

*Aeneid* 11: The Saddest Book

William S Anderson

I have long admired a short essay entitled "The Dullest Book of the Aeneid." It intelligently analyzes Book 3 and the reasons, partly designed by Virgil, partly due to unwise audience expectations, for the sense of boredom and weariness afflicting Virgil's characters and consequently many of the book's readers. In this chapter I shall treat Book 11, which also has few passionate admirers, as the "saddest book of the Aeneid." The word "sad" at the start should have all its connotations, covering the range from genuinely pathetic to artistically and/or practically incompetent. That understanding encourages us to ask some questions. Has Virgil carefully explored the sadness of this war in Italy, the sadness of the combatants on both sides, and the griefs of the noncombatants, and has he then communicated to us in the audience the prevailing sadness of this kind of warfare, so that we feel his and his characters' sense of sadness, so that the sadness of Book 11 rightly becomes ours? Or is there somewhere an inadequacy that makes this book sadly unsatisfactory?

The preoccupation with sadness in Book ii is not my own invention, as even a cursory reading demonstrates. In his recent commentary on this book, K. W. Gransden calls attention to "the most striking example of repetition in Book XI," namely, the dense usage of the Latin word *maestus*, "sad."<sup>2</sup> He provides statistics for the number of times the word appears in the book and in the entire poem: fourteen times in the first eight books; more frequently, that is nine times, in Books 9, 10, and 12; but most frequently, eleven times, in this present book. We should be cautious in what we make of a single word. But it is tempting to infer that Virgil did have the theme of sadness at heart in writing Book 11. We are aware of some scenes that in our experience occasion sadness, which Virgil has emphatically rendered as sad: Aeneas' speech over Pallas' corpse, the description of the funeral cortege, and the lament of the forlorn father Evander. Virgil packs these sad scenes with many words, in addition to *maestus*, that crowd the contexts with pathos. Characters within the poem—and this is particularly true of Aeneas—weep, groan, and desperately grieve over what has happened to them and their loved ones, and Virgil's famous subjective style quickly engages our feelings too. If Aeneas weeps, with the poet's sympathy, how can we not share the sadness?

It is a curious fact, however, that Virgil has concentrated his use of *maestus* within a relatively short portion of Book 11. Eight of the eleven occurrences come in the space of roughly 160 lines, between 26 and 189 that is, from the first mention of dead Pallas to the description of the general funeral for the Trojan fallen. Six of those are especially concentrated within sixty-seven lines that deal exclusively with the preparations of Pallas' corpse for departure and Aeneas' tearful speech of farewell (2-92). To judge from that distribution, Virgil places predominant stress on the sadness that Aeneas, the Trojans, and their Arcadian allies feel. The three other instances of *maestus* apply to the Italian situation: the sadness of the legates who return from Diomedes with gloomy news (226); the tearful dismay of Italian fathers at the prospect of more sons' deaths as Aeneas renews his offensive (454); and the hopelessly pathetic appeal of Italian mothers to Minerva to stop Aeneas dead in his tracks (482). But these episodes are not packed with sadness; they involve undistinguished groups of people, and the sadness functions more as

foreshadowing than as a comment on a particular corpse or death, such as that of Pallas. Virgil, by his choice of situation and language, seems to have concentrated sadness among the Trojans. Has he thus engaged our bias for their sadness?

This leads us to the question of whether Virgil has rigged his narrative and our responses to produce unfair propaganda. In this respect it is useful to make some distinctions. Some situations in this book are intrinsically sad, and Virgil has developed and emphasized them as such: for example, Pallas' funeral. Remember the famous photo of the Frenchman weeping as German troops entered Paris? That image said it all for the sadness of the moment. But there are situations, too, which do not openly state their feelings, which, by their very self-restraint, have the potentiality of stimulating sadness in sensitive observers or readers. Almost any picture of John F. Kennedy, and now of Jacqueline, has that potentiality. We implicitly feel the sadness of life expressed in the person of someone who, despite all his or her vitality, was doomed to die prematurely. Virgil, I think, can do something similar: use scenes of reduced or even ignored sadness to stimulate the active empathy of the attentive audience. Thus, in its expression of grief for both Trojans and Italians, this is the saddest book throughout.

Book 11 opens with dawn, on the day following the battle depicted in the previous book. Virgil divides the presentation into three parts. The first features Aeneas and the mainly sad aftermath of the conflict. Aeneas sends off the cortege of Pallas, and he agrees to a twelve-day truce for the burial of the dead on both sides. Another dawn is noted at 182, which could be the following day or a few days later, when the public funerals are performed. The opening of the second part blends with the end of the first (225), but Virgil has transferred his attention to the Italians and the political assembly called by Latinus. Bad news has come that Diomedes refuses to join them against Aeneas, and the king feels obliged to determine how his leaders now feel about the war. This part features the fierce hostility of Drances, an unscrupulous politician, and Turnus the hotheaded hero. Neither rouses much confidence. Before a decision can be made, however, the assembly proves to be abortive, when the report that Aeneas and his troops are advancing for battle requires immediate action. Apparently, the twelve days of truce are over. The third part covers the resulting battle, which is another disaster for the Italians. Turnus lays an ambush for Aeneas and encourages the Volscian woman-warrior Camilla to lead the cavalry against the Trojan horse. She does so and performs numerous feats before succumbing to a treacherous spearcast; and Turnus leaves his ambush just before he could have caught Aeneas and presumably inflicted much damage. He rushes back to the scene of defeat and plans to engage Aeneas' men, when nightfall ends combat. Virgil may not lavish the adjective "sad" on these events, but it clearly has been a terribly grim day for the Italians.

## PART I

The opening scene of the first part might be viewed as a test case of Virgil's technique of understated sadness. At first view, in the construction of the picture and in the words of the speaker Aeneas, we see and hear only of a magnificent victory, due honor to the gods in ritual that anticipates later Roman practices, and complete confidence about the future because of the victory over Mezentius.

Everything is said and seen exclusively from that perspective of Trojan triumph, until finally Aeneas transfers his attention to dead Pallas and the sadness in store for his father and city. Now such exclusive emphasis may seem odd after the memorable way Virgil built up to the ending of Book 10 and the tragic feelings of Mezentius before his death. No matter what Aeneas and the Trojans do or say the next day, can we, after Virgil's presentation of those earlier actions and words, rest content with a unilateral Trojan self-satisfaction? I once claimed about the conclusion of Book 10: "The humbled words of Mezentius have tragic depth (846 ff.). At the end, when he welcomes Aeneas' death stroke, he has but one request: to be buried with Lausus (906). Virgil does not report Aeneas' answer. We are left to decide whether the warrior, like the poet, would have been generous."<sup>3</sup> I believe Virgil obliges us to wonder how Aeneas would and should have responded to Mezentius' last words. When we watch and hear Aeneas proudly exult over his victory, with not the slightest notice of his foe, Virgil flagrantly ignores an expectation that he has created. This produces dissatisfaction with Aeneas as well as with the poet; or, to put it differently, with Aeneas because the poet has shown him in ungenerous exultation. But Virgil does more: he reveals what Aeneas' response to the father's appeal must have been through the details he slips in about the armor of Mezentius adorning the proud trophy on display.

To produce a Roman trophy, a tree was cut down and worked so that it served a function similar to a modern headless store dummy: the trunk represented the human torso, and two branches, with ends lopped off, served as the site of human shoulders and the beginning of arms. The victor then dressed this tree-dummy in the armor taken from the corpse of his victim and set up the ensemble, now a "trophy," as a display of his prowess and, in some cases, as here, in honor of the war god Mars. The tree trunk replaced the once-vital human being who wore that armor. Thus, here the trophy stands for the tragic father who spoke so movingly and meant so much to Virgil and us. The armor undeniably tells us exactly how Aeneas rejected his appeal. The helmet crest drips with blood; the breastplate has been "smashed and pierced through twice-six times." Although the blood on the crest could have come from the fatal wound in the throat that Aeneas dealt him, I am doubtful. The twelve rough gashes in his breastplate did not come from Aeneas or from any opponent who faced Mezentius in life. They have to be evidence of hateful enemy abuse of the corpse~ what Mezentius asked Aeneas, in full dignity, to spare him so that he could be united with his son Lausus. After Aeneas drove his sword into the throat of his willing victim, then, we can reconstruct the sequel: Etruscans came up

and vented their fury, with Aeneas' permission, on their hated former king, plunging spears and swords into the corpse and totally disfiguring it. Such detail increases the sadness of Mezentius' end and casts a pall on the heroic rhetoric of the Trojan.

Most of this first part concentrates on the Trojans' and especially Aeneas' deep grief for the death of Pallas. The antithesis is obvious: on the one hand, exultation over the bloody trophy that Mezentius has become, wherever his body is, however disfigured; on the other hand, heavily emphasized sorrow, subjectively presented by Aeneas and sympathetic poet, for the dead youth Pallas. Aeneas has fought and killed enemy, including both Lausus and Mezentius, in the battle; and he has a right to speak about this war and war in general. He knows that war is a dissatisfying mix of "glorious" success and intolerable loss, and he spends far more time on his grief than on his exultation over Mezentius. Some critics believe he

blames himself for Pallas' death, but this is not clear from Virgil's presentation, I believe; he has ample grounds for grief in the contrast between what enthusiastic Pallas expected to achieve before returning home in triumph and what has in fact happened. Aeneas weeps as he announces the plan to prepare the cortege (*inlacrimans*, 29), weeps again as he begins his funeral speech by the corpse (*lacrimis obortis*, 41), and is still weeping as he falls silent (*deflevit*, 59). Virgil then devotes another thirty lines to the organization of the cortege, and again he lets Aeneas speak briefly as it departs for Evander's city: "The same frightful fate of war calls me from this / to other tears. I hail you now forever, / great Pallas; and forever, my farewell." In this moment of sadness, war is nothing but "tears."

Virgil enhances the sadness of Pallas' death by adding lamenting women to the scene. Passing into the tent or pavilion where the corpse is laid out, Aeneas finds it attended by "mourning Ilian women, hair disheveled" in standard grieving fashion. Where did these Trojan women come from? Did not Aeneas leave them all behind in Sicily, because they were a drag on the Trojans' heroic purposes? But when it comes to expressing grief, how can you do without women? So Virgil has created some for this occasion. (Remember how he did the same to make the death of young Euryalus more affective in Book 9~)4 Virgil will soon remind us of the Italian womenfolk and their desperate grief; here, he unexpectedly contrives weeping women for the Trojan side, too.

More sadness is conveyed in the simile about Pallas and the special funeral gift that Aeneas finds for him. Here is Mandelbaum's version of the simile that conveys how the poet sees the boy's corpse (9-94): 'Just as a flower of gentle violet / or drooping hyacinth a girl has gathered; / its brightness and its form have not yet passed, / but mother earth no longer feeds it or / supplies its strength." He resembles a cut flower, lovely for one last precious moment. But even more, Pallas has been given the descriptive details that belong more aptly to a virgin at the moment of marriage people used to call metaphorically "deflowering" or "defloration." Greek and Latin poetry loves to place the marriageable maiden, the virgin, amid flowers which she is plucking or is urged metaphorically to gather. A virgin has plucked this flower, and Pallas is dead; the ultimate sexual assault has robbed him of the pleasures of marriage and family, of the happy future that Evander hoped for him. We should be awake to this theme in Virgil's poem, that death deflowers young warriors, men like Pallas and later Turnus, and women, as we shall see, like Camilla.

The connection of war-death and violence to virgins at the time of marriage is bolstered by the reference to "mother" earth, no longer performing her maternal role for the cut flower. The virgin's mother loses her role, too, after the wedding. In that latter sense, the gift of Aeneas is significant: he has passed on a present from dead Dido, a robe richly woven with gold and purple threads by her own loving hand, which she vainly offered him as a token of love that he could not and would not indulge. This gift to Pallas has to awaken a sense of ironic sadness even if Aeneas has put it aside. Pallas and Dido, deprived of life and love, have much in common. When Aeneas veils Pallas' head with this symbolic gift (*obnuhit*, 77) Virgil refers to the veil that regularly stands for the virgin's deferential role in the marriage ritual. Pallas' wedding is going to be his funeral, and the pyre will consume this gorgeous robe of loving Dido and the fair hair of Pallas that it veils.

Aeneas' negotiations with the Latin ambassadors support the illusion of time passed while the

cortege covers the distance to Evander's city. It is a tearfully sad arrival (139ff.), with the principal stress of course on Evander's grief, but with no small emphasis, too, on the feelings of the Arcadian women and the sounds of lamentation that fill the "sad city" (*maestam urbem*, 147). Virgil turns away from that scene to the next, I presume, dawn, which in his affective terms brings kindly light to wretched mortals (*miseris mortalibus*, 182). The mass funerals of the Trojans, definitely sad and tearful (*maestum*, 189, *lacrimis*, 191), and of the Italians also full of grieving (lactase, 214, *maerentum*, 216) are juxtaposed. But in the latter case Virgil can concentrate on the noncombatants, the wives, sisters, children, and parents of the dead Italians who curse the war and pick out Turnus as the scapegoat.

## PART 2

The second part, which involves the abortive Council of the Italians (225-44), explores more fully the feelings of the Italian males, warriors, and noncombatants, and the extent to which they reflect the passionate war-hating grief of the women, children, and aged recorded above. Treading a cautious tightrope, Latinus reacts to the loss of the hoped-for alliance with Diomedes by emphasizing the little hope they realistically have in their own strength (309-13) and proposing to settle with Aeneas. Drances, quick to seize an opportunity, jumps in with his comments, which are aimed, the poet tells us, to belittle Turnus, the warrior he hates from personal, not patriotic, motives (336-75). In his invidious speech, though he says some things that are true and potentially useful, his bias is obvious, calculated to cause trouble and negate the utility of his words. The real issues—the wretched deaths and the apparent futility of this war—are lost. Caught in a pattern of political vituperation and dishonest rhetoric, Turnus lacks the self-control and broad understanding to restore the focus to the main issues. Even at the end, when he has appealed to the manly courage (virtue) of his audience, he cannot help reverting to his anger against Drances and his civilian "cowardice." The result of this mutual sniping is indecisive: the sadness of the Italians has been left unsatisfied, and the cursed war resumes.

Large numbers join in the militant fervor of Turnus, and Virgil briefly records the grief and grumbling doubts of the older male noncombatants, the fathers (*maesti mussantque patres*, 454). Their sadness, for all its validity, has no chance of gaining a hearing amid the warlike confusion in Latium. Now, the women and children appear on the walls, to be of use in this ultimate crisis (475-76). Other women accompany Queen Amata to the temple of Minerva, to pray in vain for help in their struggle against Aeneas, whom they hatefully call the "Phrygian pirate" (484). And finally the poet turns his and our attention to their heroic leader Turnus, as he wildly kyurens, 486) arms himself and then dashes down from the citadel, all "golden" (*aureus*, 490) an exaggerated adjective to go with his wildness and the irrational enthusiasm of his warriors. Here a simile captures the complex nature of Turnus, so attractive in his energy and drive, so sad in his crazed reliance on wildness. When Greeks and Romans compared human beings to animals, they knew that they might be magnifying human physical qualities, but they were definitely minimizing their rational control. To make his comparison even more effective, Virgil borrows a memorable simile from Homer's Iliad, which applied first to Paris, then to Hector, to define their respective moments of irresponsibility:

*exultatque animis et spe iam praecipit hostem: qualis ubi abruptis fugit praesepia vinclis tandem liber equus, campoque potitus aperto aut ille in pastus aillnentaque tendit equarum aut adsuetus aquae perfundi flumine noto emicat, arrectisque fremit cervicibus alte luxurians luduntque iubae per colla, per armos. (491-97)*

He is delirious with courage, his hope already tears the enemy just as a stallion when he snaps his tether and flies off from the stables, free at last to lord the open plains, will either make I..for meadows and the herds of mares or else leap from the stream where he is used to bathing and, wanton, happy, neigh, his head raised high, while his mane sweeps across his neck and shoulders, (M 649-57)

Like most translations, this one has made some arguable decisions In the first line, "delirious" is too strong for Virgil's verb, which is the basis of our word "exult"; and "courage" is too specifically heroic and human for the Latin word that I would render "high spirits." Virgil describes the youthful exuberance of Turnus in words that are also thoroughly appropriate for the horse who will now appear in his simile. It seems to make sense that Turnus in his delirium should "already tear the enemy," but since such action does not adapt easily to the simile's horse, we might suspect that Virgil did not quite say that. His Turnus "already in his hope catches the enemy ahead of time" (*spe iam praecipit hostem*, 491). No tearing or wounding, simply overtaking. But that is exactly what the simile wants: the horse is heading for either of two destinations. Thus, we must change Mandelbaum at line 655. He pictures the second alternative as follows: the horse leaps from the stream after bathing and prances about neighing and sweeping his mane picturesquely over his neck. But that is not it. Here is what the horse joyously imagines and hopes to achieve: either he will join the female horses in the pastures, to make love not war, or he will flash forward to a familiar stream, where he has been accustomed to bathing. Bathing is a different sensuous pleasure the stallion might pursue after breaking free, again noticeably different in kind from Turnus' militant hope.

Homer's point was that the horse had escaped and was following its natural instincts, not what men had trained it to do, which was to serve men obediently in war. The Homeric horse is regularly part of a pair drawing a chariot into battle and giving a hero quick access to the enemy. The Virgilian horse more often serves as a cavalry animal. Turnus is about to rush wildly away, not only from the orderly Council of State, but also from the cavalry battle that follows immediately on his departure, to lay an abortive and inglorious ambush for Aeneas. Mandelbaum's "free at last" (652) is accurate for the Latin, but the words, so closely now identified with Martin Luther King Jr., have a special irony that Virgil did not envision. The freedom of the stallion and of Turnus, quite unearned, is obvious irresponsibility. That last picture, then, of the horse as it neighs, its head held high, swishing its mane over neck and shoulders, refers to it not in a position of standing still but as moving spiritedly toward either of its destinations, mares or stream. To picture Turnus rushing into war irresponsibly like an escaping animal is an exciting image but also a sad one. How different from Aeneas who hates war and equates it with tears, for himself

and both sides involved; he engages in it reluctantly, from a sense of duty. Turnus regards this battle as the means by which he escapes all the public responsibilities that limit his "freedom." His motives rob the Italian cause of valid purpose and seriously compromise its leader.

### PART 3

Virgil, although living in the highly prejudiced culture of Rome and writing within the limits of that cultural bias has nevertheless created in the female figure of Camilla a powerfully sympathetic, even heroic, representative of the Italian people. I think that sensitive male poets in Rome—such as Virgil and Ovid, to name but two—were aware of the cruder cultural bias against women and made creative efforts to break that bias down. Just as Virgil let what I called "understated sadness" emerge effectively in his description of the battered, bloody trophy that replaced Mezentius' mutilated corpse at the beginning of this book, I believe he has produced an understated representation of Camilla that is neither chauvinistically triumphant nor pornographically defective. I now argue for that point of view. Much of what I shall advance has been anticipated by Grace Starry West.

The Camilla Virgil introduces as the final entry in the Catalogue of Italians of Book 7, a most dramatic conclusion to that book, is (at least to the internal audience of the epic) a highly attractive compound of feminine militancy. She is a *bellatrix* (warrior) (805) who has rejected the normal woman's role of weaving, and, paradoxically, though a virgin, associates herself with rough battles. Yet Virgil chooses to emphasize her swiftness and light agility, so that we picture her racing gracefully over the fields, not pursuing or attacking an enemy; and he makes her the focus of admiring women, who pick out her regal attire with their eyes and notice nothing of her menacing militarism. These women are mothers (813), and we can well imagine that they think of her longingly as a possible mate for their sons.

The Camilla we get to know in Book I is not wholly the same woman; Virgil has not exactly changed her, but he reveals new details about her that suggest the admiring Italian women were perhaps premature in their judgments. Understanding this more complex Camilla, then, involves not only perceiving her thematic function but also exploring afresh the way Virgil presents this female figure.

I start from the new information about Camilla that Virgil introduces as Turnus departs for his ambush and leaves her in command of the cavalry engagement before the city (532-84). The attractive woman of Book 7 received an elusive description as one who did not participate in domestic tasks but engaged in warfare, looked queenly, ran swiftly, carried a quiver and a spear tipped with myrtle (a favorite symbol of Venus). In the work of Virgil's great successor, Ovid, virgins regularly make a choice, that is, either preparing for matrimony and domesticity or dedicating themselves to virginity; this choice can be represented as either weaving or hunting, working for Minerva or for Diana. But the virgin who devotes herself to warfare does not fall into a recognizable pattern other than that of the exotic Amazon. In Virgil's account in Book 11, Diana gives a sympathetic narrative that presents Camilla as a unique kind of temporary devotee, who then has left off hunting for warfare, with the goddess's sad permission. Diana is not angry with her and has no intention of punishing her for abandoning her sacred duty; on the contrary, the goddess, knowing that Camilla is doomed, announces ahead that she will do all she can to

ennoble her death (59~94).

The reasons for Diana's special feelings for Camilla are indicated in the background narrative about her father, her narrow escape from death, and the peculiar way in which she became a devotee of Diana. She has not consciously chosen virginity over marriage; her background readily suggests why she is above all a *bellatrix*. Her father Metabus was a cruel and hated king, much like Mezentius, who fled from an uprising and escaped only with his baby daughter. To save the girl, he prayed for Diana's help and dedicated Camilla to the goddess as a servant; the Latin word *famula* (558) is a synonym for the word *camilla* that gives her her name. Metabus hid in the mountains, far from political and social advantages, and Camilla grew up as a kind of "wild girl," drinking the milk of wild animals (571-72) and toting around spear, bow, and arrows once she could walk (573-80). She served Diana devoutly, as virginal huntress, and Diana loved her more than all others (537, 586).

Virgil has carefully used Diana as a sympathetic narrator to influence our response. She does not treat Camilla's decision to become a warrior as a sinful lapse that merits punishment. She respects and honors Camilla's departure as sadly heroic: it is not the treachery of the lapsed (or raped) virgin (like Callisto). Metabus' daughter would inevitably learn about war-fare, armies, and regal politics from him in addition to hunting; the royal attire she flaunts from her horse (7.814-15) and the title of "queen" that the poet confers on her during the battle (*regina*, 11.499, 703, 801) may well indicate that she claims her inheritance. Her status also suggests how she could raise and command a cavalry unit. Like Lausus, son of exiled king Mezentius, she respects her father, works to recover his throne, and devotes herself to the military role her ambition and loyalty necessitate. Virgil, however, has altered the Mezentius pattern by removing Metabus from the scene: Camilla seems an independent warrior, fighting for her own goals, superior to Lausus and the other young hero, Pallas on the Trojan side. Though Virgil does not stress her patriotic and political purposes, his use of Diana to introduce her period of heroism is designed to make her a positive paradigm.

In view of this preparation, we should look closely at her victories to see whether in fact Virgil has made them appropriately heroic. Camilla's *aristeia* includes victories over undistinguished foes, but what else could she do? Mezentius, Aeneas, and Turnus kill inferior men also; and frequently Virgil makes their killings far more self-assertive and bestial than those of Camilla. There is no reason to take exception to her first conquest of Euneus: his death is ugly, but Virgil does not say anything of Camilla's aims or reactions, and the ugliness reflects that of war in general. Seven more deaths follow without giving us insight into the victorious woman (670-75), before we come to the cloddish hunter trying to be a soldier, Ornytus. Virgil's narrative focuses on the unusual uniform and gigantic size of the man, not on his personality, and his ill-suited manner makes Ornytus an easy mark for Camilla. The killing is not described in detail, but it is colored by Camilla's vaunt (685-89). She speaks with enmity, sneering at him as a hunter out of his element, which is ironically revealed by his death at the hands of a woman! This does not mean that Virgil presents Camilla as a man-hater, a fanatic virgin. Nothing of the sort. Camilla is on friendly terms with Turnus, who thinks it good strategy to put her in command of his male cavalry leaders. There is no chauvinism among the Italians, and Virgil allows little to be expressed by their foes against Camilla. Her vaunt over Ornytus epitomizes the difference between his incompetence and her complete



success in changing from hunter to warrior.

Camilla's victories over the two Trojan warriors, Orsilochus and Butes, who also dwarf her in size and apparent strength, are legitimate military exploits, with no negative qualification, no boasting from Camilla (69098). Then comes the Ligurian son of Aunus. He casts at her the disparaging charge that she is a weak woman whose superiority is only due to her horse's strength (705-6), but Virgil disarms that criticism by his earlier accounts of her victories and by his characterization of the man as a coward. The sneering insult of this man has its effect on Camilla, who rages with anger and hurt pride (709), but she acts decisively to make him eat his words. She leaps down from her horse to fight him hand-to-hand, and, when he thinks he has secured his escape, she runs down his galloping horse and brings the coward to the ground dead. Thus, she emerges his superior, as the falcon-simile demonstrates; his use of *femina* was merely an illicit verbal tactic.

Last we come to Chloereus, the final victim Camilla marks for herself but does not get, and to Arruns, her killer. I have reviewed numerous commentaries, articles, and books on this episode, but the only person, to my knowledge, who comes right out and says that Chloereus is a eunuch is G. S. West. Modern editors tend to follow the main manuscript tradition and give a text that introduces Chloereus as "sacred to Mt. Cybelus" (*sacer Cybelo*, 768), which means that Virgil indirectly made him a devotee of the goddess Cybele, whose home was that mountain. As devotee of Cybele, Chloereus had to be a eunuch, and Virgil has exaggerated the effeminacy associated with eunuchs by detailing his horse's special mantle, the gold decorations of his armor, the saffron chlamys, and the exotic Cretan arrows he shoots from a Lydian bow. Like Omytus earlier, Chloereus is a garishly ridiculous figure. He is really a "half-man" out of his element, a sure victim for a real warrior like Camilla, a source of victor's spoils. Had Virgil shown her killing Chloereus and proceeding on to another combat, there would have been no problem. Instead he chose to make this a triangular situation and include Arruns, depriving Camilla of her easy victory over an exotic eunuch and instead giving Arruns a coward's advantage, the opportunity to kill her from ambush.

In his provocative article on heroism in Book 11, T. G. Rosenmeyer suggests that Virgil presents a different standard of heroism from the reality of his own day: "At the court of Augustus, Arruns would have been decorated for his efforts." I am not convinced by that claim: Augustus never decorated an ordinary soldier who claimed to have killed an enemy general." Even in Augustus' day, the most heroic deed was the killing of the enemy general by the Roman general, in hand-to-hand combat; and there was much discussion about the reward for such achievement, the *spolia opima*. Virgil, while stressing the unheroic qualities of Arruns' attack from hiding, also gives him some trappings of piety. When he throws his fatal spear, he prays to Apollo and styles himself a devotee of a special cult on Mount Soracte Near Rome, where the worshippers walk on fiery coals (787-88). He prays to eradicate the disgrace (*dedecus* 789), this foul disease (*haec dira pestis* 792) represented by Camilla's superiority over her opponents. Apollo grants that prayer, without necessarily agreeing with the pejorative terminology, but he distinctly deprives Arruns of the chance to enjoy his success at home, which was also part of the prayer. Apollo's sister, then, proceeds to punish him with a lonely death. The last we see of him, he is groaning out his final breaths in a field, and his companions have no idea where he is or what has happened to him. As far as Virgil and his audience are concerned, that is a just death, as Opis states (849). Nobody weeps for Arruns: his victory is

inglorious. Sadness is the exclusive property of Camilla in this triangle.

Camilla never gets to confront Chloereus, the effeminate priest of the Trojan cult of Cybele; if given that chance, she would surely have killed him, Virgil makes us believe. Here is where all that golden effeminate finery on Chloereus becomes an unintended weapon. Virgil expresses ambivalence about her feelings (778-79) and aims: whether to dedicate the splendid armor in a temple or to dress herself in the captured gold. If the first, she would have acted as Aeneas himself did at the start of this book (a veritable Roman); if the second, she would have resembled Euryalus whose greed cost him his life, or Turnus, whose pride in stripping Pallas will ultimately be punished by Aeneas. In fact, though, because she never gets to kill and spoil Chloereus, we and Virgil never can decide the question. But it is striking that Virgil emphasizes her incautious focus on Chloereus' glittering appearance: as Mandelbaum has it, "fearless, with a female's love I of plunder and of spoils, she raged through all the army" (M 1038). Some readers have read this use of the term "female" (*femineo*, 782) as pejorative. But what exactly does Virgil mean here?

The Latin, literally rendered, does produce what Mandelbaum gives us: *femineo praedae et spoliolum ardebat amore* (782). The adjective "female" and its noun "love" frame the entire clause, with the seemingly pejorative "female" setting up everything that follows. We might assume Virgil's point to be that it is just like a woman to lust for plunder and spoils in war, but this interpretation is not consistent with his general portrayal of -- especially after Virgil's telling us that Camilla's desires were Camilla, unsure and otherwise giving us no woman-warrior as a paradigm. (And the greed of Euryalus, who was no woman, refutes the claim.) We must, I think, separate the adjective "female" and its prejudicial implications of "lust like a woman" from the words "booty" and "spoils" and restrict it to its noun "love." I suggest a translation along these lines: "she burned with desire for plunder and spoils; she blazed with a woman's passion." Female passion is the point, not what she desired; this we already know from the case of Dido. The passion of the aptly named Amata, devoid of materialism is also highly feminine and fatal. Blind, heedless pursuit of one's goal, fits the Greco-Roman stereotype of the passionate woman, and it belongs to the decorum of epic and tragedy, regularly disastrous, if not fatal.

It is true that Virgil explains Camilla's death as due to her heedless passion, but he does not ask us to scorn that passion. She differs from Euryalus and Turnus not in her desire for spoils, but in her careless pursuit of them, which costs her her life before she could take them. Against the foils of eunuch Chloereus and cowardly fanatic Arruns, Camilla stands high and heroic. Some might wish that the poet had not referred to woman's passion here; this is the only time when he associates Camilla with love of any kind. This love seems distorted, a sad indication of wasted femininity. But the context arouses reactions too complex for us to focus exclusively on this deficiency, and the sadness of Camilla's death colors the remainder of the book. As she dies, she has no thought for her lost spoils or her lost future: she speaks like a commander, concerned that Turnus act to avert a crisis. Virgil gives an affective description of the way her limbs grow cold and relax, and then he assigns her his version of the Homeric line used for Hector's death, the same line that will record Turnus' death and grimly end his poem in 12.952: "and with a moan, her life, resentful, fled to Shades below" (831, M 1101-102). This is a heroine's premature death. It is the saddest and most significant death of Book 11.

Camilla's heroism affects the Italian women, who are inspired to die defending their city walls (895). The cruel pathos of her end takes us back to the deaths of Mezentius and Pallas, which were the focus of the book's opening. Thus, in the course of this book, the poet powerfully engages the reader's sympathy for both sides in this civil and thus saddest of wars.

Need help with Book 11 in Virgil's *The Aeneid*? Check out our revolutionary side-by-side summary and analysis. Camilla is one of the *Aeneid*'s most fascinating characters. A true wild woman, she is not only better than the men at fighting, but somehow even more terrifying to them because of her uniqueness as a woman warrior. Active Themes. Since the omens suggest a bad fate for Camilla in this battle, Diana sends Opis down with a bow, to kill the man who will kill Camilla. The battle begins and various men die. In the middle of the scene of carnage, Camilla appears, with one breast bare, a brilliant and untiring fighter, and accompanied by other virgin warriors. Camilla kills multiple men with sing Book 1 Contents. Vergil, *Aeneid* I 1-11. *Arma virumque canit, Troiae quae primum ab urbe condita profugus laetantibus una nititur.* Throughout the *Aeneid* Vergil sets his Roman theme in tension with the heroic world of Homer; Aeneas has to leave the one world and enter the other (Williams). *primus*: "first," not here in the sense of "the first who," but "at the first," "in the beginning" (Frieze). The meaning is not that Aeneas was the first of a series of Trojans who settled in Italy, but merely that he marks the first beginning of the Roman race (Bennett). 2: *Italiam*: acc. of the limit of motion. In prose a preposition (ad or in) would be required (F-B) (AG 428g).