

Ambiguities of Manhood in Aeneid 9

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March 26, 2022
CAMWS
Winston-Salem, NC

A

his amor unus erat pariterque in bella ruebant;
tum quoque communi portam statione tenebant.
Nisus ait: 'dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt,
Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?
aut pugnam aut aliquid iamdudum inuadere magnum
mens agitat mihi, nec placida contenta quiete est.
cernis quae Rutulos habeat fiducia rerum:
lumina rara micant, somno uinoque soluti
procubuere, silent late loca. percipe porro
quid dubitem et quae nunc animo sententia surgat.
Aenean acciri omnes, populusque patresque,
exposcunt, mittique uiros qui certa reportent.
si tibi quae posco promittunt (nam mihi facti
fama sat est), tumulo uideor reperire sub illo
posse uiam ad muros et moenia Pallantea.'

[A. 9.182-96]

For them, there was one love, and together they would rush into battle. At that time too they were guarding the gate in a shared watch. Nisus said, "Do the gods put this passion in men's minds, Euryalus, or does each man's dread desire become his god? My mind has long been stirring me to undertake a fight or some great deed, and it isn't content in calm silence. You see the confidence the Rutulians have in the situation. Scattered lights gleam. Undone by sleep and wine they lay at rest, and the territory is silent far and wide. So learn what I am in doubt about and what thought rises now in my mind. Everyone, the people and the elders, demands that Aeneas be summoned back and that men be sent to report what has been learned. If they promise what I demand on your behalf (for the fame of the deed is enough for me), I think I can find a route to Pallanteum's wall at the foot of that mound."

B

obstipuit magno laudum percussus amore
Euryalus

[A. 9.197-98]

Struck by great love of glory, Euryalus reacted with surprise.

C

iamque ad Messapi socios tendebat; ibi ignem
deficere extremum et religatos rite uidebat
carpere gramen equos, breuiter cum talia Nisus
(sensit enim nimia caede atque cupidine ferri)
'absistamus' ait, 'nam lux inimica propinquat.
poenarum exhaustum satis est, uia facta per hostis.'

[A. 9.351-56]

And now he headed for the comrades of Messapus; there he saw the final fire waning and the horses tied up as normal eating the grass, when Nisus, realizing that they were being carried away by excessive slaughter and desire, briefly said as much: "Let us stop, for a hostile light approaches. Enough punishment has been consumed; a way has been made through the enemy."

D

multa uirum solido argento perfecta relinquunt
armaque craterasque simul pulchrosque tapetas.
Euryalus phaleras Rhamnetis et aurea bullis
cingula, Tiburti Remulo ditissimus olim
quae mittit dona, hospitio cum iungeret absens,
Caedicus; ille suo moriens dat habere nepoti;
post mortem bello Rutuli pugnaque potiti:
haec rapit atque umeris nequiquam fortibus aptat.
tum galeam Messapi habilem cristisque decoram
induit. excedunt castris et tuta capessunt.

[A. 9.357-66]

They leave behind many solid silver arms of men, mixing bowls, and at the same time beautiful carpets. Euryalus – the battle ornaments of Rhamnes, and his golden studded belt, gifts which once very wealthy Caedicus sent to Remulus of Tibur, when he, though distant, joined him in guest-friendship; on his death bed, he gave them to his grandson to possess. After his death, the Rutulians got them in war and battle – Euryalus carries off these things and fastens them to his brave shoulders, to no good end. Then he donned the helm of Messapus, lightweight and handsome with its crests. They left the camp and headed for safe places.

et galea Euryalum sublustri noctis in umbra
prodidit immemorem radiisque aduersa refulsit.

[A. 9.373-74]

And the helm betrayed negligent Euryalus in the radiant shadow of night, and struck by rays of light it gleamed back.

E

'non pudet obsidione iterum ualloque teneri,
bis capti Phryges, et morti praetendere muros?
en qui nostra sibi bello conubia poscunt!
quis deus Italiam, quae uos dementia adegit?
non hic Atridae nec fandi factor Vlixes:
durum a stirpe genus natos ad flumina primum
deferimus saeuoque gelu duramus et undis;
uenatu inuigilant pueri siluasque fatigant,
flectere ludus equos et spicula tendere cornu.
at patiens operum paruoque adsueta iuuentus
aut rastris terram domat aut quatit oppida bello.
omne aeuum ferro teritur, uersaque iuuentum
terga fatigamus hasta, nec tarda senectus
debilitat uiris animi mutatque uigorem:
canitiem galea premimus, semperque recentis
comportare iuuat praedas et uiuere rapto.
uobis picta croco et fulgenti murice uestis,

desidia cordi, iuuat indulgere choreis,
et tunicae manicas et habent redimicula mitrae.
o uere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges, ite per alta
Dindyma, ubi adsuetis biformem dat tibia cantum.
tympana uos buxusque uocat Berecynthia Matris
Idaeae; sinite arma uiris et cedite ferro.'

[9.598-620]

"Are you not ashamed, twice-captured Phrygians, to be penned in again by siege and ramparts, to stave off death with walls? Behold the ones who demand our wives for themselves with war! What god drove you to Italy? What madness drove you to us? There are no sons of Atreus here, no storyteller Ulysses. A hard race at root, first thing we take our newborn sons to the rivers and harden them with the savage cold of the currents. As boys, they stay up hunting, and they tire out the woods. They make a game of breaking horses and shooting darts from the bow. Moreover, as young men, tolerant of work and accustomed to little, they either subdue the earth with rakes or shake towns with battle. Every age is inured to the sword, and we tire the backs of bullocks with the spear-butt—and sluggish old age does not weaken the force of mind and alter our strength: we weigh down white hair with a helmet, and it always pleases us to carry off fresh prey and live off what we've stolen. Dear to you is clothing hued with yellow and gleaming purple, lounging about—dancing pleases you. Your tunics have sleeves; your headdress has ribbons. Really Phrygian women (you're not Phrygian men after all!), go across lofty Dindyma, where the flute plays the two-piped song to the accustomed throng. For drum and Berecynthia boxwood flute of the mother of Ida summons you. Leave arms to men and yield to the sword."

F

'macte noua uirtute, puer, sic itur ad astra,
dis genite et geniture deos.'

[A. 9.641-42]

"Congratulations on your newfound manhood, boy; that's
the way to the stars, child of gods and destined to father
gods."

G

'sit satis, Aenide, telis impune Numanum
oppetiisse tuis. primam hanc tibi magnus Apollo
concedit laudem et paribus non inuidet armis;
cetera parce, puer, bello.'

[A 9.653-56]

"Let it be enough, son of Aeneas, that you attacked
Numanus with your weapons and got away with it. Great
Apollo grants you this first glory and does not envy equal
arms. Otherwise refrain from war, boy."

H

agnouere deum proceres diuinaque tela
Dardanidae pharetramque fuga sensere sonantem.
ergo auidum pugnae dictis ac numine Phoebi
Ascanium prohibent...

[A. 9.659-62]

The Dardanian leaders recognized the god and his divine
weapons and heard his quiver rattle at his departure. Thus,
with the words and godhead of Apollo they hold back
Ascanius, greedy for battle...

I

diffugiunt uersi trepida formidine Troes,
et si continuo uictorem ea cura subisset,
rumpere claustra manu sociosque immittere portis,
ultimus ille dies bello gentique fuisset.
sed furor ardentem caedisque insana cupido
egit in aduersos.

[A. 9.756-61]

The Trojans flee, routed by trembling fear, and if this concern—to burst the bolts with his hand and let his comrades in through the gates—had immediately occurred to him in his victory, that day would have been the last for the war and for the race. But madness and the insane desire for bloodshed drove him burning against his foes.

J

‘comportare iuuat praedas et uiuere rapto.
uobis picta croco et fulgenti murice uestis,
desidiaae cordi, iuuat indulgere choreis,
et tunicae manicas et habent redimicula mitrae.’

[A. 9.612-16]

“To carry off spoils and live on what we’ve stolen, pleases us. Dear to you is clothing hued with yellow and gleaming purple, lounging about—dancing pleases you. Your tunics have sleeves; your headdress has ribbons.”

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