

**Dartmouth Katabasis**  
*A Parody of The Aeneid, Book VI*

By Emma Sampugnarò '20

*Today, I bring a tale of Aeneas, a privileged young Dartmouth student, seeking his father in the land of the alumni. As usual, this one goes out to the muses.*

So grieving, and in tears, pious Aeneas drew toward the Center for Professional Development.

Aeneas entered the unmarked building, past the gleaming Bank of America, to seek the Sibyl - feared by men. By the Delian god of prophecy, she dispersed uncanny knowledge of corporate recruiting.

Thus she addressed the king,

“The hour demands no lagging over such rejection from McKinsey. Instead, you should make an offering. Seven cases of Keystone light and seven well-chosen Twisted Teas.”

Great soldier Aeneas began.

“One thing I pray for, since here they say one finds the gate of the Alumni. May I go to my dear father’s side? Teach me the path, show me the entrance.”

The sibyl, Bonnie Holbrook replied,

“Offspring of gods by blood, you must first connect with Prosperina - on LinkedIn. She’s a third degree connection and right now, she’s on a media cleanse. But she will easily accept your request if you are called by fate.”

So with impressive networking skills, Aeneas struggled but was able to carry out the orders of the Sibyl. He was taken to a great cave in the basement of Tuk-Tuk.

The Sibyl cried out,

“Enter the path here and unsheath your resume.”

She flung herself into the cave mouth and he strode boldly at her heels.

Before the entrance, greed formed a two-headed snake with Gluttony. Uncaffeinated shades roamed hopelessly in search of the KAF line. A group of stoners passed around a single juul.

Swept by sudden fear, Aeneas drew his resume. If his companion, knowing the truth, had not admonished him, he would still be there shouting about second round interviews.

Eventually, a whole crowd came streaming to the banks, dirty and unwashed.

Aeneas said,

“Tell me, Sister, what this means. The crowd at the stream. Where are these souls bound?”

Bonnie answered him,

“All in the nearby crowd are pauper souls, the ones who refused to donate to the Senior class gift. They flutter and roam this side a hundred years. Or until a bench is named after them.”

Anchises’ son, pondering on so much, stood in pity for the souls’ hard lot. And then swiftly turned away.

The Fields of Mourning came into view. So called since here are those whom pitiless puppy love has consumed. Among them was sorrowful Dido, who changed her D-plan for Aeneas. She later discovered that he was “there for a good time, but not for a long time.”

Then to the left, Aeneas saw a group of shades, chained to a rickety computer terminal. From the interior, groans were heard and the thud of lashes.

Aeneas cried,

“What are the forms of evil here? O’ Sister, tell me. And the punishments dealt out: why such a lamentation?”

Said the Sibyl,

“It is decreed that no pure soul should neglect the academic honor principle. These wicked shades have been cast out, and now transcribe the same essay on Buddhism in Film. Over and over until the document erases itself and they must start again.”

She then took him to places of delight, where souls take ease among the Big Green Groves. The good Shonda Rhimes and Theodore Geisel relished in an endless sophomore summer.

Said Aeneas,

“Tell us, happy souls, what great region holds Anchises? Also, where are all of the CS/Econ bros?”

The shades rolled their eyes, but eventually Anchises met his son on the grass.

He said in welcome,

“My son, truly, Dartmouth’s most famous alumni come not from finance and consulting, but from the humanities.”

Aeneas didn’t seem to understand. He continued.

“On the other hand, you are a legacy, I’ll make sure my buddy at McKinsey gives you a call.”

And with that, pious Aeneas returned to the College by the Ivory Gate.