

Translation of Vergil's *Aeneid* II.XL-LVI

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Abstract: *I originally translated Book II of Vergil's Aeneid for my advanced placement Latin course in high school; two years later, I returned to the translation of the Aeneid for Professor Carrie Mowbray's Latin course, which focused on an in-depth, thorough examination of the Aeneid (more specifically, Books I-VI) in both Latin and English. This excerpt taken from Book II has remained a favorite of mine, as the vivid imagery and language allow readers to envision a most detailed scene. Vergil's personification of the Trojan Horse is the prime reason this excerpt has always appealed to me. Laocoon's famous line, "quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentis," is oft-cited throughout ancient literature. My translation aims to highlight the vivacity of Vergil's poetry, in order to conjure up uniquely graphic and evocative scenes.*

References and Lexical Acknowledgements:

Vergil, and Ganiban, Randall Toth. *Aeneid* Books 1-6. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2012.

A Latin Dictionary. Founded on Andrews' edition of Freund's Latin dictionary. revised, enlarged, and in great part rewritten by. Charlton T. Lewis, Ph.D. and. Charles Short, LL.D. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1879. Accessed via www.perseus.tufts.edu.

Primus ibi ante omnis magna comitante caterva
 Laocoon ardens summa decurrit ab arce,
 et procul 'o miseri, quae tanta insania, cives?
 creditis avectos hostis? aut ulla putatis
 dona carere dolis Danaum? sic notus Ulixes?
 aut hoc inclusi ligno occultantur Achivi,
 aut haec in nostros fabricata est machina muros,
 inspectura domos venturaque desuper urbi,
 aut aliquis latet error; equo ne credite, Teucri.
 quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentis.'
 sic fatus ualidis ingentem viribus hastam
 in latus inque feri curvam compagibus alvum
 contorsit. stetit illa tremens, uteroque recusso
 insonuere cavae gemitumque dedere cavernae.
 et, si fata deum, si mens non laeva fuisset,
 impulerat ferro Argolicas foedare latebras,
 Troiaque nunc staret, Priamique arx alta maneres.

First, there before all men, with a great throng accompanying,
 the burning Laocoon charges down from the highest citadel,
 and from afar, cries out, 'O wretched citizens, what is this frenzy, so great?
 Do you believe that the enemy has been swept away?
 Or do you suppose that any Greek gifts are devoid of trickery?
 Thus, is it for this that Ulysses is notorious?
 Either the Greeks are hidden within this wood,
 or this machine was forged against our walls,
 in order to spy on our homes and to come into the city from overhead,
 or some other trick is lurking; Trojans, do not trust in the horse.
 Whatever this is, I dread the Greeks even bearing offerings.'
 Thus having spoken, he hurled a mighty pike with forceful power
 into the side and into the womb of the beast with curved seams.
 That pike stood quivering, and after it struck the womb,
 the hollows rang out and the cavities gave out a groan.
 And, if the fate of the gods had not been ill-omened,
 if the mind had not been foolish, he would have impelled us
 to defile the Greek hiding places with iron,
 and Troy would presently stand,
 and the high stronghold of Priam would endure.