

Sparta (Elegy of Heroes)

Dragonry

Ἦ ζεῖν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις ὅτι τῇδε
κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι.

They told them forces would be rising from the east
Striking fear into their hearts as from the wild sea rose the beast
Just three hundred Spartans, as they met them side by side,
When arrows flew to cloak the sun, they stemmed the Persian tide

Lead our way, Leonidas
Give us strength and unite us
On these rocks the tide will break
And no one weep at our wake!

Tell them you saw us ride
To the gates of our destiny
Tell them we fought and died
For our land and our liberty
And then tell them, you saw us lie
On the ground as their law commands

Here they fought immortals and a man-god at these portals
On their shields and armour clashed swords and arrows, bodies gashed
And the phalanx held and would not break as Xerxes' pillar dared to quake
With the dawn a red sun rose, a lion's wrath, a feast for crows...

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To the gates of our destiny
Tell them we fought and died
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And then tell them, you saw us lie
On the ground as their law commands

And so three hundred rode
With their dark fate bestowed
Upon their longest day
Where they lay

But so the word was spread
And, this the legend said,
Made Greece retaliate
For Sparta's fate

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