There has been a lull in hostilities in the nine-year siege, due to a plague in the Greek camp and the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles. Achilles has withdrawn from the fighting.

An attempt has been made to bring the war to an end by means of a single combat between Menelaus, the husband of Helen, and Paris, her seducer.

It fails.

At the beginning of *Iliad* 5, battle has resumed on the open plain, with the leaders on both sides prominent in their chariots.

Diomedes is struck by an arrow from Pandarus, but is saved by Athene...

More than three weeks have passed.

The dangerous Trojan attack on the Greek ships has been repulsed.

But Patroclus has been killed by Hector, who has plundered Achilles’ armour.

The furious Achilles is about to return to the action, freshly armed by Hephaistos, having vowed revenge on Hector and all the Trojans.

On Mount Olympus, Zeus summons a Council, in which he will finally allow the two factions among the gods to take part in the fighting openly.