

Jeffrey Carlyle

Dr. Dana Shiller

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Summary of Second Half of Book 6 of The Aeneid

In the beginning of the second half Aeneas saw Dido standing in the dark. Aeneas knew her form and approached her. This was the first he knew that the accounts of her death were accurate. He wept and said that he did not abandon her by his own choice. Dido did not speak to him and instead ran off to be with her dead husband.

The Trojan continues on and encounters Greek leaders and soldiers. Some of the Greeks run away in terror and other try to yell but are unable. The Trojan then encounters Deiphobus—the Trojan husband of Helen. Aeneas asks Deiphobus if he has done everything he needs to do to honor Deiphobus' death. Deiphobus reassures Aeneas that there is nothing further that needs to be done. Deiphobus then continues to speak of the traitorous actions of Helen. He discusses the fall of Troy and the Trojan horse.

The Sibyl reminds the Trojan of passing time and says that should continue. Deiphobus agrees and says he will no longer delay their progress and walks away.

The Trojan continues and encounters the first place of torture. This first place is where Rhadamanthus, king of Cnossus, punishes those who were not discovered in the upper world for crimes they had committed.

Tisiphone over sees these punishments. The Trojan then sees a deep chasm where those who committed very treacherous crimes. Here those who committed adultery, neglected their kinsmen, sold or bought power and influence, were tyrants, and fought against their country are tortured.

The Sybil urges the Trojan to continue and they finally come to the arches of the land of joy. The land of joy is made up of a brightly-lit forest. In this forest were those who were wounded fighting for their country, priests who had been chaste, true prophets, those who had discovered new things, and those who were remembered by men. All of these peoples were a sacred white ribbon around their heads.

These peoples gathered around Aeneas and the Sibyl. The Sibyl inquired to them where they could find Anchises, Aeneas' father. Musaeus, the speaker of the group, replied that none of them have a fixed position, but that they can climb a ridge to look over the plains and find Anchises. The Trojan climbs the ridge and sees his father in a valley. Aeneas was looking over the souls of his future descendents.

Anchises is not surprised to see Aeneas, instead Anchises states that he knew Aeneas would come. Aeneas asks about the souls around them. Anchises says that these are the souls who are owed a second body and describes how souls are called up to live again. Anchises then begins to tell Aeneas of his future descendents in the land of Italy. There is the Alban Silvius who will be raised in the woods after his father's death. Also, there are Procas, Capya, and Numitor, and the king Silvius Aneas. The lineage continues onto Romulus, the founder of Rome. Then it continues to Ceaser

and Augustus Ceaser. Anchises then discloses that it is the fate of Rome to ruler over the entire known world. Aeneas left his father at the gate and then returned to his ships and set sail.

The important them of this chapter is fate. All throughout the chapter fate is spoken about. There is the fate of those who are not buried. There is the fate of those who are not punished for their crimes in the upper world. There is the fate of those who are against their family and their country. There is the fate of those who helped humanity. Most importantly is the fact that fate is known in advance. Years before his descendents are born Anchises knows them by name. He also knows that it is the fate of Rome to rule the world.