



THE WAR TO END ALL WARS

The Trojan War is one of the most important events to have occurred in Greek mythology and has been told in many works of Greek literature, the most notable being Homers Illiad.

The Illiad goes through the period of four days and two nights in the tenth year of the decade-long siege of Troy; the Odyssey tells the story of the trip home for Odysseus. Other parts of the war are told in several other epic poems.

PART I - PRELUDE TO WAR

THE PROPHECY: TWO BROTHERS, ONE BRIDE AND THE CHOSEN ONE THAT NEVER WAS

The beginning of the Trojan war began with a prophecy regarding the order of the Olympians and a divine love contest. Namely, many years before the war's beginning, both Poseidon and Zeus had fallen in love with a sea-nymph with the name Thetis. Both wanted Thetis to be his bride; however, they both backed off after they were told of the consequences that awaited them if they made such an action.

This consequence was that if the sea-nymph were to lay with Zeus or his brothers, that a son would be born who would be stronger than his father and possess a weapon that would be much more powerful than the trident or the thunderbolt. To avoid this from happening, Zeus made it so that Thetis would have to marry King Peleus.

STRIKE STRIKES IN THE FORM OF AN APPLE

After Thetis' marriage was figured out, Zeus held a big feast to celebrate Peleus' and Thetis' marriage, where all of the gods were invited – except for the goddess of strife, Eris. The goddess was annoyed at the fact that she was turned away that before she left the gathering, she flung her gift amongst the crowd of guests; this gift was called the Apple of Discord, which was a golden apple with the words, “for the fairest” inscribed on it.

Not too long after the apple was thrown, Aphrodite, Athena, and Hera began to fight about who should have the apple. Zeus was unable to decide by himself, so he sent the goddesses to Paris, the prince of Troy, to decide.

THE BEAUTY CONTEST YOU DIDN'T WANT TO JUDGE

Paris was unable to make a decision, so the goddesses started to bribe him. First, Hera offered to grant him political power and a throne if he were to choose her; then, Athena offered him wisdom and skills in battle; finally, Aphrodite promised Paris the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen of Sparta. Without batting an eyelash, Paris chooses Aphrodite.

THE REWARD

Helen was already married to Menelaus, the king of Sparta. So, Paris, under the disguise of a diplomatic mission, went to Sparta to abduct Helen from her home so he could bring her back to Troy with him. Before Helen could look up to see Paris, she was shot with an arrow by Cupid, or Eros, and fell in love with Paris the moment she saw him.

PART II - WAR!

THE FACE THAT LAUNCHED A THOUSAND SHIPS

The Trojan War can be said to have started shortly after the abduction of Helen. This is because Helen's husband, Menelaus, got his brother, Agamemnon, to lead a voyage to find her and get her back. Agamemnon was able to get other Greek heroes, such as Odysseus, Ajax, Nestor, and Achilles, to join him on this adventure.

FAILED NEGOTIATIONS

After landing, skirmishing, and pitching their camp, Odysseus and Menelaus proceed as ambassadors to Troy, to demand the surrender of Helen. But this proposal, never takes hold, owing to the opposition of Paris. War is declared.

TOO MANY TO FIGHT AND WALLS TOO HIGH TO CLIMB

The number of the Trojans is scarcely one tenth that of the besiegers; and although they possess many brave heroes, such as Aeneas, Sarpedon, Glaucus, and especially Hector, in their fear of Achilles they dare not risk a general engagement, and remain holed up behind their walls. On the other hand, the Greeks can do nothing against the well-fortified and defended town, and see themselves confined to laying ambushes and devastating the surrounding country.

PART III - THE TENTH AND FINAL YEAR!

ACHILLES QUILTS

In a dispute over the release of the captured priest of Apollo's daughter, Agamemnon refuses her release and instead promised Briseis, Achilles favorite slave. Furious, Achilles returns to his tent and refuses to fight.

LET'S SETTLE THIS LIKE MEN ... OR NOT

The armies are standing opposed to one another, prepared for fight, when they agree to a treaty that the whole conflict will be decided by a duel between Paris and Menelaus. Paris is overcome in the duel, and is only rescued from death by the intervention of Aphrodite. When Agamemnon presses for the fulfillment of the treaty, the Trojan Pandarus breaks the peace by shooting an arrow at Menelaus, and the agreement falls apart.

The day ends with an indecisive duel between Hector and Ajax son of Telamon. They call a truce to bury their dead. When the fighting begins again, Zeus forbids the gods to take part in it, and ordains that the battle shall end with the defeat of the Greeks. On the following night Agamemnon already begins to think about fleeing, is advised to reconcile with Achilles. A fruitless effort is made. Odysseus and Diomedes go out on a night-time reconnaissance mission, kill many Trojans, and capture a Trojan spy

ACHILLES RETURNS!

Achilles allows his friend Patroclus to borrow his armor and enter the battle with their contingent of soldiers to help the distressed Greeks. Supposing it to be Achilles himself, the Trojans in terror flee from the camp before Patroclus, who pursues them to the town. At last Patroclus himself is slain by Hector with the help of Apollo; Achilles' armor is lost. And now Achilles repents of his anger, returns to the war, and on the following day, furnished with new and splendid armor by Hephaestus at the request of Thetis, avenges the death of his friend on countless Trojans and finally on Hector himself.

A DASTARDLY GIFT

The War finally ends when the Greeks retreated from camp and left behind a large wooden horse outside the gates of Troy. Inside Troy, there were many debates on if they should bring the wooden horse in. Only two people, Laocoon and Cassandra, spoke out against the horse, but they were ignored.

THE DESTRUCTION OF TROY

The wooden horse was a plan made by Odysseus to end the war. After the Trojan Horse was left at the gates, the Greeks sailed away from Troy to the island of Tenedos, leaving behind one double agent named Sinon. He was able to convince the Trojans that the Greeks had retreated from the war and assured the Trojans that the wooden horse was safe and would bring luck to the Trojans.

That night, after most of Troy was asleep or in a drunken stupor, Sinon let the hidden Greek warriors out from the horse, and they slaughtered the Trojans

PART IV - THE AFTERMATH

THERE IS NO HAPPILY EVER AFTER

The surviving Greek heroes learned the hard way that gods never forget and hardly forgive because even though they were victorious in the war, most of them were punished for their transgressions. In fact, only a handful of Greek soldiers made it back home, and that's with several adventures and exploits along the way. Even fewer were welcomed back to their homes because they were killed by their loved ones or they were exiled into oblivion – there were some cases where both incidents happened.

THE JOURNEY HOME

Of the soldiers who did make it home, Odysseus' 10-year journey home as detailed in the Homer's ***Odyssey*** is the most documented and famous.

