

Love and hatred In the funeral ceremony of Patroclus and the ill-treatment of Hector

Legends tell us about the relationship between the Greek hero Achilles and Patroclus and their friendship since childhood. When he was young, Patroclus killed his friend Klisonimos by mistake during playing discus. Fearing retribution, Menoitius fled with his son and dwelled in the Palace of Pelius, King of Petheia. It was the first time that Patroclus meets with Achilles son of the King Pelius. Iliad (XI, 780-790) informs us that Patroclus was a few years older than Achilles, and that King Pelius sent them to the wise Chaeron, King of Alcintaurus, as a tutor, to teach and educate them. There began their relationship to grow, and to be strong. Their friendship turned to the intimate relationship known as the double love; love and passion that made Achilles can not stay away or separate from his friend Patroclus.

The Homeric poems mention that Patroclus was one of Helen's suitors, and that he was compelled to defend her on account of the solemn oaths which has been taken upon himself to king Tindarius.

And on the shores of Troy, when Achilles refrained from participating in the fight between the Achaeans and the Trojans, because of his extreme anger from king Agamemnon, and thus making the balance in fight tended to the Trojans, Hector and the Trojans drove the Achaeans back to their ships. The main Achaean fighters, Agamemnon, Diomedes and Odysseus were wounded and retired from the battlefield. In that time Patroclus asked Achilles to participate instead of him in the fight in order to save his comrades, Achilles allowed him to participate and to use his splendid armor. So when they saw him, the Trojans thought him Achilles and they were terrified and began to run away from the battlefield. Patroclus led Myrmidons to a great victory, killing many of the Trojans and their allies. In spite of the warning of Achilles not to go away from the Achaean ships, Hector chased Patroclus and killed him, but Ajax and Menelaus could bring his body back.

After the news came from the battlefield, Patroclus is dead and the armies are fighting over his corpse, Achilles went mad, so he returned to the battle to avenge his friend. He suffered greatly from the loss of his beloved friend, his anger and hatred were directed towards Hector who killed his dearest friend. Thus he did not calm down until he chased Hector thrice round the walls of the city, Troy, and dragged the corpse to the Greek camp, subsequently dragging it thrice round the tomb of Patroclus each day for three days. Whenever the pain of his loss became severe, he came out of his tent, chased the Trojans, killed and tortured some of them. In the beginning, Achilles refused his friend's body to be buried as it was common at the time, for he could not bear the pain of separation from his friend. However, after Patroclus appeared in Achilles` dream asking him to burn his body so that it can have a secure access to the Hades, Achilles obeyed and prepared a huge funeral pyre. In this funeral pyre, as described by Homer in many verses, Achilles burnt ten Trojan alive, a lock of Achilles` hair and two of his own dogs, then Achilles put the corpse of his dearest friend Patroclus in the middle of the pyre, and every time he remembered, him his hatred of Hector became greater and so he expanded the pyre.

After the burial ceremony, Achilles held many different games in honor of his friend, during which numerous valuable awards, from his own properties, were given to the winners.