

## Ancient Sources for Acts

### Chapter 27

27:1–8

Homer, *Odyssey* 4.499–511

“Aias truly was lost amid his long-oared ships. [500] Upon the great rocks of Gyrae Poseidon at first drove him, but saved him from the sea; and he would have escaped his doom, hated of Athena though he was, had he not uttered a boastful word in great blindness of heart. He declared that it was in spite of the gods that he had escaped the great gulf of the sea; [505] and Poseidon heard his boastful speech, and straightway took his trident in his mighty hands, and smote the rock of Gyrae and clove it in sunder. And one part abode in its place, but the sundered part fell into the sea, even that on which Aias sat at the first when his heart was greatly blinded, [510] and it bore him down into the boundless surging deep. So there he perished, when he had drunk the salt water.

Homer, *Odyssey* 5.291–453

So saying, he gathered the clouds, and seizing his trident in his hands troubled the sea, and roused all blasts of all manner of winds, and hid with clouds land and sea alike; and night rushed down from heaven. [295] Together the East Wind and the South Wind dashed, and the fierce-blowing West Wind and the North Wind, born in the bright heaven, rolling before him a mighty wave. Then were the knees of Odysseus loosened and his heart melted, and deeply moved he spoke to his own mighty spirit: “Ah me, wretched that I am! What is to befall me at the last? [300] I fear me that verily all that the goddess said was true, when she declared that on the sea, before ever I came to my native land, I should fill up my measure of woes; and lo, all this now is being brought to pass. In such wise does Zeus overcast the broad heaven with clouds, and has stirred up the sea, and the blasts [305] of all manner of winds sweep upon me; now is my utter destruction sure. Thrice blessed those Danaans, aye, four times blessed, who of old perished in the wide land of Troy, doing the pleasure of the sons of Atreus. Even so would that I had died and met my fate on that day when the throngs [310] of the Trojans hurled upon me bronze-tipped spears, fighting around the body of the dead son of Peleus. Then should I have got funeral rites, and the Achaeans would have spread my fame, but now by a miserable death was it appointed me to be cut off.”

Even as thus he spoke the great wave smote him from on high, rushing upon him with terrible might, and around it whirled his raft. [315] Far from the raft he fell, and let fall the steering-oar from his hand; but his mast was broken in the midst by the fierce blast of tumultuous winds that came upon it, and far in the sea sail and yardarm fell. As for him, long time did the wave hold him in the depths, nor could he [320] rise at once from beneath the onrush of the mighty wave, for the garments which beautiful Calypso had given him weighed him down. At length, however, he came up, and spat forth from his mouth the bitter brine which flowed in streams from his head. Yet even so he did not forget his raft, in evil case though he was, [325] but sprang after it amid the waves, and laid hold of it, and sat down in the midst of it, seeking to escape the doom of death; and a great wave ever bore him this way and that along its course. As when in autumn the North Wind bears the thistle-tufts over the plain, and close they cling to one another, [330] so did the winds bear the raft this way and that over the sea. Now the South Wind would fling it to the North Wind to be

driven on, and now again the East Wind would yield it to the West Wind to drive. But the daughter of Cadmus, Ino of the fair ankles, saw him, even Leucothea, who of old was a mortal of human speech, [335] but now in the deeps of the sea has won a share of honor from the gods. She was touched with pity for Odysseus, as he wandered and was in sore travail, and she rose up from the deep like a sea-mew on the wing, and sat on the stoutly-bound raft, and spoke, saying: “Unhappy man, how is it that Poseidon, the earth-shaker, [340] has conceived such furious wrath against thee, that he is sowing for thee the seeds of many evils? Yet verily he shall not utterly destroy thee for all his rage. Nay, do thou thus; and methinks thou dost not lack understanding. Strip off these garments, and leave thy raft to be driven by the winds, but do thou swim with thy hands and so strive to reach [345] the land of the Phaeacians, where it is thy fate to escape. Come, take this veil, and stretch it beneath thy breast. It is immortal; there is no fear that thou shalt suffer aught or perish. But when with thy hands thou hast laid hold of the land, loose it from thee, and cast it into the wine-dark sea [350] far from the land, and thyself turn away.” So saying, the goddess gave him the veil, and herself plunged again into the surging deep, like a sea-mew; and the dark wave hid her. Then the much-enduring, goodly Odysseus pondered, [355] and deeply moved he spoke to his own mighty spirit: “Woe is me! Let it not be that some one of the immortals is again weaving a snare for me, that she bids me leave my raft. Nay, but verily I will not yet obey, for afar off mine eyes beheld the land, where she said I was to escape. [360] But this will I do, and meseems that this is best: as long as the timbers hold firm in their fastenings, so long will I remain here and endure to suffer affliction; but when the wave shall have shattered the raft to pieces, I will swim, seeing that there is naught better to devise.”

[365] While he pondered thus in mind and heart, Poseidon, the earth-shaker, made to rise up a great wave, dread and grievous, arching over from above, and drove it upon him. And as when a strong wind tosses a heap of straw that is dry, and some it scatters here, some there, [370] even so the wave scattered the long timbers of the raft. But Odysseus bestrode one plank, as though he were riding a horse, and stripped off the garments which beautiful Calypso had given him. Then straightway he stretched the veil beneath his breast, and flung himself headlong into the sea with hands outstretched, [375] ready to swim. And the lord, the earth-shaker, saw him, and he shook his head, and thus he spoke to his own heart: “So now, after thou hast suffered many ills, go wandering over the deep, till thou comest among the folk fostered of Zeus. Yet even so, methinks, thou shalt not make any mock at thy suffering.” [380] So saying, he lashed his fair-maned horses, and came to Aegae, where is his glorious palace. But Athena, daughter of Zeus, took other counsel. She stayed the paths of the other winds, and bade them all cease and be lulled to rest; [385] but she roused the swift North Wind, and broke the waves before him, to the end that Zeus-born Odysseus might come among the Phaeacians, lovers of the oar, escaping from death and the fates. Then for two nights and two days he was driven about over the swollen waves, and full often his heart forboded destruction. [390] But when fair-tressed Dawn brought to its birth the third day, then the wind ceased and there was a windless calm, and he caught sight of the shore close at hand, casting a quick glance forward, as he was raised up by a great wave. And even as when most welcome to his children appears the life [395] of a father who lies in sickness, bearing grievous pains, long while wasting away, and some cruel god assails him, but then to their joy the gods free him from his woe, so to Odysseus did the land and the wood seem welcome; and he swam on, eager to set foot on the land. [400] But when he was as far away as a man's voice carries when he shouts, and heard the boom of the sea upon the reefs—for the great wave thundered against the dry land, belching upon it in terrible fashion, and all things were wrapped in the foam of the sea; for there were neither harbors where ships might ride, nor road-steads, [405] but projecting headlands, and reefs, and cliffs—then

the knees of Odysseus were loosened and his heart melted, and deeply moved he spoke to his own mighty spirit:

“Ah me, when Zeus has at length granted me to see the land beyond my hopes, and lo, I have prevailed to cleave my way and to cross this gulf, [410] nowhere doth there appear a way to come forth from the grey sea. For without are sharp crags, and around them the wave roars foaming, and the rock runs up sheer, and the water is deep close in shore, so that in no wise is it possible to plant both feet firmly and escape ruin. [415] Haply were I to seek to land, a great wave may seize me and dash me against the jagged rock, and so shall my striving be in vain. But if I swim on yet further in hope to find shelving beaches and harbors of the sea, I fear me lest the storm-wind may catch me up again, [420] and bear me, groaning heavily, over the teeming deep; or lest some god may even send forth upon me some great monster from out the sea—and many such does glorious Amphitrite breed. For I know that the glorious Earth-shaker is filled with wrath against me.” While he pondered thus in mind and heart, [425] a great wave bore him against the rugged shore. There would his skin have been stripped off and his bones broken, had not the goddess, flashing-eyed Athena, put a thought in his mind. On he rushed and seized the rock with both hands, and clung to it, groaning, until the great wave went by. [430] Thus then did he escape this wave, but in its backward flow it once more rushed upon him and smote him, and flung him far out in the sea. And just as, when a cuttlefish is dragged from its hole, many pebbles cling to its suckers, even so from his strong hands [435] were bits of skin stripped off against the rocks; and the great wave covered him. Then verily would hapless Odysseus have perished beyond his fate, had not flashing-eyed Athena given him prudence. Making his way forth from the surge where it belched upon the shore, he swam outside, looking ever toward the land in hope to find [440] shelving beaches and harbors of the sea. But when, as he swam, he came to the mouth of a fair-flowing river, where seemed to him the best place, since it was smooth of stones, and besides there was shelter from the wind, he knew the river as he flowed forth, and prayed to him in his heart: [445] “Hear me, O king, whosoever thou art. As to one greatly longed-for do I come to thee, seeking to escape from out the sea from the threats of Poseidon. Reverend even in the eyes of the immortal gods is that man who comes as a wanderer, even as I have now come to thy stream and to thy knees, after many toils. [450] Nay, pity me, O king, for I declare that I am thy suppliant.”

Homer, *Odyssey* 12.403–28

“But when we had left that island and no other land appeared, but only sky and sea, [405] then verily the son of Cronos set a black cloud above the hollow ship, and the sea grew dark beneath it. She ran on for no long time, for straightway came the shrieking West Wind, blowing with a furious tempest, and the blast of the wind snapped both the fore-stays of the mast, [410] so that the mast fell backward and all its tackling was strewn in the bilge. On the stern of the ship the mast struck the head of the pilot and crushed all the bones of his skull together, and like a diver he fell from the deck and his proud spirit left his bones. [415] Therewith Zeus thundered and hurled his bolt upon the ship, and she quivered from stem to stern, smitten by the bolt of Zeus, and was filled with sulphurous smoke, and my comrades fell from out the ship. Like sea-crows they were borne on the waves about the black ship, and the god took from them their returning. [420] But I kept pacing up and down the ship till the surge tore the sides from the keel, and the wave bore her on dismantled and snapped the mast off at the keel; but over the mast had been flung the back-stay fashioned of ox-hide; with this I lashed the two together, both keel and mast, [425] and sitting on these was borne by the direful winds. “Then verily the West Wind ceased to blow tempestuously, and swiftly the

South Wind came, bringing sorrow to my heart, that I might traverse again the way to baneful Charybdis.

Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 647–66

But when one comes with glad news of deliverance to a city rejoicing in its happiness—how shall I mix fair with foul in telling of the storm, not unprovoked by the gods' wrath, that broke upon the Achaeans? [650] For fire and sea, beforehand bitterest of foes, swore alliance and as proof destroyed the unhappy Argive army. In the night-time arose the mischief from the cruel swells. Beneath blasts from Thrace ship dashed against ship; [655] and they, gored violently by the furious hurricane and rush of pelting rain, were swept out of sight by the whirling gust of an evil shepherd. But when the radiant light of the sun rose we beheld the Aegean flowering with corpses [660] of Achaean men and wreckage of ships. Ourselves, however, and our ship, its hull unshattered, some power, divine not human, preserved by stealth or intercession, laying hand upon its helm; and Savior Fortune chose to sit aboard our craft [665] so that it should neither take in the swelling surf at anchorage nor drive upon a rock-bound coast.

Herodotus, *Histories* 7.188–92;

[88]The Persian fleet put to sea and reached the beach of the Magnesian land, between the city of Casthanaea and the headland of Sepia. The first ships to arrive moored close to land, with the others after them at anchor; since the beach was not large, they lay at anchor in rows eight ships deep out into the sea. They spent the night in this way, but at dawn a storm descended upon them out of a clear and windless sky, and the sea began to boil. A strong east wind blew, which the people living in those parts call Hellespontian. Those who felt the wind rising or had proper mooring dragged their ships up on shore ahead of the storm and so survived with their ships. The wind did, however, carry those ships caught out in the open sea against the rocks called the Ovens at Pelion or onto the beach. Some ships were wrecked on the Sepian headland, others were cast ashore at the city of Meliboea or at Casthanaea. The storm was indeed unbearable.

[89]The story is told that because of an oracle the Athenians invoked Boreas, the north wind, to help them, since another oracle told them to summon their son-in-law as an ally. According to the Hellenic story, Boreas had an Attic wife, Orithyia, the daughter of Erechtheus, ancient king of Athens. Because of this connection, so the tale goes, the Athenians considered Boreas to be their son-in-law. They were stationed off Chalcis in Euboea, and when they saw the storm rising, they then, if they had not already, sacrificed to and called upon Boreas and Orithyia to help them by destroying the barbarian fleet, just as before at Athos. I cannot say whether this was the cause of Boreas falling upon the barbarians as they lay at anchor, but the Athenians say that he had come to their aid before and that he was the agent this time. When they went home, they founded a sacred precinct of Boreas beside the Ilissus river.

[190] They say that at the very least no fewer than 400 ships were destroyed in this labor, along with innumerable men and abundant wealth. This shipwreck proved useful to Ameinocles son of Cretines, a man of Magnesia who owned land around Sepia, for he later picked up many gold and silver cups cast up on shore, found the Persian treasures, and acquired other untold riches. Although he became very rich from his findings, he did not enjoy luck in everything, for he suffered greatly when his son was murdered.

[191] There was no counting how many grain-ships and other vessels were destroyed. The generals of the fleet were afraid that the Thessalians might attack them now that they had been defeated, so they built a high palisade out of the wreckage. [2] The storm lasted three days. Finally the Magi made offerings and cast spells upon the wind, sacrificing also to Thetis and the Nereids. In this way they made the wind stop on the fourth day—or perhaps it died down on its own. They sacrificed to Thetis after hearing from the Ionians the story that it was from this place that Peleus had carried her off and that all the headland of Sepia belonged to her and to the other Nereids.

[192] The storm, then, ceased on the fourth day. Now the scouts stationed on the headlands of Euboea ran down and told the Hellenes all about the shipwreck on the second day after the storm began. After hearing this they prayed to Poseidon as their savior and poured libations. Then they hurried to Artemisium hoping to find few ships opposing them. So they came to Artemisium a second time and made their station there. From that time on they call Poseidon their savior.

Herodotus, *Histories* 8.12–14

[12] When darkness came on, the season being then midsummer, there was abundance of rain all through the night and violent thunderings from Pelion. The dead and the wrecks were driven towards Aphetæ, where they were entangled with the ships' prows and jumbled the blades of the oars. The ships crews who were there were dismayed by the noise of this, and considering their present bad state, expected utter destruction; for before they had recovered from the shipwreck and the storm off Pelion, they next endured a stubborn sea-fight, and after the sea-fight, rushing rain and mighty torrents pouring seaward and violent thunderings.

[13] This is how the night dealt with them. To those who were appointed to sail round Euboea, however, that same night was still more cruel since it caught them on the open sea. Their end was a terrible one, for when the storm and the rain came on them in their course off the Hollows of Euboea, they were driven by the wind in an unknown direction and were driven onto the rocks. All this was done by the god so that the Persian power might be more equally matched with the Greek, and not much greater than it.

[14] These men, then, perished at the Hollows of Euboea. As for the barbarians at Aphetæ, when to their great comfort the day dawned, they kept their ships unmoved, being in their evil plight well content to do nothing for the moment. Now fifty-three Attic ships came to aid the Greeks, who were encouraged both by the ships coming and by the news that the barbarians sailing round Euboea had all perished in the recent storm. They waited then for the same hour as before, and fell upon certain Cilician ships when they put to sea. After destroying these when night fell, they sailed back to Artemisium.

Euripides, *Daughters of Troy* 77–86

### **Poseidon**

While they stay on shore, or as they cross the salt sea?

### **Athena**

When they have set sail from Ilium for their homes. On them will Zeus also send his rain and fearful hail, [80] and inky tempests from the sky; and he promises to grant me his thunder-bolts to hurl on

the Achaeans and fire their ships. And you, for your part, make the Aegean strait to roar with mighty billows and whirlpools, and fill Euboea's hollow bay with corpses, [85] that Achaeans may learn henceforth to reverence my temples and regard all other deities.

Euripides *Iphigeneia in Taurica* 1391–1498

The ship, while it was within the harbor, was headed for the mouth; but when it had crossed, it met with a violent swell and was hard pressed; and the wind, rising with sudden dreadful gusts, [1395] forced it astern. They beat the waves strongly; but the swell was driving the ship back towards the land. Agamemnon's daughter stood up and prayed: "O daughter of Leto, bring me, your priestess, safely to Hellas [1400] from this barbaric land, and forgive my thefts. For you, goddess, love your brother; believe that I love mine also." The sailors shouted the paean in response to her prayer, and applied their naked shoulders [1405] to the oars, at the command. But the ship came nearer and nearer to the rocks; some of us rushed into the sea, others grasped the woven ropes. And I set out here to you at once, lord, [1410] to tell you what has happened there.

But go, take chains and nets with you; for if the swell does not become calm, there is no hope of safety for the strangers. [1415] Revered Poseidon, ruler of the sea, watches over Troy and is hostile to the race of Pelops; he will now allow you and your citizens, as is right, to have in your hands the son of Agamemnon and his sister; she stands convicted as betrayer of her unremembered sacrifice to the goddess in Aulis.

**Chorus Leader:**

[1420] Unhappy Iphigenia, you will die with your brother, if you come again into the hands of the king.

**Thoas:**

All citizens of this barbarian land, hurl the reins on your horses, rush to the coast and seize what the Hellene ship [1425] casts forth! With the goddess' help, be eager to hunt down these impious men! Drag the swift ships to the sea! So that by sea and with pursuit on horseback by land, you may take them; and hurl their bodies from the hard rock, [1430] or impale them on the stake.

As for you women, who knew about these plots, I will punish you later, when I am at leisure. But now in this present urgency, I will not remain still.

Athena appears above.

**Athena:**

[1435] Where, where are you carrying this pursuit, lord Thoas? Listen the words of Athena, who is here. Cease to follow or to send an army pouring forth; for Orestes came here, destined by the oracles of Loxias, to flee from the anger of the Furies, [1440] and to bring his sister to Argos and take the holy statue to my land, thus gaining a release from his present miseries. Thoas, I am speaking to you: you expect to take Orestes in the sea-swell and kill him; but Poseidon, for my sake, [1445] now lets him sail over the back of the waveless sea.

And you, Orestes, attend to my commands, for you hear the goddess' voice even though not present: go away with the statue and your sister; and when you come to Athens, built by the gods, [1450] there is a place on the farthest borders of the Attic land, neighbor to the ridge of Carystia, sacred, and my people call it Halae. There build a temple and set up the image in it; it will have its name from the Tauric land and from your labors, [1455] which you have endured, wandering through Hellas and goaded by the Furies. And mortals will in future times celebrate Artemis Tauropolos with hymns. And establish this law: whenever the people keep the festival, let a sword be held [1460] to a man's throat and draw out blood, in atonement for your sacrifice, so that the goddess may have her honors, and holiness is revered. You, Iphigenia, must be key-holder for this goddess on the hallowed stairs of Brauron, and will die there and be buried; [1465] and they will dedicate adornment to you, finely-woven robes which women who have died in childbirth leave in their homes. I charge you to send these Hellene women to their country, for their correct intentions. . . . For I saved you [1470] before also, Orestes, on Ares' hill when the votes were equal; and this will be the custom, for the one with equal votes to win. But, son of Agamemnon, take your sister away from this land. And you, Thoas, do not be angry

**Thoas:**

[1475] Lady Athena, whoever hears the words of the gods and does not obey, is not thinking rightly. I am not angry at Orestes, for going off with the goddess' image, or at his sister; for what good is it to contend against the strength of gods? [1480] Let them go to your land with the statue of the goddess, and let them establish it there, with good fortune. I will send these women also to fortunate Hellas, as you bid me. And I will stop the army [1485] and the ships I raised against the strangers, as you think this right, goddess.

**Athena:**

I commend you; for necessity rules both you and the gods.

Go, winds, carry the son of Agamemnon to Athens by sea; I will journey with them, and keep safe the holy image of my sister.

[1490] Go with good fortune, blessed in having your portion of safety.

Pallas Athena, holy among immortals and mortals, we will do as you command. [1495] For we receive your voice in our ears with great and unexpected pleasure.

Greatly revered Victory, may you occupy my life and never cease to crown me!

Euripides *Helen* 400–413

[400] But I wander miserably over the swelling waves of the gray ocean, ever since I sacked the towers of Ilion; and although I long to come home, I am not thought worthy by the gods to achieve this. I have sailed to Libya's deserts and all its inhospitable landing-places; [405] and whenever I draw near my native land, the blast drives me back again, and no favoring wind has ever entered my sails to let me come home.

And now I am cast up on this shore, a miserable shipwrecked sailor who has lost his friends; and my ship is [410] broken into many pieces against the rocks. But out of its cleverly-wrought fastenings

the keel was left, on which I made my difficult escape by an unexpected chance, and also Helen with me, whom I dragged away from Troy.

Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 2.1093–1121

The sons of Phrixus were faring towards the city of Orchomenus from Aea, coming from Cytaean Aeetes, on board a Colchian ship, to win the boundless wealth of their father; for he, when dying, had enjoined this journey upon them. And lo, on that day they were very near that island. But Zeus had impelled the north wind's might to blow, marking by rain the moist path of Arcturus; and all day long he was stirring the leaves upon the mountains, breathing gently upon the topmost sprays; but at night he rushed upon the sea with monstrous force, and with his shrieking blasts uplifted the surge; and a dark mist covered the heavens, nor did the bright stars anywhere appear from among the clouds, but a murky gloom brooded all around. And so the sons of Phrixus, drenched and trembling in fear of a horrible doom, were borne along by the waves helplessly. And the force of the wind had snatched away their sails and shattered in twain the hull, tossed as it was by the breakers. And hereupon by heaven's prompting those four clutched a huge beam, one of many that were scattered about, held together by sharp bolts, when the ship broke to pieces. And on to the island the waves and the blasts of wind bore the men in their distress, within a little of death. And straightway a mighty rain burst forth, and rained upon the sea and the island, and all the country opposite the island, where the arrogant Mossynoeci dwelt. And the sweep of the waves hurled the sons of Phrixus, together with their massy beam, upon the beach of the island, in the murky night;

Polybius, *Histories* 1.37

The passage was effected in safety, and the coast of Camarina was reached: but there they experienced so terrible a storm, and suffered so dreadfully, as almost to beggar description.

The disaster was indeed extreme: for out of their three hundred and sixty-four vessels eighty only remained. The rest were either swamped or driven by the surf upon the rocks and headlands, where they went to pieces and filled all the seaboard with corpses and wreckage. No greater catastrophe is to be found in all history as befalling a fleet at one time. And for this Fortune was not so much to blame as the commanders themselves. They had been warned again and again by the pilots not to steer along the southern coast of Sicily facing the Libyan sea, because it was exposed and yielded no safe anchorage; and because, of the two dangerous constellations, one had not yet set and the other was on the point of rising (for their voyage fell between the rising of Orion and that of the Dog Star).

Yet they attended to none of these warnings; but, intoxicated by their recent success, were anxious to capture certain cities as they coasted along, and in pursuance of this idea thoughtlessly exposed themselves to the full fury of the open sea. As far as these particular men were concerned, the disaster which they brought upon themselves in the pursuit of trivial advantages convinced them of the folly of their conduct. But it is a peculiarity of the Roman people as a whole to treat everything as a question of main strength; to consider that they must of course accomplish whatever they have proposed to themselves; and that nothing is impossible that they have once determined upon. The result of such self-confidence is that in many things they do succeed, while in some few they conspicuously fail, and especially at sea. On land it is against men only and their works that they have to direct their efforts: and as the forces against which they exert their strength do not differ intrinsically from their own, as a general rule they succeed; while their failures are exceptional and

rare. But to contend with the sea and sky is to fight against a force immeasurably superior to their own: and when they trust to an exertion of sheer strength in such a contest the disasters which they meet with are signal. This is what they experienced on the present occasion: they have often experienced it since; and will continue to do so, as long as they maintain their headstrong and foolhardy notion that any season of the year admits of sailing as well as marching.

Chariton, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* 3.3

After selling their embarrassing cargo, the tomb robbers left Miletus and sailed for Crete. They had heard that it was a great and prosperous island and hoped that there the disposal of their wares would be easy. But a violent wind caught them and drove them out into the Ionian Sea, where they drifted in deserted waters. Thunder and lightning and prolonged darkness overtook the villains, Providence revealing that they had enjoyed fair sailing earlier only through Callirhoe's presence. Each time they came close to death God would not grant them a quick release from their fear of it, but prolonged their shipwreck. Dry land refused to accept such villains and so, long tossed on the sea, they were reduced to shortage of provisions, especially of water. Their ill-gotten gains availed them naught, and they began to die of thirst in the midst of gold.

Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 7.2-7

<sup>2</sup>It chanced that at the close of the summer season I was crossing from Chios with some fishermen in a very small boat, when such a storm arose that we had great difficulty in reaching the Hollows of Euboea in safety. The crew ran their boat up a rough beach under the cliffs, where it was wrecked, and then went off to a company of purple-fishers <sup>2</sup>whose vessel was anchored in the shelter of the spur of rocks nearby, and they planned to stay there and work along with them. <sup>3</sup>So I was left alone, and not knowing of any town in which to seek shelter, I wandered aimlessly along the shore on the chance that I might find some boat sailing by or riding at anchor. I had gone on a considerable distance without seeing anybody when I chanced upon a deer that had just fallen over the cliff and lay in the wash of the breakers, lapped by the waves and still breathing. And soon I thought I heard the barking of dogs above, but not clearly owing to the roar of the sea. <sup>4</sup>On going forward and gaining an elevated position with great difficulty, I saw the dogs baffled, running to and fro, and inferred that their quarry, being hard pressed by them, had jumped over the cliff. Then, soon after, I saw a man, a hunter, to judge by his appearance and dress; he wore a beard on his healthy face, and not simply hair at the back of his head in mean and base fashion, as Homer says the Euboeans did when they went against Troy, mocking and ridiculing them, it seems to me, because, while the other Greeks there made a good appearance, they had hair on only half the head. <sup>5</sup>Now this man hailed me, saying, "Stranger, have you seen a deer running anywhere hereabouts?" And I replied, "Yonder it is this minute, in the surf," and I took him and showed it to him. So he dragged it out of the sea, ripped off the skin with his knife while I lent a helping hand as best I could. Then, after cutting off the hind quarters, he was about to carry them away along with the hide, when he invited me to come along and dine upon the venison with him, adding that his dwelling was not far away. <sup>6</sup>"And then in the morning," he continued, "after you have rested with us, you shall come back to the sea, since the present is no weather for sailing. Yet do not worry about that," he continued, "I should be content to have the wind die down after full five days, but that is not likely when the peaks of the Euboean mountains are so capped with clouds as you see them now." And at the same time he asked me whence I came, how I had landed there, and whether the boat had not been wrecked. "It was a very small one," I replied, "belonging to some fishermen who were crossing over, and I, their only passenger, sailed with them on urgent business, <sup>7</sup>but all the same it ran aground and was wrecked."

“Well, it could not easily have been otherwise,” he replied; “for see, how wild and rugged the part of the island is that faces the sea. These are what they call the Hollows of Euboea, where a ship is doomed if it is driven ashore, and rarely are any of those aboard saved either, unless, of course, like you they sail in a very light craft. But come and have no fear. To-day you shall rest after your trying experience, but to-morrow we shall do our best to get you out safely, now that we have come to know you.

Lucian, *Toxaris* 19–21

*Mne.* See what you think of the next—Euthydicus of Chalcidice. I heard his story from Simylus, a shipmaster of Megara, who vowed that he had been an eyewitness of what he related. He set sail from Italy about the setting of the Pleiads, bound for Athens, with a miscellaneous shipload of passengers, among whom were Euthydicus and his comrade Damon, also of Chalcidice. They were of about the same age. Euthydicus was a powerful man, in robust health; Damon was pale and weakly, and looked as if he were just recovering from a long illness. They had a good voyage as far as Sicily: but they had no sooner passed through the Straits into the Ionian Sea, than a tremendous storm overtook them. I need not detain you with descriptions of mountainous billows and whirlwinds and hail and the other adjuncts of a storm: suffice it to say, that they were compelled to take in all sail, and trail cables after them to break the force of the waves, and in this way made Zacynthus by about midnight. At this point Damon, being seasick, as was natural in such a heavy sea, was leaning over the side, when (as I suppose) an unusually violent lurch of the vessel in his direction, combining with the rush of water across the deck, hurled him headlong into the sea. The poor wretch was not even naked, or he might have had a chance of swimming: it was all he could do to keep himself above water, and get out a cry for help. Euthydicus was lying in his berth undressed. He heard the cry, flung himself into the sea, and succeeded in overtaking the exhausted Damon; and a powerful moonlight enabled those on deck to see him swimming at his side for a considerable distance, and supporting him. 'We all felt for them,' said Simylus, 'and longed to give them some assistance, but the gale was too much for us: we did, however, throw out a number of corks and spars on the chance of their getting hold of some of them, and being carried to shore; and finally we threw over the gangway, which was of some size.'--Now only think: could any man give a surer proof of affection, than by throwing himself into a furious sea like that to share the death of his friend? Picture to yourself the surging billows, the roar of crashing waters, the hissing foam, the darkness, the hopeless prospect: look at Damon,--he is at his last gasp, he barely keeps himself up, he holds out his hands imploringly to his friend: and lastly look at Euthydicus, as he leaps into the water, and swims by his side, with only one thought in his mind,--Damon must not be the first to perish;--and you will see that Euthydicus too was no bad friend.

*Tox.* I tremble for their fate: were they drowned, or did some miraculous providence deliver them?

*Mne.* Oh, they were saved all right; and they are in Athens at this day, both of them, studying philosophy. Simylus's story closes with the events of the night: Damon has fallen overboard, Euthydicus has jumped in to his rescue, and the pair are left swimming about till they are lost in the darkness. Euthydicus himself tells the rest. It seems that first they came across some pieces of cork, which helped to support them; and they managed with much ado to keep afloat, till about dawn they saw the gangway, swam up to it, clambered on, and were carried to Zacynthus without further trouble. These, I think, are passable instances of friendship; and my third is no way inferior to them, as you shall hear.

Lucian, *The Ship* 7–9

Ti. He is a wonderful hand at it, so the crew say; a very Proteus in sea-cunning. Did they tell you how he brought them here, and all their adventures? how they were saved by a star?

Ly. No; you can tell us about that now.

Ti. I had it from the master, a nice intelligent fellow to talk to. They set sail with a moderate wind from Pharus, and sighted Acamas on the seventh day. Then a west wind got up, and they were carried as far east as Sidon. On their way thence they came in for a heavy gale, and the tenth day brought them through the Straits to the Chelidon Isles; and there they very nearly went to the bottom. I have sailed past the Chelidons myself, and I know the sort of seas you get there, especially if the wind is SW. by S.; it is just there, of course, that the division takes place between the Lycian and Pamphylian waters; and the surge caused by the numerous currents gets broken at the headland, whose rocks have been sharpened by the action of the water till they are like razors; the result is a stupendous crash of waters, the waves often rising to the very top of the crags. This was the kind of thing they found themselves in for, according to the master,—and on a pitch dark night! However, the Gods were moved by their distress, and showed them a fire that enabled them to identify the Lycian coast; and a bright star—either Castor or Pollux—appeared at the masthead, and guided the ship into the open sea on their left; just in time, for she was making straight for the cliff. Having once lost their proper course, they sailed on through the Aegean, bearing up against the Etesian winds, until they came to anchor in Piraeus yesterday, being the seventieth day of the voyage; you see how far they had been carried out of their way; whereas if they had taken Crete on their right, they would have doubled Malea, and been at Rome by this time.

Aelius Aristides, *Sacred Tales* 2.12–14

Why should one mention the way that everyone in Smyrna was astounded when they saw my unhoped for appearance? When we arrived at Clazomenae, it seemed fated to cross straight to Phocaea. For when we were near the islands Drymussa and Pele, a breeze from the southeast arose, and as we went further, the southeast wind became sharp, and finally a portentous gale broke out. And the ship rose at the prow and dipped at the stern and nearly sank. Next it was awash everywhere. Then it turned out to the open sea. The seamen sweated and shouted, and the passengers screamed. For some friends were also sailing with me. But I was content to say only, “O Asclepius!” after we had faced many kinds of danger and finally near the very landing were turned and driven back countless times and had caused much anguish to the spectators, scarcely and hardly were we saved.

When the night came, the god ordered me to perform my purgation, and showed me from what. And it produced no less an effect than a purge by hellebore would, as those who had experience in this said, since everything was stirred up by the tempest. And he made everything clear, that it was fated for me to suffer shipwreck, and for that reason these things happened, and now it would be also necessary for my safety and in order to fulfill my destiny completely, to embark in a skiff and to arrange it in the harbor, so that the skiff overturn and sink, but that I myself be picked up by someone and brought to land. For thus my fate would be fulfilled. Of course, we did this quite gladly. And the contrivance of the shipwreck, which occurred with real danger, seemed wonderful to all. Wherein we also knew that it was even he who saved us from the sea. An additional benefaction was the purgation.

Aelius Aristides, *Sacred Tales* 2.64–68

And I did not know what to do, for in the midst of taking food and of talking, there was a blockage, and I thought that I must choke. And my other physical debilities were consonant with these things. Antidotes and various other drugs were given in vain.

It seemed fitting to be taken home, if I could somehow endure. It was impossible by land, for my body would not bear the shaking. We attempted sailing. Some of the pack animals, which we had brought, had died in the bad weather, and we sold the survivors. And a sort of *Odyssey* took place. Right at the start in the Tyrrhenian Sea, there was a squall, darkness, a southwester. And the sea was uncontrollably rough, and the steersman let go of the rudders, and the captain and the sailors poured ashes on their heads, and bewailed themselves and the ship. The sea rushed in full fury over the prow and stern, and I was deluged by wind and waves, and these things happened day and night. It was nearly midnight when we were borne to the Peloric promontory of Sicily. Then we wandered and ran in the strait, sometimes forwards, sometimes backwards. We crossed the Adriatic in two nights and a day, escorted noiselessly by the current. When it was necessary to put in at Cephallenia, again the waves grew high and the wind was not favorable, but we wandered up and down. My body was troubled in various ways and broke down.

You could not put in words what happened again in the Achaean straits, right at the equinox, when the good sailors put out of Patrae, although I was unwilling and opposed it from the first, in all of which my chest and the rest of my body were still more injured. What took place in the Aegean sea was nearly the same and occurred through the incapacity of the steersman and the sailors, who decided to sail in unfavorable winds and did not wish to listen to me. Again there were fourteen stormy days and nights, and we were carried through the whole sea, during these days there was not a little fasting.

Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* 3.1–5

On the third day of our voyage, the perfect calm we had hitherto experienced was suddenly overcast by dark clouds and the daylight disappeared, a wind blew upwards from the sea full in the ship's face, and the helmsman bade the sailyard be slewed round.... [here is a vivid description of the ship being thrust up and down through the waves.] About mid-day or a little after the sun totally disappeared, and we could see one another no better than by moonlight. Lightning flashed from the sky, the heaven bellowed with thunder so that the whole air rang with the din; this was answered from below by the turmoil of the waves, and between sky and sea whistled the noise of contending winds....Then the helmsman ordered the jettison of the cargo. No difference was made between gold and silver and the cheapest stuff, but we hurled all alike from the ship's sides; many of the merchants themselves seized their goods, on which all their hopes were centered, and hastened to pitch them overboard. Now the ship was stripped of all its contents; but the storm was still unabated. At length the helmsman threw up his task. He dropped the steering oars from his hands and left the ship to the mercy of the sea; he then had the jollyboat got ready, and bidding the sailors follow him, was the first to descend the ladder and enter her. They jumped in close after him, and then was confusion worse confounded and a hand-to-hand fight ensue. They who were already in the boat began to cut the rope which held her to the ship, while all the passengers made preparations to jump where they saw the helmsman holding on to the rope; the boat's crew objected to this, and, being armed with axes and swords, threatened to attack any who leaped in; many, on the other hand, of those on the ship armed themselves as best they might, one picking up a piece of

an old oar, another taking a fragment of one of the ship's benches and so began to defend themselves. At sea might is right, there now followed a novel kind of sea-fight...Every law of friendship and pity disappeared, and each man regarding only his own safety, utterly disregarded all feelings of kindness toward his neighbors....[the dinghy plunges into the sea and strikes a rock, sinking with all her passengers.] Those who instantly perished, their lungs full of salt water, experience the most tolerable fate in our general evil plight, because they were not kept in suspense by the fear of death. For a slow death at sea lets a man suffer all its pangs before the actual moment of dissolution. ... Some tried to swim, and were killed by being dashed by the waves on to the rock: many others fell upon broken pieces of wood and were spitted upon them like fishes; others were swimming about already half dead. The ship thus broken up, some favoring deity kept whole for us that part of the prow on which Leucippe and I were seated astride, and we floated as the sea carried us...I wailed and cried, 'Lord Poseidon, and make a truce with us, the remnants of your shipwreck. We have already undergone many deaths through fear; if you mean to kill us, do not make our deaths separate; let one wave overwhelm us. If our fate is to become food for sea-beasts, let one fish destroy us and one maw swallow us, that even in the fish we may have a common tomb.'" It was but a short time after I had uttered this prayer that the wind dropped and the savagery of the waves subsided; the sea was full of the corpses of the dead; and the tide rapidly brought Menelaus and his servant to land.

*Apollonius King of Tyre* §265–67

But Apollonius, not forgetting the dignity of a king in the traffic of a merchant, returned the purchase-money to the state; and the people, struck with wonder at this unexpected instance of generosity, erected in the forum a chariot drawn by four horses, running side by side. In the car was a statue, representing Apollonius with his right hand rubbing the corn from the ear. His left foot trampled upon it; and on the pediment they placed the following inscription: — "Apollonius, Prince of Tyre, by a gift to the city of Tarsus, preserved its inhabitants from a cruel death." A few days afterwards, by the advice of Stranguilio and his wife Dionysias, the prince determined to sail for Pentapolis, a city of the Tyrreni, [266] where he might remain in greater tranquility and opulence. They brought him, therefore, with much ceremony to the sea-shore; and then bidding his hosts farewell, he embarked. For three days and nights he sailed with favorable winds; but after losing sight of the Tharsian coast, they veered round, and blew from the north with great violence. The rain fell in heavy showers, mixed with hail; and the ship was carried away by the fury of the storm. Dark clouds brooded over them; and the blast, still increasing, threatened them with immediate death. The crew, imagining all was lost, caught hold of planks, and committed themselves to the mercy of the waves. In the extreme darkness that followed, all perished. But Apollonius, riding on a plank, was cast upon the Pentapolitan shore; on which, after quitting the water, he stood thoughtfully, and fixing his eyes upon the ocean, now in a calm, exclaimed, "Oh, ye faithless waves! better had I fallen into the hands of that savage king! — to whom shall I now go? What country shall I seek? Who will afford succor to an unknown and helpless stranger?" As he spoke this, he beheld a young man coming towards him. He was a robust, hard-favored fisherman, clad in a coarse frock. Apollonius, driven by his distresses, humbly besought this man's assistance, even with tears starting from his eyes. "Pity [267] me," said he, "whosoever thou art; pity a man stripped of all by shipwreck — one to whom better days have been familiar, and who is descended from no ignoble family. But that you may know whom you succor, understand that I am a prince of Tyre, and that my name is Apollonius. Save, then, my life, I entreat you." The fisherman, compassionating his sufferings, brought him to his own roof, and placed such as he had before him. And that there might be no deficiency in the charitable part he was acting, he divided his cloak, and gave one half to

the stranger; “Take,” said the benevolent man, “take what I can give, and go into the city; there, perhaps, you will find one with more power to serve you than I am. If you are unsuccessful in your search, return hither to me. What poverty can provide you shall share. Yet, should you hereafter be restored to your throne, do not forget or despise the coarse, threadbare cloak of the poor fisherman.” “Fear not,” said Apollonius; “should I prove ungrateful may I be shipwrecked again, nor find in my extremity a man like yourself.” As he spoke, the fisherman pointed out the way to the city gates, which Apollonius shortly entered.

Heliodorus, *Ethiopian Story* 1.22

For this cause was our ship laden with gold, silver, goodly apparel and other necessaries, as much as were necessary for the expenses of the same and to make the people a public feast; and thus we loosed out of the haven. Our parents, since they were old and feared the dangerousness of the voyage, tarried at home; but many of the other citizens, some in our ship, others in boats of their own, came to accompany us. After we had ended the greatest part of our voyage a tempest suddenly arose and a vehement wind with fearful blasts moving great waves of the sea. This caused us to leave our determined journey, for our steersman overcome by the greatness of the danger in the violence of the storm gave up the tiller and let fortune control our course. We were driven by the wind for seven days and seven nights, and at last we were cast upon the shore whereon you found us and saw the great slaughter. In that place the mariners, as we were banqueting for joy of our unlooked for delivery, attacked us and for our riches sought to destroy us. But they were all slain, not without the destruction of our friends and acquaintance — which would God had not happened — and we only poor miserable creatures were left as victors.

Heliodorus, *Ethiopian Story* 5.27

‘When they came aboard the Phoenician ship and were gone from Delphi, they sailed at first as they would wish and had a very prosperous wind behind them. But when they came to the Calydonian Sea they were greatly troubled, since they had happened into a sea which of its own nature is disquiet and troublesome.’ Cnemon at this desired him not to pass it by but to tell if he knew any reason for the raging of the waves in that place. ‘The Ionian Sea,’ said Calasiris, ‘being brought from its great breadth into narrow waters, pours, as it were through a funnel, into the Crisaean Gulf and then, hastening to mingle with the Aegean, is checked in its course by the Isthmus of the Peloponnese, whose hill by God’s providence perhaps was placed there lest the violence of the water should overflow the land on the contrary coast. Wherefore it would seem that the water is beaten back and piles up more in this part of the sea than in any other place, since that which is flowing in strikes against that which is running backwards, so that the sea begins to boil and the waves rise boisterous, by their mutual clashing lifted up into mighty billows.’ All those who were present praised and applauded this reasoning, declaring it to be true, and Calasiris went on with his tale. ‘When we had passed this sea and had lost sight of the Rugged Islands, we thought that we discovered the heights of Zacynthus, lying like a dark cloud before our eyes. Therewith the master bade strike some of the sails, and when we asked him why he abated them and went more easily, seeing that the ship had a very good gale of wind — ‘Because,’ said he, ‘if we went with a full sail, we should arrive at the island about the first watch and there would be danger lest in the dark we run upon the sharp rocks hidden beneath the sea. It is therefore wisdom to lie out all night and take the wind in such proportion as shall serve to bring us to land there in the morning.’ Thus said the master, Nausicles, but we did not do so; for at the very rising of the sun we were casting anchor in harbour. The inhabitants of the island who dwelt about the haven, which was not far from the city,

came flocking to look upon us, as if we had been some strange sight, admiring the handsomeness of the great ship, as it seemed, which was built very fair and high, and saying that they recognized therein the excellent workmanship of the Phoenicians, and that we had wonderful good luck, who made so good a voyage in the winter about the time the Pleiads were ready to set.

Quintus of Smyrna, *The Fall of Troy* 14.345–527 [from *The War at Troy*, tr. Frederick M. Combellack; Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma press, 1968]

Speedily then the Greeks dragged their ships into the sea and put on board all the possessions they had taken as booty earlier on their way to Troy, when they had overcome the neighboring peoples, and all they had brought from Troy herself. They took especial delight in this latter, because the amount of it was so vast. Along with the other booty, many captive women followed with deep sorrow in their hearts. Then the men themselves got on board the ships.

Calchas, however, did not follow the eager army into the sea. On the contrary, he even tried to hold the other Greeks back, because he was afraid that a terrible destruction was rushing upon the Greeks in the vicinity of the Capherean Rocks. But they paid no attention to him at all; an evil Fate had beguiled the minds of the men. Amphilocus alone, swift son of noble Amphiaraus, and a man skilled in prophecy, stayed with wise Calchas. They were both fated to go to the citadels of the Pamphylians and the Cilician, far from their own country.

But these were matters that the gods arrange later. The Greeks now untied the cables of their ships from the land and speedily drew up the anchors stones. The Hellespont re-echoed the sounds of their haste, and the waters of the sea washed round the ships. Everywhere in the prows lay piles of armor taken from men who had been killed, and up above there hung thousands of signs of victory....

They passed by Chryse and the seat of Sminthian Apollo and holy Cilla, and windy Lesbos began to appear. Speedily they rounded the headland of Lectus, where there is the last ridge of Ida. The full sails hummed, the dark swells roared about the prows. The long waves grew dark with shadows, and their paths over the sea showed white with foam....

Then she [Athena] took her father's [Zeus] weapons, those which no god lifts except great Zeus, and she made huge Olympus shake. She threw into confusion the clouds and all the air above them. Night was shed about the earth, and the sea grew dark. Zeus looked on with great delight, as the broad heaven moved about the feet of the goddess. The air roared around her, as though unwearied Zeus were rushing into battle....

The sea roared uncontrollably as they swept over it, and the waves like steep mountains ran in all directions. The spirit of the Greeks was shattered in their breasts, since the waves carried their ships now high in the air and now, as though they were rolling down a cliff, carried them into a dark abyss. A kind of uncontrollable force kept causing the sea to boil up as the waves parted. They were overcome with helplessness and, in their state of shock, had no power to put hand to oar, nor, much as they wanted to, did they have the strength to furl about the yards the sails that were being torn by the winds, nor, on the other hand, could they arrange them for sailing, because the terrible storm blasts drove them violently on. The helmsmen, too, no longer had the strength to manipulate the ship's rudders nimbly with their expert hands, for the evil gales were scattering everything in all directions. They had no hope of saving their lives, assailed as they were

simultaneously by dark night, the great storm, and the dreadful wrath of the immortals. For Poseidon, showing favor to his brother's glorious daughter, was stirring up the pitiless sea, and she herself up above, in her merciless rage, was swooping with lightning. . . . Some poor wretches, eager to thrust away with oars ships that were rushing at them, fell into the great depths, oars and all, and died a pitiful death as long timbers from other ships assailed them from every side, and the bodies of all were horribly crushed. Some fell in the ships and lay there like dead men. Others, embracing polished oars, swam under pressure of necessity. Others, again, floated along on planks. The sea roared from its depths, and it seemed as if ocean, heaven, and earth were all confounded together.

Plautus, *The Rope* 62–78

Then he himself straightway embarks and proceeds to sail off with his little stock of courtesans. The young fellow is informed by others of these happenings and the pimp's departure. He goes to the harbor: there ship was far, far out at sea. Then it was that I, beholding the maiden borne away, came to her rescue, and also came with ruin to the pimp. I raised a blustering gale and waked the waters of the deep. For Arcturus, the fiercest constellation of them all, am I, tempestuous when I rise, and when I set more tempestuous still. So now side by side upon a rock are seated pimp and guest, a pair of castaways: their ship is wrecked. That maiden, however, and another slave girl likewise, were terrified and jumped from the ship into a boat. And now the waves are driving them from the rock toward the shore, at the spot where that old exile dwells in this cottage, the roof and tiles of which were torn off by the storm.

Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.122–252

Now o'er Achates and Ilioneus,  
now o'er the ship of Abas or Aletes,  
bursts the tempestuous shock; their loosened seams  
yawn wide and yield the angry wave its will.  
Meanwhile how all his smitten ocean moaned,  
and how the tempest's turbulent assault  
had vexed the stillness of his deepest cave,  
great Neptune knew; and with indignant mien  
uplifted o'er the sea his sovereign brow.  
He saw the Teucric navy scattered far  
along the waters; and Aeneas' men  
o'erwhelmed in mingling shock of wave and sky.  
Saturnian Juno's vengeful stratagem

her brother's royal glance failed not to see;  
and loud to eastward and to westward calling,  
he voiced this word:  
“What pride of birth or power  
is yours, ye winds, that, reckless of my will,  
audacious thus, ye ride through earth and heaven,  
and stir these mountain waves? Such rebels I—  
nay, first I calm this tumult! But yourselves  
by heavier chastisement shall expiate  
hereafter your bold trespass. Haste away  
and bear your king this word! Not unto him  
dominion o'er the seas and trident dread,  
but unto me, Fate gives. Let him possess  
wild mountain crags, thy favored haunt and home,  
O Eurus! In his barbarous mansion there,  
let Aeolus look proud, and play the king  
in yon close-bounded prison-house of storms!”  
He spoke, and swiffler than his word subdued  
the swelling of the floods; dispersed afar  
th' assembled clouds, and brought back light to heaven.  
Cymothoe then and Triton, with huge toil,  
thrust down the vessels from the sharp-edged reef;  
while, with the trident, the great god's own hand  
assists the task; then, from the sand-strewn shore  
out-ebbing far, he calms the whole wide sea,

and glides light-wheeled along the crested foam.  
As when, with not unwonted tumult, roars  
in some vast city a rebellious mob,  
and base-born passions in its bosom burn,  
till rocks and blazing torches fill the air  
(rage never lacks for arms)—if haply then  
some wise man comes, whose reverend looks attest  
a life to duty given, swift silence falls;  
all ears are turned attentive; and he sways  
with clear and soothing speech the people's will.  
So ceased the sea's uproar, when its grave Sire  
looked o'er th' expanse, and, riding on in light,  
flung free rein to his winged obedient car.  
Aeneas' wave-worn crew now landward made,  
and took the nearest passage, whither lay  
the coast of Libya. A haven there  
walled in by bold sides of a rocky isle,  
offers a spacious and secure retreat,  
where every billow from the distant main  
breaks, and in many a rippling curve retires.  
Huge crags and two confronted promontories  
frown heaven-high, beneath whose brows outspread  
the silent, sheltered waters; on the heights  
the bright and glimmering foliage seems to show  
a woodland amphitheatre; and yet higher

rises a straight-stemmed grove of dense, dark shade.

Fronting on these a grotto may be seen,

o'erhung by steep cliffs; from its inmost wall

clear springs gush out; and shelving seats it has

of unhewn stone, a place the wood-nymphs love.

In such a port, a weary ship rides free

of weight of firm-fluked anchor or strong chain.

Hither Aeneas of his scattered fleet

saving but seven, into harbor sailed;

with passionate longing for the touch of land,

forth leap the Trojans to the welcome shore,

and fling their dripping limbs along the ground.

Then good Achates smote a flinty stone,

secured a flashing spark, heaped on light leaves,

and with dry branches nursed the mounting flame.

Then Ceres' gift from the corrupting sea

they bring away; and wearied utterly

ply Ceres' cunning on the rescued corn,

and parch in flames, and mill 'twixt two smooth stones.

Aeneas meanwhile climbed the cliffs, and searched

the wide sea-prospect; haply Antheus there,

storm-buffeted, might sail within his ken,

with biremes, and his Phrygian mariners,

or Capys or Caicus armor-clad,

upon a towering deck. No ship is seen;

but while he looks, three stags along the shore  
come straying by, and close behind them comes  
the whole herd, browsing through the lowland vale  
in one long line. Aeneas stopped and seized  
his bow and swift-winged arrows, which his friend,  
trusty Achates, close beside him bore.

His first shafts brought to earth the lordly heads  
of the high-antlered chiefs; his next assailed  
the general herd, and drove them one and all  
in panic through the leafy wood, nor ceased  
the victory of his bow, till on the ground  
lay seven huge forms, one gift forevery ship.

Then back to shore he sped, and to his friends  
distributed the spoil, with that rare wine  
which good Acestes while in Sicily  
had stored in jars, and prince-like sent away  
with his Ioved guest;—this too Aeneas gave;  
and with these words their mournful mood consoled.

“Companions mine, we have not failed to feel  
calamity till now. O, ye have borne  
far heavier sorrow: Jove will make an end  
also of this. Ye sailed a course hard by  
infuriate Scylla's howling cliffs and caves.  
Ye knew the Cyclops' crags. Lift up your hearts!  
No more complaint and fear! It well may be

some happier hour will find this memory fair.  
Through chance and change and hazard without end,  
our goal is Latium; where our destinies  
beckon to blest abodes, and have ordained  
that Troy shall rise new-born! Have patience all!  
And bide expectantly that golden day.”  
Such was his word, but vexed with grief and care,  
feigned hopes upon his forehead firm he wore,  
and locked within his heart a hero's pain.  
Now round the welcome trophies of his chase  
they gather for a feast. Some flay the ribs  
and bare the flesh below; some slice with knives,  
and on keen prongs the quivering strips impale,  
place cauldrons on the shore, and fan the fires.  
Then, stretched at ease on couch of simple green,  
they rally their lost powers, and feast them well  
on seasoned wine and succulent haunch of game.  
But hunger banished and the banquet done,  
in long discourse of their lost mates they tell,  
'twixt hopes and fears divided; for who knows  
whether the lost ones live, or strive with death,  
or heed no more whatever voice may call?  
Chiefly Aeneas now bewails his friends,  
Orontes brave and fallen Amycus,  
or mourns with grief untold the untimely doom

of bold young Gyas and Cloanthus bold.  
After these things were past, exalted Jove,  
from his ethereal sky surveying clear  
the seas all winged with sails, lands widely spread,  
and nations populous from shore to shore,  
paused on the peak of heaven, and fixed his gaze  
on Libya. But while he anxious mused,  
near him, her radiant eyes all dim with tears,  
nor smiling any more, Venus approached,  
and thus complained: "O thou who dost control  
things human and divine by changeless laws,  
enthroned in awful thunder! What huge wrong  
could my Aeneas and his Trojans few  
achieve against thy power? For they have borne  
unnumbered deaths, and, failing Italy,  
the gates of all the world against them close.  
Hast thou not given us thy covenant  
that hence the Romans when the rolling years  
have come full cycle, shall arise to power  
from Troy's regenerate seed, and rule supreme  
the unresisted lords of land and sea?  
O Sire, what swerves thy will? How oft have I  
in Troy's most lamentable wreck and woe  
consoled my heart with this, and balanced oft  
our destined good against our destined ill!

But the same stormful fortune still pursues  
my band of heroes on their perilous way.  
When shall these labors cease, O glorious King?  
Antenor, though th' Achaeans pressed him sore,  
found his way forth, and entered unassailed  
Illyria's haven, and the guarded land  
of the Liburni. Straight up stream he sailed  
where like a swollen sea Timavus pours  
a nine-fold flood from roaring mountain gorge,  
and whelms with voiceful wave the fields below.  
He built Patavium there, and fixed abodes  
for Troy's far-exiled sons; he gave a name  
to a new land and race; the Trojan arms  
were hung on temple walls; and, to this day,  
lying in perfect peace, the hero sleeps.  
But we of thine own seed, to whom thou dost  
a station in the arch of heaven assign,  
behold our navy vilely wrecked, because  
a single god is angry; we endure  
this treachery and violence, whereby  
wide seas divide us from th' Hesperian shore.  
Is this what piety receives? Or thus  
doth Heaven's decree restore our fallen thrones?"

Virgil, *Aeneid* 3.253–75

Is this what piety receives? Or thus

doth Heaven's decree restore our fallen thrones?"

Smiling reply, the Sire of gods and men,

with such a look as clears the skies of storm

chastely his daughter kissed, and thus spake on:

"Let Cytherea cast her fears away!

Irrevocably blest the fortunes be

of thee and thine. Nor shalt thou fail to see

that City, and the proud predestined wall

encompassing Lavinium. Thyself

shall starward to the heights of heaven bear

Aeneas the great-hearted. Nothing swerves

my will once uttered. Since such carking cares

consume thee, I this hour speak freely forth,

and leaf by leaf the book of fate unfold.

Thy son in Italy shall wage vast war

and, quell its nations wild; his city-wall

and sacred laws shall be a mighty bond

about his gathered people. Summers three

shall Latium call him king; and three times pass

the winter o'er Rutulia's vanquished hills.

His heir, Ascanius, now Iulus called

(Iulus it was while Ilium's kingdom stood),

full thirty months shall reign, then move the throne

from the Lavinian citadel, and build

for Alba Longa its well-bastioned wall.

Here three full centuries shall Hector's race  
have kingly power; till a priestess queen,  
by Mars conceiving, her twin offspring bear;  
then Romulus, wolf-nursed and proudly clad  
in tawny wolf-skin mantle, shall receive  
the scepter of his race. He shall uprear  
and on his Romans his own name bestow.

Virgil, *Aeneid* 5.14–43

Soon in mid-sea, beyond all chart of shore,  
when only seas and skies were round their way,  
full in the zenith loomed a purple cloud,  
storm-laden, dark as night, and every wave  
grew black and angry; from his lofty seat  
the helmsman Palinurus cried, “Alas!  
What means this host of storms encircling heaven?  
What, Neptune, wilt thou now?” He, having said,  
bade reef and tighten, bend to stronger stroke,  
and slant sail to the wind; then spake again:  
“High-souled Aeneas, not if Jove the King  
gave happy omen, would I have good hope  
of making Italy through yonder sky.  
Athwart our course from clouded evening-star  
rebellious winds run shifting, and the air  
into a cloud-wrack rolls. Against such foes  
too weak our strife and strain! Since now the hand

of Fortune triumphs, let us where she calls  
obedient go. For near us, I believe,  
lies Eryx' faithful and fraternal shore:  
here are Sicilian havens, if my mind  
of yon familiar stars have knowledge true.”  
then good Aeneas: “For a friendly wind  
long have I sued, and watched thee vainly strive.  
Shift sail! What happier land for me and mine,  
or for our storm-beat ships what safer shore,  
than where Dardanian Acestes reigns;  
the land whose faithful bosom cherishes  
Anchises' ashes?” Heedful of his word,  
they landward steer, while favoring zephyrs fill  
the spreading sail. On currents swift and strong  
the fleet is wafted, and with thankful soul  
they moor on Sicily's familiar strand.  
From a far hill-top having seen with joy  
the entering ships, and knowing them for friends,  
good King Acestes ran to bid them hail.  
Garbed in rough pelt of Libyan bear was he,  
and javelins he bore, in sylvan guise:  
for him the river-god Crimismus sired  
of Trojan wife. Remembering in his heart  
his ancient blood, he greeted with glad words  
the wanderers returned; bade welcome to

his rude abundance, and with friendly gifts  
their weariness consoled.

The morrow morn,  
soon as the new beams of a golden day  
had banished every star, Aeneas called  
a council of his followers on the shore,  
and from a fair green hillock gave this word:  
“Proud sons of Dardanus, whose lofty line  
none but the gods began!

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11.477–574

Now is the mother's visage pale with fear,  
and now the sister's sanguinary rage  
glows in her eyes. Her countenance contorts  
with cruel threats and in bewildered ways  
dissolves compassionate: And even when  
the heat of anger had dried up her eyes  
the conflict of her passion brought new tears.  
As when the wind has seized upon a ship  
and blows against a tide of equal force,  
the vexed vessel feels repellent powers,  
and with unsteady motion sways to both;  
so did Althaea hesitate between  
the conflict of her passions: when her rage  
had cooled, her fury was as fast renewed:  
but always the unsatisfied desire

of blood, to ease the disembodied shades  
of her slain brothers, seemed to overcome  
the mother-instinct; and intensity  
of conduct proved the utmost test of love.  
She took the billet in her arms and stood  
before the leaping flames, and said, "Alas,  
be this the funeral pyre of my own flesh!"  
And as she held in her relentless hand  
the destiny of him she loved, and stood  
before the flames, in all her wretchedness  
she moaned, "You sad Eumenides attend!  
Relentless Gods of punishment,—turn, turn  
your dreadful vision on these baneful rites!  
I am avenging and committing crime!  
With death must death be justified and crime  
be added unto crime! Let funerals  
upon succeeding funerals attend!  
"Let these accumulating woes destroy  
a wicked race. Shall happy Oeneus bask  
in the great fame of his victorious son,  
and Thestius mourn without slaughtered ones?  
'Tis better they should both lament the deed!  
Witness the act of my affection, shades  
of my departed brothers! and accept  
my funeral offering, given at a cost

beyond my strength to bear. Ah wretched me!  
Distracted is my reason! Pity me,  
the yearnings of a stricken mother's heart  
withholding me from duty! Aye, although  
his punishment be just, my hands refuse  
the office of such vengeance. What, shall he  
alive, victorious, flushed with his success,  
inherit the broad realms of Calydon,  
and you, my slaughtered brothers, unavenged,  
dissolved in ashes, float upon the air,  
unpalpitating phantoms? How can I  
endure the thought of it? Oh let the wretch  
forever perish, and with him be lost  
the hopes of his sad father, in the wreck  
of his distracted kingdom. Where are now  
the love and feelings of a mother; how  
can I forget the bitter pangs endured  
while twice times five the slow moon waxed and waned?  
“O had you perished in your infancy  
by those first fires, and I had suffered it!  
Your life was in my power! and now your death  
is the result of wrongs which you have done—  
take now a just reward for what you did:  
return to me the life I gave and saved.  
When from the flames I snatched the fatal brand.

Return that gift or take my wretched life,  
that I may hasten to my brothers' tomb.  
“What dreadful deed can satisfy the law,  
when I for love against my love am forced?  
For even as my brothers' wounds appear  
in visions dreadful to denounce my son,  
the love so nurtured in a mother's breast  
breaks down the resolution! Wretched me!  
Such vengeance for my brothers overcomes  
first at your birth I gave it, and again  
the yearning of a mother for her son!  
Let not my love denounce my vengeance!  
My soul may follow with its love the shade  
of him I sacrifice, and following him  
my shade and his and yours unite below.”  
She spoke and as she turned her face away,  
she threw the fatal billet on the fire,  
and as the flames devoured it, a strange groan  
was heard to issue from the burning wood  
but Meleager at a distance knows  
of naught to wreck his hour of victory,  
until he feels the flame of burning wood  
scorching with secret fire his forfeit life.  
Yet with a mighty will, disdaining pain  
he grieves his bloodless and ignoble death.

He calls Ancaeus happy for the wounds  
that caused his death. With sighs and groans he called  
his aged father's name, and then the names  
of brothers, sisters, and his wife—and last,  
they say he called upon his mother's name.  
His torment always with the fire increased,  
until, as little of the wood remained,—  
his pain diminished with the heat's decrease;  
and as the flames extinguished, so his life  
slowly ascended in the rising air.  
And all the mighty realm of Calydon  
was filled with lamentations —young and old  
the common people and the nobles mourned;  
and all the wailing women tore their hair  
his father threw his body on the ground,  
and as he covered his white hair and face  
with ashy dust, bewailed his aged days.  
Althaea, maddened in her mother's grief,  
has punished herself with a ruthless hand;  
she pierced her heart with iron. —Oh! if some God  
had given a resounding harp, a voice  
an hundred-fold more mighty, and a soul  
enlarged with genius, I could never tell  
the grief of his unhappy sisters.—They,  
regardless of all shame, beat on their breasts;

before the body was consumed with fire,  
embraced it, and again embracing it,  
rained kisses on their loved one and the bier.  
And when the flames had burnt his shrinking form  
they strained his gathered ashes to their breasts,  
and prostrate on the tomb kissed his dear name,  
cut only in the stone,—and bathed it with their tears  
Latona's daughter, glutted with the woes  
inflicted on Parthaon's house, now gave  
two of the weeping sisters wide-spread wings,  
but Gorge and the spouse of Hercules  
not so were changed. Latona stretched long wings  
upon their arms, transformed their mouths to beaks,  
and sent them winging through the lucent air.

She remembered well,  
how, when she lay in childbirth round her stood  
the three attendant sisters of his fate.  
There was a billet in the room, and this  
they took and cast upon the wasting flames,  
and as they spun and drew the fatal threads  
they softly chanted, “Unto you we give,  
O child new-born! only the life of this;  
the period of this billet is your life.”  
And having spoken so, they vanished in the smoke.

Althaea snatched the billet from the fire,  
and having quenched it with drawn water, hid  
it long and secretly in her own room,  
where, thus preserved, it acted as a charm  
to save the life of Meleager. This  
the mother now brought forth, and fetched a pile  
of seasoned tinder ready for the torch.  
She lit the torches and the ready pile,  
and as the flames leaped up, four times prepared  
to cast the fatal billet in the midst;

and four times hesitated to commit  
the dreadful deed,—so long the contest veered  
between the feelings of a mother's breast  
and the fierce vengeance of a sister's rage.

Now is the mother's visage pale with fear,  
and now the sister's sanguinary rage  
glows in her eyes. Her countenance contorts  
with cruel threats and in bewildered ways  
dissolves compassionate: And even when  
the heat of anger had dried up her eyes  
the conflict of her passion brought new tears.

*Tristia* 1.2.1–110

Gods of the sea and sky – since what is left but prayer? –

don't shatter the ribs of our storm-tossed ship,

don't, I beg you, add to great Caesar's anger!

Often when one god presses, another brings help.

Mulciber was against Troy, Apollo for her:

Venus was friendly to Trojans, Pallas hostile.

Saturnia hated Aeneas, supported Turnus:

yet he was safe through Venus's power.

Fierce Neptune often challenged the cunning Ulysses:

Minerva often saved him from her uncle.

And however different I am from them,

who denies a power to me, against the angry god?

A wretch, I'm wasting idle words in vain.

My mouth that speaks is drenched by heavy waves,

and fearful Notus hurls my words away,

and won't let my prayers reach the gods.

So the same winds drive my sails and prayers

who knows where, so I'm doubly punished.

Ah me! What mountains of water churn!  
Now, now you think they'll touch the highest stars.  
What abysses sink beneath the yawning flood!  
Now, now you think they'll touch black Tartarus.  
Wherever I look there's nothing but sea or air,  
here swollen waves, there threatening cloud,  
between, the roar and humming of the winds.  
The ocean waves don't know what lord to obey.  
Now Eurus storms in power from the purple east,  
now Zephyrus rushes in from late evening,  
Now frozen Boreas raves from dry polar stars,  
now Notus wars with his opposing brow.  
The helmsman's unsure of what to shun or where  
to steer for: his art is baffled by uncertain evils  
Surely we're done for, there's no hope of safety,  
while I speak the waves drench my face.  
The breakers will crush this life of mine, with lips  
praying in vain, I'll swallow the fatal waters.  
But my loyal wife grieves only for my exile:  
it's the only ill of mine she knows, and groans at.  
She doesn't see me hurled through the vast seas,  
pursued by the winds, she doesn't see death nearing.  
It's good that I didn't allow her to ship with me,  
or I, poor wretch, would endure a double death!  
Now, though I die, since she is free from danger,

at least the other half of me will survive.

Ah! What a swift flame flashes from the cloud!

What a mighty crash resounds from the ether!

The blow on her planks from the waves is no less  
than a siege-gun's heavy thud against the walls

Here comes a wave that overtops them all:

after the ninth and before the eleventh.

I don't fear dying: but this way of dying's wretched.

Save me from drowning, and death will be a blessing.

A natural death or dying under the blade, at least  
your body rests on the solid ground, as you ebb,  
and there are requests to others, and hope of a tomb,  
not to be food for the fishes in the ocean.

Assume I deserve such a death, I'm not the only  
traveler here. Why does my sentence drown the innocent?

Gods above, and you of the green flood, who rule the seas,  
both crowds of you, desist from your threats:

an unhappy man, let me carry the life that's granted  
by Caesar's relenting anger, to the chosen place.

If you wish to punish me with the sentence I merit,  
my fault, even to my judge, does not deserve death

If Caesar had wished to send me to Stygian waters,  
he wouldn't have needed your help in this.

He has a power, not to be grudged, over my life:

he'll take away what he's given, when he wishes.

You, I pray, whom surely no offence of mine  
has wounded, be content now with my troubles.  
Yet, if you're all willing to save this wretch,  
the life that's ruined can't now be saved.  
Though the seas quieted, and kind winds blow,  
though you spare me, I'll be no less an exile.  
I don't plough the open sea to trade my goods  
greedy to acquire wealth without end,  
nor to reach Athens, I once sought as a student,  
nor the Asian cities, nor places I've seen,  
nor do I sail to Alexander's famous city,  
to see your pleasures, happy Nile.  
I ask for favorable winds – who would credit it? –  
to set my sails for the Sarmatian land.  
I'm forced to touch the wild left shore of Pontus:  
I complain my flight from my native land's too slow.  
I pray for the journey to be shorter,  
to see the people of Tomis in their unknown world.  
If you love me, hold back these breakers,  
and let your powers favor the ship:  
or if you hate me deeply, drive me to the land assigned,  
part of my punishment is in the place.  
Drive my body on swiftly, winds – why linger here? –  
Why do my sails desire Italy's shores?  
Caesar does not want this. Why hold one he expels?

Let the land of Pontus see my face  
He orders it, I deserve it: nor do I think it pious  
or lawful to defend a guilt he condemns.  
Yet if mortal actions never deceive the gods,  
you know that crime was absent from my fault.  
Ah, if you know it, if my error has misled me,  
if my thought was foolish, but not wicked,  
if as the humblest may I've favored that House,  
if Augustus's statutory law was enough for me,  
if I've sung of the happy age with him as Leader,  
and offered incense for Caesar and the Caesars –  
if such was my intent, spare me, gods!  
If not, may a towering wave drown my life!  
Am I wrong, or do heavy clouds begin to vanish.  
is the wave of the changing sea defeated, humbled?  
No accident, but you, called as witness,  
whom we cannot deceive, bring me this aid.

Curtius, *History of Alexander* 4.3.16–18

It was in the middle of the night when Alexander gave orders for the fleet, prepared as described to encircle the walls. And already the ships were moving towards the city from every side, and the Tyrians were paralyzed with despair, when suddenly thick clouds spread over the heavens, and whatever light penetrated them was shut out by a widespread mist. Then a rough sea began to rise by degrees, and soon, urged on by a more violent wind, stirred up billows, and the craft dashed against one another. And already the bonds by which the four-bankers were fastened together began to be torn apart, the platforms to break up and with a mighty roar to drag the soldiers with them into the deep. For the ships, when joined together, could not in any way be managed in such a time of disorder; the soldiers disturbed the work of the sailors, the oarsmen the duties of the soldiers, and, as usually happens in such a crisis, the skilful obeyed the ignorant. For the helmsmen, who at other times were wont to take command, then through fear of death did what they were ordered. At last the sea, lashed with greater vigor by the oars, yielded to the sailors who were rescuing the ships as if by main force, and the vessels were brought to the shore, for the most part badly damaged.

Phaedrus, *Fables* 4.23: **The Shipwreck of Simonides** (trans. C. Smart)

A man, whose learned worth is known,  
Has always riches of his own.  
Simonides, who was the head  
Of lyric bards, yet wrote for bread,  
His circuit took through every town  
In Asia of the first renown,  
The praise of heroes to rehearse,  
Who gave him money for his verse.  
When by this trade much wealth was earn'd,  
Homewards by shipping he return'd  
(A Cean born, as some suppose):  
On board he went, a tempest rose,  
Which shook th' old ship to that degree,  
She founder'd soon as out at sea.  
Some purses, some their jewels tie  
About them for a sure supply;  
But one more curious, ask'd the seer,  
"Poet, have you got nothing here?"  
"My all," says he, "is what I am."-  
On this some few for safety swam  
(For most o'erburden'd by their goods,  
Were smother'd in the whelming floods).  
The spoilers came, the wealth demand,  
And leave them naked on the strand.  
It happen'd for the shipwreck'd crew  
An ancient city was in view,  
By name Clazomena, in which  
There lived a scholar learned and rich,  
Who often read, his cares to ease,  
The verses of Simonides,  
And was a vast admirer grown  
Of this great poet, though unknown.  
Him by his converse when he traced,  
He with much heartiness embraced,  
And soon equipp'd the bard anew,  
With servants, clothes, and money too  
The rest benevolence implored,  
With case depicted on a board:  
Which when Simonides espied,  
"I plainly told you all," he cried,  
"That all my wealth was in myself;  
As for your chattels and your pelf.  
On which ye did so much depend,  
They're come to nothing in the end."

Petronius, *Satyricon* 11.89

Another marvel! where above the deep  
Tower the sheer cliffs of Tenedos, the surge  
Is lashed to foam, and a fierce roaring breaks  
The silence of the seas, as on a quiet night  
The sound of pulsing oars is borne to land,  
When fleets are passing on the distant main.  
We turn our gaze; and there with rolling coils  
Two water-snakes are sweeping toward the shore;  
Their flanks, like lofty ships, throw back the foam,  
They lash the main, their crests that ride the waves  
Gleam fiery like their eyes, whose lightning flash  
Kindles the deep, the billows hiss and roar.  
All stare aghast. Behold, like priests attired  
In Phrygian robes, there stand Laocoön's sons,  
Twin pledges of his love, whom in their folds  
The fiery snakes entwine. Each lifts his hands,  
His childish hands, to guard,-- alas! in vain,--  
His brother's head; from love's unselfishness  
Remorseless death a sharper anguish wins.  
Their sire, too weak to save them, shares their fate.  
Gorged with fresh blood, the monsters drag him  
down;

Seneca, *Agamemnon* 456–578

[456] Meanwhile all the shore is hid and the plains sink from view, and dimly the ridges of Ida's mount appear; and now, what alone the keenest eye can see, the smoke of Ilium shows but a dusky spot. Already from the yoke Titan was freeing his horses' weary necks; now to the stars his rays sink

low, now day goes headlong down. A tiny cloud, growing to a murky mass, stains the bright radiance of the setting sun, and the many colored sun-set has made us doubt the sea.

[465] Young night had spangled the sky with stars; the sails, deserted by the wind, hung low. Then from the mountain heights there falls a murmur deep, whose threatening, and the wide-sweeping shore and rocky headlands send forth a moaning sound; the waves, lashed by the rising wind, roll high – when suddenly the moon is hid, the stars sink out of sight, skyward the sea is lifted, the heavens are gone. 'Tis doubly night; dense fog o'erwhelms the dark and, all light withdrawn, confuses sea and sky. From all sides at once the winds fall on and ravage the sea, from its lowest depths upturned, West wind with East wind striving, South with North. Each wields his own weapons, with deadly assault stirring up the deep, while a whirlwind churns the waves. Strymonian Aquilo sends the deep snow whirling, and Libyan Auster stirs up the sands of Syrtes; nor stand the strife with Auster: Notus, heavey with clouds, blows up, swells waves with rain, while Eurus attacks the dawn, shaking Nabataean realms, and eastern gulfs. What wrought fierce Corus, thrusting forth his head from ocean? The whole sky he tears from its foundations, and you might think the very gods falling from the shattered heavens, and black chaos enveloping the world. Flood strives with wind and wind backward rolls the flood. The sea contains not itself, and rain and waves mingle their waters. Then even this comfort fails their dreadful plight, to see at least and know the disaster by which they perish. Darkness weighs on their eyes, and 'tis the infernal night of awful Styx. Yet fires burst forth, and from the riven clouds gleams the dire lightning flash, and to the poor sailors great is the sweetness of that fearful gleam; even for such light they pray.

[497] The fleet itself helps on its own destruction, prow crashing on prow and side on side. One ship the yawning deep sucks into the abyss, engulfs and spews forth again, restored to the sea above; one sinks of its own weight, another turns its wrecked side to the waves, and one the tenth wave o'erwhelms. Here, battered and stripped of all its ornament, one floats, with neither sails nor oars nor straight mast bearing the high sailyards, a broken hulk, drifting wide on the Icarian sea. Reason, experience, are of no avail; skill yields to dire calamity. Horror holds their limbs; the sailors all stand stupefied, their tasks abandoned; oars drop from hands. To prayer abject fear drives the wretches, and Trojans and Greeks beg the same things of the gods. What can near doom accomplish? Pyrrhus envies his father, Ulysses Ajax, the younger Atrides Hector, Agamemnon Priam; whoever at Troy lies slain is hailed as blessed, who by deeds of arms earned death, whom glory guards, whom the land he conquered buries. "Do sea and wave bear those who have dared naught noble and shall a coward's doom o'erwhelm brave men? Must death be squandered? Whoe'er of heaven's gods thou art, not yet with our sore troubles sated, let thy divinity be at last appeased; o'er our calamities e'en Troy would weep. But if thy hate is stubborn, and 'tis thy pleasure to send the Greek race to doom, why wouldst have those perish along with us, for whose sake we perish? Allay the raging sea: this fleet bears Greeks but it bears Trojans too." They can no more; the sea usurps their words.

[528] But lo! disaster on disaster! Pallas, armed with the bolt of angry Jove, threatening essays whate'er she may, not with spear, not with aegis, not with Gorgon's rage, but with her father's lightning, and throughout the sky new tempests blow. Ajax alone, undaunted by disaster, keeps up the struggle. Him, shortening sail with straining halyard, the hurtling lightning grazed. Another bolt is leveled; this, with all her might, Pallas launched true, with hand back drawn, in imitation of her father. Through Ajax it passed, and through his ship, and part of the ship with it, and Ajax it bore away. Then he, nothing moved, like some high crag, rises flame-scorched from the briny deep, cleaves the raging sea, with his breast bursts through the floods and, holding to his wrecked vessel with his hand, drags flames along, shines brightly midst the darkness of the sea and illumines the

waves. At last, gaining a rock, in mad rage he thunders: "Tis sweet to have conquered all things, flood and flame, to have vanquished sky, Pallas, thunderbolt and sea. If led not in terror of the god of war; both Hector at once and Mars did I with my sole arm withstand; nor did together with their Phrygians, I conquered; – and shall I shrink from thee? Another's weapon with weakling hand thou hurlest. What, if he himself should hurl –? When in his madness he would be daring more, father Neptune, pushing with his trident, o'erwhelmed the rock, thrusting forth his head from his waves' depths, and broke off the drag. This in his fall Ajax bears down with him, and now he lies, by earth and fire and billows overcome.

[557] But us shipwrecked mariners, another, worse ruin challenges. There is a shallow water, a deceitful shoal full of rough boulders, where treacherous Caphereus hides his rocky base beneath whirling eddies; the sea boils upon the rocks, and ever the flood seethes with its ebb and flow. A precipitous headland o'erhangs, which on either hand looks out upon both stretches of the sea. Hence thou mayst descry thine own Pelopian shores, and Isthmus which, backward curving with its narrow soil, forbids the Ionian sea to join with Phrixus' waves; hence also Lemnos, infamous for crime, and Calchedon, and Aulis which long delayed the fleet. Seizing this summit, the father of Palamedes with accursed hand raised from the high top a beacon-light and with treacherous torch lured the fleet upon the reefs. There hang the ships caught on jagged rocks; some are broken to pieces in the shallow water; the prow of one vessel is carried away, while a part sticks fast upon the rock; one ship crashes with another as it draws back, both wrecked and wrecking. Now ships fear land and choose the seas. Towards dawn the storm's rage is spent; now that atonement has been made for Ilium, Phoebus returns and sad day reveals the havoc of the night.

Lucan, *Civil War* 4.48–120

Within his regions, to the Occident

Drave all that shroud Arabia and the land

Of Ganges; all that or by Caurus<sup>6</sup> borne

Bedim the Orient sky, or rising suns

Permit to gather; pitiless flamed the day

Behind them, while in front the wide expanse

Was driven; nor on mid earth sank the clouds

Though weighed with vapor. North and south alike

Were showerless, for on Calpe's rock alone

All moisture gathered; here at last, forbidden

To pass that sea by Zephyr's bounds contained,

And by the furthest belt<sup>7</sup> of heaven, they pause,

In masses huge convolved; the widest breadth  
Of murky air scarce holds them, which divides  
Earth from the heavens; till pressed by weight of sky  
In densest volume to the earth they pour  
Their cataracts; no lightning could endure  
Such storm unquenched: though oft athwart the gloom  
Gleamed its pale fire. Meanwhile a watery arch  
Scarce touched with color, in imperfect shape  
Embraced the sky and drank the ocean waves,  
So rendering to the clouds their flood outpoured.  
And now the snows which Titan never yet  
Could melt were thawed: the Pyrenaean rocks  
Are wet with flowing ice; accustomed springs  
Find not discharge; and from the very banks  
Each stream receives a torrent. Caesar's arms  
Are shipwrecked on the field, his tottering camp  
Swims on the rising flood; the trench is filled  
With whirling waters; and the plain no more  
Yields corn or kine; for those who forage seek,  
Err from the hidden furrow. Famine knocks  
(First herald of o'erwhelming ills to come)  
Fierce at the door; and while no foe blockades  
The soldier hungers; fortunes buy not now  
The meanest measure; yet, alas! is found  
The fasting peasant, who, in gain of gold,

Will sell his little all! And now the hills  
Are seen no more; rivers in one vast sea  
Of whirlpools overwhelmed; beasts borne away  
And sucked beneath the stream; their rocky dens  
Sweep onwards; and the torrent's raging force  
Bears back the inflowing ocean. Nor does night  
Acknowledge Phoebus' rise, for all the sky  
Feels her dominion and obscures its face,  
And darkness joins with darkness. Thus doth lie  
The lowest earth beneath the snowy zone  
And never-ending winters, where the sky  
Is starless ever, and no growth of herb  
Sprouts from the frozen earth; but standing ice  
Tempers the stars which in the middle zone  
Kindle their flames. Thus, Father of the world,  
And thou, O trident-god who rul'st the sea  
Second in place, Neptunus, load the air  
With clouds continual; forbid the tide,  
Once risen, to return : forced by thy waves  
Let rivers backward run in different course,  
Thy shores no longer reaching; and the earth,  
Shaken, make way for floods. Let Rhine o'erflow  
And Rhone their banks; let torrents spread afield  
Unmeasured waters: melt Rhipaeae snows:  
Spread lakes upon the land, and seas profound,

And snatch the groaning world from civil war.

Lucan, *Civil War* 5.560–77

' The sea-mew on the land; the heron used

' To wade among the shallows, borne aloft

' And soaring on his wings-all these alarm;

' The raven, too, who plunged his head in spray,

' As if to anticipate the coming rain,

And trod the margin with unsteady gait.

But if the cause demands, behold me thine.

'Either we reach the bidden shore, or else

'Storm and the deep forbid-we can no more.'

Thus said he loosed the boat and raised the sail.

No sooner done than stars were seen to fall

In flaming furrows from the sky: nay, more;

The pole star trembled in its place on high:

Black horror marked the surging of the sea;

The main was boiling in long tracts of foam,

Uncertain of the wind, yet seized with storm.

Then spake the captain of the trembling bark:

See what remorseless ocean has in store!

Whether from east or west the storm may come

Is still uncertain, for as yet confused

'The billows tumble. Judged by clouds and sky

'A western tempest: by the murmuring deep

'A wild south-eastern gale shall sweep the sea.

'Nor bark nor man shall reach Hesperia's shore

Lucan, *Civil War* 9.319–47

When first the billows to the fleet gave way,  
Black from the sky rushed down a southern gale  
Upon his realm, and from the watery plain  
Drave back th' invading ships, and from the shoals  
Compelled the waves, and in the middle sea  
Raised up a bank. Forth flew the bellying sails  
Beyond the prows, despite the ropes that dared  
Resist the tempest's fury; and for those  
Who prescient housed their canvas to the storm,  
Bare-masted they were driven from their course.  
Best was their lot who gained the open waves  
Of ocean; others lightened of their masts  
Shook off the tempest; but a sweeping tide  
Hurried them southwards, victor of the gale.  
Some freed of shallows on a bank were forced  
Which broke the deep: their ship in part was fast,  
Part hanging on the sea; their fates in doubt.  
Fierce rage the waves till hems<sup>1</sup> them in the land;  
Nor Auster's force in frequent buffets spent  
Prevails upon the shore. High from the main,  
By seas inviolate, one bank of sand  
Far from the coast arose; there watched in vain  
The storm-tossed mariners, their keel aground,

No shore descrying. Thus in sea were lost  
Some portion, but the major part by helm  
And rudder guided, and by pilots' hands  
Who knew the devious channels, safe at length  
Floated the marsh of Triton loved (as saith  
The fable) by that god, whose sounding shell<sup>2</sup>  
All seas and shores re-echo; and by her,  
Pallas, who springing from her father's head  
First lit on Libya, nearest land to heaven,  
(As by its heat is proved); here on the brink  
She stood, reflected in the placid wave  
And called herself Tritonis. Lethe's flood  
Flows silent near, in fable from a source  
Infernal sprung, oblivion in his stream;  
Here, too, that garden of the Hesperids,  
Its boughs all golden, where of old his watch  
The sleepless dragon held. Shame be on him  
Who calls upon the poet for the proof  
Of that which in the ancient days befell;  
But here were golden groves by yellow growth  
Weighed down in richness, here a maiden band  
Were guardians; and a serpent, on whose eyes  
Sleep never fell, was coiled around the trees,  
Whose branches bowed beneath their ruddy load.

Lucan, *Civil War* 9.445–92

By his most violent breath, and borne aloft  
Through all the regions of the boundless sky;  
Perchance a wonder in some distant land,  
Where men may fear the weapons from the heaven  
There falling, as the armor of the gods,  
Nor deem them ravished from a soldier's arm.  
'Twas thus on Numa by the sacred fire  
Those shields descended which our chosen priests<sup>3</sup>  
Bear on their shoulders; from some warlike race  
By tempest rapt, to be the prize of Rome.  
While thus the tempest whirled the earth aloft  
Prone fell the host, and wound their garments tight,  
And gripped the soil; but hardly thus prevailed.

Statius, *Thebaid* 5.361–430

[361] “And already were they distant from the land the range of a Gortynian shaft, when Jupiter brought a cloud laden with dark rain and set it over the very rigging of the Pelasgian ship; then the waters shudder, all its light is stolen from the sun and the gloom thickens, and the wave straightway takes the colour of the gloom; warring winds tear the hollow clouds and rend the deep, the wet sand surges up in the black eddies, and the whole sea hangs poised between the conflict of the winds, and with arching ridge now all but touching the stars falls shattered; nor has the bewildered vessel its former motion, but pitches to and fro, with the Triton on its bows now projecting from the waters’ depths, now borne aloft in air. Nor aught avails the might of the heroes half-divine, but the demented mast makes the vessel rock and sway, and falling forward with overbalancing weight smites upon the arching waves, and the oars drop fruitlessly on the rowers’ chests.

[376] “We, too, from rocks and every walled rampart, while they thus toil and rage against the seas and the southern blasts, with weak arms shower down wavering missiles – what deed did we not dare? – on Telamon and Peleus, and even on the Tiryinthian we bend our bow. But they, hard pressed both by storm and foe, fortify, some of them, the ship with shields, others bale water from the hold; others fight, but the motion makes their bodies helpless, and there is no force behind their reeling blows. We hurl our darts more fiercely, and the iron rain vies with the tempest, and enormous stakes and fragments of millstones and javelins and missiles trailing tresses of flame fall now into the sea, now on the vessel: the decking of the bark resounds and the beams groan as the gaping holes are torn. Even so does Jupiter lash the green fields with Hyperborean snow; beasts of all kinds perish on the plains, and birds are overtaken and fall dead, and the harvest is blasted with

untimely frost; then is there thundering on the heights, and fury in the rivers. But when from on high Jove flung his brand with shock of cloud on cloud, and the flash revealed the mariners' mighty forms, our hearts were frozen fast, our arms dropped shuddering and let fall the unnatural weapons, and our true sex once more held sway.

[398] "We behold the sons of Aeacus, and Ancaeus threatening mightily our walls, and Iphitus with long spear warding off the rocks; clear to view among the desperate band the son of Amphitryon outtops them all, and alternately on either hand weighs down the ship and burns to leap into the midst of the waves. But Jason – not yet did I know him to my cost – leaping nimbly over benches and oars and treading the backs of heroes, calls now on great Oenides, now on Idas and Talaus, now on the son of Tyndarues dripping with the white spume of the sea, and Calais driving aloft in the clouds of his frosty sire to fasten the sails to the mast, and with voice and gesture again and again encourages them. With vigorous strokes they lash the sea and shake the walls, but none the more do the foaming waters yield, and the flung spears rebound from our towers. Tiphys himself wearies by his labors the heavy billows and the tiller that will not hear him, and pale with anxiety oft changes his commands, and turns right- and leftward from the land the prow that would fain dash itself to shipwreck on the rocks, until from the vessel's tapering bows the son of Aeson holds forth the olive-branch of Pallas hat Mopsus bore, and through the tumult of his comrades would prevent him, asks for peace; his words were swept away by the headlong gale.

[420] Then came there a truce to arms, and the tempest likewise sank to rest, and day looked forth once more from the turbid heaven. Then those fifty heroes, their vessels duly moored, as they leap from the sheer height shake the stranger shores, tall comely sons of glorious sires, serene of brow and known by their bearings, now that the swelling rage has left their countenances. Even so the denizens of heaven are said to burst forth from their mystic portals, when they desire to visit the homes and the coast and the lesser banquet of the red Aethiopians: rivers and mountains yield them passage, Earth exults beneath their footsteps and Atlas knows a brief respite from the burden of the sky.

Valerius Flaccus, *Argonautica* 1.614–5

Joyfully from the prison burst the Thracian horses, the West wind and the South wind of the night-dark pinions with all the sons of the storms, and the East wind, his hair disheveled with the blasts, and tawny with much said they drew the tempest on, and in thunderous advance together drive the curling waves to shore,

Silius Italicus, *Punica* 17.244–90

Then with his trident he stirred up the inmost recesses of his realm, and smote the sea from East and West, and troubled the whole source of Ocean. High rose the foaming waves, and dashed on every rock till it shook. First, the cloudy South-wind, rising in the land of the Nasamones, caught up the waters of the Syrtis and left it bare; the North-wind followed, bearing aloft on its dark wings part of the sea which it had carried off; and the black East-wind thundered with opposing blast and seized its share of the deep. Now thunder rent the sky, and now the lightning-flashes came thick and fast, and the inexorable sky rushed down upon the ships. Fire and rain, waves and angry winds, all worked together, and darkness covered the sea with night. But lo! a gust, launched by the South-wind, struck Hannibal's ship astern; it roared against the yard, while the cordage creaked and whistled with a fearful noise; then it carried a wave, mountain-high, from the darkling deep and

broke it over Hannibal's head. He shuddered and cried out, as he surveyed the sea and sky: "Fortunate were you, O brother Hasdrubal, and made equal to the gods in your death. You died gloriously, falling in battle by a soldier's hand; and Fate permitted you to bite the soil of Italy as you died. But I was not suffered, either to breathe my last on the field of Cannae, where Paulus and many another hero fell, or, when I carried fire-brands against the Capitol, to be struck down to Hades by the bolt of Jupiter." While he lamented thus, two waves driven by opposite winds smote both sides of his vessel and held it fast beneath the dark heaps of water, as if a water-spout had sunk it. Then, driven up by boiling eddies of black sand, the ship came up again to the surface and hung above the waves, kept on an even keel by the opposite winds. But the fierce South-wind dashed two other vessels against the cliffs and jagged rocks—a pitiful sight to see. As they struck, their beaks crashed; and then the hulls, split by the sharp rocks, cracked as their frame-work broke up. Now a motley sight as seen: all over the water there floated, together with weapons and helmets and scarlet plumes, the treasure of Capua in her palmy days, the Italian booty set apart for Hannibal's triumph, tripods and tables of the gods, and images which the Romans had vainly worshipped in their affliction. Then Venus, appalled by the sight of the raging deep, spoke thus to the Ruler of the Sea: "Sire, have done with your wrath for the time ; your threats are terrible enough to secure greater objects. But now, I pray you, be merciful to the sea ; or else cruel Carthage may boast Neptune that a son of hers proved invincible in war, and that the Aeneadae, my children, needed the sea and all its waves to put Hannibal to death."

Tacitus, *Annals* 2.23–24

When, however, summer was at its height, some of the legions were sent back overland into winter-quarters, but most of them Cæsar put on board the fleet and brought down the river Amisia to the ocean. At first the calm waters merely sounded with the oars of a thousand vessels or were ruffled by the sailing ships. Soon, a hailstorm bursting from a black mass of clouds, while the waves rolled hither and thither under tempestuous gales from every quarter, rendered clear sight impossible, and the steering difficult, while our soldiers, terror stricken and without any experience of disasters on the sea, by embarrassing the sailors or giving them clumsy aid, neutralized the services of the skilled crews. After a while, wind and wave shifted wholly to the south, and from the hilly lands and deep rivers of Germany came, with a huge line of rolling clouds, a strong blast, all the more frightful from the frozen north which was so near to them, and instantly caught and drove the ships hither and thither into the open ocean, or on islands with steep cliffs or which hidden shoals made perilous. These they just escaped, with difficulty, and when the tide changed and bore them the same way as the wind, they could not hold to their anchors or bale out the water which rushed in upon them. Horses, beasts of burden, baggage, were thrown overboard, in order to lighten the hulls which leaked copiously through their sides, while the waves too dashed over them.

*Testament of Naphtali* 6:1–9

<sup>1</sup>And again, after seven days, I saw our father Jacob standing by the sea of Jamnia, and we were with him. <sup>2</sup>And behold, there came a ship sailing by, without sailors or pilot; and there was written upon the ship, The Ship of Jacob. <sup>3</sup>And our father said to us: Come, let us embark on our ship. <sup>4</sup>And when he had gone on board, there arose a vehement storm, and a mighty tempest of wind; and our father, who was holding the helm, departed from us. <sup>5</sup>And we, being tost with the tempest, were borne along over the sea; and the ship was filled with water, (and was) pounded by mighty waves, until it was broken up. <sup>6</sup>And Joseph fled away upon a little boat, [ and we were all divided upon nine Planks] , and Levi and Judah were together. <sup>7</sup>And we were all scattered unto the ends of the earth.

<sup>8</sup>Then Levi, girt about with sackcloth, prayed for us all unto the Lord. <sup>9</sup>And when the storm ceased, the ship reached the land [ as it were] in peace. And, lo, our father came, and we all rejoiced with one accord.

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 1.14.2–3 §279–80

(279) and when he came into the city, he was received by Cleopatra with great splendor,—who hoped he might be persuaded to be commander of her forces in the expedition she was not about. But he rejected the queen's solicitations, and being neither affrighted at the height of that storm which then happened, nor at the tumults that were now in Italy, he sailed for Rome.

3. (280) But as he was in peril about Pamphylia, and obliged to cast out the greatest part of the ship's lading, he, with difficulty, got safe to Rhodes, a place which had been grievously harassed in the war with Cassius. He was there received by his friends, Ptolemy and Sappinius; and, although he was then in want of money, he fitted up a three-decked ship of very great magnitude,

Josephus, *Life* 2 §13–16

(13) But when I was in the twenty-sixth year of my age, it happened that I took a voyage to Rome; and this on the occasion which I shall now describe. At the time when Felix was procurator of Judea, there were certain priests of my acquaintance, and very excellent persons they were, whom on a small and trifling occasion he had put into bonds, and sent to Rome to plead their cause before Caesar. (14) These I was desirous to procure deliverance for; and that especially because I was informed that they were not unmindful of piety towards God, even under their afflictions; but supported themselves with figs and nuts. Accordingly I came to Rome, though it were through a great number of hazards, by sea; (15) for, as our ship was drowned in the Adriatic Sea, we that were in it, being about six hundred in number, swam for our lives all the night; when, upon the first appearance of the day, and upon our sight of a ship of Cyrene, I and some others, eighty in all, by God's providence, prevented the rest, and were taken up into the other ship: (16) and when I had thus escaped, and was come to Dicearchia, which the Italians call Puteoli, I became acquainted with Aliturus, an actor of plays, and much beloved by Nero, but a Jew by birth; and through his interest became known to Poppea, Caesar's wife; and took care, as soon as possible, to entreat her to procure that the priests might be set at liberty; and when, besides this favor, I had obtained many presents from Poppea, I returned home again.

*Acts of Philip* 3.33–36

<sup>33</sup>And he came to the sea in the borders of the Candaci and found a ship going to Azotus, and agreed with the sailors for four staters, and sailed. A great wind came, and they began to cast out the tackle and say farewell to each other and lament. <sup>34</sup>Philip consoled them: Not even the ship shall be lost. He went up on the prow and said: Sea, sea, Jesus Christ by me his servant bids thee still thy wrath. There was calm, and the sailors thanked him and asked to become servants of Jesus. <sup>35</sup>And he instructed them to forsake the cares of this life. <sup>36</sup>And they believed, and Philip landed and baptized them all.

Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* 1.8

While I spoke thus concerning others, I also lectured myself, saying, Why do I blame others, being myself guilty of the very same crime of heedlessness? But I shall hasten into Judaea, having first arranged my affairs. And when I had thus made up my mind, there occurred a long time of delay, my worldly affairs being difficult to arrange. Therefore, meditating further on the nature of life, that by involving men in hope it lays snares for those who are making haste, yea, and how much time I had been robbed of while tossed by hopes, and that we men die while thus occupied, I left all my affairs as they were, and sped to Portus; and coming to the harbor, and being taken on board a ship, I was borne by adverse winds to Alexandria instead of Judaea; and being detained there by stress of weather, I consorted with the philosophers, and told them about the rumor and the sayings of him who had appeared in Rome. And they answered that indeed they knew nothing of him who had appeared in Rome; but concerning Him who was born in Judaea, and who was said by the report to be the Son of God, they had heard from many who had come from thence, and had learned respecting all the wonderful things that He did with a word.

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.3.4 §52

There were also a great many of the king's party who deserted the Romans, and assisted the Jews; yet did the most warlike body of them all, who were three thousand of the men of Sebaste, go over to the Romans. Rufus also, and Gratus, their captains, did the same (Gratus having the foot of the king's party under him, and Rufus the horse); each of whom, even without the forces under them, were of great weight, on account of their strength and wisdom, which turn the scales in war.

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.4.2 §58

And he had soon burnt down all the fine edifices, if Gratus, the captain of the foot of the king's party, had not taken the Trachonite archers, and the most warlike of Sebaste, and met the man.

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.4.3 §63

He once ventured to encompass a whole troop of Romans at Emmaus, who were carrying corn and weapons to their legion; his men shot their arrows and darts, and thereby slew their centurion Arius, and forty of the stoutest of his men, while the rest of them, who were in danger of the same fate, upon the coming of Gratus, with those of Sebaste, to their assistance, escaped;

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.5.2 §74

They had before this met him, Joseph, the first cousin of Archelaus, and Gratus, together with Rufus, who led those of Sebaste, as well as the king's army: there also met him those of the Roman legion, armed after their accustomed manner; for as to Sabinus, he durst not come into Varus's sight, but was gone out of the city before this, to the seaside.

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.12.5 §236

But Cumanus took one troop of horsemen, called the Troop of Sebaste, out of Caesarea, and came to the assistance of those that were spoiled; he also seized upon a great number of those that followed Eleazar, and slew more of them.

Seneca, *Epistles* 77.1–2

Suddenly there came into our view to-day the “Alexandrian” ships, - I mean those which are usually sent ahead to announce the coming of the fleet; they are called “mail-boats.” The Campanians are glad to see them; all the rabble of Puteoli stand on the docks, and can recognize the “Alexandrian” boats, no matter how great the crowd of vessels, by the very trim of their sails. For they alone may keep spread their topsails, which all ships use when out at sea, because nothing sends a ship along so well as its upper canvas; that is where most of the speed is obtained. So when the breeze has stiffened and becomes stronger than is comfortable, they set their yards lower; for the wind has less force near the surface of the water. Accordingly, when they have made Capreae and the headland whence Tall Pallas watches on the stormy peak, all other vessels are bidden to be content with the mainsail, and the topsail stands out conspicuously on the “Alexandrian” mail-boats.

### 27:9–12

Vegetius, *On Military Affairs* 4.39

The next question is to consider months and dates. For the violence and roughness of the sea do not permit navigation all the year round, but some months are very suitable, some are doubtful, and the rest are impossible for fleets by a law of nature. When Pachon has run its course, that is, after the rising of the Pleiades, from six days before the Kalends of June (i.e. 27<sup>th</sup> May) until the rising of Arcturus, that is, eighteen days before the Kalends of October (i.e. 14<sup>th</sup> September), navigation is deemed safe, because thanks to the summer the roughness of the sea is lessened. After this date until three days before the Ides of November (i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> November) navigation is doubtful and more exposed to danger, as after the Ides of September (i.e. 13<sup>th</sup> September) rises Arcturus, a most violent star, and eight days before the Kalends of October (i.e. 24<sup>th</sup> September) occur fierce equinoctial storm, and around the Nones of October (i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> October) the rainy Haedi, and five days before the Ides of the same (i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> October) Taurus. But from the month of November the winter setting of the Vergiliae (Pleiades) interrupts shipping with frequent storms. So from three days before the Ides of November (i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> November) until six days before the Ides of March (i.e. 10<sup>th</sup> March) the seas are closed. The minimal daylight and long nights, dense cloud-cover, foggy air, and violence of winds doubled by rain and snow not only keep fleets from the sea but also traffic from making journeys by land. But after the birthday, so to speak, of navigation which is celebrated with annual games and public spectacles in many cities, it is still perilous to venture upon the sea right up to the Ides of May (i.e. 15<sup>th</sup> May) by reason of very many stars and the season of the year itself—not that the activities of merchants cease, but greater caution should be shown when an army takes to the sea in warships than when the enterprising are in a hurry for their private profits.

### 27:13–20

Polybius, *Hist.* 1.17.3

The Carthaginians, on the contrary, when they saw that Hiero had become their enemy, and that the Romans were becoming more deeply involved in the enterprise in Sicily, considered that they themselves required stronger forces in order to be able *to confront* their enemies and control Sicilian affairs.

Philo, *Joseph* 33

For as the master of a ship collects together all the means which may tend to ensure him a favorable voyage with reference to and in dependency on the changes of the wind, not always guiding his vessel in one and the same way; and as a physician does not apply one and the same means of cure to every sick person, nor even to one person if his disease varies in its character, but watches the periods of its abatement, and of its intensity, and of its becoming full or empty, and the alterations of the causes of the sickness, and so varies his remedies as much as possible to secure the safety of his patient, applying one remedy at one time and another at another.

Polybius 1.39

From ignorance of the waters, they ran upon some shallows; the tide receded, their ships went aground, and they were in extreme peril. However, after a while the tide unexpectedly flowed back again, and by dint of throwing overboard all their heavy goods they just managed to float the ships.

Strabo, *Geography* 2.5.20

After Sicily and the straits on either side of it, there are other seas, for instance, that opposite the Syrtes and the Cyrenaic, the Syrtes themselves, and the sea formerly called the Ausonian, but which, as it flows into and forms part of the Sea of Sicily, is now included under the latter name. The sea opposite to the Syrtes and the Cyrenaic is called the Libyan Sea; it extends as far as the Sea of Egypt.

The Lesser Syrtes is about 1600 stadia in circumference. On either side of its mouth lie the islands of Meninx and Kerkina. The Greater Syrtes is (according to Eratosthenes) 5000 stadia in circuit, and in depth 1800, from the Hesperides to Automala, and the frontier which separates the Cyrenaic from the rest of Libya. According to others, its circumference is only 4000 stadia, its depth 1500 stadia, and the breadth at its mouth the same.

The Sea of Sicily washes Italy, from the Strait of Rhegium to Locris, and also the eastern coast of Sicily from Messene to Syracuse and Pachynus. On the eastern side it reaches to the promontories of Crete, surrounds the greater part of Peloponnesus, and fills the Gulf of Corinth. On the north it advances to the Iapygian Promontory, the mouth of the Ionian Gulf, the southern parts of Epirus, as far as the Ambraciac Gulf, and the continuation of the coast which forms the Corinthian Gulf, near the Peloponnesus.

The Ionian Gulf forms part of what we now call the Adriatic. Illyria forms its right side, and Italy as far as the recess where Aquileia is situated, the left.

The Adriatic stretches north and west; it is long and narrow, being in length about 6000 stadia, and its greatest breadth 1200. There are many islands situated here opposite the coasts of Illyria, such as the Absyrtides, Cyriatica, and the Libyrnides, also Issa, Tragurium, the Black Corcyra, and Pharos. Opposite to Italy are the Islands of Diomedea. The Sea of Sicily is said to be 4500 stadia from Pachynus to Crete, and the same distance to Tænarus in Laconia. From the extremities of Iapygia to the bottom of the Gulf of Corinth the distance is less than 3000 stadia, while from Iapygia to Libya it is more than 4000. In this sea are the Islands of Corcyra and Sybota, opposite the coasts of Epirus; and beyond these, opposite the Gulf of Corinth, Cephallenia, Ithaca, Zacynth, and the Echinades.

**27:33–38**

Josephus, *Life* 3 §15

For, as our ship was drowned in the Adriatic Sea, we that were in it, being about six hundred in number, swam for our lives all the night; when, upon the first appearance of the day, and upon our sight of a ship of Cyrene, I and some others, eighty in all, by God's providence, prevented the rest, and were taken up into the other ship.