

Troy Story

The Iliad

Narrator:

The Iliad – an epic tale of gods and heroes set at Troy over three thousand years ago. At its heart - the story of a great warrior a demi-god afflicted by terrible rages. Achilles – son of the sea-nymph Thetis and a mortal named Peleus The setting - a war begun almost ten years ago when Helen of Sparta was stolen away by the Trojan Prince Paris. A war manipulated by gods who take opposing sides. Total war - ancient style. We begin at Troy, besieged by King Agamemnon and his Greek army. The stubborn King offends Achilles – the Greeks’ best warrior – by claiming his spoil of war, the maiden Briseis...Achilles leaves the battlefield – honour affronted. So Achilles’s mother Thetis asks Zeus to let the Trojans have the upper hand– to show the Greeks they need her son. For now, there’s a truce although Paris – a lover not a warrior - is almost killed in a duel with Helen’s husband... Heading into battle, Trojan champion Hector says an emotional goodbye to his wife and child. The fighting resumes, spurred on by the gods – and the Trojans are winning. Achilles still refuses to fight. But the Greeks know their foes fear him. So his best friend Patroclus tries to fool the Trojans by wearing Achilles armour. He is killed in battle - by Hector. Enraged Achilles vows revenge. Wearing armour newly fashioned by Hephaestus, the blacksmith god, he re-enters the battle and slays Hector. Still incensed, Achilles defiles Hector’s corpse. This angers Zeus. He helps Hector’s father Priam find Achilles and beg for Hector’s body. Priam reminds Achilles of his own father and the two weep together, lamenting the vagaries of war. And our story ends with Hector’s funeral and mourning at Troy.