

A2 Latin Unseen Verse (OVID) Past Paper: 2000 (The Omen of the Serpent)

The Greek fleet, waiting to sail for Troy, receives an omen which predicts the length of the war they will fight there. However, it is prevented by contrary winds from setting sail, and Agamemnon, the Greek leader, is forced to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia, in order to placate the virgin goddess, Diana.

A thousand ships set off to pursue Paris to Troy, and vengeance would have been swift had not strong winds made the sea impassable and had the ships not been held fast at Aonian Aulis.

hic patrio de more Iovi cum sacra parassent,
 serpere caeruleum Danaï¹ videre draconem
 in platanum², coeptis quæ stabat proxima sacris.
 nidus³ erat volucrum bis quattuor arbore summa:
 quas simul et matrem circum sua damna⁴ volentem
 corripuit serpens avidoque recondidit ore,
 obstipuere omnes, at veri providus augur
 Thestorides⁵ 'vincemus'; ait, 'gaudete, Pelasgi⁶!
 Troia cadet, sed erit nostri mora longa laboris,'
 atque novem volucres in belli digere⁷ annos.
 sed manet Aoniis⁸ Boreas⁹ violentus in undis
 bellaque non transfert, et sunt qui parcere Troiæ
 Neptunum credant, quia moenia fecerat urbi;
 at non Thestorides⁵, nec enim nescitve tacetve
 sanguine virgineo placandam virginis iram
 esse deæ. postquam pietatem publica causa
 rexque patrem vicit, castumque datura cruorem
 flentibus ante aram stetit Iphigenia ministris,
 victa dea est nubemque oculis obiecit et inde
 supposita fertur mutasse¹⁰ Mycenida¹¹ cerva.

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OVID: *Metamorphoses* XII, 11ff.

¹Danaï, -orum m.pl.

²platanus, -i f.

³nidus, -i m

⁴damna, -orum n.pl.

⁵Thestorides is nominative

⁶Pelasgi, -orum m.pl.

⁷digero, digerere, digessi, digestum...in +acc.

⁸Aonius, -a -um

⁹Boreas, -ae m.

¹⁰muto, mutare, mutavi, mutatum

¹¹Mycenis (acc. Mycenida) f.

Greeks
 plane tree
 nest
 (here) doomed chicks

Greeks
 I interpret... as
 Aonian (referring to part of
 Greece)
 Boreas (the North Wind)
 (here) I replace
 (here) Iphigenia

[28]

(b) Write out and scan lines 2 and 20 of the above passage.

[2]

