

Give me a hero and I'll write you a tragedy.
Give me another and I'll write of their treachery.
Give me a third and- actually, don't give me a third. Two is all we need.
You only need two people for a betrayal.
Now, humans aren't inherently treacherous,
In the same way that you can't say all heroes are tragic,
But it would certainly seem that they are.

I would call it a problem of mythology
Painting the worst of the people and the deities,
Making us think all men are like Atreus who cursed his family and cannibalized,
Or else they're like Zeus,
Who seems to do nothing but commit adultery and destroy lives.
And of course,
You can't forget the story of the Trojan horse,
Pretending to be a gift and sacrifice to the gods,
And instead being a ploy for the Greeks to win the war against all odds.

Yes, treachery is rampant in our myths and stories,
With heroes and villains destroying each other for their share of the glory.
It is not all made up though, as any Roman can tell you,
It became all too real when a dying Caesar said to Brutus,
"Et tu?".

If I had time, I could keep going further;
Spotting the treachery and trickery in classical antiquity
Isn't a significant victory,
Even for just a casual observer.

The purpose of learning history and myth, though,
Isn't really what famous quotes you have memorized
And whose specific stories you know.
Instead, you need only study their meaning,
So we never repeat what happened long long ago.

So give me a hero, and I'll write you a tragedy.
Give me another and I'll write of their treachery.
Give me a third and- actually, don't give me a third. Two is all we need.
You only need two people to learn from them.

So study those two heroes, study their stories.
Learn why they did what they did to get their share of glory.
It doesn't matter who they are, not really,

Just as long as you can understand their trickery.

Learn why what Zeus did to Hera was more than just rude,
And why Atreus brought a curse on his line just because of a feud.
Know why the Greeks deceiving the Trojans was brilliantly cruel,
And how Caesar's murder was due in part to his own treacherous rule.
If you want, find someone else, there's plenty to spare,
Just study *someone's* story, so you know to beware.

Trickery and treachery in classical antiquity
Is everywhere in our myths, our heroes, and our histories.
These betrayals may have happened ages ago,
But even today their stories have much to show.

We can learn from these stories
Of heroes, villains, and gods,
So that whenever we find ourselves at odds
With each other, toe-to-toe,
Instead of tricking and betraying one another,
We can try and leave treachery in the past where it belongs,
In our stories of long long ago.