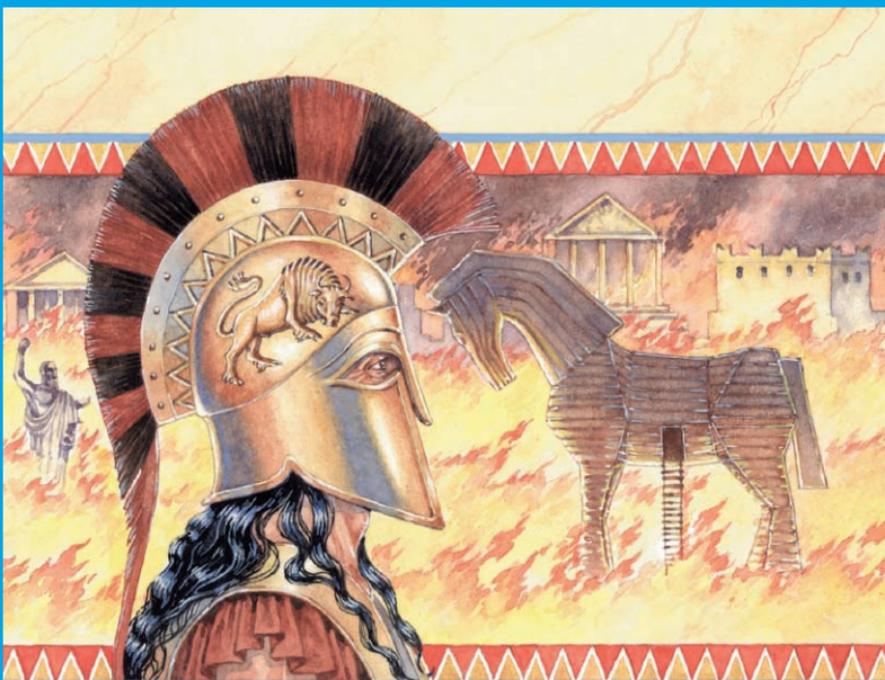


Benedict Flynn
THE TALE OF TROY

Read by **Benjamin Soames**

**JUNIOR
CLASSICS**



1	The Marriage of Peleus and Thetis	11:43
2	The Judgement of Paris	11:21
3	Helen of Sparta	9:02
4	– Helen and Paris Flee	4:50
5	Greece Rises in Revenge	11:52
6	The Gathering at Aulis	10:51
7	Troy Besieged	10:44
8	The Early Years of the War	8:43
9	– Pestilence in the Camp	5:37
10	The Wrath of Achilles	13:31
11	– To Battle!	7:14
12	The Death of Patroclus	8:58
13	– Achilles the Invincible	9:35
14	The Death of Hector	10:41
15	The Sack of Troy	13:40
16	– The Trojan Horse	9:30

Total time: 2:38:01

Benedict Flynn

THE TALE OF TROY

There really was once a time when the tall towers of a city called Troy reached gleaming into the sky; when its proud king fought against an invading army in a desperate siege. It was nearly four thousand years ago, in an age when the kings of golden Mycenae held sway over the mainland of Greece and Troy commanded the entrance to the Hellespont. Bronze Age peoples from Europe and Asia came to trade there, and the city overlooked a well-watered and fertile plain. It was a rich city, a prize to be won.

The Tale of Troy comes to us through a poet named Homer. He told the story as a poem which he called **The Iliad**, because Troy was also known as Ilium. Homer wandered from town to town in ancient Greece repeating his poem; people would pay to listen to him. He sang another too, called **The Odyssey**, about how the Greek warriors made their way home when the siege ended.

The Iliad is where myth and history meet. It is a blurred memory, already five centuries old when Homer composed his poem, of the rivalries that led to the real

Trojan war, and the siege. It is also the memory of an imagined golden age, a distant time of heroes, when great deeds were performed by brave men, and mortals were the pawns in the gods' quarrels with each other.

Homer's characters, the gods and heroes of the stories, were very real for the people to whom he sang. The gods were the way the ancient Greeks explained their world. If something unusual happened, there was probably a god behind it. And for every blessing, they said, the gods gave two sorrows.

Ancient Greeks thought men resembled their gods, apart from being mortal. So because they felt emotions like desire, anger or love, the Greeks assumed the gods also did. They weren't expected to be good all the time – and they weren't. Often they would disobey Zeus, and be punished by him.

Different gods looked after different aspects of their lives. Zeus was the father of the gods, and the most powerful. He ruled over the stormy sky with thunderbolts and lightning, enthroned on Mount Olympus.

Poseidon was lord of the sea. The underworld, where the souls of the dead lived, was ruled by Hades. The realm of love was ruled by Zeus' sister Aphrodite.

Zeus had many children by different wives – goddesses, nymphs and mortal women. One son, Apollo, was the god of music and poetry and famous as a deadly accurate archer. A daughter, Athene, was the goddess of wisdom and courage. Another son was Ares, the god of war. Hephaestus, the god of the forge, who made the armour for Achilles, was the son of Hera, queen of the gods. Zeus' infidelities annoyed her so much she produced him all on her own.

Heroes were the sons or daughters of a mortal and a god, like Achilles, the son of Peleus Prince of Thessaly, and Thetis the sea nymph. Ordinary people admired them for their wonderful deeds, but heroes did not perform their feats for others. They sought after excellence and glory for themselves. When Achilles and Agamemnon quarrel in the story it is because Agamemnon refuses to show him enough respect for the deeds he has done, and not only because Agamemnon takes away the lovely Bryseis.

The ancient Greeks used Homer's poems like The Bible. They enjoyed the stories but they also learned from them how to behave

in the right way. When Paris stole Helen away he broke the laws of hospitality. Everyone could learn from **The Tale of Troy** how furious that made the gods, and how Paris was punished. Or how Achilles' uncontrolled anger and slaughter of Trojans after the death of his friend Patroclus hastened his end by angering the gods. Arguments were settled by referring to Homer, and children used the poems in their lessons.

Homer's poem was sung everywhere – to halls of noblemen, at fairs to merchants, and farmers in their villages. **The Tale of Troy** was so important to the ancient Greeks that Homer became a kind of hero himself. Long after his death artists, thinkers and ordinary people still look to his tale for inspiration.

Notes by Benedict Flynn

**The music on this CD is taken from the
NAXOS and MARCO POLO catalogues**

STRAVINSKY Firebird Suite No. 2 BRT Philharmonic Orch., Brussels/Alexander Rahbari	8.550263
KOECHLIN The Jungle Book Rheinland-Pfalz Philharmonic/Leif Segerstam	8.223484
GREIG Lyric Pieces BBC Scottish SO/Jerzy Maksymiuk	8.550864
GILSON The Sea Moscow SO/Frédéric Devreese	8.223809
SALTER & SKINNER The Wolf Man Moscow SO/William T Stromberg	8.223747
WAGNER The Flying Dutchman ORFZO, Vienna/Pinchas Steinberg	8.660025-26
MENDELSSOHN Ruy Blas – Overture Slovak Philharmonic/Oliver Dohnanyi	8.550222
SCHREKER Fantastic Overture Slovak Philharmonic/Edgar Seipenbusch	8.220392
RAVEL Daphnis and Chloë Suite No. 2 Czecho-Slovak Radio SO/Kenneth Jean	8.550424
WALTON Symphony No. 2 English Northern Philharmonia/Paul Daniel	8.553402
PROKOFIEV The Year 1941, Op. 90 National SO of Ukraine/Theodore Kuchar	8.553056
PROKOFIEV Romeo and Juliet Op. 64 National SO of Ukraine/Andrew Mogrelia	8.553184-5

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THE TALE OF TROY

Read by **Benjamin Soames**

There was once a time, nearly four thousand years ago, when the tall towers of a city called Troy reached gleaming into the sky; when its proud king fought against an invading army in a desperate siege. **The Tale of Troy** was so important to the ancient Greeks that its author, Homer, became a kind of hero. Long after his death artists, thinkers and ordinary people still look to his tale for inspiration.

This exciting version of the famous story is retold especially for 8-13-year-olds.



Benjamin Soames trained at LAMDA. Since then he has been active on both stage and screen, appearing in the popular television series *Sharpe* and *Absolutely Fabulous* as well as the television films *Heavy Weather* and *England, My England*. He has toured worldwide in the acclaimed Cheek By Jowl production of *Measure For Measure*. He also reads the highly-praised *Tales from the Norse Legends* and *Tales from the Greek Legends* for Naxos AudioBooks.

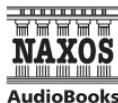
“Benedict Flynn’s lucid retelling is read with engaging directness by Benjamin Soames.”

THE INDEPENDENT

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