



# Greek and Roman Mythology

## Ch 14

### The Adventure of Aeneas

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Aeneas defeats Turnus, by Luca Giordano, 1634–1705. The *genius* of Aeneas is shown ascendant, looking into the light of the future, while that of Turnus is setting, shrouded in darkness.

In Trojan War, Aeneas was second only to Hector among famous heroes.

He was actually the son of Venus.

# PART ONE: FROM TROY TO ITALY

# *Aeneas flees burning Troy,*

Federico Barocci, 1598.





With Venus's help, Aeneas was able to escape from Troy with his father and little son, to sail away to a new home.

Aeneas was often regarded as the real founder of Rome because Romulus and Remus, the actual founders, were born in the city his son built, in Alba Longa.



When Aeneas set sail from Troy, many Trojans had joined him. Aeneas was told in a dream that the new home destined for them was a country far away to the west, Italy—in his days called Hesperia.

Aeneas in dream

Aeneas' company encountered the Harpies just as Jason and his men had done. However, the Trojans were not as bold as the Greeks to kill these horrifying creatures, they were forced to the sea to escape Harpies.



**Aeneas and his  
Companions Fighting the  
Harpies**

1646 - 1647

Musée du Louvre, Paris,  
France

Painting, Oil on canvas, 155  
x 218 cm





"Andromache Mourning Hector" by Jacques-Louis David, 1783

To their surprise, at the next landing stop they met Hector's wife Andromache. When Troy fell she had been given to Neoptolemus, sometimes called Pyrrhus, Achilles' son. However, Pyrrhus abandoned Andromache and married Hermione, Helen's daughter.

Andromache then married a Trojan prophet, Helenus. They were now ruling the place. When Aeneas came, they welcomed him and his men.

Map of the Mediterranean region showing the journey of Aeneas from Troy to Italy. The map includes labels for various locations: MANTVA, CLVSIVM, LAVRENTVM, AVSONIA, ARPI, CVMAE, PETELIA, ERYX, ACESTA, Carthago, LIBYA, BVTHROTVM, ITHACA, ARGOS, STROPHADES, ORTYGIA, PERGAMA, AENEAS, TROIA, and THRACIA. A red line with arrows indicates the path of the journey, starting from Troy, passing through the islands, and ending in Italy. A red box highlights the area around LAVRENTVM and AVSONIA.



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However, there's still something not warned by Helenus. He did not know that the southern part of Sicily was occupied by Cyclopes. Aeneas and his men met Polyphemus, but, fortunately, they escaped the risk for one of Ulysses' sailors told them to flee immediately.





While sailing around Sicily, Aeneas and his men were struck by a strong storm brought by Juno.

Juno hated Trojans for she could never forget the judgment of Paris. She even bore special hatred toward Aeneas for she knew that, by fate, Aeneas would conquer her pet city, Carthage.

## The Trojans came to Carthage



When Neptune calmed the sea, Aeneas and his men landed the north coast of Africa. The place they came ashore was quite near to Carthage. Juno at this time came up with a brilliant idea.

Juno planned to let Aeneas and Dido, the beautiful ruler of Carthage, be in love with each other. For love, Aeneas might forget their new home in Italy.

Venus learned and decided to let Dido fall deep in love with Aeneas so he would not get hurt in Carthage. She didn't, however, let Aeneas love her too much in return so he would remember his mission sailing to Italy.

Dido



Aeneas lived with Dido happily for quite a long period of time until one day Jupiter sent Mercury to Carthage and told him to continue his destiny and mission.



Aeneas and Dido

Dido committed suicide



Dido pleaded Aeneas not to go, but Aeneas and his men secretly left Carthage at night. On shipboard looking back at the walls of Carthage, Aeneas saw the city illuminated by a great fire. Unknowingly, he was looking at the glow of Dido's funeral pyre. Dido committed suicide when she saw Aeneas gone.

# PART TWO: THE DESCENT INTO THE LOWER WORLD



**Aeneas, guided by the  
Cumaean Sibyl, descending  
into the Underworld**

Aeneas followed Helenus's words to find the Sibyl of Cumae, a woman of wisdom. She told Aeneas that she would lead him to the underworld where he would learn all he needed to know from his father, Anchises. (Anchises died in the great storm)

To get to Anchises, Aeneas went to seek a golden bough growing on tree. Only with this in his hand could he enter the underworld.

In to the wilderness of trees Aeneas found it with his ever-faithful friend Achates.

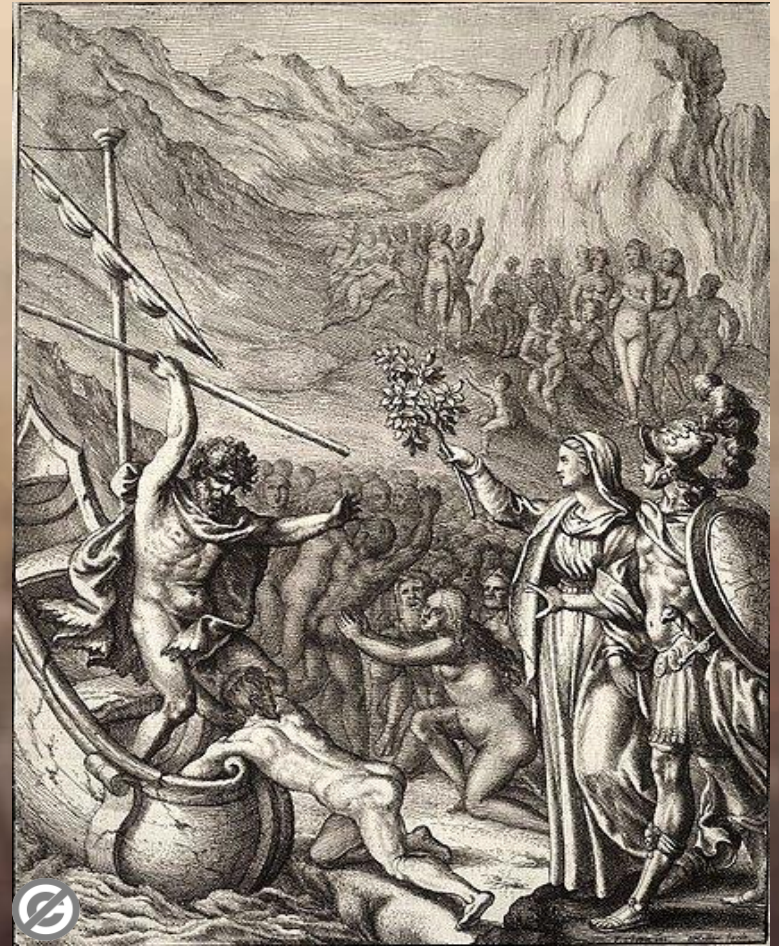
Then, together, prophetess and hero started their journey.



*Venus Appearing to  
Aeneas and Achates*

Seeing the golden bough in Aeneas's hand, Charon, the ferryman in the underworld yield to take them. When they encountered Cerberus the dog, they pacified it with cakes as Psyche did.

There in the underworld, Aeneas saw many ghosts, including Minos, Europa's son, and even Dido's.



Aeneas and Sibyl boarded Charon's ferry to the underworld.

At last, they reached a spot where the road divided. The road to the left was full of horrid sounds and groans. The one to the right led to Elysian Field where Aeneas would find his father. There, Anchises was found and he gave Aeneas instructions on how to establish home in Italy and how they could evade and endure all the follow-up hardships.

Next day, the Trojans sailed up the coast of Italy looking for their promised land.

# PART THREE: THE WAR IN ITALY

In Italy, Juno was again causing troubles. She made the most powerful people of the country, the Latins and Rutulians, fiercely opposed to the Trojans. She also summoned Alecto, one of the Furies, from Hades and bade her launch bitter wars over the land.



The furies



The aged Latinus, a great grandson of Saturn, had been warned by the spirit of his father, Faunus, not to marry his daughter Lavinia to any men in the country but a stranger who was soon to arrive. From the union a race destined to hold the entire world would be born. Hence, when Aeneas arrived, Latinus received them with hospitality. He believed that Aeneas was the one his daughter had to marry.

# Juno stepped in...

Alecto first inflamed Queen Amata's heart to oppose the marriage between her daughter and Aeneas.

Next, Alecto informed the king of Rutulians (one of the suitors for Lavinia's) of the union of Lavinia and Aeneas. This drove Turnus to frenzy. He immediately started his army to march to Latium.



Third, Alecto guided Aeneas's young son (Ascanius) to kill a stag cared and tended by a farmer's daughter. The farmers got furious and would like to kill Ascanius.

Now, Latins and Rutulians together were opposed to the little band of Trojans.

## Father Tiber informed Aeneas in a dream



In this perilous moment, Father Tiber, the god of the great river Aeneas and his men encamped near, visited Aeneas in a dream telling him to go upstream to Evander. There, Aeneas would get the support he needed.

The old king in Evander further suggested Aeneas to ask for help from the Etruscan for Evander was too small to help the Trojans. Etruscans, on the other hand, will be willing to help Aeneas for they hated their former ruthless King, Mezentius. And now, Mezentius was helping Turnus. Hence, Etruria were determined and glad to support Aeneas to fight.

The two sides began their war.



# Brave military couriers

**Nisus** (experienced soldier) and **Euryalus** (a stripling but equally brave and full of generous ardor for heroic deeds)

They died for they risked to go through Turnus' camp to send message to Aeneas.



Wikimedia commons Jastrow






*Nisus and Euryalus* (1827)  
by Jean-Baptiste Roman (Louvre Museum)

The rest of the Trojans' adventures were all on the battlefield. Aeneas came back with a large army of Etruscans in time to save his men. Later, he led the army to succeed in winning the victory of the war. Virgil's poem ends with Turnus' death. Aeneas, as we learned, married Lavinia and founded Roman race.













# Q & A

- ① In your opinion, to what extent is the Aeneid a political poem?  
Is it propaganda?
- ② Divine intervention:  
How does the behavior of the gods reflect on human qualities?



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