Paper #1 – Descriptive Commentary

The purpose of this assignment is to prepare you for the larger, secondary commentary while still allowing you to review the morphological, syntactical, and poetic features of Vergil's Latin. In brief, you will **choose TEN words or phrases from Sinon's first main speech (Book 2, lines 77-104)** and **IDENTIFY** a **POETIC/RHETORICAL FIGURE** and then **FULLY IDENTIFY** the syntax of the word or phrase

A few things to keep in mind:

- Choose the words wisely! To get full credit for the assignment I will need to see a mix of poetic features: There can be some overlap/repeats, but I would like to see **AT LEAST 6 DIFFERENT FIGURES** mentioned. *You may earn bonus points if you ID more than 6!*
- You need to provide a **complete morphological identification** and a **complete syntactical identification** for each word/phrase. Use the "Fully Identify" guidelines from the handout online to ensure that you provide all the information.
- You need to name and describe the poetic/rhetorical devices and can hazard potential explanations as to their effect/function. You should focus on figures that we have discussed in class, but you are not limited to those! You can use your vast knowledge of figures from other poetry classes or consult the appendix (#411-447) to add some additional elements to your repertoire.

Your commentary needs to be typed, <u>but it can simply take the form of a list</u> in which you write out the Latin words, provide the identification, poetic/rhetorical figure, and any other information necessary.

Here is an example taken from the following passage (from Laocoön's first speech) to give you an idea of what it could look like:

> **aut** hoc inclusi ligno occultantur Achiui,
> **aut** haec **in nostros fabricata est machina muros**,
> inspectura domos uenturaque desuper urbi,
> **aut** aliquis latet error;

1. ***aut…aut…aut…*** (lines 45-8): **anaphora**, the repetition of a word at the beginning of consecutive clauses or phrases. Here the repetition of the conjunction *aut* suggests Laocoön's confusion about the actual purpose of the horse. Anaphora is often used at moments of heightened emotion and Laocoön is, understandably, very stressed at the presence of the horse outside Troy and what it could mean for the city. [*note: no syntactical definition is necessary here, since the figure is represented by the conjunction *aut*]
2. ***in nostros fabricata est machina muros*** (line 46): **chiasmus**: the elements *in nostros…muros* surround the subject and verb *fabricata est machina* in the classical ABBA pattern. *Nostros muros* are both acc. masc. pl., with *muros* as the object of the prepoision *in. Machina* is nom. fem. sing., and the subject of the verb, *fabricata est*, which is perf. pass. ind. 3rd pers. sing. Here the inclusive pattern of the chiasmus actually paints a picture of the horse within the walls of Troy, the ultimate result of this contrivance.

THIS COMMENTARY IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON FRIDAY March 13th—but you can always turn it in early! If you cannot make it to class for some reason, please email me the document by 11:00 PM that day. The penalties for late work are noted on the Syllabus.