

For Wheelock, Chapter 23

**Vergil AENEID 2.40-56:
Laocoön, Episode One**

Prīmus ibi ante omnēs, magnā comitante
catervā,
Lāocoön ārdēns summā dēcurrit ab arce
et procul, 'Ō miserī, quae tanta īnsānia, cīvēs?
Crēditis āvectōs hostēs? Aut ūlla putātis
dōna carēre dolīs Danaum? Sic nōtus Ulixēs?
Aut hōc inclūsī lignō occultantur Achīvī,
aut haec in nostrōs fabricāta est māchina mūrōs,
īnspectūra domōs ventūraque dēsūper urbī,
aut aliquis latet error; equō nē crēdite, Teucrī.
Quidquid id est, timeō Danaōs et dōna
ferentēs.'

Sic fātus, validīs ingentem vīribus hastam
in latus inque ferī curvam compāgibus alvum
contorsit. Stetit illa tremēns, uterōque recussō
īnsonuēre cavae gemitumque dedēre cavernae.
Et, sī fāta deum, sī mēns nōn laeva fuisset,
impulerat ferrō Argolicās foedāre latebrās,
Trōiaque nunc stāret, Priamīque arx alta
manērēs.



*The Procession of the Trojan Horse into Troy
ca. 1760*

Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, 1727 - 1804



Trojan horse replica in Turkey

**TRANSLATION by the English poet John
Dryden:**

Laocoon, follow'd by a num'rous crowd,
Ran from the fort, and cried, from far, aloud:
'O wretched countrymen! what fury reigns?
What more than madness has possess'd your
brains?

Think you the Grecians from your coasts are
gone?

And are Ulysses' arts no better known?
This hollow fabric either must inclose,
Within its blind recess, our secret foes;
Or 't is an engine rais'd above the town,
T' o'erlook the walls, and then to batter down.

Somewhat is sure design'd, by fraud or force:
Trust not their presents, nor admit the horse.'

Thus having said, against the steed he threw
His forceful spear, which, hissing as flew,
Pierc'd thro' the yielding planks of jointed wood,
And trembling in the hollow belly stood.

The sides, transpierc'd, return a rattling sound,
And groans of Greeks inclos'd come issuing
thro' the wound

And, had not Heav'n the fall of Troy design'd,
Or had not men been fated to be blind,
Enough was said and done t'inspire a better mind.
Then had our lances pierc'd the treach'rous wood,
And Ilian tow'rs and Priam's empire stood.

*Laocoon group,
1st century B. C.
Vatican Museums,
Rome
By Athenodoros,
Hagesandros, and
Polydoros of Rhodes*



