

Automedon and Alcinous
yoked the horses; Automedon
grasped the whip in his right hand
and leapt on to the chariot. [397]

Behind him came Achilles, armed,
gleaming like bright Hyperion.
He called to his father's horses: [399]

'Xanthus, Balius, famous offspring
of Podarge, find another way
to bring your charioteer back safely,
not leave him dead like Patroclus.' [404]

Then Xanthus of the swift feet spoke;
he bowed his head, his mane streamed down
to the ground, and the goddess,
white-armed Hera, gave him speech. [407]

'We shall save you this time, Achilles,
though your doom is near, caused not by us
but by a god and by Fate. Not we
but Apollo caused Patroclus' death. [414]

'We run like the west wind, but you
are fated to be defeated
in fight by a god and a mortal.'
He spoke, and the Fates stopped his speech. [418]

Then swift Achilles spoke to him:
'Xanthus, why do you foretell my death?
You need not. I know I must die here,
far from my father and mother. [422]

'But still I shall go on until
the Trojans have enough of war.'
He spoke, and with a cry he drove
his horses on among the foremost. [424]