to avenge your honor in the only way you know how.

Suddenly, however, you feel your arms tighten. Your sword grows heavy, and your resolve is not so strong. Strangely, you feel a tugging on the long hair that flows out the back of your helmet and marks you an adult Greek male.

You turn to see a vision of the goddess Athena. She warns you not to avenge yourself on Agamemnon in this way but to wait for a better opportunity. What should you do?

If you choose to listen to Athena and spare Agamemnon, turn to page 41.

If you choose to ignore Athena and kill Agamemnon, turn to page 31.

“Achilles, you must trust me. You will be avenged against Agamemnon, but killing him will not serve your purpose.” You know she’s right. And, however difficult, you swallow your anger and your pride, and return your sword to its scabbard. Agamemnon will live. For now.

But another problem remains: your insulted honor. Although you have agreed not to kill Agamemnon, that doesn’t prevent you from trying to regain your honor. But how much is your honor worth to you? What are you willing to do to regain it? How much shame are you willing to endure for your comrades?

You have three choices.

Turn to the next page to assess your choices.

1. You came to Troy to do a job and to honor a vow. You swore to defend Helen and you, of all the Greeks, are the man who can accomplish that most effectively. You can continue to fight, despite your injured honor.

2. You came to Troy to do a job and to honor a vow. But your honor is your honor, and without that it is impossible to do your job effectively. You can remove yourself from the battle until you feel your honor has been restored sufficiently; the Greeks can see what it's like to fight without their best warrior.

3. You came to Troy to do a job and to honor a vow. But how can you do your job with such poor leadership? You can gather allies among your troops and remove Agamemnon as leader. You then can lead the Greeks to victory, as you were meant to.

If you continue to fight, turn to page 18.

If you remove yourself from battle, turn to page 50.

If you revolt against Agamemnon, turn to page 35.

page 42

[these choices are not included in the sample; the next page picks up with p.31 from the second choice on p.24]

Athena's attempts, however valiant and well-intentioned, are too late. Vigor and strength return to your limbs, and you bring a crushing blow down on the head of Agamemnon. Every fiber of your warrior self screams with righteousness and revenge, and you glory in the death of the man who insulted your honor.

The Greeks, however, do not seem as awed by your strength. They look at you now, not with the respect and admiration they used to, but with a mixture of fear and disgust. Involuntarily you shrink before them, suddenly aware of what you have done and what it means.

Your glory as the premier Greek warrior has passed. You have crossed a line that cannot be recrossed. You only now await their decision: banishment or death. Either way, your story has ended.

THE END