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De Colloquio Socratico

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Hector

Troy, the greatest citadel of the age, was about to fall. Paris, Hector's younger brother, had caused the war by stealing Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, prompting the attack of all who had sworn to protect her, which was everybody. Now all the contentious Greek kings united and sailed against Troy in their thousand ships. Though Hector's death was prophesied if he fought, he decided to fight anyway in order to protect his family and people.

Son of Priam and Hecuba, Hector of Troy was one of the greatest heroes in Greek mythology. His name means valiant warrior. He was brave, handsome, and unlike most Greek heroes free from darker motives. He was the leader of the Trojans during the Trojan war and also their best warrior. Even though it was foretold from the beginning that he would die if he fought in its defense, Hector was so honorable and patriotic that he fought anyway. He was also an obedient son, good father, and loving husband.

When the Greeks arrived in their 1000 ships. Helenus, who was another brother of Hector, prophesied that it was not yet Hector's time to die, so wishing to take advantage of this,

Hector and the other Trojan generals met with the leaders of the Greek armies. He challenged any one of their number to a duel. Nine men eagerly volunteered and were obliged to draw straws. Ajax won the draw and so the duel began. All day they fought, but neither could get any advantage, until finally at the end of the day they declared it a draw. To show their new-found respect for the other, they exchanged gifts. Hector presented Ajax with a sword, which Ajax would later use to kill himself. In return, Ajax gave Hector a girdle, which Achilles later used to drag the fallen Hector around Troy with a chariot.

Later in the war the Trojans (again led by Hector) decided to attack the Greek's encampment, around which the Greeks had built a big wall. The goal was to burn the Greek's ships. First the Trojans attacked the enemy's defenses, but they could not get through. Eventually when Agamemnon, the Greek's chief commander, was wounded, Hector rallied his men to greater vigor. Hector then smashed the gates into the encampment, and the Trojans fought their way in and destroyed the camp. Tragically, Hector was hit by a stone thrown by Ajax and fell dying to the ground. Groaning with fear, the Trojans panicked and broke ranks. Still not fated to die yet, Hector was miraculously saved when Apollo came and infused strength into him. Quickly, Hector cut his way to the ships and called for fire. Unluckily, Ajax stood in the Trojans' way and cut down everyone that tried to reach Hector, and the Trojans were soon beaten back.

Achilles, the Greek's best warrior had refused to fight thus far in the war because of a quarrel with Agamemnon. To rally the Greek's, Patroclus, Achilles' best friend borrowed his

armor in order to make the Greek's think Achilles had joined the fight. The tide of battle turned and the Trojans were routed and mercilessly driven up against the walls of Troy. Doing his best to save the Trojans, Hector fought Patroclus and when the dual ended Patroclus was dead. The battle was over and the armies withdrew. Furious with Hector for killing Patroclus, Achilles joined the fight.

With Invincible Achilles, the Greeks fought much more fiercely and the Trojans had a hard time of it. Finally, when Achilles led yet another assault on Troy, and the Trojans again fled within its walls for protection Hector remained, determined not to give in to that greater enemy, Fear, again. Achilles approached, but Hector panicked and Achilles pursued him three times around the city before Hector finally turned to fight. Because Hector wore Achilles armor, which he had stripped from Patroclus' body, the gods were offended and offered him no help. Knowing of his old armor's weakness in the neck, Achilles confidently began the contest. Achilles threw his spear, and Hector deftly dodged it, but unseen by him the gods secretly returned the spear to Achilles. Hector threw his own spear, which Achilles also dodged, and advancing, drew his sword. As Hector swung his sword, Achilles speared him through the neck, missing the vocal cords, and Hector fell. With his dying breath he begged that his body be returned safely to his father, Priam, then the great Hero died. Still angry, Achilles ignored Hector's dying plea, and did his best to destroy the body. He dragged Hector by his girdle behind a chariot for weeks, but Apollo protected the body of Hector so that Achilles could not harm it. Finally giving in, Achilles gave the body to Priam for a huge ransom of many treasures. Achilles was finally able to

let go of his anger, and Hector was given a full burial ceremony. The great Hero of the Trojans died with honor.

The true hero fought even though it had been prophesied that he would die if he did. Hector cared more for his family and people than for his life. He had true honor, and he loved his people. Troy fell to the Greeks in their thousand ships, but not until Hector, a true Trojan, had fallen in its defense. Too often honor and loyalty are abandoned; Hector's deeds and example should not be ignored.

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