

Passive of intransitive verbs

Seems logically impossible

- Scipio defeated Hannibal at Zama
- Hannibal was defeated by Scipio at Zama

- Scipio returned to Rome
- ??

In Latin intransitive verbs can be used in the third singular passive in an impersonal construction

Ergo omnes magno circum clamore fremebant,
praecipue pius Aeneas. Tum iussa Sibyllae,
haud mora, festinant flentes, aramque sepulchri
congerere arboribus caeloque educere certant.
Itur in antiquam silvam, stabula alta ferarum;
procumbunt piceae, sonat icta securibus illex,
fraxineaeque trabes cuneis et fissile robur
scinditur, advolvunt ingentis montibus ornos.

Now from all sides, with tumult and loud cry,
The Trojans came, — Aeneas leading all
In faithful grief; they hasten to fulfil
The Sibyl's mandate, and with many a tear
Build, altar-wise, a pyre, of tree on tree
Heaped high as heaven : then they penetrate
The tall, old forest, where wild creatures bide,
And fell pitch-pines, or with resounding blows
Of axe and wedge, cleave oak and ash-tree through,
Or logs of rowan down the mountains roll. (Aeneid VI 179)

Itur in antiquam silvam it is gone into an ancient wood = they go into an ancient wood

Agent (if stated) by ab and ablative

Ab hostibus acriter pugnatum est

The only passive construction poss with verbs taking the dative (naturally intransitive):

Omnibus argumentis utendum est
Use must be made of all arguments

Decimae legioni a Caesare indulgebatur
Caesar used to indulge the tenth legion (It used to be indulged by Caesar to the tenth legion)

A bonis civibus paretur legibus
Good citizens obey the laws (it is obeyed to the laws by good citizens)