



Ilium

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Dan SIMMONS

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From the towering heights of Olympos Mons on Mars, the mighty Zeus and his immortal family of gods, goddesses, and demigods look down upon a momentous battle, observing -- and often influencing -- the legendary exploits of Paris, Achilles, Hector, Odysseus, and the clashing armies of Greece and Troy.

Thomas Hockenberry, former twenty-first-century professor and *Iliad* scholar, watches as well. It is Hockenberry's duty to observe and report on the Trojan War's progress to the so-called deities who saw fit to return him from the dead. But the muse he serves has a new assignment for the wary scholic, one dictated by Aphrodite herself. With the help of fortieth-century technology, Hockenberry is to infiltrate Olympos, spy on its divine inhabitants ... and ultimately destroy Aphrodite's sister and rival, the goddess Pallas Athena.

On an Earth profoundly changed since the departure of the Post-Humans centuries earlier, the great events on the bloody plains of Ilium serve as mere entertainment. Its scenes of unrivaled heroics and unequaled carnage add excitement to human lives devoid of courage, strife, labor, and purpose. But this eloi-like existence is not enough for Harman, a man in the last year of his last Twenty. That rarest of post-postmodern men -- an "adventurer" -- he intends to explore far beyond the boundaries of his world before his allotted time expires, in search of a lost past, a devastating truth, and an escape from his own inevitable "final fax." Meanwhile, from the radiation-swept reaches of Jovian space, four sentient machines race to investigate -- and, perhaps, terminate -- the potentially catastrophic emissions of unexplained quantum-flux emanating from a mountaintop miles above the terraformed surface of Mars ...

The first book in a remarkable two-part epic to be concluded in the upcoming *Olympos*, Dan Simmons's *Ilium* is a breathtaking adventure, enormous in scope and imagination, sweeping across time and space to connect three seemingly disparate stories in fresh, thrilling, and totally unexpected ways. A truly masterful work of speculative fiction, it is quite possibly Simmons's finest achievement to date in an already storied literary career.

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Présentation de l'éditeur

Ilium, c'est Troie. Troie, c'est la guerre chantée par Homère dans *Illiade*.

Mais le mont Olympe est situé sur Mars et les dieux qui l'habitent, conformes à l'imagerie antique, abusent des facilités quantiques en guise de pouvoirs surhumains. Quasiment immortels, ils se déplacent à travers le temps et l'espace. Leur spectacle favori, voire obsessionnel, demeure cette guerre qui se déroule sur Terre et dont aucun d'eux ne connaît l'issue.

Aucun sauf Zeus, évidemment.

Pour vérifier la conformité de la guerre réelle avec ce qu'en a conté Homère, les scholiastes, des érudits pêchés à différents moments de l'histoire, sont dotés de pouvoirs secondaires non négligeables, ainsi celui d'emprunter l'identité d'un Grec ou d'un Troyen le temps de leur observation.

Hockenberry est l'un de ces scholiastes, ressuscité, extrait du XXe siècle et enrôlé contre son gré par Aphrodite en personne pour une mission secrète : faire triompher les Troyens, assassiner Athéné.

Pour leur part, les Moravecs, Intelligences Artificielles, qui vivent autour des planètes extérieures, commencent à s'inquiéter de la débauche de manipulations quantiques qui a pour source Mars. Elle menace le système solaire et peut-être l'univers tout entier. Ophu d'Io et Mahnmüt sont envoyés y voir ce qu'il s'y passe. L'un ne jure que par Shakespeare, l'autre que par Proust.

Et sur Mars, de petits hommes verts érigent sans fin des statues géantes dans le style de celles de l'île de Pâques. Tandis que sur terre, les Derniers Hommes, au nombre exact de un million, jouent les sybarites décadents.

Dan Simmons, l'auteur du *Cycle d'Hyperion*, a transposé dans le grandiose avenir avec génie, humour, culture et rigueur, la fameuse *Illiade*.

La Guerre de Troie, comme si vous y étiez. Vue de demain.

Amazon.com

Genre-hopping Dan Simmons returns to science fiction with the vast and intricate masterpiece *Ilium*. Within, Simmons weaves three astounding story lines into one Earth-, Mars-, and Jupiter-shattering cliffhanger that will leave readers aching for the sequel. On Earth, a post-technological group of humans, pampered by servant machines and easy travel via "faxing," begins to question its beginnings. Meanwhile, a team of sentient and Shakespeare-quoting robots from Jupiter's lunar system embark on a mission to Mars to investigate an increase in dangerous quantum fluctuations. On the Red Planet, they'll find a race of metahumans living out existence as the pantheon of classic Greek gods. These "gods" have recreated the Trojan War with reconstituted Greeks and Trojans and staffed it with scholars from throughout Earth's history who observe the events and report on the accuracy of Homer's *Iliad*. One of these scholars, Thomas Hockenberry, finds himself tangled in the midst of interplay between the gods and their playthings and sends the war reeling in a direction the blind poet could have never imagined. Simmons creates an exciting and thrilling tale set in the thick of the Trojan War as seen through Hockenberry's 20th-century eyes. At the same time, Simmons's robots study Shakespeare and Proust and the origin-seeking Earthlings find themselves caught in a murderous retelling of *The Tempest*. Reading this highly literate novel does take more than a passing familiarity with at least *The Iliad* but readers who can dive into these heady waters and swim with the current will be amply rewarded. --*Jeremy Pugh* From Publishers Weekly

Hugo and Stoker winner Simmons (*Hyperion*) makes a spectacular return to large-scale space opera in this elegant monster of a novel. Many centuries in the future, Earth's small, more or less human population lives

an enjoyable, if drone-like existence. Elsewhere, on some alternate Earth, or perhaps it's the distant past, the battle for Troy is in its ninth year. Oddly, its combatants, Hector, Achilles and the rest, seem to be following a script, speaking their lines exactly as Homer reported them in *The Iliad*. The Gods, who live on Olympus Mons on the planet Mars, may be post-humans, or aliens, or, well, Gods; it isn't entirely clear. Thomas Hockenberry, a late-20th-century professor of the classics from De Pauw University in Indiana, has, along with other scholars from his era, apparently been resurrected by the Gods. His job is to take notes on the war and compare its progress to Homer's tale, noting even the smallest deviations. Meanwhile, the "moravecs," a civilization of diverse, partially organic AIs clustered on the moons of Jupiter, have been disturbed by the quantum activity they've registered from the inner solar system and have sent an expedition to Mars to investigate. It will come as no surprise to the author's fans that the expedition's members include specialists in Shakespeare and Proust. Beautifully written, chock full of literary references, grand scenery and fascinating characters, this book represents Simmons at his best.

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