

Polydorus: I have come from the hidden places of the dead  
where Hades dwells apart from the other gods.  
My name is Polydorus, the youngest son of Priam  
and Hecuba, who once were king and queen of Troy.  
I was too young to carry a spear and fight  
against the Greeks when they invaded our city,  
so my parents sent me away in secret to Thrace,  
to the house of their friend Polymnestor,  
who rules these fertile northern lands of Thrace.  
To insure my future in case Troy fell to the Greeks, 10  
my father sent me with a horde of gold,  
protected by my guardian Polymnestor.

As long as Troy held out and her towers stood tall,  
I flourished like a young sapling transplanted to safety.  
But when my brother Hector fell, his body hacked  
and defiled by the Greek hero Achilles,  
Troy was doomed. Showing no mercy, the Greeks  
sacked our sacred city, uprooting her walls and temples.  
My father took refuge at the great altar,  
a holy place, a sanctuary, but to no avail. 20  
Achilles' son Neoptolemus  
cut him down in cold blood. Free now  
to show his nature, my guardian Polymnestor  
butchered me in his home and seized the gold  
for himself.

Worse, if worse is possible,  
he took my body out to sea and tossed it  
overboard, then sailed home to count his treasure.  
Slowly the waves rolled my corpse to shore,  
where it washes in the surf, unwept and unburied.

Leaving my body, I have come as a spirit 30  
to visit my mother Hecuba, hovering  
in her dreams these last three nights,  
ever since the Greeks landed here,  
opposite Troy, with their Trojan slaves  
(only the women, for they killed all the men).  
But our conquerors sit idly  
by their ships, listless, no wind to sail home.  
Then the ghost of their great warrior Achilles  
appeared, demanding one more sacrifice  
so that his spirit could rest: the blood of my sister, 40  
Polyxena. On this day she must die,  
and my mother will bury two of her children.

You see her now, Hecuba, on all fours,  
crawling from the women's tent. She is waking

from the nightmare where my phantom just appeared.