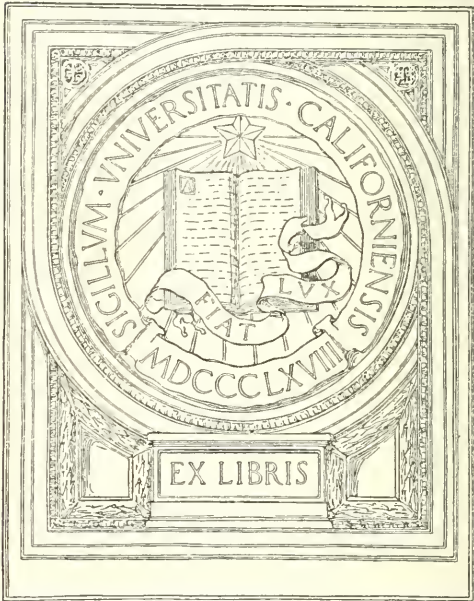
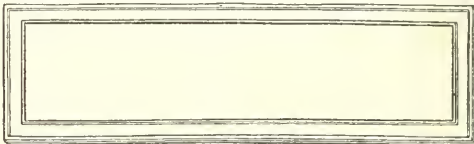




UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
AT LOS ANGELES



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# PROPERTIUS

TRANSLATED BY

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OXFORD

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# PREFACE

I. THIS translation follows the Clarendon Press text of 1902 except where a footnote warns the reader of a divergence therefrom. The divergences are of various kinds. In a few passages I have returned to a traditional reading which that text had rejected; in a few others I have adopted a more palaeographically exact reconstitution of the reading where tradition offers a *vox nihili* which admits more than one possible correction: e.g. at III. xiii. 32, for the vulg. *versicoloris*, the charming *vitricoloris* (N. *viricoloris*) which Prof. Robinson Ellis kindly communicated to me.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes the change is only a reformed punctuation; in one case the probabilities now seem to me to justify the prima-facie immensely improbable hypothesis of transposition; and in about a dozen cases I am now willing to accept the testimony of inferior manuscript witnesses against N. But much the largest category of innovation consists of conjectures admitted to the text. And here, if consistency be a thing worthy of vindication, I have to offer a few words of defence. I was guided in 1902 by a rigorous fidelity to the principles laid down for the Oxford Series of Classical Texts. The series was then comparatively new, and the principles have suffered a natural development in course of

<sup>1</sup> The word *lascivia* in IV. iii. 11 was suggested to me by Dr. Rutherford.

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their application to an increasingly wide field of material. However, the doctrine of maintaining the best manuscript reading, unless where it is to be held downright impossible or to admit of pretty certain conjectural correction, is well enough in the conditions of a text with *apparatus criticus*; the reader is not bound by the editor's choice, and has the means at hand to revise on appeal and substitute a definite sentence for *Non liquet*: but ἐπέχω is a conclusion ruled out by practical necessity for the translator, whose private hesitations may be still further dissolved by the thought that his reader will be easily content to take the constitution of the Latin text for granted if he is not provoked by stumbling-blocks in the English. Anyhow, the reader is entitled to require of the translator that he shall first settle what words he is going to translate in a given passage; and whereas the editor might, in a text of prescribed conservative structure, offer a *lectio dignissima* still competing with a pair of *lectiones dignae*, the translator must plump for the one which has even an infinitesimal majority of the points of probability. I have therefore promoted a good many readings from *apparatus criticus* to text. And furthermore I have ventured to give a first airing here to a few new conjectures of my own, though this is no place to vindicate their legitimacy. I will frankly plead that to alter one's mind on no point in four years, in the matter of so difficult and much disputed a text as Propertius might be set down to obstinacy; and, in particular,



the exercise of writing a complete version of my author, compiling a complete index to his Latinity, and amassing many materials for a commentary, has given me a far more disciplined and secure insight into Propertius.

II. As a translation it has the initial misfortune of being designed for two markets. It is intended for any such person as having no Latin may yet be curious to explore Propertius; but it is also intended to help those who wish to study this difficult and peculiar poet in the original. For the service of the student it takes its place as one of the pieces in a scheme of exposition which also comprises text, *index Latinitatis*, and commentary. But the first condition, if it is to satisfy the scholar's purposes, is that the key should fit the lock. I have therefore studied before all things to be faithful in my version: *inque meis libris nil prius esse fide*, as the Soothsayer says in the Prologue to Book IV. But the formula of fidelity may be applied to very different methods. 'Give me word for word,' says one man; and another maintains that it is no true translation which does not give a poem for a poem. Now *ex hypothesi* a prose version puts the latter requisition out of court. And, indeed, it might here be made a brief question whether the problem of turning verse into prose is not one which might conveniently be treated apart from translations of verse into verse or prose into prose.

III. Let us premise that there are two epochs when a language is most apt for these purposes. In the elasticity of youth, translation is its natural diet and exer-

cise: Latin, Italian and English all alike employed and deployed their adolescent powers by taking in foreign material for assimilation. At such dates the receiving idiom is able and ready to expand and adapt itself in sympathy with what it seeks to naturalize. Next when the receiving idiom is grown classically precise and firm-set, foreign literature immigrating by the way of translation is so violently drilled into conformity that (in a typical case) it soon comes to be allowed that Pope's *Iliad* may be a great English poem but it is not Homer. And lastly, I think that Mr. Bevan, in the preface to his excellent *Prometheus Bound*, was right when he argued that the present stage of the language is peculiarly favourable to translators. The incipient senile ataxy of English restores us something of the receptiveness which in the Elizabethans was an effect of juvenal elasticity.

But is it not true to say that translation from verse into prose is a specifically different problem? Historically, at least, it will be admitted that we have in English no such translation which can take rank among *Testi di Lingua*. Transpositions, not merely from language to language but from the key of verse into the key of prose, have not been done in English at any period when (either by virtue of the then age of the language or thanks to the general contemporaneous excellence of writing) they could become classical exemplars of the kind. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say that they are a Victorian product; and, to put a still

finer point on it, that the prevailing vogue has been a reflected Tennysonianism in phrasing, and a truckling to the momentary Saxonizing reaction in vocabulary.

It is vain then to seek for principles of craftsmanship in second-rate models: there is no authority to give an answer. Mr. A. Lang ingeniously observes that poetical words in English should be used to translate poetry. Yes: but tautology, charming form of argument as it is, should be complete. If he had said that poetry should be translated into poetry, his statement would have been impregnable. But the day is past when English could be approved for poetical merely in virtue of certain quaint archaic vocables spotted about in sentences of quite modern rhythm and construction. Samuel Butler's *Odyssey*, horrifying as it was by the want of conventional quaintness and unreality, has done more to help us towards an eventual solution.

We are placed in a liberty of experiment which is bewildering as well as facilitating: no rule, no worthy model, nothing but a vague feeling that some day somewhere this desired and undiscovered province of speech must yield up its secrets to exploration. The present state of the language invites the pioneer; taste seems to require a certain character in prose translation from verse; yet criticism will not be content to allow that an anachronistic patchwork gives the missing note. The question remains: How shall prose render poetry and yet remain prose?

IV. Or better—for a literary inquiry loses in worth and interest by every step away from the concrete—what is the translator to do? Write prose which is ambling off at every turn into unchecked verse rhythms, like some of the writings of the late Mr. J. A. Symonds? or sorrowfully admit that the major excellences of prose, beyond a mere verbal dexterity, are almost hopelessly precluded to him? In candour I accept the latter alternative: which is tantamount to confessing that the translator here sets to work with a base alloy for his material. Whether a style which partiality may dignify by the name of Romantic Prose, but which is more apt to be damned for a mongrel jargon, can possibly excite any pleasure in any critic whose pleasure is worth exciting, is a question which can only be answered by humble experiment. But I am so little sanguine of a good success in the result, that I prefer to rest a defence for apparent freedoms and deviations from word-for-word rendering upon the very same grounds upon which word-for-word is usually defended as a method: namely, fidelity. For if we take *A word for a word* as one end of a scale of faithful translation, and place the maxim *A poem for a poem* at the other; and if, as we have seen, the second formula is *ex hypothesi* prescinded; we are left with a process of approximation from the confessedly inadequate towards the formally unattainable. But though it is open to the severe critic to condemn all attempts for failing to reach the impossible further term, I would

argue that it is unreasonable to disqualify any attempt for departing from the worthless hither term. No one can seriously hold that it is better to render a word for a word than an idiom for an idiom, a thought for a thought, &c. 'A word for a word' is the meanest possible appreciation of what is the unit in language—little less absurd than 'a letter for a letter'. The trouble begins, though, when we advance to the higher units—such as a sentence for a sentence; and becomes acute where we encounter something which appears vital in the articulation of modern prose, the paragraph, and which yet is incommensurable with, say, the stanza in verse. Principle seems to be baffled, though rule of thumb in composition is commonly met by rule of individual fancy in criticism. But experience has taught that by angling with a parable you may sometimes catch a little truth which slips through the nets of definition.

To translate one language into another, then, may be compared to executing a painter's theme in sculpture. To translate from verse in one language to prose in another is like the attempt to render a painter's effect in some medium which discards one of the original artist's resources; like an engraver who tries to interpret a coloured painting in black and white. All means are his except such as are peculiar to colour. And even of the effects of colour there are some which perhaps it is lawfully possible for him to strive after: not as the heraldic designers do, who by a fixed code of

convention indicate in black and white the proper colourings of a blazon, for the literary equivalent to this practice would be a cypher. But after he has with meticulous nicety endeavoured to copy the elements of composition, perspective, line and modelling, he will still hardly rest content without essaying to transplant the tone and feeling of his original by such means of graduated richness and reserve as his tools allow him : that is, he must be at particular pains to exploit the capacities of rhythm in the sentence, allusive hereditary or acquired suggestions of words, and discreetly managed inversion.

V. A faithful translator is in duty bound to be faithful in absurdity where, to the best of his appreciation, the Latin is absurd ; he must not scruple at confusion of metaphor or at outrageous hyperbole. For example : if Propertius wrote

*tu patrum meritis conare anteire securis,*

the translator must, to the best of his Latinity, weigh the amount of metaphor which resides in *anteire* ; and if he is satisfied that the word is not a wholly defaced coin but keeps its character, then he must render by *outstrip your uncle's axes*. And he ought to be moved by no such criticism as ' This is impossible in English ', unless his critic can prove that there was no extravagance in the original, or at least that the extravagance has been forced in the rendering. Obeying the same rule, he will reckon it a dishonesty to palliate verbal brutalities, or to usurp the commentator's office by

unpicking the obscure accumulations of mythological allusion in which Propertius deals, or tacitly to amend his defective economy of transitions. Once play false to this doctrine, and shirk the task of following out with the humblest patience every nook and corner of the phrase, and we stand in danger of lapsing into such unworkmanlike flaccidity that Ovid in English will be undistinguishable from Propertius, Homer appear faked into the semblance of Apollonius Rhodius, and Plato and Thucydides read like one and the same style. What kind of craftsman would he be whose engraving should leave it doubtful whether he had copied from Raffaele or Michelangelo? Smoothness of finish is good ; but there is a false smoothness which is procured by mutilation, a translation which suggests that the original had no more feature than a melting snow-man.

VI. I will conclude by here expressing my obligations to the Rev. Dr. Merry, Rector of Lincoln, and Vice-Chancellor, for his kindness in discharging the unkindly office of censor. His experience has determined in what passages of the poet there is such a degree of lubricity as might embarrass or perturb the reader ; but the knife has been sparingly used, for Propertius's verse, though sometimes libertine, is never gross. And, on the positive side of the account, I owe Dr. Merry many thanks for several corrections of error and many improvements of phrasing.

GLASGOW :

*February, 1906.*

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# PROPERTIUS

## CYNTHIA

### BOOK I

#### I *Cynthia prima suis*

*Prologue : to Tullus.*

CYNTHIA was the first woman that made me the  
poor captive of her eyes when hitherto no touch  
of desire had reached me. And now Love abashed the  
sturdy pride of my glance ; he planted his feet and  
5 bore heavily on my head, till the rogue schooled me  
to hate a modest maid and live the life of a scapegrace.

And now it is a whole year and still this madness in  
me abates not, though the luck 's against me and I must  
abide the brunt of it.

Tullus, it was by never shirking any task that  
10 Milanion broke down the cruelty of the hard-hearted  
daughter of Iasus. Yes, at times he would rove mad  
among the rocks and caves of Parthenia, and anon he  
would go visiting the shaggy beasts of the wilderness ;  
also he felt the stroke of the Hylaeon mace, and groaned  
at his wounds on the crags of Arcadia. Well, he got  
15 his way and tamed that fleet-footed maid ; such power  
in love have supplications and loyal service.

Not so with me : Love is here so dull he can bethink him of no sleights ; neither has he the mind to walk the familiar ways as aforetime.

But O you to whom belongs the juggling mystery that draws the moon down from the sky, whose task it is to work the atoning rite on hearths of witchcraft, look 20 and bestir yourselves : turn my mistress' mind, and cause her to grow paler than this cheek of mine ! Then I will allow that you are of power to draw the stars and the rivers by the incantations of Cytaeine.

And you, my friends, you who too late recall the 25 fallen, inquire for the means to minister to a heart diseased. Stoutly will I endure the iron and the pitiless fire, let me but gain the freedom to utter those things which anger would like to say. Carry me through uttermost nations, carry me over seas, where no woman shall be aware of my going. You may abide at home, 30 you for whom the God is all kind consent and his ear is ready and gracious, and may you be ever well-paired in love unimperilled.

Not so with me : this Venus, as I find her, is one that wrecks nights of bitterness ; and Love never abates nor wants for employ.

Eschew this plague, I counsel you : let every man 35 stick to his own sweetheart and never change his ground when his love is grown familiar.

But whosoever shall now turn a dull ear to my counsels, oh, with what pain shall he repeat my words hereafter !

## II

*Quid iuvat ornato*

*To Cynthia: the Praises of  
Natural Beauty unadorned.*

WHAT does it profit, sweet life, to walk abroad  
with bedizened hair and play off the delicate  
folds in a muslin of Cos? Or to steep your locks in a  
perfume from the Orontes, and make a market of  
yourself by these outlandish dowries, using purchased  
braveries to spoil the grace of nature instead of letting  
5 the bodily form dazzle by its proper excellences?

Take my word for it, all this leechcraft of yours to  
mend the looks is naught: Master Love is naked and  
loves not one that makes a craft of beauty.

Consider what colours beautiful mistress Earth puts  
10 forth; how the ivies come kindlier after their own  
wild will, and the strawberry-tree arises in greater  
beauty among desert fastnesses, and water has wit  
enough to run its wayward courses. The shore  
enamelled with its native pebbles has a charm to win  
the heart, and the birds sing the sweeter for no lore.

15 These were not the means that Phoebe used, the  
daughter of Leucippus, to kindle Castor; Hilaira, her  
sister, did not move Pollux by her ornaments: nor yet  
that daughter of Evenus, on her father's shores, who  
was once a matter of quarrel between Idas and eager  
20 Phoebus. Neither did Hippodamia, forayed upon a  
stranger's wheels, allure her Phrygian husband by  
pretended fairness; hers was a complexion beholden to  
no jewels, like the tint on a panel of Apelles. It was

not their endeavour to gain lovers at large : a pure heart was grand enough beauty for them.

I am not now afraid that you prize me at a <sup>25</sup> lower rate than these vanities : a woman is adorned enough if one man is pleased with her ; all the more when Phoebus endows you with his own song, and Calliope delights to endow you with the Aonian lyre ; and you have a merry language of delight, never without your incomparable charm, and all things are yours <sup>30</sup> which Venus and which Minerva approve.

These are the graces which shall ever make you the favourite of my life, if you will only tire of this wretched modishness.

### III *Qualis Thesea iacuit*

*To Cynthia : he visits her late after a revel.*

LIKE the maiden of Cnosus when she lay fainting on the lonely beach at the departure of Theseus' vessel ; like the daughter of Cepheus nestling in her first slumber, Andromeda newly set free from the hard crags ; and no less like an Edonian Bacchante when she sinks <sup>5</sup> down by grassy Apidanus wearied out by the pauseless saraband—such like was Cynthia ! She seemed to breathe a dainty repose as her head rested on her half-yielding arms, while I was trailing my fuddled steps after a mighty deal of liquor, and the boys wagging the torch in the late hours of night. 10

And I—my senses even now were not so wrecked altogether but I tried to come at her, dinting the bed

most delicately. Although I was caught by a double  
fury and Love and Wine alike (either is a stern god)  
15 bade me slip an arm adroitly beneath and risk a venture  
upon the defenceless fair—approach my hand and so  
fall to kisses and the encounter; yet I had not the  
courage to disturb my mistress' slumber, afraid of the  
sharp chidings of a cruelty which I had tasted before:  
but there I stuck and gazed with straining eyes, as it  
20 were Argus before the unfamiliar horns of Io.

And now I would unloose the garlands from my brow  
and set them, Cynthia, upon your temples; now I  
would amuse myself by shaping a tumbled lock of hair;  
presently I would bestow a stealthy apple or two in the  
hollow of her hands. And all my tributes did I lavish  
25 upon thankless sleep: my poor tributes, how many  
a time they rolled down the slope of her lap! And as  
often as she drew a deep breath and stirred with an  
exquisite movement I stood aghast; and, quick to  
believe my idle divination, I thought *Might not this be  
some vision charged with unaccustomed terrors for you? Or  
30 someone forcing you to be his against your will?* Until the  
moon running past the opposite windows, the busy moon  
whose lamps were fain to linger too long, opened the  
closed eyes with her slight shafts. Her elbow deep in  
the softness of the bed, she said *'At last! Maltreat-  
35 ment brings you home to my pillow when it has dislodged  
you from somebody else's locked doors? Aye, where have you  
squandered the time of a night which belonged to me, you,  
who come limp with debauch, ugh!—when the tale of the  
stars is told? Ah, heartless fellow, would that you might*

*have to live out such long nights as you are always making 40  
your poor lady spend! Yes! for a while I cheated  
slumber by the help of my purple web, and anon by the song  
of Orpheus and his lyre. But I was so tired! And now  
and again I made a little forlorn complaint to myself that  
there must often be long delays when one looks abroad for  
love: Until I dropped, and sleep struck me with his 45  
delicious wings. That was the last concern of my tearful  
sorrows'.*

#### IV *Quid mihi tam multas*

*To Bassus: The Praises of  
Cynthia, and the vanity of  
comparing others with her.*

**T**ELL me, Bassus, why do you press me to change and forsake my mistress, by the praise you give to so many girls? Why do you not suffer me instead to spend whatever life is yet to follow, in this accustomed bondage?

Oh, your praises might recall the beauty of Antiope 5 the daughter of Nycteus, and the beauty of Spartan Hermione, and all those ladies whom the heyday of the Age of Fair Women bore—Cynthia will not let *them* have any renown! Never think then that when it comes to a match between her and these pretty fickle 10 forms, the sternest judge can bid her go dishonoured by defeat.

Besides, this beauty is only the uttermost edge of my mad passion: there are greater things, Bassus, that I die for and welcome death. The high-bred style, the

grace of many accomplishments, and those raptures of  
speech the tongue delights to utter beneath the cover-  
15 let which tells no tales ! And the more you strive to  
undo our loves, the more fondly each of us cherishes  
the troth which outwits you.

You shall not get off scot-free ! My furious mistress  
shall hear of this ! And you shall find in her a foe that  
will not be content with a discreet half-spoken phrase !  
After this Cynthia will neither entrust me to you, nor  
20 go to look for you ; she will be mindful of this great  
offence ; she will be so angry, she will go the rounds of  
all the other girls and tear your name to shreds—oh,  
there will not be a doorstep in the town where you  
will be welcome. No altar will be too mean for her  
to weep at ! Any hallowed stone, of the common  
sort !

No loss or harm that befalls her, does Cynthia feel so  
sorely as when her love is stolen from her and so the  
25 god performs not his proper work : most chiefly, her  
love for me ! So may she ever abide, I pray, and may I  
never discover anything in her to make me complain.

## V *Invide, tu tandem*

*To Gallus : a rebuke for  
cynicism : in which his fall is  
foretold.*

**E**NOUGH, envious man ! A truce to your tiresome  
preaching, and let a well-matched couple keep to  
the course that we now run ! Lunatic ! What are you

about? Would you taste of my mad transports? Misguided fellow, you hasten to know the uttermost plagues, to take your luckless way through unsuspected 5 fires, to drink the poisons of all Thessaly!

*She* is not to be measured and matched with your gadding wenches: she does not deal in soft angers, I tell you!

And if by chance she is not adverse to your vows, yet what a tale untold of sorrows she will give you! She 10 will not leave you so much as your sleep—you shall not be able to call your eyes your own. She's the very one to put men of an unbroken spirit fast in strings! Oh, how often will you run to my doorstep when you have been spurned, and your brave words will be lost in a sob, and quakings and shudders will come over you with 15 doleful weepings, and fear will trace his ugly characters on your brow, and any word that you want will forsake your complaint, and you will be a poor creature that knows not who nor where he is!

Then you will be brought to understand the stern bondage of my mistress, and how it feels to go away 20 home when the door is shut against you; and by this time you will not so often be surprised at my wan colour, or why my whole bodily being is so brought to nothing.

And high birth will not serve to aid you either, when you are a lover: Love knows no yielding to a row of ancestors in the gallery! Whereas if you shall betray 25 the least trace of a fault on your part, how quickly will you be a byword instead of a grand name!



I shall have no power then to lend you comfort when you ask it, since I have no physic to treat my own woes with : poor creatures alike, mates in love, we shall be  
 30 fain to weep tear for tear, either in the other's bosom.

For which reason, cease, Gallus, to explore my Cynthia's power : make but an overture, and she is consenting enough with a vengeance !

## VI *Non ego nunc Hadriae*

*To Tullus : who had invited him to Asia.*

**T**ULLUS, I fear not now to make acquaintance of the sea of Hadria with you, or to haul a sail on the Aegaeon main : you are the man with whom I could scale the Rhipaeon Mountains, and stride further afield than the House of Memnon.

5 But my mistress clings to me ; her words stay me from parting, her earnest prayers and often changing colour. It is she who for whole nights together chatters to me in syllables of fire, complaining that there is no such thing as the gods, if I forsake her ; she who to my face denies that she is mine ; she, who  
 10 threatens—the wonted strain of a mistress out of humour and a man angry.

Against such complaints I cannot hold out for an hour. Why, confound the man that can be cold-blooded in love ! Surely it is never worth while for me to visit the classic scenes of Athens and contemplate the long-

stored riches of Asia, if Cynthia fling reproaches at me 15  
when the bark is drawn down to the water, if she scar  
my face with frenzied hands, if (though the gale debar)  
she still say that a debt of kisses is due to her, and that  
nothing is so unkind as a man's disloyalty?

Do you study how your honours may outstrip your  
uncle's well-earned axes, and recall to the memory of  
our provinces the forgotten precedent of rights. For 20  
your prime of days has never dallied with love, your  
earnest thought has ever been for the nation in arms.  
And may a certain Boy never bestow on you my toils  
and pains and all the thrice-told tale of my tearful  
confessions!

Suffer me (Fortune ever meant that I should be in 25  
a mean station) to render up my life, such as it is, to  
the uttermost naughtiness. Many men have perished  
cheerfully in a lifelong love: let me also be num-  
bered with them and the earth cover me. I was  
not born apt for glory, or apt for arms: this is the  
warfare the fates would have me undergo. 30

And as for you—be it in the broad reach of soft Ionia,  
or be it where the sluice of Pactolus steeps the plough-  
lands of Lydia; whether you go scouring the lands on  
foot or scouring the deep with oars, yourself part and  
parcel of a well-beloved government: if in those  
days there shall come to you some hour not unmindful 35  
of me, you need never doubt but that I am living under  
an unkind star

## VII

*Dum tibi Cadmeae*

*To Ponticus : on the Vanity  
of Epic in Love.*

PONTICUS, while your song is of Cadmean Thebes  
and the ghastly encounters of brotherly warfare—  
and, bless me, you vie with old Homer, if the fates will  
but deal tenderly with your verse—meanwhile, as is  
5 our wont, we are exercised upon our loves, seeking  
some matter to employ against an unkind mistress.  
Not so much for any inborn wit as because I am fain to  
be the drudge of grief and lament aloud the unkind  
days of my prime. Here runs the hackneyed rule of  
10 my life, herein is my glory, hence I desire the renown  
of my verse to proceed. Ponticus, let them praise but  
one thing in me : that I found favour with a scholar  
mistress and many a time endured her undeserved  
menaces ; hereafter let the flouted lover read me and  
pore over me, and may it be to his profit that he has  
learned my sorrows.

15 You too—if this Boy once smite you with his sure  
marksmanship (that were a pity ! To think that you  
have outraged our gods !) it will be away with your  
leaguers and away with your Seven Armies ! You will  
weep to see them lie unresponsive beneath the dust of  
ages.

And you shall covet in vain to frame a soft ditty :  
20 Love belated will prompt you to no song.

Then you will often marvel at me for no mean poet,  
then I shall be preferred before the great wits of Rome.

Then shall the young men be unable to keep silence from saying at my grave, ' *Dead! Thou great poet of our burning passion!*'

Beware how you despise my verse in your pride: 25 when Love is slow in coming, he often comes with a long score of usury.

VIII A *Tune igitur demens,*

*To Cynthia: on her intended voyage to Illyria.*

ARE you beside yourself then? Do you not care for me enough to matter? Or do you prize me at a lower rate than cold Illyria? And this man—whoever he is—of yours is so dearly valued now that you are willing to go without me by any wind that blows?

Can you hearken to the noise of the raving deep with 5 a stout heart, and lie in a hard rough ship? You with your dainty feet tread firm on the hoar-frost where it lies outspread? You, Cynthia, endure the unfamiliar snows?

Oh, I would the season of the winter storms might be doubled, and the lingering Pleiads keep the mariner 10 still unemployed, your hawser never be cast off on the Tyrrhene sands while an unfriendly breeze makes light of my supplications! Oh, let me never see these winds dropping at the hour when your barks stand out to sea and the wave lifts them away—while she will let me 15 stand rooted to the empty strand, crying, Cruel, cruel! again and again and shaking my fist!

Yet of whatever sort be your deserts towards me,  
 faithless one, may Galatea be not estranged against  
 your voyage : Good luck attend your oar when you  
 20 pass the Cape of Thunder, and Oricos harbour you in  
 quiet waters !

No women shall be able to corrupt me or keep me  
 from lamenting over you aloud on your doorstep, my  
 life ! And one thing will not fail me—to summon and  
 question the sailors, ‘*Tell me, in what haven is my*  
 25 *mistress locked ?*’ And I will say, ‘*Though she settle in*  
*coasts Atracian or in coasts Hyllean, mine she still shall be*’.

## VIII B

*Hic erat ! hic*

*She abandons her project.*

HERE she was and here she is pledged to remain !  
 The envious may burst themselves, but we have  
 prevailed ! She could not away with my unceasing  
 prayers. Now eager jealousy must discard its mis-  
 30 taken delights : my Cynthia has renounced going on  
 her new voyage. ‘*Dear*’ she calls me, and Rome ‘*very*  
*dear for my sake*’ and ‘*a kingdom has no sweets without*  
*me*’.

Narrow may be the bed, but she has chosen to sleep  
 with me, and rather to be mine after whatever fashion,  
 35 than have the ancient kingdom that dowered Hippo-  
 damia or all the treasure Elis had earned by her steeds  
 ere that day.

Mighty as were his presents and mightier still the  
 presents he promised, still she has not forsaken my

bosom for covetousness. What means had I to bend her? Not with gold, not with Indian shells, but by the devout suffrage of persuasive song. 40

So there *are* Muses, and Apollo is not slow to answer a lover (on these I put my lover's faith)—Cynthia the incomparable is mine!

Now I am free to tread the topmost stars with the sole of my foot! Come day, come night, she is mine! My rival does not filch my true love from me: there's 45 a brave boast that shall not disown my grey hairs!

## IX

*Dicebam tibi*

*To Ponticus: on his Falling  
in Love.*

**D**ID I not tell you so, scoffer, that love would find you out, and your tongue not wag free for ever? See, you are down! In meek obeisance you approach your sovereign mistress, and now anybody commands you, though you bought her only the other day.

The doves of Dodona cannot beat me in the matter 5 of love, at telling which lads each lass controls. Pain and tears may well have made me a pastmaster: ay, could I but be quit of love and rank as a novice!

What does it profit your sad case now to indite a solemn strain, and tearful chronicle of Amphion's lyre 10 and the walls he built? In love a line of Mimnermus has more virtue than Homer: Love is a gentle creature that seeks smooth-polished ditties. Get you

gone, pray, and pack up those quires full of sour severity, and sing such a note as any maid will like to  
15 learn! Why, think, if you had no ready matter for your pen, where would you be? But instead, you are like a lunatic standing in midstream and looking for water!

And as yet you do not even lose colour, nor feel the touch of authentic fire: this is but the first spark of mischief to come. *Then* you will crave rather to beard an Armenian tigress, rather to learn the bondage of  
20 the wheel in hell than feel the Boy's marksmanship in your marrow so often and never have the power to say *No* to an angry mistress. Love never offered his unresisting wings to any man unless he meant anon to turn and crush him with a stroke.

25 And she may be willing enough—do not let that beguile you: the sting goes all the deeper, Ponticus, when the girl belongs to you, because then you are never allowed to take your eyes off for a holiday, and Love permits no nightwatches in any other service.

He is one that does not show himself until his stroke is gone home in your bones. To all and sundry I say  
30 it: Flee, oh, flee the fond dalliance which is without a respite!

This can make steel and oak to yield: much hope for you then—oh, the frail conceit!

For which cause, if you are not past shame, lose no time but confess your misdeeds. It is often a relief in love to make known the instrument of your undoing.

X

*O iucunda quies,*

*To Gallus. Thanks for admission to witness his Transports ; with Precepts for Lovers.*

**O** the merry night's rest when I was there to witness your first love, I, the confidant of your tears ! Oh, the merry delight for me to remember that evening ; Oh, that was a time to be summoned up in my prayers, when I saw you, Gallus, ready to die in the 5 clasp of your girl, and dwelling on every syllable long drawn out !

Though sleep was heavy on my poor drooping eyes, and the red moon was now driving her team across the middle of heaven, yet I could not withdraw from your games ; there was such fire in the responsive play 10 of your words.

But since you have not scrupled to make me free of your pleasures, accept the reward of your trust. Not only have I learned to hold my tongue concerning your agonies—there is a thing found in me, my friend, which is more than loyalty. I have power to join parted lovers again, and power to open a mistress' 15 reluctant door ; and power to sain the fresh troubles of another : and there is no slight skill of healing in my words. Cynthia has taught me always whatsoever things are to be sought and what things to beware of. Love has not gone for nothing with me ! 20

'Look that you do not hanker after a quarrel with your girl when she is out of humour, nor talk haughtily



nor keep silence for long ; nor if she has begged for something, refuse it with an ungracious air, nor let kind words be wasted upon you. She makes a  
 25 nettled response when she is scorned, and has no mind to discard her well-deserved menaces when she has been hurt. But the meeker you be and the more submissive to love, the more often are you likely to enjoy a good success. The man who shall never give  
 30 his heart a holiday to go fancy free is one that will find abiding bliss in one girl.'

## XI *Ecquid te mediis*

*To Cynthia at Baiae.*

CYNTHIA, when you are dallying in the heart of Baiae, where his Road runs over strands made famous by Hercules, or amusing yourself anon with the view of waters which obeyed the dominion of King  
 5 Thesprotus, hard under the illustrious headland of Misenum, does ever any thought of me come to you and make you spend nights of memories? Is there any room left in the furthest corners of your love? Or has some enemy—I know not who—by his pretended fires taken you away from any spells that I could sing? Oh, I would that rather you may be trusting to a toy pair  
 10 of oars and a tiny skiff may engage you in the Lucrine Lake, or the water that slips away so easily under the recurring stroke may detain you safe cloistered within the slender flood of Teuthras,—than at leisure to listen to the winning whispers of another as you lie voluptuously nestling on a beach that tells no tales!

So it often happens that a girl falls : her guardian 15  
 is dispossessed, she breaks her troth, and never a thought  
 of the gods who sealed the bond.—Not that I have not  
 proved you to be of well-tried repute, but because in  
 this regard loving is always a kind of dreading. You  
 will forgive me then for any hint of sourness my packet  
 may convey to you : it is the fault of my dread. 20  
 ‘ Have I not other things to think about, the watchful  
 care of a dear mother ? ’ Oh, do not say that ! Should  
 I have any interest in life without you ? You alone are  
 my house, you alone, Cynthia, my parents, you are my  
 every moment of gladness ! If my friends find me down-  
 cast, or if they find me glad instead, whatever I shall be 25  
 I shall say ‘ *Cynthia has been the matter* ’.

Do but make all possible haste to quit that poisoned  
 Baiae. How many lovers will have to thank that  
 shore for a breach between them, a shore which was  
 ever sworn foe to chaste girls ! Why, out upon Baiae  
 and the waters ! They are a reproach to love ! 30

## XII *Quid mihi desidiae*

*Written in the country in  
 answer to a friend at Rome.*

WHY are you never weary of imagining re-  
 proaches of idleness against me because ‘ Rome  
 knows my secrets, and that keeps me from coming ’ ?  
*She* is as many miles remote from my pillow as the  
 Bougue from the Venetian Po : I have no Cynthia 5  
 now to feed a familiar passion with her embrace, or  
 speak music in my ear.

Time was, I found favour : it was never given to any man to love with a loyalty like mine in those days. We have roused a jealousy. Is it not a god that has overwhelmed me? Or can it be that Herb of Division which  
 10 they gather on the peaks of Prometheus?

I am no more the man I was. A long journey changes girls. What a deal of love to vanish in such a little time !

Now for the first time I am brought to face the long nights alone ; and have no ears but my own to weary for pity.

15 Happy the man that can weep in his mistress' presence ; Love takes some little pleasure in a sprinkling of tears. Again, if her scorn can work alteration in his passions, there are pleasures likewise in a change of bondage.

But I cannot in conscience love another nor break  
 20 with *her* : Cynthia was the first, Cynthia will be the end.

### XIII *Tu, quod saepe soles,*

*To Gallus. The Scoffer engaged in a serious Passion.*

**Y**OU, Gallus, as is often your wont will rejoice at my plight because my love is reft from me and I have no employ. But I will not imitate your language, deceiver. I wish, Gallus, that a girl may never  
 5 play you false. Your renown increases with every girl you beguile, and you do not look for a true-lover's

abiding place in any heart ; yet, these days, you have lost your heart to *somebody* ; you begin to turn pale with belated concern : it is the first footstep slipt which will lead you down the precipice. This shall be the atonement for those victims whose agony you mocked : one will have you pay the piteous requital 10 for many. This is she who will put down those vulgar loves, and you shall not always be so enamoured of seeking for new.

It was not by mischievous tattle nor yet by augur that I learned this : I saw ; pray, can you deny it on my evidence ? I saw you half-swooning, all your neck 15 in gyves ; and then Gallus, you laid on hands and wept for a long while, and craved to give up the ghost in the delicious syllables of transport ; and what happened next, my friend, my modesty keeps secret.

I could not disjoin your close embraces : there was such insane frenzy between the pair of you. The god 20 of Taenarum could not match this, when fused into the form of Haemonian Enipeus he whelmed Salmoneus' daughter beneath his unresisted fondness ! Hercules' love could not match this, when all afire for heavenly Hebe, he tasted his first delights upon the peaks of Oeta ! A single day has achieved the out- 25 stripping of all lovers ! These were no lukewarm brands she fired you with ; she would not let your former haughty satieties overtake you this time ; and she will not suffer you to be drawn off : your own warm eagerness will carry you forward.

And no wonder, considering that she is worthy of

30 Jove, and second only to Leda, and sweeter than Leda's brood—sweeter alone than all the three! She can be more winning than the daughters of the gods in Argos of old, she can speak such language as would force Jove to love.

But as for you, since you are destined once for all to die this death which is love, improve occasion! This is the very doorway you deserved to enter! And since this new weakness has befallen you, I wish you good luck  
35 with her; and may you find all your fancy would have in her alone!

## XIV

*Tu licet abiectus*

*To Tullus. Riches not to compare with Love.*

YOU may lie in a prostrate luxury by the Tiber's wave, drinking wines of Lesbos out of a piece of Mentor's handiwork, and amuse yourself by watching now the wherries speeding so fast, now the barges  
5 moved so slow by the tow-rope; and all the woodland may present its crest of plantations to your view—such a mass of timber as Caucasus sinks beneath!—and yet all these vanities can never compare with a love like mine. Love knows no yielding to the grandeur of riches.

If she passes a long delicious night with me, or spends  
10 a whole day in love uncrossed, then the streams of Pactolus come under my roof, and all the gem-fisheries of the Red Sea wave! Then my delights are my

warrant that kings must give way before me. May these abide till my doom will have me die !

For who takes delight in riches when Love is contrary? Mine be no prizes if the Queen of Love is out of humour ! She is able to break the huge strength of the Sons of the gods, she can be the distress of even stubborn minds ; she does not fear to overstep a threshold of Arabian onyx, or to invade a purple couch, Tullus, and keep a poor lad tossing all over his bed. 20  
What ease does he get then by his silken stuffs and embroidery of many colours?

So long as she shall visit me graciously, I will not scruple to look down upon all kingdoms whatsoever, and the dowries of Alcinous to boot.

## XV *Saepe ego multa*

*To Cynthia. Reproaches for her heartless perfidy.*

PLENTY and often were the unkindnesses I dreaded from your fickle spirit, but never, Cynthia, did I reckon for this treason. Look at my great peril ! I am in the clutches of destiny !—and I find you indifferent in my hour of dread. And you have the heart to finger and rearrange last night's hair, to get a 5  
complexion by a long spell of repose, and none the less to bedizen your breast with Oriental stones—like a beauty making ready to go to a new gallant.

But this was not Calypso's way long ago, when she wept to the lonely waters in her distress at the Ithacan's 10  
departure ; many days she sat woebegone with undrest

hair, and much she talked to the unrighteous main ;  
and though she was never to see him again, yet she  
grieved when she remembered the secrets of their long  
happiness.

17 Nor Hypsipyle's way, when the winds hurried the  
son of Aeson away and she was left standing, full of  
18 forebodings, in the empty bedchamber ; Hypsipyle  
never knew another love after that, from the day when  
20 she melted in welcome to the Haemonian guest.

15 Alphasiboea so loved her mate that for his sake she  
took vengeance on her own brothers, and love burst  
16 the ties of blood and natural affection. When her  
21 mate died, Evadne made his unhappy fires serve for  
her funeral ; and so passed away, a proud name in the  
chronicle of Argive chastity.

And there was none of these could turn your dispo-  
sition so that you too might become an illustrious  
legend !

25 Cease, Cynthia, it is time to cease from recalling  
those infidelities by your words,—and spare to arouse  
the gods : they have forgotten. Oh, you are all too  
venturesome, for it is at my risks and charges you stand  
to rue any untoward visitation that may befall you.

Many things sooner—the rivers shall sooner glide  
down from the wild sea, and the year bring on his phases  
30 in disorder—than the thought of you could suffer any  
change in my heart ! Be what you will, nothing can  
make you a stranger.

Think not so<sup>1</sup> meanly of those eyes for whose sake I

<sup>1</sup> Read *tam*.

many a time put faith in treachery ! It was by them you used to swear and say that if you had told any lie, 35 you wished they might fall out and you would catch them in your hands ! And you dare to lift them up in the face of the great Sun ? You do not quake to think of all the naughtinesses you have committed ? Who made you blench and turn all colours and squeeze a tear from reluctant eyes ? 40

These are the things which have now been my undoing, but I shall leave a warning to my peers in love ' *Oh, there's no safety in trusting to any fond allurements !* '

## XVI *Quae fueram magnis*

### *The Door's complaint.*

**I** THAT was flung wide for great triumphs of old, I the Door renowned for Tarpeian chastity ; whose threshold was glorified by gilded chariots and wetted by the beseeching tears of prisoners ; I now am scarred by the nightly brawls of toppers, and oft I complain aloud at the strokes of unworthy hands. And there is never any lack of scandalous chaplets hanging here and torches lying as tokens for the rejected that the door is shut against them. I have no power to guard my mistress against nights of reproach when my honour is given over to foul pasquinades. And, for 10 all that, she is not recalled to spare her good name the life of more than modern licence that she lives.

Meanwhile I am made all the more doleful by the



long vigils of a certain poor votarist till I grow fain to  
 15 weep at his heavy plaint. He gives my posts no peace  
 with the repetition of his tattling ditties of fond appeal.

*'Door more inly cruel than thy very mistress, why art  
 thou closed so soon and confrontest me with the dumb barrier  
 of thine unkind portals? Why art thou never unlocked to  
 give passage to my love, but knowest not how to feel and  
 20 deliver my stealthy supplications? Shall no term ever be  
 granted to my pain? Shall my rest be a scandalous sleep  
 on the lukewarm threshold? I lie there and the midnights  
 are sorry for me, the full stars are sorry for me, and the  
 air blowing chill on me with the morning frost; Thou only  
 25 hast no pity for the pains that hurt men, and I get no  
 sympathetic answer from thy silent hinges.*

*Oh, I would that my poor voice might pierce the hollow  
 of a chink and strike upon my mistress' ears and there find  
 entrance! Though she be sterner than the rock of Sicily,  
 30 though she be harder than iron and steel, yet she will not  
 be able to control her eyes, and her breath will heave with  
 unwilling tears. Now she lies leaning on the lucky arm  
 of another, and my words are wasted on the nightly zephyr.  
 35 But thou alone, thou Door, art the chief cause of my  
 pain; no presents of mine can ever prevail with thee.  
 I have never outraged thee with any pert or peevish words  
 of my tongue (such things as anger is wont to say, wholly  
 taken up in the proffered occasion<sup>1</sup>), that thou shouldst  
 leave me, hoarse with long complaining, to watch out the  
 40 restless hours of waiting at the street corner. Nay, many  
 times have I spun thee a sonnet of fresh verse; I have*

<sup>1</sup> *Ira dato . . . loco.*

*pressed thy steps and given thee kneeling kisses. How many times, traitress, have I turned me round before thy portals and rendered thee my appointed vows with secret acts of my hands !'*

All this he says, and much more that you luckless 45 lovers are familiar with : he jangles against the carol of morning birds.

So am I denounced to everlasting reprobation by the sins of my mistress and the weeping of this constant lover.

## XVII *Et merito, quoniam*

*To Cynthia : written at sea,  
off the coast of Epirus in a  
storm.*

**A**ND well I may !—since I had the heart to run away from my girl: now I have only the forlorn seafowl to talk to. I am no practised traveller, but Cassiope must now behold my bark, and all my orisons are wasted on a thankless shore.

Why, Cynthia, the very winds take your part though 5 you are not here ! Look, what cruel menace is in the scolding gale !

Shall I never enjoy the blessing of the storm's abatement? Shall this strip of sand cover my burial?

*You* though—do give a happier turn to your cruel complaints ! Be content with your vengeance—this darkness, these evil shoals !

Will you have the heart to see my mortal being con-

signed to rest, and never a tear in your eye—never hold my bones to your bosom?

Mischief take the man, whoever he was, that first made barks and sails, and travelled the reluctant abyss!

15 Was it not an easier matter to subdue my mistress' disposition (hard-hearted she was, but what an incomparable girl nevertheless!) than to be staring like this at a shore surrounded with strange forests and to look with disappointed longing for the Tyndarids?

20 *There* whenever chance had brought my sorrows to the grave, and the last stone were standing over my buried love, she would have lavished her dear hair upon my death and laid my bones delicately in a soft bed of roses; she would have called my name aloud over my dust—the last of me—that I might find the earth no burden.

25 Nay, but you nymphs of the sea, born of lovely Doris, come in a prospering dance and spread bright sails. If ever Love tumbling touched your waves, deal gently with your fellow and indulge him with a less uncivil strand!

### XVIII *Haec certe deserta*

*To Cynthia: elegy written in a solitude.*

**H**ERE at least is solitude and a place that will tell no tales of my plaint; the breath of zephyr owns the untenanted grove. Here I may freely utter my secret anguish—unless the very stones of the wilderness fail to keep faith.

Whence must I begin the recollection of your flouts 5  
 and scorns, my Cynthia? What outset for tears do you  
 furnish me with? It is but a little while ago that I was  
 reckoned among happy lovers, and now I must bear  
 a brand of disgrace in the register of your love. What  
 is my great offence? What spells make you so altered  
 towards me? Is a new girl the motive of your ill- 10  
 humour? O Madam light-of-love! I vow, as I would  
 have you return to me, that none other has ever ven-  
 tured her pretty feet on my threshold. Although  
 this anguish of mine owes you a heavy enough score of  
 barbarities, yet my anger shall never behave itself so  
 savagely as might make me (and with good cause) a  
 frenzy to infuriate you for ever, and disfigure your eyes 15  
 by weeping with tears undisguised<sup>1</sup>.

Or is it that I betray no more tokens of my plight  
 than this altered hue, and there is no testimony that  
 cries aloud in my looks? You trees shall be my witnesses  
 (if a tree has any loves), Beech, and the Arcadian god's 20  
 favourite Pine,—Oh, how often do my words echo be-  
 neath your delicate shades, and *Cynthia* is charactered  
 in your bark!

Or is it that the wrongs you have done me have bred  
 no better musings than a matter only imparted to  
 discreet portals? I am faint-hearted; I have grown  
 used to put up with all my proud lady's commands and 25  
 make no doleful tattling complaint of her acts.

And this is my reward! The haunted spring, the  
 cold rock, the comfortless repose in the walks of the

<sup>1</sup> *detectis.*

wilderness ! And I am fain to tell all my complaints can  
30 express to the twittering birds in solitude.

Yet, be what you will, the woods must echo *Cynthia*  
to me, and the stones of the desert be tenanted by  
your name.

## XIX *Non ego nunc tristis*

*To Cynthia : written in sick-  
ness and the prospect of death.*

I FEAR not now the grisly world of shadows, my  
Cynthia ; I care not for the mortal debt to be  
paid to the final faggot : all my fear is lest my death  
be without your love. This dread is harder to bear  
than the very funeral.

5 The Boy has not stuck so lightly in my<sup>1</sup> eyes, that  
even my dust can forget and be quit of love.

In the viewless regions of that other world the heroic  
scion of the house of Phylacus could not forget his  
sweet wife ; but craving eagerly with unreal hands to  
10 handle his delight the man of Thessaly came as a ghost  
to his ancient home. In that other world whatever I  
am to be, I shall ever be called *your* spectre. A great  
love overpasses even the coasts of doom. Come all  
the lovely band, the women of the golden days, who  
are in that other world, all whom Dardan plunder  
15 bestowed on Argive lords—but there is none of them,  
Cynthia, whose beauty can please me more than yours !  
You—may it so please the righteous Earth—though

<sup>1</sup> *nostris*.

never so long a destiny of old age delay you, yet shall your bones be the darling of my tears !

Oh, that you might feel this when you are alive and I am a charred ember ! Then there would be no bitterness at all for me in Death. I fear death, lest you spurn my tomb, Cynthia, and the wicked god of Love rob my dust of you and force you to dry your falling tears whether you will or no. A loyal girl may yield to unremitting menace.

For which cause let us be merry lovers together while we may : love is never long enough, whatsoever be his date.

## XX *Hoc pro continuo te,*

*To Gallus : the story of Hylas and a moral.*

**I** GIVE you a counsel, Gallus, in virtue of our steadfast love. There is one precept must never leak away out of a listless mind : *Chance oft encounters a lover when he least expects.* Ascanius who used the Minyae so cruelly, can tell you.

Your flame is a Hylas, second only to the son of 5 Theiodamas, not beneath his good looks, and matched in name. Now whether you skirt the cool<sup>1</sup> of a shady forest, or the flood of Anio steep your feet, or you stroll on the coast by the Giants' Strand, or wherever you take up your quarters in the mazy haunts of a 10 riverside, always beat off the eager forays of the Nymphs

<sup>1</sup> *frigora.*

(our Ausonian Adryads are no less amorous !) lest it be your lot Gallus (Oh the cruelty of it <sup>1</sup>), always to visit the hills, the cold rocks and the pools—an unpractised  
 15 pilgrim. Such were the hardships which Hercules' luckless adventure endured and bewailed in strange climes : but nothing softened the River Ascanius.

For once on a time (as they tell) the Argo stepped forth from the arsenals of Pagasa and made the distant voyage of Phasis ; and, the waters of Athamas already  
 20 past, gliding she brought her timbers alongside at the Mysian cliffs. Here, no sooner established on that quiet coast, the company of heroes covered the soft strand with piles of foliage. But the squire of the unconquered paladin struck further afield to seek for the choice water of a sequestered spring. Two brothers  
 25 followed, the North-wind's brood ; Zetes flew over his head, and over his head flew Calais likewise : to seize a kiss they both pressed, balanced on outstretched hovering hands ; and while one beat a retreat the other would swoop up from below and give his kiss. Swung in mid-air the boy takes sanctuary in the inmost coign  
 30 of the pinion and lays about him with a branch to clear his way past their winged ambuscades. Presently the sons of Pandionid Orithyia give up the game, and (O sorrow !) away went Hylas, away he went on his road to the Hamadryads.

In this place there was situate beneath the peak of Mount Arganthus, The Fount, a favourite oozy abode of the Thynian Nymphs. Overhead from the

<sup>1</sup> *sit durum . . . experto.*

deserted trees hung juicy fruits that owned no hus- 35  
bandry; tall lilies stood around in the rich water-  
meadows where their whiteness mingled with the  
crimson colour of poppies. Anon like a child he fell  
to picking these with the delicate edge of his nail, and  
cared more for the flowers than for the task set him; 40  
and anon stooping unwary over the pretty waters he  
prolongs his truantry because of the coaxing reflexion.  
At last he dips his arms and makes to draw out; leaning  
hard on his right shoulder he hoists a full sluice.

But when the Dryad maidens kindling at his fairness 45  
forsook their wonted dances in wonderment, and as he  
slid forward, drew him gently down through the un-  
resisting flood—then Hylas made an outcry: they  
had seized him bodily! And from afar off Alcides  
answers and answers again, but the wind brings him  
back the name from the verges of the pool. 50

Take warning, Gallus, by this tale and keep guard  
over your darling: you seemed to be entrusting your  
pretty Hylas to Nymphs.

## XXI *Tu, qui consortem*

*Lines written for a Cenotaph  
of one Gallus who fell in the  
Perusine War.*

**Y**OU who make such haste to escape a kindred  
fate; you, wounded soldier from the Tuscan  
Lines, why do your swollen eyes start aside at the  
sound of my groaning? I was one among all the rest



of you that went soldiering, the closest comrade of them all.

5 Save yourself, aye, but in such trim that father and mother may have the heart to rejoice, lest sister perceive the truth by your tears : that Gallus, plucked safe away from the midst of Caesar's swords, failed to escape certain unknown hands.

And whosoever shall find bones scattered abroad in the hills of Tuscany, let him know that those are mine.

## XXII *Qualis et unde genus,*

### *Epilogue.*

WHAT sort of man am I and whence sprung ?  
What are my household gods ? You ask me these questions, Tullus, in the name of our ever-friendliness.

I will tell you. If the graves of Perugia are a household word to our nation—all the burials of those days, those hard days for Italy, when feud at Rome drove  
5 her citizens to madness ; yet I am the man to whom beyond all others thou, dust of Tuscany, art a memory of woe : thou didst suffer the limbs of my kinsman to be flung away, thou hadst no mould to cover his wretched bones with. I was bred in Umbria where she most closely neighbours the field beneath those  
10 tombs and marches with them, in fertile Umbria of the bountiful countrysides.

## BOOK II

I

*Quaeritis, unde mihi*

*To all his Friends, but to  
Maecenas in particular: an  
Apology.*

YOU question whence it comes that love so often employs my pen, whence it comes that my book is found so soft in the mouth. Not Calliope, not Apollo descants these matters to me; my mistress herself is author of my wit and fancy. If you make her to move radiant in Coan muslins, then shall muslins of Cos be the stuff of all this roll; if I have seen the scattered locks straying on her brow, she loves to put on her stateliest bearing because I have praised her hair; if with ivory fingers she strikes the melody of the lyre, I admire how artfully she controls the nimble sallies of her hands; when she droops a pair of eyes that sue for slumber, the poet in me discovers a thousand fresh conceits. Whatever she has done, anything that she has said, serves to make some grand legend out of nothing.

But if, Maecenas, the fates had so highly favoured me that I could lead heroic companies to battle, my song should not be of Titans, of Ossa piled on Olympus to make Pelion the path to heaven, of ancient Thebes, or of Pergama the glory of Homer, and how two seas were linked in one at Xerxes' command, or of that earliest realm of Remus, or the proud spirit of tall Carthage, the Cimbrian menace, and the good ser-

25 vice of Marius ; I would chronicle your Caesar's  
wars and policies, and you should be my second  
theme beneath great Caesar. For as often as I sang  
of Modena or that Philippi where Roman brought  
Roman to the grave, or the naval combats of the Sici-  
lian rout, or the hearths of the ancient Tuscan race  
30 overthrown in ruin, or the coasts of Ptolemaean Pharos  
conquered ; or sang of Egypt and Nile and the day when  
haled into the city the River-god passed disfeatured with  
his seven captive streams, or necks of kings encircled by  
gilded chains, and beaks of Actian prizes rolling along  
35 the Sacred Street : my Muse would still be inweaving you  
in the record of battles, you the soul of loyalty whether  
to commence peace or to abandon it. Theseus among  
the dead, Achilles among the living, they take each his  
friend to witness for an example, the one his Pirithous,  
the other his Patroclus !

But Callimachus has not the large utterance to peal  
40 the shocks of war waged in Phlegra between Jove and  
Enceladus, and my temper sorts ill with rugged strains  
to enshrine Caesar's name high amidst his Phrygian  
grandsires. The seaman's story is of tempest, the  
ploughman's of his team of bulls ; the soldier tells his  
wounds, the shepherd his tale of sheep : we have to do  
45 instead with such as wage their warfare in a narrower  
battlefield. Let every man spend his days at the trade  
he is best able to practise !

It is glory to die for love : and the next best glory,  
if a man is given the power to enjoy but one. Oh, may  
I enjoy my own love to myself !

If I mistake not, she likes to find fault with girls who are light-of-love, and disesteems the whole Iliad on 50 account of Helen.

Though I must put my lips to stepdame Phaedra's potions, the potions which failed to hurt her stepson, though I be doomed to perish by the herb of Circe, or the Colchian shall fire for me her cauldron upon hearths of Iolcos—since one woman has plundered 55 my feelings, from this house shall my funeral train proceed.

Leechcraft can heal all the pains of humanity : only love likes not the man who makes his craft of disease.

Machaon healed the limping legs of Philoctetes, and Chiron, son of Phillyra, the eyesight of Phoenix ; the 60 god of Epidaurus too by his Cretan simples restored lifeless Androgeon to his father's hearth ; also the Mysian paladin who received his hurt from the lance of the Haemonian, by that very lance received his relief.

But this failing of mine, if anybody shall be able to 65 rid me of it, he is the one man who will be able to deliver the apples into Tantalus' hand ; he likewise could take the ewers of the virgins and fill each vessel brimful, that their delicate necks be not bowed by the ceaseless burden of water ; likewise he will unloose Prometheus' arms from his crag on Caucasus and drive away the bird from the midst of his bosom. 70

But, since it must be so, when the time shall come for destiny to demand up my life, and I shall be a short-lived name on a scanty breadth of marble,

Maecenas—you who have been the hope, the emulous  
ambition of all our youth, you, my lawful pride in life  
75 and in death—if ever your way chance to lie by the  
road which neighbours on my tomb, halt your British  
chariot with the figured harness, and dropping a tear  
upon my dumb cold embers fling me a word or two, as  
it might be ‘*Poor fellow, a maid’s unkindness was his  
doom!*’

## II *Lib’er eram et vacuo*

*His freedom enslaved again by  
an Incomparable.*

I WAS at liberty and musing upon a life of lonely  
pillows, but Love has outwitted me under a feint  
of peace. Why do such looks linger in the flesh on  
earth? Ah Jove, I think nothing of your sly pleasures  
in days of old!

5 Brown hair! Such long hands! Such grandeur in  
her carriage! And she walks in majesty—why, she  
might be Jove’s sister and not unworthy of him! Or  
she is like Pallas moving stately beside Dulichian altars,  
her breast veiled by the Gorgon’s chevelure of snakes.  
Such was Ischomache, the daughter of Lapithes, a  
woman of the golden days, a delicious prize for Cen-  
10 taurs to ravish from the thick of the carousal!

<sup>1</sup> Such was Brimo in the legend, when by the waters  
of Boebeis she nestled Mercury closely to her maiden  
side.

<sup>1</sup> *Mercurio qualis.*

Give way now, ye Goddesses, whom the shepherd saw doffing their kirtles on the peaks of Ida long ago !

Oh, that eld may refuse to alter these looks although she shall live the centuries of the Cumæan prophets !

### III *Qui nullum tibi dicebas*

*To Himself on the same occasion.*

**Y**OU were saying that none could harm you now, and here you are in a fix ! All your proud conceit brought down ! You are hardly man enough to keep quiet for one month, poor wretch, and presently we shall be having another scandalous book about you !

Why, I was trying if a fish could live in dry sand, and 5 a grisly wild boar in the sea, all unaccustomed ! nay, stranger still—if I could spend my nights over grave pursuits. A love is put off, but never abolished.

And it is not so much her looks, fair though they be, that have made me prisoner—lilies could never be whiter than my mistress ! It is like snows of Tartary 10 vying with Spanish vermilion, like rose-petals swimming in pure milk !—not the comely fashion of her hair falling in streams over a polished neck ; not her eyes, a pair of flambeaux, the stars of heaven to me ! It is not because a girl happens to dazzle in silks of 15 Araby—I am none of your fond amorists that flatter for nothing ; rather because when the liquor is on the table, she dances as beautifully as ever Ariadne marshalling her wild frolic bands in the measure ; rather

because when she preludes a song with touches of her  
20 Aeolian quill, she is so well skilled that her playing is  
equal to the lyre of Aganippe ; and then she pits her  
pen against Corinna of old—she does not allow your  
common, anybody's verses to be a match with hers !

Surely, sweetheart, in your first days a Love was there,  
boding brightly, to salute your birth with a melodious  
25 sneeze ! These heavenly endowments, the gods be-  
stowed them on you ; never imagine that your mother  
gave them to you. No, no, such dowries do not belong  
to human childing, ten months never bred such ex-  
cellences ! You were born to be the very glory of  
30 Roman maidens, you shall be the first maiden of Rome  
to lie down beside Jove, you shall not always be with  
us and visit an earthly couch. There was Helen first,  
and now this loveliness returns to the world again.  
Can I wonder now if all our youth be kindled at her ?  
It had been handsomer for thee, Troy, to perish for her !  
35 Time was I used to wonder that a maid was the cause  
of such a mighty war between Europe and Asia at  
Pergama ; but now I see, Paris, you were a sage, and  
you too, Menelaus, the one to demand the other to  
be stiff in refusal. A face to deserve that even Achilles  
should die for it ! Even Priam must find the cause of  
40 the war good !

Whosoever would outstrip in renown the panels of  
the old masters must present my mistress for a type in  
his craftsmanship : if he exhibit her to the peoples of  
the West or to the peoples of the East, he will set  
the East and set the West on fire.

Ah, could I but contain myself within these bounds ! 45  
Or, if come it must, come such a second love as shall  
give me yet sharper deaths to undergo !

Even as a bull at first refuses at the plough, and afterwards comes gently to the field when his yoke is grown familiar ; so do young men chafe in love at first and are full of mettle, but presently they are broken-in and put up with fair and foul alike. Melampus was 50 a seer, and he suffered a shameful bondage when he was found guilty of pilfering the oxen of Iphiclus. It was not gain that moved him, but the loveliness of Pero and the hope that she should one day be a bride in the house of Amythaon.

#### IV *Multa prius dominae*

*The Miseries and Uncertainties  
of Lovers.*

**M**ANY sins must you first deplore in your mistress, often ask and often go disappointed ; often must your teeth spoil an unoffending nail, and rage prompt you to stamp your foot like a man that is in two minds at once !

All for nothing were perfumes drenched on my hair, 5  
and my step went loitering in a nicely balanced pace.

This is a case where no herb has any virtue, no night of Colchian arts, no brewed simples of Perimede's handiwork : inasmuch as we perceive neither cause nor open stroke, the avenue whereby approach (as they do 10 approach) all these plagues remains viewless. Here is a man that needs not physicians, nor soft beds for his



malady ; it is no season or air of a climate that works him harm ; he walks his ways—and the next moment his friends are wondering at his decease ! Such an incalculable thing is love, whatever you make of it.

15 Yes ! Is there a cheating sorceress whose fortune I do not make ? Is there a hag who does not pore over my dreams a dozen times ?

If ever I have an enemy, let him love girls ; let him take his pleasure in a boy, if ever I have a friend ! You glide along an unruffled river and your boat in no  
20 danger : how can the surge of such a toy seaboard harm you ? *He* often changes temper at a single word ; she will hardly be softened by your very blood.

V

*Hoc verum est,*

*To Cynthia : Disillusion and  
Remonstrance.*

**I**S this true, Cynthia, that you are all over Rome and living in unconcealed naughtiness ? Have I deserved to expect this ? Traitress, you shall pay for it ! I will have my North-wind blowing too, Cynthia.

5 I mean, though, to discover one among the many deceivers, one who will care to be made famous by my verse, and not trample on me with such unmerciful temper ; and she shall tear you to tatters !

Oh, I have loved you long, and you shall weep—too late ! Now my anger is fresh, now is the time to depart :  
10 let the pain but disappear, and (believe me) love will come back ! The waves of the Carpathian Sea are

not so changeable with a North-wind, a black cloud does not turn about so easily before the shifty Southerly gale as angry lovers are altered by a word : withdraw your neck from the unrighteous yoke while you may !

Not but what you will feel some pain ; only the first 15  
night, though—in love any plague is light if you will put up with it.

But as for you, sweetheart, in the name of Lady Juno's sweet covenant spare to let your proud spirit do you a mischief. Not only does a bull strike his foe with his curving horns, but a very sheep shows fight against her assailant, if provoked. I will not rend the 20  
clothes from your forsworn body, my anger must not shatter the door that you have locked against me, I will not presume to wring your plaited hair in my anger, nor hurt you with brutal thumbs : let some rude clown 25  
pick these vulgar quarrels, one whose head has never worn the encircling ivies. So I will write what no days of yours shall ever cancel '*Cynthia is a mighty beauty ; but Cynthia is a wanton in her words*'.

Believe me, however much you despise the whispers of report, this is a line you will turn pale at. 30

## VI *Non ita complebant*

*To Cynthia. His Jealousy  
and the Licence of Roman  
manners.*

THEY did not fill Lais' house at Ephyre so, though all Greece lay at her doors ; Menander's Thais, in her day, had no such throng, and she made the pastime

5 of the Erichthonian people ; nor yet that Phryne who could have built up Thebes after its clean destruction, so many men she had to enrich her !

But, not content with that, you often feign pretended kinsmen, and there is no lack of such as have the right to kiss you.

A man's face in a picture hurts me, a name, a soft  
10 inarticulate brat in the cradle ! I shall be hurt if your mother gives you many kisses, hurt by your sister and her bedfellow ; anything will hurt me ; I am so fearful (forgive my fears !) that I cannot see a shirt without having a wretched suspicion that there's a man inside it.

15 These appetites, so they tell, brought on wars in the old time, to these origins belong all the deaths of Troy ;<sup>1</sup> from this cause<sup>2</sup> did mourning make havoc among the unwitting Achivi in the days when Atreus' son paid dear for his second passion<sup>1</sup> ; the same frenzy bade the Centaurs break their knobbed tankards upon Pirithous as he stood to face the brunt. Why should I seek for Grecian instances ? Thou, Romulus, fostered on cruel  
20 wolf's milk, art a ringleader in this reproach ; it was thy precept to ravish the Sabine virgins and fear not ; it is by thy authority that Love now dares anything at Rome. Happy the wife of Admetus and the bed of Ulysses, and every such woman as loves her husband's  
25 threshold ! What is the good for girls to found temples of Chastity when any bride may be anything you please ?

It was the art which first painted lewd panels and presented disgraceful sights in a decent dwelling, that

<sup>1-1</sup> iii. 18. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *hinc*.

put this taint in the unspoiled eyes of girls and would not have them unschooled in its own naughtiness. Oh, <sup>30</sup> let him howl underground <sup>1</sup>, the man who employed his handicraft in displaying what quarrels lurk beneath the unbetraying mask of pleasure ! The roof was gay with no such designs in the old times, the wall was figured with no reproach then. It is not without good cause, though : the spider has curtained the holy place, and <sup>35</sup> the evil weed encroaches on forsaken gods.

What guardians then, what threshold bounds shall I set for you, which never an enemy's foot may overstep? A sourfaced watch set upon an unwilling woman is no help : she is safe enough, Cynthia, whose honour <sup>40</sup> forbids a fault.

But as for me, never a wife shall lure me, never a mistress ; you shall ever be my mistress and my wife.

## VII

*Gavisa est certe*

*To Cynthia : upon the Repeal  
of a Law which enacted  
Penalties for Bachelors.*

CYNTHIA surely rejoiced at the repeal of this law ; for at the proclaiming of it a while ago we both wept long, lest it should sever us ; although Jove himself could not part two lovers against their will. ' But Caesar is mighty.' Nay, Caesar is mighty in arms : <sup>5</sup> conquest of nations is worth nothing in love.

Indeed I could rather have suffered this head to part company with this neck than consent to mis-spend my

<sup>1</sup> a ! *gemat in terris.*

flames in humouring a wife's whim, or pass by your  
barred threshold, a husband—I a husband!—looking  
10 back with wet eyes at what I had betrayed. Ah, what  
slumbers would my wedding-flutes have piped you  
then, flutes more mournful than any funeral  
trumpet!

### VII A *Unde mihi patriis*

*To Cynthia: perhaps a part  
of the same poem.*

WHAT have I to do with furnishing sons to  
support ancestral triumphs? None of my blood  
15 will ever be a soldier. Yet, did but real camps attend  
in my mistress' train, then should Castor's charger not  
move grandly enough for me. For hence alone it is  
that my glory earned renown, my glory which travels  
far as the wintry sons of Borysthenes.

You are my only delight; Cynthia, let me be yours  
only, and I will prize this love more dearly than the  
20 lineage of ancestral blood.

### VIII *Eripitur nobis iam*

*To a Friend: jealousies, re-  
proaches, and menaces.*

ROBBING me of a mistress whom I have loved for  
so long!—And you, my friend, bid me shed no  
tears? No feuds are bitter but feuds of love; murder  
me and I will hate you less! Can I behold her nestled  
5 upon another man's arm? Is she who was called *mine*

to be called *mine* no more? 'All things change; loves change, at least. Either conquered or conquering—so runs the whirligig of love. Great captains and great sultans have often had a fall; Thebes once stood up-right and Troy was tall Troy.' 10

The presents I have given! the songs I have made! And still she was of iron and never said '*I love you*'.

So all these years I have been headstrong fool enough to put up with you and your household, unscrupulous woman? Did you ever think of me as a man that had 15 rights? Do you mean always to fling your haughty phrase at my head?

Well, Propertius, must you die thus in the prime of your days? Nay, die! Let her rejoice over your disappearance! Let her torment my ghost, persecute my shade, outrage my funeral fires, trample on my very bones! Why, did not Boeotian Haemon gash his 20 own side and sink down at Antigone's tomb, and mingle his bones with the unhappy girl's, because he would not enter his house in Thebes without her?

You shall not escape, though! You must die with 25 me! Either blood must drip from this same steel! Your death will be ever so dishonourable to me; a dishonourable death, yes—but die you shall nevertheless!

Great Achilles, he too was robbed of his mate. Left forlorn, he hardened his heart to keep his weapons 30 idly in quarters. He first saw the rout, the Achaeans haled along the beach, the Dorian camp set on fire by Hector's brand. He first saw Patroclus disfigured,

35 outstretched on a heap of sand, and his hair lying dabbled in butchery ; and endured it all for the sake of beautiful Briseis. Such is the bitterness of a man's rage and grief when he is robbed of his love. Yet when by a tardy redress his captive was restored to him, he haled that same valiant Hector behind his Thessalian horses.

But when I am so much lesser a man than he whether in prowess or in accoutrement, what wonder if Love  
40 triumphs over me without question?

## IX

*Iste quod est,*

*To Cynthia. In the same strain.*

I HAVE often been what *he* is now : but maybe another in his time will be preferred to the very elect one of to-day !

Penelope, a woman well worth all that multitude of suitors, was able to live unscathed for twice ten  
5 years ; she was able to put off the bridal by a pretence of weaving, while with nightly deceit she unravelled her daily fabric ; and though she had no hope ever to see Ulysses again, she abode steadfast and grew an old woman waiting for him.

So too Briseis ; she flogged her white cheeks with  
10 a frantic hand, and clasped her lifeless Achilles ; bride of the foray, she mourned as in the shallow streams she washed her bleeding lord outstretched over the brim of Simois at her feet ; and soiled her hair, and uplifted

huge Achilles' body, those giant bones of his in her little hand.

(Thou hadst no Peleus then, no sea-coloured mother, 15  
no Scyrian Deidamia to help her forlorn lover.)

Well, well, those were days when Greece rejoiced in true-hearted daughters, days when modesty prospered still in the very thick of warfare !

But *you* could not be idle for a single night, unnatural woman !—nor stay alone for a single day ! 20  
More than that, you prolonged your cups with plenty of merriment together ; and I daresay mischievous things enough were said about me. You even seek one who provoked a parting with you before. Please the gods, you may enjoy your man now that you're caught !

Are these the vows I undertook for your safe recovery, 25  
praying that<sup>1</sup> mine might be the head the waters of Styx must sosoona overpower, while<sup>2</sup> we friends stood weeping around your bed ? Where was this man then, in heaven's name, or who was he then, traitress ? What would you have done if I were a soldier obliged to remain far away in India, or if my ship were weather-bound in 30  
the Atlantic ?

Yes, feigned words and feigned deceits—they come easy to you ; this is the one work every woman is skilled in ! The Syrtes changing under a veering gale, the leaves fluttering in a winter's southerly gale—they are not so inconstant as woman's troth when she is angry, 35  
be the matter earnest or be the matter light.

Well, since such is your will and pleasure, I will

<sup>1</sup> *ut.*

<sup>2</sup> *cum.*



give place. Boy-loves, I beseech, bring forth sharper weapons from your armoury ! Vie with each other at piercing me ! melt in pieces this life of mine ! To  
 40 have my blood—that will be a grand feather in your caps.

The stars are my witnesses, and the hoar-frost of morning, and the door stealthily opened to a poor fellow, that never in life have I cared for anything more dearly than for you ; dear you shall be even now though you be so bitterly set against me. And never  
 45 another woman shall gain entry to my bed. I will be alone since I may not be yours.

Oh, how I would that (if by any means I have lived my span of years dutifully) the fellow might turn to stone in the midst of love ! For iust of kingship the  
 50 two princes of Thebes fell in accursed warfare while their mother stood between them ; much more would I welcome death to see *you* dead, if my girl might be at stake between us as we fought !

## X *Sed tempus lustrare*

*To Augustus on his Eastern victories.*

**N**AY it is time to beat the bounds of Helicon with other dances, and time to give a fair field to the Thessalian steed. Now it is all my fancy to celebrate the squadrons valiant for battle, the camps of my  
 5 prince, the camps of Rome. And if my strength fail, at least my boldness will be a title of honour ; in great enterprises the very ' I would ' is enough.

Let a man's heyday sing of loves, his latter day of wars and alarms : I will sing of battle now that my mistress' chronicle is written. Now I mean to walk abroad with sterner port and frowning mien ; now my Muse teaches me a different harp. Up, my heart ! Quit your mean song, Pierids, it is high time to put on strength ; now we shall have need of no mean utterance. Already Euphrates forswears the backward-glancing eye of his Parthians and is sorry that he hemmed in the Crassi. Nay India presents her neck to your triumph, Augustus, and the house of unimpaired Arabia trembles before you. And may any such land as now withdraws herself at the world's end, hereafter be conquered and feel your hand !

These shall be the camps I will follow ; I will be a great bard by singing of your camps. May the fates have that day in keeping for me !

As when one cannot touch the head because a statue is too tall, his garland is laid here low at the feet ; so do we now, having no means to scale the song of glory, yield our humble incense with the worship of the poor. My song is not yet acquainted even with the wells of Ascra ; Love has but washed it in the stream of Permessus.

## XI *Scribant de te alii*

*To Cynthia. An Epigram,*

**O**THERS may write about you, or you may remain unknown, it matters not ; let him praise who puts seed in barren ground !

Trust me, the black date of uttermost death shall carry away all the talents you are dowered with, and 5 carry you away with them, all on that one couch, the bier; and the wayfarer shall pass by your bones in disregard and never say '*These ashes were once a scholar maid*'.

## XII *Quicumque ille fuit*

*Love: imitated from the Greek.*

WHOSOEVER he was who painted Love as a boy, think you not he had a marvellous craftsmanship? He first saw that lovers are witless creatures, and that great blessings are lost to them by reason of 5 their unsubstantial fancies. Likewise it was not amiss of him to add the windy wings, and make this human-hearted god to fly, considering that we toss upon the coming and going of a wave, and our gale never sits steady in any quarter. With good reason too is his hand equipped with barbed arrows, and a Cretan 10 quiver rests slung from both shoulders; since he strikes before we descry the foe from our safe shelter, and none goes away sound after that wound.

As for me, the shafts abide, and the boyish semblance abides, but his wings—he has surely lost his wings, for 15 oh, he never flies anywhere away from my breast, but spends my blood in an unceasing warfare.

Why dost thou delight to lodge in withered marrows? For very shame remove thy weapons elsewhere<sup>1</sup>. Better

<sup>1</sup> *si pudor est . . . tela.*

adventure those poisons upon such as are fresh and entire ; it is not I but my unsubstantial ghost that gets 20 the cudgelling ! And if thou finish the undoing of that, who will there be to make such ditties (this light Muse of mine is thy grand renown) upon my mistress' head, her fingers, her black eyes, and sing how delicately her feet use to move ?

### XIII *Non tot Achaemeniis*

*Desiring no glory but in Cynthia, he directs her how he would be buried, and how regarded after his burial.*

NOT so many Tuscan arrowheads are pinned upon Achaemenian shafts as Love has stuck in my breast ! He has forbidden me to despise these most slender muses, and by his command I lodge in the very grove of Ascra ; not to make Pierian oaks follow my 5 word or be of power to draw wild beasts along in the valley of Ismarus—but that Cynthia instead may be amazed at my verse ; this shall make me a more famous master than Inachian Linus.

I am not only an admirer of a comely person, nor of the woman who boasts her illustrious grandsires. It 10 shall be my pleasure to read my pages in the bosom of a scholar-maid and submit them to the clean censure of her ear. If I can gain this, then good-bye to the gross medley of common talk ; I shall be safe in the judgement of my mistress. And if she will but lend

15 a gracious ear and bless me, then I can endure a feud with Jove.

So, whenever it shall be, the day when death shall close up my eyes, hear what order you must observe at my obsequies. Let no procession of mine march with  
20 long-drawn-out array of effigies ; no trumpet be the idle dirge of my doom ; no bier be spread for me then on ivory pedestals, and my mortality rest upon no couch of cloth-of-gold from Attalus' realms. The row of spice-laden dishes shall be all to seek, and only the meagre ceremonies of a poor man's funeral attend  
25 me. Costly enough my procession though it were no more than a quire or two of verses ; I will present them as my grand gifts to Persephone.

But you shall follow with bare breast all torn, and be not weary of calling upon my name, and place the last kisses on my cold lips when the onyx casket filled with  
30 the tribute of Syria shall be bestowed. Thereafter when the underlying glow shall make ashes of me, let a poor jar of earthenware receive my after-state ; and a bay-tree be set over my scanty sepulchre, for a shade to cover the room of my burnt-out remains ; and a line  
35 or so, to say '*He who now lies here all uncouth dust, once owned Love and none but Love for his master*'.

The glory of this my grave shall grow in repute no less than the bloodstained sepulchre of the Phthian paladin. You also, if one day you must come to your  
40 doom, mind you come gray-haired by this road to the stones of memory. And meanwhile beware how you think scorn of me when I am buried ; earth, quick with

secrets, is not wholly without feeling towards the truth<sup>1</sup>.

Oh, would that any one Sister of the Three had bid me lay down my spirit in my earliest cradle! Aye, to what end shall the breath of such uncertain date be 45  
 husbanded? It was three ages before Nestor's ashes were seen. Oh, for some Gallic soldier on the ramparts of Troy to have curtailed the lot of his patriarchal eld! He would not have seen the body of Antilochus laid in earth or said 'O Death, why dost thou come to me 50  
 so late?'

However, you must sometimes weep over your lost friend; it is a bounden duty to love a former mate for ever. Witness the cruel boar who struck down the snow-white Adonis of old as he went hunting upon Idalian peaks, how the lovely youth lay there in the fen, 55  
 and there (they say) went Venus with hair dishevelled.

But in vain shall you call back my dumb shade, Cynthia; for how shall my crumbled bones be able to speak?

## XIV

*Non ita Dardanio*

*His triumph.*

**D**ELIGHTS of Atreus' son at his Dardan triumph when down fell the mighty wealth of Laomedon; joy of Ulysses when, his wanderings finished, he touched the shore of his dear Dulichia; or of Electra when she 5

<sup>1</sup> or towards faithfulness.

beheld safe and sound that Orestes her brother whose pretended bones she had held and wept over them ; Minos' daughter looking upon Theseus unharmed after he guided his Daedalian way by his clue of thread— what were all these to the delights I have garnered  
10 this past night? Come such another and I shall be an immortal !

Why, so long as I walked humbly with drooping neck I used to be called ' no more worth than a dry tank '. And now she no longer tries to put her wicked scorns in the way between us, and she cannot sit unmoved at my weeping.

15 Oh, I would that this kind of dealing had not come to my knowledge so late ! Now it is giving physic to a cinder. There was the path shining bright before me and I was blind ! This is the truth of the adage '*Madly in love, nobody uses his eyes*'.

This is the precept I have perceived to profit us  
20 instead : ' Flout them, you lovers ! ' This is the way to make her consent to-day that yesterday said *No*. Others were knocking in vain and calling on their mistress ; my girl had her head sunk in voluptuous languor with me !

This is a finer victory for me than your conquests of Parthia ; this shall be spoils, kings, chariot and all for me !

25 Goddess of Cythera, I will nail a grand offering upon thy pillar, and the legend under my name shall set forth that '*I, Propertius, set up this booty before thy house, a lover admitted for a whole night*'.

Now, sweetheart, my ship shall come safely beached

to you : surely not sink with all her cargo in the midst of the shore-water? Nay, if so be that any offence shall 30 alter you towards me, then may I lie dead before your antechambers !

## XV

*O me felicem !*

*To Cynthia. The Lover  
Triumphant.*

: : : : : : : : :

SOONER shall earth mock the husbandman by a changeling increase, rather the Sun drive a team of darkness; streams begin to recall their water towards the fountainhead, and fishes parch in the dry deep— than I could remove my agonies elsewhere; hers in 35 life I will be, hers will I be in death !

Nay, if she but consent to grant me such nights again <sup>1</sup>, a mere twelvemonth of life will be a long age; if she shall give me many, I will grow immortal in them. One night will make a god of anybody outright ! 40

This is the life which, if all men would commonly covet to run and grovel sunk in abundance of strong liquor, then were there no such thing as cruel steel nor ship of war; the Actian sea would not tumble our bones; nor Rome, so oft besieged about by the press of her own triumphs, be weary of untying her hair to 45 mourn. One thing shall posterity be able to praise in us with good cause: our carousals have never outraged any of the gods.

<sup>1</sup> *talis iterum.*



Only do you not abandon the fruition of life while there is yet light ! Give all your kisses and you shall  
50 give few enough !

As the petals forsake a withered chaplet, and you see them floating scattered upon the wine-bowls, so it is with us lovers ; for all our high sallies of hopes, perhaps to-morrow's date shall round our destinies.

## XVI *Praetor ab Illyricis*

*To Cynthia : his jealous fury  
against a Rival.*

THE praetor is just arrived, Cynthia, from Illyrian lands, a mighty prey for you, a mighty vexation for me. Could not he have lost his life at the Headland of Thunder ? Oh, Neptune, what gifts would I have  
5 given thee ! Now there is banqueting and a full table without me ; now it is open doors all night without me.

Why, since it is so, do not abandon the offered harvest, if you have any senses ; strip your thick-witted full-fleeced brute ! And presently when his fortune is eaten up and he still faithful but penniless, tell him  
10 to sail and find some more Illyrias !

Cynthia does not run after the rods of office or care for pride of place—but she's the one for always weighing her lovers' moneybags !

O Venus, come to the rescue of my anguish, and make him wreck his bodily frame with the unresting exercises of his wanton will !

15 So it is true, anybody purchases love with presents ? Jove, what unworthy stuff to waste a girl for ! She is

ever sending me to the ocean to look for gems, and bidding me fetch my gifts for her from Tyre itself. Oh, how I would that no man were rich at Rome, and the prince himself might lodge in a straw-built cot! 20 Mistresses would never be on sale for a present, and a girl would grow gray in one house; you would never have lain apart from me<sup>1</sup> for a week of nights, with your white arms round so foul a man—and that not for any sins of mine (I take you to witness) but because in general pretty women have ever liked fickleness. 25 The outlandish fellow bustles to and fro on the brawny legs to which her door was denied—and the next moment, here he is in luck, possessed of my domain!

Look what Eriphyle got by her presents—Oh, the rueful reward! And in what torment Creusa the bride 30 burned!

Will no ill-treatment ever assuage my tears? Must these misbehaviours never cease to entail this agony? All these many days past, I have felt no interest in the theatre or the Parade, and my table has no relish. Oh, for some shame, at least some shame!—or is it possible 35 the proverb is true?—*Scandalous loves mean deaf ears*. Consider the chief who not long ago filled the waters of Actium with vain alarms (for all his men had their death-warrant); it was his rascally passions bade him put about ship and turn tail and seek for escape at the ends of the world. But Caesar's merit and Caesar's 40 boast were in this, that he put up the sword with the same hand that gained the victory.

<sup>1</sup> *nunquam . . . cubares.*

But as for all the gowns, all the emeralds, and the chrysoliths of yellow ray that he has given you, may I see  
 45 the tempest spirit them away into space ! I wish they may turn into earth or turn into water ! Jove does not always smile serenely at forsworn lovers and with a deaf ear disregard their petition. You have seen the thunder-clap roll all across the heaven and the bolt leap down  
 50 from skiey habitations : it is not the Pleiads who work these effects nor yet the watery Orion ; the wrath of the thunderbolt falls not so for nothing. In that hour the god is wont to punish forsworn maidens because he too has wept at their deceits, god as he was.

55 For which cause, do not for a Tyrian stuff's sake think it worth while to be terrified every time there is a South-wind blowing a cloudy rack.

## XVII *Mentiri noctem,*

*In Bitterness he is still submissive.*

**T**O pledge a night and break faith, to lure a lover with promises—this is the true meaning of blood-guiltiness ! These are secrets I have learned to expound, the many times when I have fulfilled the rueful measure of a night, forlorn, and aching on this half, aching on that half of my bed.

5 Be moved if you will by the lot of Tantalus beside the river to see how the waters still give thirst the slip and ebb away from his droughty mouth ; stand aghast if you will at the toils of Sisyphus, how he rolls

and rolls the reluctant load all the way up the hill ;  
there is nothing in the world lives a harder life than  
your lover, nothing that, if you had your right senses, 10  
you would less wish to be.

Time was, they acclaimed my good luck and envy  
stood aghast ; now I am scarce admitted once in every  
ten days. Now, unnatural woman, I am fain to hurl  
myself from a rugged rock, and take a poisonous powder  
in my hands ! Am I not even free to make a night of 15  
it at a street corner beneath a dry moon, or pass a word  
through the cracks in the door ? <sup>1</sup>

Yet though it be so, I will eschew changing mistress.  
She will weep one day when she perceives my loyalty.

### XVIII *Assiduae multis*

*He reasons with her in anger.*

**M**ANY have found ceaseless complaints breed dislike :  
when a man keeps silence a woman is often broken  
by it. If you have seen something, better say you have  
not ; and if anything should happen to have hurt you, say it  
does not hurt ! How if my life were feeble with gray years,  
and the wrinkles of feebleness made my cheeks seamy ? 5

Nay, Aurora despised not Tithonus' eld, nor left him  
sunk in abandonment at her Orient house ; often at her  
departing she cherished him in her waters ere she  
studiously washed her harnessed team ; as she reposed 10  
in the land of her Indian neighbours in his embrace,  
she complained how soon the days came round again ;

<sup>1</sup> Read ? after *fores*.

as she mounted her chariot she called the gods unjust and rendered her service to the world with a bad  
15 grace. She had pleasure enough in her old Tithonus alive to outweigh the heaviness of her grief at the loss of Memnon.

She was not ashamed, fair maid though she was, to sleep with an old man and be always kissing gray hairs. But you, traitress, hate me though I am young, whereas you will be a hag bent double in no long date. (Indeed  
20 why do I not cut short my sorrows with the thought that it is Cupid's wont to play a rogue's trick on those to whom he had been kind before?)

And even at this time you must be madly aping the dyed Britons; and when you amuse yourself, your head is coloured with an outlandish brilliance? Every sem-  
25 blance is proper as nature gave it: a Belgian tint is a disgrace on a Roman cheek. I wish plenty of plagues underground to a girl who plays tricks with her hair—lying little fool! Away with it! and in my eyes at least you shall still pass for beautiful; beautiful enough to  
30 me, if only you are oft consenting. If Madam So-and-So has had a fancy to colour her forehead with a mess of azure, is azure beauty good on that account?

You have no brother and no son, I alone must be  
35 brother and son to you. Let your own pillow be ever your guardian, and do not be tempted to sit about with brow too much bedizened. I shall believe the tale of report<sup>1</sup>—no misdemeanours! Rumour overleaps land and seas!

<sup>1</sup> read a comma after *committere*.

## XIX

*Etsi me invito*

*To Cynthia in the Country,  
written from his home.*

ALTHOUGH it is against my will, Cynthia, that you quit Rome, I rejoice that in my absence you dwell in the wilds of the country. In the pure fields there will be no young seducer whose soft instances will not suffer you to keep honest, no brawl will arise 5 before your windows, your sweet sleep will not be spoilt by voices calling on your name. You will be alone, Cynthia, and have for your view the lone hills, the flock, the needy husbandman's boundaries. No games will be able to seduce you there, no temples—that chief occasion for your misbehaviours; there you will 10 have an endless view of bulls ploughing and the vine shedding her locks under the expert pruning-hook; and there you shall offer the uncommon frankincense at some rude chapel where the kid sinks dying before a yeoman's hearth. Why, you shall even be welcome to mimic their dances in bare ankles—if but there be 15 perfect security from any intruder.

I myself will turn sportsman! From this very hour I have a mind to adopt the mysteries of Diana and set up votive trophies in honour of Venus. I will commence hunter of wild beasts, duly bestow their horns on a pine-tree, and in person give my gallant hounds the 20 master's word.—Not that I should venture to try the huge lions, though, or nimbly assail the wild hogs. Well

then, let my bravery be to lay wait for the gentle hares  
and pierce the wild-fowl with an arrow drawn home,  
25 where Clitumnus buries his lovely streams in his proper  
grove, and his sluice washes the snow-white cattle.

And you, sweetheart, as often as you shall engage in  
any adventure, bear in mind that I shall be with you  
ere many mornings. And for me likewise no lonely  
30 forests, no gadding streams that pour from mossy  
highlands, shall avail to distract me from pattering  
your name on a tireless tongue. When a man's away,  
anybody is glad to do him an ill turn.

## XX *Quid fles abducta*

*To Cynthia: he protests his  
faithfulness.*

**W**HY do you weep more sadly than Briseis when  
they took her away? Why do you weep more  
doleful and distressed than captive Andromache? Why  
weary the gods with frantic complaints at my falseness?  
Why bewail that my loyalty is fallen so low?

Not so mournful with her nightly plaint the Attic  
5 bird when she makes Cecropian leaves resound to her  
cry; or Niobe at her six pairs of graves, streaming out  
the tears of her proud distress till Sipylus thrills  
at her.

Though they bind my arms in knots of brass, or my  
10 limbs be ensconced in the very house of Danaë, for  
your sake, sweetheart, I will burst the brazen fetters  
and overleap the iron-barred house of Danaë.

All that they say about you to me is spoken to deaf ears ; do but you not doubt of my earnestness. By the bones of my mother and the bones of my father 15 (if I am speaking false, oh, let the ashes of either be heavy upon me !), I swear that I will abide yours, sweetheart, till the uttermost darkness ; one troth, one day shall carry us both off. Even if neither your renown nor your beauty held me, your gentle bondage 20 might hold me.

The full moon now reels out her seventh orbit since not a street corner can hold its tongue about you and me : in which time not once nor twice the door has been kind to me, not once nor twice I have been made free of your pillow. Yet I have never bought a night with sumptuous presents ; whatever I was, the fullness 25 of your partial fancy made me. When so many men sought you, you alone sought me : can I possibly be unmindful of your qualities?

If so may you torment me, Furies of tragedy, thou Aeacus damn me at the Assize in Hell ; and among 30 Tityus' plague of birds, may one more bird roam to be my punishment ! If so, may I have my burden of rocks to support in a Sisyphean ordeal.

You need not beseech me in meek pleading packets ; my last troth shall be as was my first. It is my charter for ever that I am the only lover who no more leave 35 off quickly than I begin lightly.



## XXI

*A quantum de me*

*To Cynthia: the Slanders of  
a false Rival.*

NOW, may Venus be unkind to Panthus in such measure as the measure of the slander which Master Panthus' sheet has forged concerning me!

But *you* must be coming to think my divination truer than Dodona. Your pretty gallant has a wife!  
5 'All those nights gone for nothing? Have you no shame?'  
Look, *he* sings! *he* is free! You are sunk in solitude, you who were all too ready to believe him.

And now you are the talk between that couple; he says haughtily that 'you were often at home when he would rather not have found you'. Mischief take me, if he is not just making a feather in his cap of you!  
10 These are master husband's titles to honour!

Thus did Jason of old deceive his Colchian hostess; she was cast out of the house because Creusa was in possession. Thus was Calypso cajoled by the Dulichian paladin; she saw her lover spread his sails.

15 Ah, you maidens all too ready to lend an ear, learn by forlorn experience not to be too rashly kind! But in spite of that<sup>1</sup> you are looking all this while for a second steadfast<sup>2</sup> lover. Fool, you may well take warning by the experience of the first!

I am with you, in whatever place, I at every season  
20 alike, be you sick or be you sound.

<sup>1</sup> *nunc.*<sup>2</sup> *restet.*

XXII *Scis here mi multas*

*To Demophoon: a confession  
of his Amorous Temper.*

YOU know, Demophoon, that yesterday I found many girls to admire, all alike; you know that I am visited by many plagues. My footfall never paces the street-corner in vain, and the theatres—Oh, too fatal institution! I am undone if anybody parts her white arms in a melting gesture or attunes her lips to 5 a lively air.

Meanwhile my poor eyes must be running after a wound—some fair creature sitting with her bosom unveiled, some gadding locks that stray over a faultless forehead, and an Indian jewel fastens them in the middle 10 of the head. Every cruel *No* that I read in her look, the cold sweats would run down all over my brow.

You ask me the reason why, Demophoon, I am so soft towards them all? As for that question, no love ever has a reason why. Why does anyone gash his arms with ritual blades and bruise himself keeping time to 15 the frantic measures of a Phrygian?

Every man's own nature gave him his particular weakness when he was made: fortune has given me always to be in love with something. Though the fates of minstrel Thamyras pursue me, never, my jealous friend, will I be blind to a pretty face! 20

XXII A *Aut, si es dura,**A Fragment.*

**E**ITHER, if you be unkind, say *No* ; or if not unkind, consent and have done with it ! What is the good of spending words without so much as a meaning ?

45 The one biting pain of all for a lover, is when at the height of expectation she suddenly refuses to meet him. What deep sighs keep him tossing restless all over the bed ! Why does she forbid him to be admitted, as if he were a stranger ? And again he wearies his boy with questions that he has heard answered before ; the

50 boy, whose errand is to ask the doom that his master dreads to know.

XXIII *Cui fuit indocti**He is amazed to see himself fallen so low.*

**I** WHO used to turn from so much as walking by the path of the unlearned mob, I do not stick now at relishing a draught taken from the common tank.

Does any gentleman give presents to another man's slave that he may carry the promised word to his

5 mistress ? And ever be questioning '*What colonnade shelters her now ?*' and, '*In what Park does she take her walk ?*' And when you have endured the labours that legend tells of Hercules, the end of it is that she writes '*Have you any present ?*', and you are allowed to scan the countenance of a horrible watchman, and (often

10 enough) lie in hiding caught in some filthy den.

How dearly bought, once in a whole twelvemonth,  
 does a night come round! Mischief take all the  
 partizans of the closed door! What do you say, on  
 t'other hand, to one that stalks at large with her mantle  
 thrown back, unhedged by any terror of guardians?  
 Why, the wench that pads the Sacred Street till it is <sup>15</sup>  
 rubbed smooth by her nasty slipper, lets nothing inter-  
 fere if one will come at her—this is a wench that  
 will never put you off; her tattling tongue will not  
 demand a sum that a skinflint father often weeps to  
 hear you confess; she will not say '*I am afraid! Quick!*  
*Pray, make haste to get up! You are lost! here's my*  
*husband coming from the country!*' 20

Let me be happy with such as the Euphrates and  
 such as the Orontes has sent me! I do not care for  
 decency in these gay intrigues.

Since no lover has any freedom at all left, if a free  
 man chooses to fall in love he's a lost fool.

## XXIV *Tu loqueris, cum*

*He excuses himself.*

'**Y**OU talk so when your famous book has made<sup>1</sup> you  
 a byword, and your *Cynthia* is read all over the  
 Forum?'

Who would not feel the sweat bathe his temples at  
 these words? No choice but to live clean like a gentle-  
 man, or to keep your love a secret?

Nay, if *Cynthia* were as you suppose towards me, <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *sis.*

breathing indulgence, I should not be called the prince of debauchery, nor maligned with such scandal through the whole town ; and though I might make use of <sup>1</sup> a name, as for gifts—no ! I should be only so many fair words out of pocket. This is why you need not wonder at my seeking cheap entertainment : a less  
 10 costly discredit—surely that is a good enough reason for you ?

Now it is a fan of gorgeous peacock's tail, and a ball—something cool to hold in her hands ; and if I am angry nothing will satisfy her but she must ask me for ivory dice, and the miserable presents which dazzle in the  
 15 Sacred Street. Oh, confound me if I ' care about your extravagances '—just because I am ashamed to be the sport of a deceitful mistress !

## XXIV A *Hoc erat in primis*

*To Cynthia: an expostulation and a promise of fidelity.*

**A**ND this was what it meant ! ' I might be as happy and thankful as the best ! ' Are you not ashamed with all your beauty to be a jilt ? Hardly one or two nights spent in love, and already I am told  
 20 that I am wearisome to your couch.

But now you were praising me and reading my verses ; has the love you talked of turned his wings so quickly ?

Let the man vie with me in fancy, and vie with me

<sup>1</sup> *uterer.*

in craftsmanship ; before all let him learn to be content with one roof for his loves ! If it be your good pleasure, let him fight against Lernaean hydras and 25 fetch you apples from the Hesperian dragon ; let him cheerfully swallow noisome poisons and the waters of shipwreck, and never refuse to be a wretch for your sake (oh, that you would put these tasks to the touch in me, sweetheart !)—and you will soon find him among the faint hearts, this pert gallant of yours, who now 30 has gained his vainglorious eminence by bragging ; next year will mean a breach between you.

But as for me, all the years of the Sibyl shall not alter me ; no labour of Hercules, not that black day.

You shall lay my bones to rest and say '*Your bones, 35 Propertius—here they are. Ah, you were faithful to me ; yes, faithful you were, although you were not illustrious in pedigree, and although you were none too rich*'.

There is nothing I will not put up with, ill-treatment never alters me ; to bear with a pretty woman, I do not 40 reckon that any burden ! Not a few have met their death by beauty like yours, I believe ; but I believe many had not faithfulness. Theseus was fond of Minos' daughter for a little while, so was Demophon fond of Phyllis—knavish guests, either of them. Medea is a household word with you already, and the bark of 45 Jason, and how she was left forlorn by the man she had so lately rescued.

Hard-hearted is she who feigns a semblance of love for many, and so is anyone that has the heart to prepare herself for more than one man. Do not compare me

with the high-born, or compare me with the wealthy:  
 50 hardly is one found to gather your bones when the  
 end comes. I will be that man to you. Only I pray  
 that rather it may be you who shall mourn for me  
 with breast bare and locks dishevelled.

## XXV

*Unica nata meo*

*A Rhapsody of reproaches,  
 regrets, and such counsels of  
 Philosophy as may help in  
 love.*

ONE and only, my loveliest theme, born for my  
 grief, will ever the motto 'Come often' fall to my  
 lot<sup>1</sup>? You shall be made the most famous of beauties by  
 my pages—by Calvus' leave be it said, and under  
 Catullus' good pleasure.

5 The time-worn soldier lays by his weapons and  
 sleeps apart, patriarchal oxen refuse to draw the  
 plough, the rotten ship reposes on the idle sand, and  
 the warrior's shield, now grown old, keeps holiday  
 in a temple; but no eld shall withdraw me from your  
 10 love, not if I must be a Tithonus or a Nestor.

Was it not better worth to serve a hard-hearted  
 tyrant, and groan in cruel Perillus' bull? Aye, better  
 worth it was to stiffen at the Gorgon's glance; we  
 might as well even endure the birds of Caucasus.

15 Yet I will hold my ground. A spike of steel is worn  
 out by rust, a flagstone by a little water many a time;

<sup>1</sup> *excideritne unquam.*

but nothing can wear out the love which abides steadfast at his mistress' threshold, and with undeserving ear supports her hard words. Scorn him, and he turns to plead; hurt, he confesses himself in the wrong; and back he comes again though his feet refuse to 20 carry him.

And you also, you who put on such proud airs in the full satisfaction of love, be not so quick to believe! No woman is in earnest for long.

Does any man fulfil payment of his vows in mid-storm, when even in harbour a vessel often floats disabled? Or hasten to claim the prize before the 25 race is finished, because<sup>1</sup> his seventh wheel has grazed the turning-post ahead? Prospering breezes in love tell lies and mock us: when overthrow comes late, then comes the great overthrow.

However, while it lasts, though she be never so dearly attached to you, lock up your pleasures in the discreet keeping of your own bosom. Because when 30 a man has possession of his love, it happens by some strange law that nothing ever does him such an ill turn as his own biggest talking. Though she bid you very often, mind to go but once; what comports envy is not apt to last long.

Yet were these the delightful days of the old-world 35 maidens, I should be in your shoes now: it is the time defeats me. These bad days shall not alter my ways though: let everybody know how to go his own road.

But O you who recall my many loves and divided

<sup>1</sup> *quod*.



40 devoirs, how sorely do we torture our eyes by so behaving! You have seen a maid of full and delicate brilliance, you have seen another swarthy but brilliant still. Either colouring allures. You have seen Mistress So-and-So walk abroad with her Grecian air, you have seen our country-women: either style of beauty  
45 captivates. Whether she be dressed in homespun or in scarlet—this or that, all are avenues alike for the plaguy wound to reach you!

When one brings sleepless nights enough to your eyes, any man shall have plagues plenty in one woman.

## XXVI *Vidi te in somnis*

*To Cynthia: his Dream, with  
an Envoi.*

*I* saw you, sweetheart, in a dream: your bark was shattered, you struck out with a failing stroke in the Ionian flood; you confessed all your falsehood towards me; and now your hair was so heavy with water you could no more uplift it—like Helle tossed on the purple  
5 wave, Helle whom the golden sheep conveyed on his soft pillion. How afraid was I lest it should befall that a sea should bear your name, and the sinking mariner weep in a Cynthian main! What vows I made then to Neptune, to Castor and his brother, and to thee, O deified Leucothoe!  
10 But now you hardly lift the tips of your fingers above the seething deep,—you call again and again on my name—another moment and you will be gone! Now had Glaucus chanced to see your eyes, you would have been turned into

*a mermaid of the Ionian Sea, and the Nereids would have been scolding at you for jealousy, white Nesaeæ, 15 sea-blue Cymothoe, and the rest ! Instead, I saw a dolphin racing to your aid ; the same, I think, who before had conveyed Arion's lyre. And I was just making to fling myself down from the top of the cliff when fear grew so strong that it broke and scattered all these illusions. 20*

Now they may wonder that so fair a maid is bound to my service and I pass for a grandee in all the town !

Not though your Cambyses should come again and your rivers of Croesus would she say ' *Get up, Master Poet, out of my bed !*' Yes, when she quotes my verse, 25 she says she hates rich people : never was mistress such a devout worshipper of poetry.

Loyalty helps much in love, and constancy much : the man who can give much, can he also love much ?

Though my girl should meditate to travel far over the sea, I will follow her, and one breeze shall drive the 30 faithful pair. One strand shall be our couch, one tree our shelter, and oft will we drink of the same water ; one plank shall serve to nestle a pair of lovers whether my bed be in fore-castle or stern. I will endure any- 35 thing, though the cruel Levanter push us hard, and the cold south gale drive our sails into the unknown,— and all ye winds who harried poor Ulysses, or the thousand ships of the Danaan Armada on the Euboean strand, or ye who set the two shores in motion when the dove dispatched upon an unknown sea served 40 Argus as his ship's guide. Only let her never fail my eyes, and Jove himself may set my ship on fire. At

least we shall be flung naked on the same coasts. The wave may bear me away, if only the earth cover you.

45 But Neptune will not be cruel to such great love :  
Neptune can match his brother Jove in love. Witness  
Amymône, (who yielded to him in the fields on con-  
dition<sup>1</sup> she might have water to bring), and the fen of  
Lerna smitten by the trident ; in her embrace he  
discharged his vow, and she saw her golden urn gush  
50 out with no earthly water. Nay, as for cruelty,  
ravished Orithyia professed there was none even in  
Boreas. We know a god that quells the earth and the  
deep seas.

Trust me, Scylla will be softened toward us, and that  
destroying Charybdis, who never ceases<sup>2</sup> from her ebb  
and flow of water ; the very stars will be obscured by  
55 no darkness ; Orion shall be clear, and clear shall the  
Kid be.

What if I must lay down my life while you remain in  
the flesh<sup>3</sup> ? This shall be no dishonourable end for us.

## XXVII *At vos incertam,*

*No true Divination but  
Lovers' Instinct.*

**A**H, mortal men, you must needs be seeking for  
the doubtful hour of decease, and by what way  
death shall come ; and seeking in cloudless heavens for  
the Phoenicians' discoveries, which star is for a man's  
advantage and which is evil !

<sup>1</sup> *dum.*

<sup>2</sup> *vacans.*

<sup>3</sup> *or in your person ?*

Whether we follow on foot after Parthians or after 5  
 Britons in the fleet, the ways of land and sea are blind  
 hazard ; when the god of war embroils the confused  
 array on either side, we weep that our life stands again  
 within the danger of armed outbreak ; weep over  
 perils of fire for our houses, and perils of collapse, or  
 lest a cup of blackness approach your lips. 10

Only the lover knows when he must die and by what  
 death, and he fears neither blasts of North-wind nor  
 arms. Although he sit already on the rowers' bench  
 under the reeds of Styx, and scan the sails of the infernal  
 barge, let but the waft of his mistress' cry recall him  
 and he will return the way that no charter makes us 15  
 free of.

## XXVIII *Iuppiter, affectae*

*Cynthia Sick.*

**O** JOVE, have pity upon a stricken maid at last !  
 Shall the death of such beauty be laid to thy  
 charge? Even Juno thy consort may forgive this: Juno 33  
 herself unbends her sternness when a girl is dying. 34  
 Certainly the time is come when the air is fevered with  
 sultry heat, and the earth begins to scorch under the  
 dry Dogstar. But it is not so much the fault of the  
 heat nor the reproach of the climate, as the oft-com- 5  
 mitted sacrilege. This is and was of old the undoing  
 of poor girls ; as often as they swear, wind and wave  
 whips the oath away.

Was Venus not offended that you should be matched

10 with her? She is a jealous goddess to all alike who compare with her beauty. Or have you slighted the temples of Pelasgian Juno? Or presumed to say that Pallas has not good eyes? You pretty women never know how to control your words! This is the wages of a guilty tongue, the wages of good looks!

15 But, you must know, sometimes an easier moment has begun with the last day for a life harassed in many perils. Io had her head transformed and lowed in her earliest years; she drank the river Nile as a cow, and now she is a goddess. Ino too went gadding about the  
20 world in her first heyday; now the poor mariner invokes her as Leucothoe. Andromeda had been offered in expiation to the monsters of the sea; it was none other than she who became illustrious as the wife of Perseus. Callisto roamed the fields of Arcady as a bear; it is she who by her star directs the course of sails at night.

25 But if so be the fates shall hasten your rest (those fates enriched by your burial), you shall recount to Semele in what peril a beauty goes; and schooled by maiden sorrows of her own, she will believe you. And among all the Maeonian daughters of the gods,  
30 the first place shall be yours by unanimous consent.

But no! You are wounded and you must humour fate as best you may. Even a god, even heartless time, can turn.

XXVIII B *Deficiunt magico*

*To Cynthia: the Crisis and  
her Recovery.*

THE whirligig spun to a chant of sorcery fails ;  
and the bay-branch lies charred on the quenched  
hearth ; the Moon now refuses to come down from the  
sky so often, and the bird of black feather sings a  
deathly note.

One barge of doom shall bear our loves, a blue-black  
vessel making sail for the pools of hell ; but not for one 5  
only do I pray for pity—have pity on two victims ! I  
shall live if she lives, if she falls I shall fall. For this  
petition I pledge myself to a votive song : I will write  
' *My girl is alive by the grace of great Jove* '. And my  
mistress in person shall make her offering and sit down  
at thy feet, and, as she sits there, recount her long 10  
perils.

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O Persephone, may this thy merciful kindness con-  
tinue, and thou, Consort of Persephone, be not more  
hard-hearted ! There are so many thousands of beauties  
among the people underground ; if it be possible, let  
there be one pretty woman in the upper regions ! You 15  
have Iope, you have fair Tyro, you have Europè, and  
shameless Pasiphaë ; and as many beauties as †Troy†  
bore and Achaia bore, and the dismantled realm of  
Phoebus and old Priam ; and if any Roman maid was 20  
reckoned among their number, she has perished ; the  
fire has them all in his hoard.

Neither is anyone's beauty or fortune always abiding : far or near, his death is in wait for everyone.

But you, sweetheart, since you are delivered from  
 25 a great peril, perform the due service of a dance to Diana, perform also your vigil to her who was once a heifer and is now a goddess : and discharge your debt of ten nights promised to me.

## XXIX      *Hesterna, mea lux,*

*To Cynthia : A Gay Adventure.*

WESTERNIGHT, sweetheart, as I was roaming  
 drunken and no servant's hand to guide me, I met  
 certain boys : my terror forbade me to reckon the  
 5 number of this tiny throng, but some held flambeaux, others arrows, part of them even appeared to be getting ready bonds for me. But they were naked. One, more frolic than the rest, spoke, 'Arrest him', says he ;  
 'you know him well enough already. This is our man ;  
 10 we have the angry lady's warrant against him'. He had hardly spoken, and the knot was on my neck. 'Push him out into the middle,' says another, and yet another adds, 'Death to the man who believes not in our godhead! She is awaiting you (and little you deserve it) for whole hours ; and here you are, simpleton, seeking I know not  
 15 what door. When she shall untie the fastenings of that Sidonian cap she wears at night, and stir her drowsy eyes, there shall be wafted to you perfumes not from herbs of Araby, but which Love has made with his own hands.

*Let be now, brothers; he pledges a faithful love, and see! we are come to the house which was committed to us. And so with a Now go and learn to spend your nights at home!*' they flung my cloak over me and brought me back again.

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It was early morning, and I would visit her and see if she slept alone. Yes, Cynthia was alone in bed! I stood amazed. Never had I thought her more beautiful, even when she wore her crimson kirtle and went on her way to relate her dreams to pure Vesta, lest there might be anything in them which promised mischief for her or for me. So she seemed to me now, freshly released from slumber. Oh! the worth of a fair face, unimproved!

'Do you think that my ways are like yours,' she said, 'that you come spying upon your friend so early in the morning? I am not so easy-living: one man will be enough for me if I know him—either you, or somebody who can prove more loyal. Not a sign to be seen in the dinted couch, no proof that two have lain there! Look, there is no such heaving breath at all in me anywhere as is usual when guilty paramours have met'.

She spoke; and, rebutting my kisses with her hand, she whipt away with only her loose slippers on her feet!

Thus was I mocked by this observer of devout love: since when,<sup>1</sup> she has not been altogether unkind to me.

<sup>1</sup> Or, never a night of kindness have I had: (*making a new poem begin at v. 23.*)



XXX

*Quo fugis a*

*To Himself, and to Cynthia :  
that nothing can stand against  
Love.*

WHAT madness ! Whither would you fly ? No flight is possible : you may fly far as the Don, and Love will follow all the way ! Not though you were to ride on Pegasus' back in the air ! Not though  
5 Perseus' pinion were to speed your feet ! Why, you might be spirited away on breezes which the sandals of Mercury furrow, and his lofty road shall advantage you nothing ! Love presses the lover, presses him always from overhead ; heavy upon unfettered necks he settles in person. He is a sharp-sighted sentinel  
10 on guard, and will never suffer you to raise your eyes, once captive, from the ground.

And after all, supposing you to be a sinner, this is not an unmerciful god to intreat, if he shall see that your prayers are earnest. Harsh graybeards may find fault with our gay suppers, but, sweetheart, let us just trudge  
15 on with the road that we have begun. Their ears are burdened with antique moralities : but there is room here for the melody of the scholar-flute—poor flute, how unjust to cast thee afloat on the rapids of Maeander because swelled cheeks disfigured Pallas' face !

Not without reason though ? Travel the Phrygian wave now, would you have me ? Visit the famous shores

of the Hyrcanian Sea? Sprinkle our common Penates with blood of slain and slaying? Bring some accursed prize back to the Lares of my fathers? I ought to be ashamed to live content with a mistress and a mistress only?

If this is a reproach it is Love's reproach. No one must lay it at my door. May it please you, Cynthia, 25 to tenant with me some dewy fastness in the moss-grown highlands: there you shall see the Sisters hug the rocks and sing of the honeyed sleights of ancient Jove—how Semele made a bonfire of his heart, how Io was his utter undoing, and last, how he turned into 30 a bird and flew to the homes of Troy. (If then there is none alive that has overcome the attack of the Winged One, why am I alone indicted for the universal offence?) Neither need you move awestruck lips to adore these Virgins; this tuneful company is not innocent of what it is to love—if it be true that a certain one lay of old upon Bistonian rocks clipped fast by the 35 semblance of Oeagrus.

Here shall they present me to you<sup>1</sup> in the forefront of the company, and Bacchus with his scholar wand shall be in the midst: then I will suffer the holy ivy clusters to hang upon my head, for my wit has no 40 worth without you.

<sup>1</sup> *tibi.*

XXXI *Quaeris, cur veniam*

*Dedication of Apollo's Porch :  
he would have Cynthia walk  
there and not gad abroad  
making a fool of him.*

YOU ask why I come to you so late? The golden  
Porch of Phoebus has been opened by great  
Caesar. It was all laid out with Carthaginian columns  
to such ample length that in the spaces between them  
was room for the woman multitude of old Danaus.  
5 Here I saw one that surely seemed more beautiful than  
Phoebus himself, as he opened his lips in song, a singer  
of marble with a silent lyre. And around the altar  
stood Myron's drove, four bulls, masterpieces of life-  
like statuary. Then in the midst rose a temple of  
10 brilliant marble, and dearer to Phoebus than his  
ancestral Ortygia. Upon which was the Sun's chariot  
above the gable peak; likewise the doors, a famous  
piece of handicraft in Libyan tusk, did mourn one for  
the Gauls cast down from Parnassus' Peak, the other  
for Tantalus' daughter and all her deaths. Anon there  
15 was the god of Pytho himself between his mother and  
between his sister, in a long robe, playing music.

XXXII 'HE sins who sees:' why, then the  
man who has not seen you will  
not covet; to the eyes belongs the guilt of a deed  
done

Yes! why, Cynthia, do you repair to the ambiguous oracles of Praeneste, and why to the walls of Aean Telegonus? What does it mean, a soothsayer<sup>1</sup> driving from Town in a fashionable chariot to Herculean Tibur? 5 And why has the Appian Way so many times witnessed a hag going under your escort<sup>2</sup>? I wish you took your walks in *this* place, when you have the leisure! But the crowd forbids me to trust you, when it sees you racing towards the grove with torches aflame to fulfil some vow there, and playing lightbearer to the goddess 10 Trivia.

You would have me think that Pompey's Portico with the shady pillars and the famous Pergamene tapestries, and the dense array of plane trees rising to match each other, and the sluice which falls away when Maro goes to sleep, and the light patter of jets which is set a-going all over the town because Triton has 15 gaped and suddenly unmasked the water—that all this is not good enough for you? You mistake: these journeys argue some escapade of gallantry! It is not Town but my eyes (what madness!) you would get away from! You waste your pains, there is nothing in the surprises you plan against me; I know these snares, 20 and it is a bungler who sets them for an adept!

For my part, though, it matters not so much: but you will have to regret such damage in honest repute, as is earned by such practices. For of late scandal has reached my ears<sup>3</sup> that you are not honestly mine, and it was not a pretty scandal to be all over the Town.

<sup>1</sup> *Vatem.*      <sup>2</sup> *te duce vidit.*      <sup>3</sup> *nostra male tendit.*

25 But you need not believe an unfriendly tongue; tittle-  
tattle has always been the punishment of beauty.  
Your good name has not been branded by a discovery  
of poison; Phoebus shall witness to seeing clean hands  
30 in you. If however, a night or so has been spent in  
endless games, such little reproaches do not move me.

The Tyndarid exchanged her country for a foreign  
love, and was brought home alive without sentence;  
Venus herself, the story goes, was seduced by the  
wanton will of Mars, and she was never any the worse  
35 thought of in heaven for that. Ida may tell how a  
goddess loved Paris who was but a shepherd, and lay  
down beside him among his beasts, but her sister  
Hamadryads were there to see, and so were the old  
Sileni and the father of that crew himself. With them  
40 of Ida, catching the Naiads' gifts with hands out-  
stretched underneath.

Does any one question in such a great swarm of lewd  
debauch, '*Why is So-and-so as rich as she is? Who gave  
it to her? And whence did he give it?*' Too happy Rome  
in our day, if it is a question of one single girl trans-  
45 gressing good behaviour! Lesbia did these same things  
before her, and nothing said: since she has precedent,  
at least there is less room for ill will.

There is a man lately arrived in Town who expects  
to find the old Tatii and the rugged Sabines. You  
50 shall sooner be able to dry up the waters of the sea and  
with earthly hand pluck down the high stars, than avail  
to make our girls eschew their sins. This was the

fashion when Saturn reigned, and when Deucalion's flood swept over the world, and after Deucalion's flood was ancient history ! Tell me, who was able to main- 55  
tain a chaste bed ? What goddess to live with a god and either want none other ?

Great Minos' wife in the old days, so they tell, was tempted astray by the lovely charm of a grim bull ; likewise, Danaë had not the virtue to deny great Jove, although she was encircled by a brazen wall. 60

Nay, if you madden us Latins<sup>1</sup> by following Greek example, you have the charter of my sentence to go as you please !

### XXXIII *Tristia iam redeunt*

*To Cynthia : against her superstitions and her riotous living.*

**N**OW comes this holy season again which I hate ! Cynthia has been ten nights at her religious duties. Oh, confound all these ceremonies which the Inachid has sent to our Ausonian matrons from the warm Nile ! The goddess who has so often parted eager lovers, who- 5  
ever she was, was always a sour creature. Thou, Io, at least, didst taste in the secret loves of Jove what it is to engage upon many goings to and fro, when Juno bade the human girl put on horns and spoil her lan- 10  
guage with the harsh noise of a brute. Ah, how many a time didst thou hurt thy mouth with oak leaves, and

<sup>1</sup> *torques imitata Latinos.*

chew the cud of arbutes in thy stalls after a feed ! And because Jove withdrew that homely semblance from thy face, art thou grown to be a haughty goddess on  
15 that account? Is Egypt with her dusky denizens not enough for thee? Why hast thou taken this long journey to Rome? Or what does it profit thee that girls should sleep in bereavement? Nay, trust me, thou shalt have horns again ! Else we will rout thee from our Town,  
20 cruel intruder ! No kindness has ever been betwixt Tiber and Nile.

But *you, you* who are appeased enough and to spare by our pains, let us after these idle nights of leisure thrice perform our stage.

You do not listen ! You leave my words to sport idly, though already the Icarian Ox-driver's team are turning  
25 their slow stars about. Callously tipping !—the midnights cannot break you down. Is your hand not yet weary of throwing the dice?

Plague take the man, whoever discovered the heady grape and first debauched honest water with any such nectar ! Good cause had the Cecropian husbandmen to murder thee, Icarus ; thou hast learned to rue the  
30 smell of wine. Thou also, Eurytion the Centaur, wast undone by wine, and thou Polyphemus likewise by that strong liquor of Ismara. By wine good looks are lost, by wine the heyday of life is debauched ; wine often makes a mistress mistake her own man.

35 Mercy on us ! How quite unchanged she is by such a deal of drink ! Drink on, you are beautiful : wine does you no harm, when the garlands hang over your face

and dip into your cups, and you read my verses aloud in a clear small voice ! Pour out the Falernian more bountifully, let the board be wet with it, let it bubble 40 more delicately in the golden tankard !

No woman takes herself cheerfully to bed alone though : there is a something which Love makes you fain to look for.

Desire always burns kindlier toward absent lovers : long plenty of opportunity makes cheap the never-failing suitor.

### XXXIV *Cur quisquam faciem*

*To Lynceus, a Reproach for disloyalty : with thoughts on the Fraud of Philosophy ; Love the only true topic of Verse ; the Praise of Virgil.*

**W**HY should any man ever commit his mistress' good looks to Love's keeping? Thus have I almost had my girl carried off ! I speak from experience : nobody is loyal in love ; it is seldom that everybody does not try to get a pretty woman for himself.

This is a god who poisons kindred, unties the bond of 5 friendship, and calls to sad warfare hearts that were happily agreed.

An adulterous guest came to take guest's-lodging with Menelaus ; and did not the woman of Colchis run away with a stranger?



10 *You*, Lynceus, you had the heart to tamper with my beloved? O faithless, was not your arm struck powerless? Fancy if she had not been staunch and as devoted as she is, could you have lived in such wickedness?

Make havoc in my breast with steel or with poison, but hands off my mistress! You shall be partner in my  
 15 life and limb if you will; friend, I accept you for master of my goods; only my bed, nothing but my bed, I beg you to respect! As a rival I cannot put up with Jove. When I am alone I am jealous (thing of  
 20 naught!) of my own shadow! I am a fool who trembles at a fool's alarms! There is one reason, though, why I remit my great indictment; your language was wandering with much strong liquor.

Only never shall the wrinkled brow of the stern life deceive me: everybody knows by this time how good  
 25 a thing it is to be in love. My friend Lynceus! to think of *him* distracted with a tardy passion! I am only glad that you should come to worship the same gods as I. What will all your sage lore of Socratic volumes help you now, and your skill to tell the ways of Nature?  
 30 What do the poems help you that you have read of your Erechthean? This Ancient you all swear by is no good in a great love. You would be better to imitate Meropian<sup>1</sup> Philetas in your muses, and the dreams of unstilted Callimachus. For though you rehearse Aetolian Achelous anew, how his sluice ran broken by main force of love, and also how Maeander's wave strays  
 35 elusive across the Phrygian plain and outwits his own

<sup>1</sup> *Meropen.*

courses; and how Adrastus' Arion, the horse which conquered at the funeral games of sad Archemorus, found a voice to speak; the fate of Amphiaraus and his four-horse chariot could not help you, nor could great Jove 40 welcoming the overthrow of Capaneus.

Cease also, cease to build up language after the Aeschylean buskin; unbend your gait to soft measures. Begin now to shape your lines to a nicety upon a narrow lathe; and, my rugged bard, concern yourself with your own fires. You shall not pass any safer than 45 Antimachus or Homer: a proper girl looks down upon even the great gods.

But the bull does not bow his neck to the heavy<sup>1</sup> plough before he has had his horns caught in strong nooses, and you will not immediately submit of yourself to love's rude handling; defiant as you are, you will 50 need to take a breaking-in from us first. None of these girls is wont to seek the theory of the universe, nor why the Moon's distress is caused by her brother's steeds, nor whether there is any such thing as abiding after the waves of Styx, nor if the pealing bolt is aimed by 55 design. Consider *me*, who had small fortune left me at home, and no triumphs of a grandsire in some ancient war, how I am king of the table among a party of girls—I, thanks to the fancy which now you slight me for! Let it be my pleasure to dally sunk in the chaplets of overnight; the divine marksman has pierced me 60 to the bones with his shot.

It is for Virgil to be able to tell of the Actian shores

<sup>1</sup> *gravi*.

of Guardian Phoebus, and the valiant barks of Caesar,  
 Virgil who now awakes to life the warfare of Trojan  
 Aeneas, and the walls he founded on Lavinian shores.  
 65 Give place, you Roman writers, give place, you Greeks!  
 Here comes to birth a something greater than the Iliad.

You, my Virgil, sing of Thyrsis and Daphnis with  
 their lip-worn reeds beneath the pinewoods of shady  
 Galaesus, and how half a score of apples or the gift of  
 70 a kid (taken from the udder where it pushed and  
 sucked) can lure maidens astray. Happy man who  
 can purchase your loves at the cheap rate of some  
 fruits,—though Tityrus himself find her thankless to  
 his song! Happy Corydon who can adventure to lay  
 hands on the freshness of Alexis, his rustic owner's  
 75 favourite. Though he repose weary with his oat-  
 playing, he gains his applause among the easy Hama-  
 dryads.

Or<sup>1</sup> when you sing the canons of the old poet of  
 Ascra, in what plain the corn flourishes, and on what  
 slope the grape, you create such music with your  
 80 scholarlike shell as the Cynthian god might modulate  
 by the touch of his fingertips.

Here, though, you have a matter which every reader  
 must find to his liking, be he novice in love or be he  
 pastmaster. For spirit, the tuneful swan does not fall  
 below himself here; nor, if he be less large in utterance,  
 has he recoiled before<sup>2</sup> the rude strain of a goose!

Varro also toyed with such a matter when his Jason  
 85 was accomplished, Varro the mighty passion of his love

<sup>1</sup> *sen.*

<sup>2</sup> *or with.*

Leucadia ; to such a matter were those writings of the merry wanton Catullus attuned, which have made Lesbia more famous than Helen herself ; such too were the avowals on Calvus' page, the scholar-poet, when 90 he sang the death of poor Quintilia. And in these last days how many wounds has Gallus, dead for love of his beautiful Lycoris, bathed in waters of the underworld ! Why, Cynthia, too, has honour in Propertius' verse with the best of them—if Fame shall please to place me among that company.

### BOOK III

#### I

#### *Callimachi manes*

##### *Prologue.*

SHADES of Callimachus, and hallowed office of Coan Philetas, suffer me, pray, to enter your closeboskage. I am the first who take my way, the priest from a pure well-spring, to carry Italian mysteries, according to the ceremony of Grecian measures. Tell me, in what cave did you alike refine your song? With 5 what foot made you your introit? Or what water did you drink?

Farewell to any man who keeps Phoebus employed with battle ! Smoothed to perfection with fine pumicestone must the Verse proceed whereby soaring Fame uplifts me from the earth, and the Muse who is born of me goes on progress behind garlanded steeds ; and 10

with me in the chariot ride little Loves, and a throng of writers follows behind my wheels!—Why do you all loosen rein and strain idly against me? It is no broad road appointed for the race which has the Muses at the goal.

15 Rome, there are many who will deliver thy praise to chronicles; and these shall sing of Bactra the destined boundary of empire. But for a thing which thou mayst read in times of peace, here is the work that, by an unattempted path, my page has brought from the Sisters' Mount for thine acceptance.

Delicate be the chaplets you bestow on your poet,  
20 my Pegasids; a rugged garland will not sort well with my head!

Now whatsoever the jealous crew may wrest from me alive, Glory shall restore it to me with usury two-fold after decease; after decease comes the old age of renown to make the semblance of things grow greater; magnified from his funeral a man's name passes upon the lips of the world.

25 For who would be acquainted with the tale of a Citadel battered by a Horse of pine-timber, and rivers pitted in combat with a man of Haemonia; with Idaean Simois (cradle of Jove's childhood); with Hector thrice bespattering the chariot wheels as they coursed the plain? Deiphobus, and Helenus, and Paris in Polydamas' armour (such figure as he cut)—hardly  
30 their own soil had known of them. Thou, Ilium, hadst now been of mean report; and thou too, Troy, twice taken by the power of the Oetaean God. Neither

is Homer, chronicler of thy fall, unaware how his work grew by process of aftertime.

I also, I shall have my praise told by Rome in the 35 ears of far-off posterity : I am my own prophet who foretell that day after I shall be ashes. The Lycian god ratifies my prayers, and I have taken such good order betimes that the slab which marks my bones shall never be a dishonoured burying-place.

## II *Carminis interea nostri*

*He resumes his proper theme,  
Cynthia.*

LET us meanwhile re-enter upon the circle of my song, and let my girl be moved and take pleasure in the familiar strain. Orpheus, they say, held the beasts of the wild spellbound, and held up the headlong rivers in their course by his Thracian lyre ; they tell how the rocks of Cithaeron stirred towards Thebes at 5 a craft of music, and of themselves took their places to make the parts of a wall ; nay, better still, Galatea turned her dripping horses towards thy song, Polyphemus, beneath savage Etna ; shall we marvel if the throng of maidens does homage to my words, when 10 Bacchus and Apollo both prosper me?—because I have no house stayed upon pillars of Taenarian marble, no dome of ivory set in the midst of gilded beams ; no orchards of mine to match the plantations of Phaeacia ; no sluice of *Aqua Marcia* bedewing elaborate grottoes. Why, the Muses are my companions, my songs are

15 beloved by the reader, and Calliope is weary with dancing to measures of mine.

Lucky the woman who is celebrated in a few pages of mine ! My songs shall be so many memorials of your beauty. For neither the skyward-pointing costliness  
 20 of the Pyramids, nor that house of Jove in Elis which mimics heaven, nor the sumptuous fortune of Mausolus' burying-place are quit of the ultimate charter of death ; the fire or the rain pilfers their splendours ; else, defeated by the burden of their own bulk, they shall  
 25 tumble under the stroke of years. But that renown which poet's wit purchases, shall not so pass out of mind by the effect of time ; poet's wit has such a pride as stands deathless.

## III

*Visus eram molli*

*His Vision : after the Greek of Callimachus.*

AS I lay in the delicate shade of Helicon where the well of Bellerophon's horse gushes, methought I had thews of power enough to publish thy kings, Alba,  
 5 and the feats of thy kings. Mighty task ! And I had approached my puny mouth to those great springs from which Dan Ennius drank of old when he thirsted : and he sang of the Curii brothers, and the pikes of the Horatii, of royal trophies conveyed in Aemilius' barge, of the conquering inactivities of Fabius and the disastrous  
 10 fight at Cannae, and the dutiful prayers which moved the gods to repentance, of the Lares putting Hannibal to flight from their Roman seat, and how

Jove was saved by the voice of a goose :—When Phoebus espied me from his Castalian tree, and as he leaned with gilded lyre against the rock, said ‘*Madman! what hast thou to do with such a flood? Who bade thee lay a* 15 *finger upon the achievement of heroic song? Thou must not look for any renown in this quarter, Propertius: delicate lawns are for small wheels to hackney, that so thy book may often be bandied to and fro on the settle for a lonely girl to read while she awaits her gallant. Why* 20 *has thy page swerved from the appointed circuit? The skiff of thy wit must not be overladen. One oar in the water and one raking the sand, and thou shalt be safe: there is mighty commotion on the high seas’.*

He had spoken, and now with his ivory quill pointed 25 me to a place where a fresh path was made on the mossy ground. Here was a grotto green with inset pebbles; from the hollows of the pumice-rock hung tambourines, holy instruments of the Muses, an effigy of father Silenus in earthenware, and thy pipes, O 30 Tegean Pan; my lady Venus’ birds, my particular company of doves were there, dipping their red beaks in a Gorgon pool. One here, one there, as their several fields fell out, the Nine maidens ply their dainty hands at their own gifts; one gathers ivies for the thyrses, one 35 sets poetry to the strings, another plaits a tissue of roses with her two hands. And one of the number of these goddesses touched me (as I guess by her looks, it was Calliope), ‘*Thou shalt ever ride well-pleased upon snow-white swans, and no din of gallant charger shall draw thee into battle. Let it be no affair of thine to* 40



blare<sup>1</sup> the advertisement of sea-fights on the harsh-throated  
 horn, nor dye the close boskage of Aonia with warfare ; nor  
 tell on what fields the battle array stands beneath Marius'  
 ensign, and Rome shatters backward the powers of Teuton-  
 45 dom, or barbarian Rhine drenched with Swabian blood  
 ferries a cargo of mangled bodies along his mourning wave.  
 Because thou must sing of the chapleted gallant upon an  
 unkind doorstep, and the tipsy tokens of a retreat made  
 under cover of night, that whosoever shall mean to befool  
 50 the sour-faced husband, may go to thee for a lesson how  
 to charm the imprisoned mistress out.

Thus Calliope ; and taking water from the spring,  
 she moistened my lips with the draught Philetas once  
 drank of.

#### IV *Arma deus Caesar*

*Written when Augustus de-  
 signed his Eastern Expedition.*

THE god-Caesar meditates to make war against  
 the rich Indians, and send his navies to cleave  
 the firths of the Sea of Jewels. Oh, the grand reward,  
 my men ! The ends of the earth make ready for our  
 triumphs ! Tiber, the Euphrates also shall flow<sup>2</sup> under  
 5 thy dominion. Long reluctant, this province shall yet  
 pass to the rods of Ausonia ; the Parthian trophies  
 shall grow familiar with our Latian Jove.

Up and away then ! Ye war-worn prows, set your  
 sails ! Ye warrior steeds, now perform your practised  
 duty ! In prophetic chant I pronounce the omens

<sup>1</sup> *flare.*

<sup>2</sup> *Thybris . . . fluet.*

prosperous. Avenge the Crassi and their defeat !  
 Away, and be doing to add a chapter to the chronicle 10  
 of Rome ! O father Mars, and thou glow of hallowed  
 Vesta, in which our destinies burn, I pray that it come  
 before my decease, that day when I shall see Caesar's  
 booty-laden wheels, his team oft halting to receive the  
 applauses of the populace ; and leaning on the bosom  
 of my dear girl, I shall set myself to scan the pageant 15  
 and read in the legend the names of the captured  
 cities, see the missiles of their elusive cavalry, the bows  
 of their trousered braves, the captive chieftains sitting  
 beneath their weapons !

Venus, save thine own scion ! May this life, in 20  
 whose person thou seest preserved the succession from  
 Aeneas, endure for ever !

Theirs be the prize whose toils have earned it : as  
 for me, enough that I can clap my hands in the Sacred  
 Street !

## V *Pacis Amor deus*

*The Vanity of Human Wishes:  
 his ambition in youth to sing  
 of Love, in age of Natural  
 Science.*

LOVE is a god of peace, we lovers adore peace : and  
 I am fixed in a stern warfare with my mistress.  
 Why is it so? I can survey gold and feel no covetous  
 twinge at heart ; my thirst does not drink out of a jewel-  
 goblet ; I have no fat Campanian lands ploughing by 5  
 a thousand yoke ; I am not a wretch that could see

Corinth destroyed to gain bronzes. Ah, it is that the primal earth prospered amiss to the hand of Prometheus when he modelled us. He used too little circumspection when he performed the task of making a heart. Bodies he disposed and let the mind escape his eye in  
 10 that handiwork : the spirit ought first to have had its ways made straight. But no !—Tossed by the wind we enter yonder vast space of sea ; we cast about to find an enemy, and we knit fresh warfare to warfare.

Thou shalt carry no riches to the waves of Acheron. Thou fool, naked must thou be conveyed to the barks  
 15 of hell. Conqueror shall mingle alike with the ghosts of the conquered. Prisoner Jugurtha sits down beside Consul Marius. Croesus the Lydian is nothing removed from Dulichian Irus. The best fate is a death that is sped by no cause but date of days<sup>1</sup>.

It is my delight that I have courted Helicon in my  
 20 first youth and joined hands in the Muses' dance ; let it be my delight to tie up my wits by drinking deep, and ever keep my head in the roses of springtime ! And when sober age shall set a bar to love and blanching  
 25 eld sprinkle my black<sup>2</sup> hair, then let my fancy turn to explore the temper of nature—what god so skilfully allays this our House of the world ; how comes the moon's rise and wane, and whence does she month by month draw her horns together and return to the full ; how it comes that the winds lord it over the sea ; what it is the Levanter seeks to catch with his gust ; and  
 30 whence is there water never-failing to supply the

<sup>1</sup> *Parca est.*<sup>2</sup> *et nigras.*

clouds ; whether a day must come which shall wreck the citadels of the world ; why the purple bow drinks up the rain-water ; or why did the peaks of Perrhaebian Pindus quake, and the Sun's disk mourn and his horses wear sable ; why the Ploughman is so tardy at 35 wheeling his oxen and his wain ; why the company of the Pleiads close in a tangle of fire ; or why the huge deep does not pass his proper bounds ; why the full year falls into his four portions ; if there be assize of gods and torture of giants under-ground ; if Tisiphone's 40 head is a mad fury of black snakes ; or there be avenging fiends of Alcmaeon, fasting of Phineus, the Wheel, the Great Stones, the Thirst in mid-water ; whether Cerberus keeps guard with triple maw over the infernal cave ; and if Tityus has not room enough in his nine acres ; or it be all a feigned legend which comes down 45 to the luckless generations, and beyond the funeral faggot no fear can be any more.

These are the outgoings of life which await me ; do you, who take more pleasure in battle, fetch home the standards of Crassus !

## VI *Dic mihi de nostra,*

*He makes the slave Lygdamus report how he found Cynthia.*

**N**OW, Lygdamus, as you value your chance to get rid of your mistress' yoke, tell me your true mind about my girl ! You are not cheating me—puffing me up with empty joy while you report what you think I

5 would best like to hear? Every messenger must surely  
be without falsehood, and a slave observe so much the  
more loyalty because he goes in fear. So now begin to  
tell me all you remember, from the very beginning: I  
shall drink in your words with ears alert. Was it so,  
when you caught sight of her dishevelled and weeping,  
10 was the water streaming out of her eyes? The bed was  
made, and you saw no looking-glass? No jewel adorned  
her snow-white hands? A mourning gown hanging  
from her soft arms? And her caskets lying locked at  
the bed foot? The house was gloomy and the hand-  
15 maidens gloomily picked at their allotted weight of wool,  
while their mistress was spinning, placed in the midst?  
And would she press the wool to her eyes to dry them?  
And did she repeat my reproaches in a plaining tone?

*'Is this the reward that was promised me—you were*  
20 *witness, Lygdamus? There are pains and penalties for*  
*one who breaks faith even though the witness be a slave.*  
*He has the heart to forsake a poor woman for nothing that*  
*I have done, and keep a—I will not say what she is—in his*  
*house! He rejoices that I am pining lonely upon a*  
*tenantless couch; if he likes, Lygdamus, he may dance*  
*upon my dead body! It is not by any graces of her nature*  
25 *that she has vanquished me but by her wicked dealings in*  
*herbs: he is lured by the reeling twine of the whirligig.*  
*The prodigious sorcery of the bloated bramble-toad, the*  
*bones gathered from a slit snake—these are what draw*  
*him to her: these, and a screech-owl's feathers found*  
30 *among sunken graves, and the woollen fillet girt upon the*  
*lover doomed to death. Lygdamus, I take my dreams*

*to witness (if they bode not falsely)—I shall have my revenge at my feet, tardy but full ! The dusty spider's web shall be woven upon their very bed where it stands tenantless ; and Venus herself shall sleep when they will make a night of it.*

If my girl did so complain to you in all sincerity of 35 feeling, then run back again, Lygdamus, by the same road you came, and with many tears bear back this charge : *That my love may allow of anger but not of playing false ; that I also am laid upon a like fire and* 40 *am in torments. I will swear to being now these twelve days continent.*

And if a blessed reconciliation shall come to be after this great<sup>1</sup> war, then, Lygdamus, to the best of my power you shall be a free man.

## VII *Ergo sollicitae tu*

*Elegy on the death of Paetus, a merchant adventurer, drowned at sea.*

**T**HEN so it is : thou, Money, art the cause why our life is made unpeaceable ; by thee we approach the road of death before our season ; thou dost furnish a cruel provender for human weakness ; and thyself art the author whence the seeds of sorrow arise. It is thou who hast thrice and again overwhelmed Paetus 5 in a furious sea as he bent his sails towards the havens of Pharos. Aye, the poor lad went in quest of thee, and

<sup>1</sup> *si ex tanto.*

now his prime of days is forfeit, and he is a strange victual adrift for far-away fishes to eat.

Your mother has not the dutiful piece of clay to perform the proper ceremonies over it, she cannot lay  
10 you to ground among kinsmen's faggots ; but instead, the seafowl stand over your bones ; instead, the whole Carpathian deep serves you for a sepulchre.

Disastrous North-wind ! Aquilo, the dismay of ravished Orithyia, what great booty was this thou hast  
15 got of him ? Or why, Neptune, why rejoice over the wreck of a ship ? This was a vessel freighted with righteous persons.

Paetus, why do you reckon up your age ? Why is a dear mother's name on your lips as you swim ? The wave does not believe in gods. Come a storm in the night, and though your cables are made fast to the  
20 rocks the cord frets away and they all go for nothing. There is a shore that can cite the witness of Agamemnon's sorrow, the shore which is branded with an ill name by the punishment of Argynnus, who scolded at the waters. It was for this lad's loss that Atreus' son would not untie his fleet ; which delay brought about the sacrifice of Iphigenia.

25 Render his body to the ground, his life was laid down in the deep ! And thou, mean sand, cover Paetus as best thou mayst ! As often as the sailor shall pass by Paetus' tomb, let him say '*This may well be a terror even to an adventurous heart !*'

Go on your ways, ye bellied barks, and work out your  
30 tissue of occasions for destruction ! This is a way of

death which runs by operation of man's own handiwork. The land was not enough, we have added the waters to the resources of fate. We have used art to augment the miserable avenues of chance.

Shall an anchor hold you fast, when you did not hold fast by your home? What are the man's deserts, say you, whose own country is not enough for him? All your gains belong to the winds. Never a keel has known old age. The very haven betrays trust. The sea is an ambush laid by nature wherein she lays wait for the covetous ; hardly once in a way can it happen that you prosper at it. The reefs of Caphareus shattered the exultant navies of the conquerors, when Greece was swept in shipwreck over the wild main. One by one Ulysses wept the loss of his comrades : his customary cunning was of no worth against the sea. 40

Had Paetus but been content to turn up his fields with his father's ox, had he but judged my words to be of weight, my pleasant messmate would still be alive before his own hearth gods, a poor man, but on dry land. Ah, my friend, you make a poor enough appearance in the place where only our tears can<sup>1</sup> find you ! 45

It was more than Paetus could put up with, to hear the screech of the tempest and hurt his dainty hands with a rough rope ; nay, a Chian bower for him, or a chamber of Orician terebinth, and his head propped on pillows of many-coloured feathers ! And this was he whose nails the wave took out by the roots while he 50

<sup>1</sup> *nil, ubi flere, potes.*



was yet alive, and his wretched mouth agape gulped in the loathed water ; he whom the remorseless night saw riding upon a little spar of timber ! The world of woes that joined together in order that Paetus might die !

55 However, he gave this charge with his uttermost complaint, while the black brine choked his dying mouth : *' Ye gods of the Aegæan, in whose control are seas, winds, and every wave that now rolls heavy on my head, whither do ye sweep away my years of new-budding*  
60 *manhood ? I have bestowed my taper hands on your surges ! Oh, cruel ! I shall be battered against the piercing rocks of the sea-fowl ! The god of the Blue has taken up his trident against me !*

*Yet at least let the tide throw me up in the borders of Italy ; this relic shall be enough of me, if but it may be my mother's'.*

65 The billow caught him away, so saying, in a whirling eddy. This was the last word, the last day of Paetus.

O hundred maids of the deep who have Nereus for your father, and thou, O Thetis, who wast drawn by a motherly anguish,—ye ought to have put your arms under his failing chin : he could not have weighed  
70 heavy on your hands ! But as for thee, savage North-wind, never shalt thou see my canvas : I must needs be laid, like an idle oaf as I am, before my mistress' doors.

VIII *Dulcis ad hesternas**To Cynthia.*

I RELISHED that brawl beside the lamps last night, and all the curses of your raving outcry! Why, when you are in your mad fit with liquor, do you push the table from before you and fling the full goblets at me with a frantic hand?

Nay, have at my hair boldly, and brand my face with 5 your pretty nails—it is you! Threaten to set fire to my eyes and burn them out! Tear open the fold of my dress and leave my bosom bare—it is you!

I doubt not that these are tokens vouchsafed me of a heartfelt heat: no woman feels this rage and grief 10 without earnest love. A woman who hurls at large the loud scolds of a rabid tongue, is also a woman that grovels at the feet of mighty Venus; she takes a body-guard, packs of keepers about her as she goes, or maybe she runs down the middle of the road like a stricken Bacchante, maybe frenzied dreams terrify her quailing 15 heart time and again, or the poor creature is beside herself at the sight of a girl painted on a panel. I am a true diviner for these tortures of spirit, I have learned that these are often the marks of a sure love.

That is no sure troth which cannot turn into quarrel- some reproaches. I wish my enemies one of your cold- 20 blooded girls! Let my peers behold my wounds where she has bitten my neck, let a bruise inform them that I have been with my girl! In love I must have rage and grief to feel or rage and grief to listen to; either have

my tears or yours to look at, when you convey a secret  
 25 word in the language of eyebrows, or cipher some un-  
 avowed communications with your fingers. I hate the  
 sighs which have not stab enough to break slumber ;  
 I would always have an angry woman to peak and pine  
 for. Paris relished his fires all the better when he had  
 the chance to deliver a delicious combat in giving  
 30 pleasure to Helen : the Danaans conquer, rude Hector  
 withstands the brunt—what matter to him while he  
 wages his mightiest battles in Helen's lap?

And I must have an endless warfare either with you  
 or with rivals for your sake. I like no peace with you !  
 Be glad, because none is so beautiful as you ; you  
 35 would have had cause for rage and grief, had there been  
 anyone. Now you may be proud instead with good  
 title.

But as for you, sir, who have plaited snares for my  
 bed, I wish you a father-in-law for ever and a mother  
 always in the house ! If, as it is, you have had any  
 chance offered you to pilfer a night, she granted it not  
 40 as a favour to you but as a spite against me !

## IX

*Maecenas, eques*

*To Maecenas : in praise of  
 his discreet and retired habit.*

**M**AECENAS, you, a plain knight born of a royal  
 Tuscan lineage, you who covet to remain within  
 the bounds of your estate in life, why do you dispatch  
 me into so wild a sea of letters? Such huge sails sort

ill with my bark. It is shameful to charge your neck with a burden that exceeds your strength, and anon to 5 bow the knee and beat a retreat overwhelmed.

All things in the world are not equally well fitted to all men ; neither is renown ever drawn from an even balance. It is Lysippus' glory to model statues full of spirit and life ; but Calamis challenges my praise by 10 the nice-fingered perfection of his horses ; Apelles demands the primacy for himself in his panel of Venus ; but Parrhasius claims a place by his fine craftsmanship in little ; we look rather in Mentor to find the interest of the subject over and above the design, yet Mys is a master at making the acanthus wind its slender lines ; 15 the Jove of Phidias does himself honour in an ivory statue, but a stone in his native city asserts the title of Praxiteles. There are some for whom the prize chariot-and-four strives in the race in Elis, some whose glory has naturally issued in swiftness of foot. One is bred for peace, another for service of warfare in camps ; each one follows the elements of his own nature. 20

But I, Maecenas, am a professed votary of your rule, and am fain to overcome you by your own instances. Whereas you might set your axes of authority as a Roman officer of state, and set your judgement seat in mid-Forum ; or pass through the warlike enemies of the 25 Mede, and load your house with weapons nailed upon the wall ; and Caesar gives you strength for the achievement, and wealth flows into your bosom smoothly at all seasons : you refrain and withdraw yourself in lowliness to the spare shades of seclusion : yourself you

30 stint the full spreading volume of your sails. And trust me this discreetness of yours will match any great Camillus of old, you also shall pass upon the lips of men; and you shall keep pace with Caesar's renown: the proper trophies of Maecenas shall be his loyalty.

35 I do not cleave the swelling sea with a ship under full sail; my whole pastime is down by a slender stream. I will not bewep the citadel sunk down upon father Cadmus' ashes, not always<sup>1</sup> bewep the conflict of the mutual carnage; nor rehearse the Scaean Gate and Pergama citadel of Apollo, and how the  
40 Danaan barks came home in the tenth springtime, when the Wooden Horse of Pallas' contrivance conquered and levelled Neptune's walls with a Grecian plough. It shall content me to please among the books of Callimachus and sing in the measures of  
45 the Dorian poet. Let these writings inflame the boys, and inflame the girls; let them acclaim me a god and offer ceremonies of worship to me!

If you will lead the way I will even sing Jove's warfare and Coeus and Eurymedon threatening the sky from the mountain ranges of Phlegra; I will indite of the high Palatine grazed by Roman bulls, and of  
50 the walls established by the slaughter of Remus, of the royal pair raised to such an height from a forest-creature's dug; and my fancy shall grow up to fulfil your bidding—I will do homage to the chariots that proceed in state from shore and from shore; the weapons of treacherous retreat sent home from Parthia;

<sup>1</sup> *semper*.

the castles of Pelusium razed in ruin by Roman iron, 55  
the hand of Antony heavy against his own being.

You, the indulgent patron of my opening prime,  
take the reins and give me the prospering word when  
my wheels break into full career. Thus much honour  
you allow me, Maecenas, and it comes of you that I  
also shall be said to have made one of your partizans. 60

## X *Mirabar, quidnam*

*To Cynthia. Verses for her  
Birthday.*

I WONDERED why the Muses had visited<sup>1</sup> me so  
early, and stood in the red blush of sunrise before  
my bed. They sent a token of my girl's birthday, and  
they clapped their hands aloud thrice for good-luck.

Let the day pass without a cloud; let the winds 5  
stand still aloft, and the menacing wave sink gently on  
the dry land. Let me behold no sorrowful person  
while this daylight lasts, let the very stone of Niobe  
keep down its tears, the halcyons' throats forsake their  
complaints and be at peace, the mother of Itys leave off 10  
chiding for her murdered son.

And, you, my beloved, born under happy auguries,  
get up and pray to the gods with the due observance  
they require. Now first dispel your drowsiness with  
fresh water, and use a well-controlled thumb to dress  
your shining hair; next find the garment in which you  
first captivated Propertius' eyes and put it on, and leave 15

<sup>1</sup> *visissent.*

not your head flowerless ; and ask that the beauty  
 wherein you excel, may never fail you, and your empire  
 over my life still abide. After that, when you have  
 hallowed the garlanded altar with frankincense, and  
 20 the propitious flame has flared all through the house,  
 let us take thought for the table ; let the night be sped  
 with drinking, while the perfume-box of onyx anoints  
 the nostril with saffron-essence. Let the hoarse-  
 throated pipe support the nightly dance, let there be  
 no bounds to the language of your naughtiness ; let  
 25 the delicious revels rid us of sleep (who cares for sleep?),  
 and the public air of the neighbouring street ring with  
 the noise ; let us also play at fortunes with a cast of  
 dice to expound the victim's name, who is to take a  
 thrashing from the heavy wings of the Boygod. And  
 when the proper time has been spent with many a  
 30 noggin, and Venus who waits upon us shall commence  
 the ceremonies of the night, let us acquit ourselves of  
 our annual service to our bridechamber and so finish  
 the course of your birthday.

## XI

*Quid mirare, meam*

*To one who had rebuked him  
 for making much of a Woman.*

WHY do you wonder that a woman sways my  
 life and hales a man to be the bondslave of her  
 dominion, and frame shameful reproaches against me  
 for an idle fellow 'that is not able to split the yoke and  
 5 break his durance' ? The seaman best reads the presage  
 of coming death, and by his wounds the soldier is

schooled in fearful apprehension. I have bragged in just such terms as yours in my bygone youth ; now you must take a lesson in fear by my example.

It was a woman of Colchis who drove the glowing bulls beneath the yoke of adamant, and sowed the seed of battle till the ground teemed with armed men, and shut the savage maw of the watchful dragon in order 10 that the Golden Wool might travel to Aeson's house.

It was a gallant woman, Penthesilea of Maeotis, who ventured of old to assail the Danaan barks with arrows from horseback. When her golden casque revealed her brow, her bright beauty conquered her conqueror. 15

Omphale was a Lydian girl, bathed in the Gygean Lake, and she advanced to such dignity of loveliness that he who had set up his Columns in a pacified world turned his rugged hand to pulling soft portions of wool. 20

Semiramis set up Babylon the city of the Persians in order to rear a lasting pile in kiln-baked bulwarks, and leave no chance for two chariots careering contrary ways along the wall so much as to scrape sides by fouling an axle-tree; also she led the channel of Euphrates 25 through the midst where she founded her citadels, and she bade Bactra arise and be the head of an empire.

Indeed, why should I arraign heroes or gods in my rebuke? Juppiter discredits himself and his house!

Nay, did not a woman hackneyed among her very menials, a woman who but late brought reproach on 30 our arms, ask for the walls of Rome and the surrender of the Senators to be her bondsmen, all for her loathsome partner's fee?



Ah, guilty Alexandria, land most ready for treasons !  
Ah, Memphis, so many times bloody to our bitter cost,  
35 where the sand robbed Pompey of his three triumphs !  
No date of days shall ever rid Rome of that brand of  
infamy. (Better had thy death passed on the  
Phlegraean Field, even though thou wast destined to  
bow thy neck to thy father-in-law.) Forsooth this  
harlot queen of polluted Canopus, this arrant brand  
40 of infamy seared upon the blood-lineage of Philip, pre-  
sumed to pit her snarling Anubis against our Jove and  
make Tiber suffer the menaces of Nile, to beat the  
Roman trumpet with her rattling *sistre*, and with the  
poles of her barge pursue the beaks of our clippers,  
45 to spread her filthy mosquito-nets on the Tarpeian  
Rock and sit in judgement amid the statues and amid  
the arms of Marius !

What does it profit then to have broken the axes of  
that Tarquin whom his pride in life brands with the  
epithet of Proud, if we must endure a woman? Take  
50 thy triumph, O Rome, and pray a long life for Augustus  
thy deliverer !

Thou didst flee, though, into the broad shoaling  
streams of the craven Nile. Thy hands yielded to  
Roman fetters. I surveyed those wrists gnawed by the  
consecrated asp, and saw how those limbs sucked in the  
55 mysterious access of her death-swoon, '*Rome, with such  
a Citizen, thou hadst no cause to fear me*<sup>1</sup>'. So said even  
that sot's tongue, swamped in endless debauch.

The tall city on the Seven Hills, who thrones para-

<sup>1</sup> *fui*.

mount over the whole world, felt the alarms of war and trembled at a woman's menace! There are spoils of Hannibal, and monuments of vanquished Syphax; 60 Pyrrhus also had his pride shattered at our feet. A Curtius established his monument in the gulf he filled up; nay, and a Decius burst the ranks of war on his careering charger. *Cocles' Path* cites the hacked stump of the bridge for an example; and one there is to whom a corby crow gave a surname in perpetual possession. Gods preserve these walls of ours even as 65 gods founded them! While Caesar lives Rome shall scarcely tremble at Jove! Now where are the navies of Scipio, where are the standards of Camillus, or where art thou, Bosporus, captured in our own days by Pompey's hand? Apollo of Leucas shall keep the record of that routed array: so mighty a pile did one day's 70 fighting rear!

But you, seaman, whether you make harbour or leave harbour behind, in all the Ionian Main remember Caesar!

## XII

*Postume, plorantem*

*To Postumus, on his going to the wars in Asia, and leaving his wife Aelia Galla.*

POSTUMUS, had you the heart to leave the weeping Galla, and go for a soldier behind the gallant ensigns of Augustus?

Was ever the pride of despoiling the Parthian worth while when Galla greatly besought you '*Do not so!*'

5 Heaven forgive me, but here 's my curse upon all you  
covetous persons together! And on anybody that cares  
more for fighting than for wedded troth! But so it is!  
You, like a lunatic, will be drinking the water of Araxes  
in your helmet, weary and covered with a soldier's  
cloak loosely flung about you; while she, meantime, will  
10 pine at some idle rumour, afraid that you will rue this  
valour of yours, afraid that the arrows of the Mede will  
make merry upon your blood, or the iron cataphract  
upon your gilded horse, afraid that some relic of you  
will be brought home to be wept over in an urn—such  
is the return of them who fall in those parts!

15 O Postumus, thrice happy and again in your virtuous  
Galla! A nature like yours never deserved such a wife.  
What will a poor girl do with the fear of nobody to be  
her shield, and Rome to teach your Galla her lesson  
of gay living? Nay, you may go with an easy mind;  
20 presents will not conquer Galla, and she will bear no  
grudge for your cruelty. On whatsoever day the fates  
shall restore you safe and sound, there will surely be  
a pure-souled Galla to hang about your neck.

Postumus will be a second Ulysses of the Wonderful  
Wife. *He* took no hurt from his many long delays—  
25 the ten years' leaguer, Ismara, the mountains of the  
Cicones; Calpe; that night<sup>1</sup> when he burned out  
Polyphemus' eye; the wiles of Circe; the lotus, the  
herb that holds fast; Scylla, and Charybdis rent  
asunder with ebb and flow of waters; Lampetie's steers  
lowing on Ithacan spits (these had been pastured for

<sup>1</sup> *нож.*

Phoebus by his daughter Lampetie); the flight away 30  
 from the bedchamber of his weeping mistress in Aeaëa ;  
 swimming so many nights and days of tempest ; enter-  
 ing into the dusky abodes of the silent ghosts ; the  
 approach with deaf oarsmen to the pools of the Sirens ;  
 renewing his old archery in the death of the suitors, 35  
 and thereby putting a term to his wanderings.

And not in vain ; because his wife had abode at  
 home persevering in chastity. Aelia Galla outdoes the  
 loyalty of Penelope.

## XIII

*Quaeritis unde*

*To his Friends. Noble  
 savagery and corrupt civiliza-  
 tion.*

YOU ask me why a night is a mint of gold to  
 greedy girls, and drained revenues complain that  
 Venus means bankruptcy.

Oh, there is a most sure and palpable cause for these  
 great wrecks : the road of high living is grown too free.  
 The Indian ant sends gold from the depths of her 5  
 mines, and Venus' shell comes from the Red-Sea main,  
 and Cadmean Tyre furnishes her crimson tints, and  
 the Arab (shepherd of many perfumes) his cinnamon.  
 These be weapons that storm even cloistered virtues,  
 gifts that might have shaken <sup>1</sup> the steadfast scorn of a 10  
 Penelope. A matron stalks on her way wearing the

<sup>1</sup> *quae quaterent.*

revenues of posterity<sup>1</sup> on her back, and flaunts in our faces the spoils of her reproach. There is no scruple in asking, no scruple in giving : or if there is any, the very obstacle is removed for a price.

15 What a singularly blessed law of death do those Eastern spouses practise, whom the red Dawn tinges with her horses ! When the last torch has been flung on the couch of death, there stands the devoted band of wives with streaming hair ; and they make a dying-match of it, which shall follow her husband alive : it is  
20 a humiliation to have been refused leave to die. They burn triumphant, and offer their breasts to the flame, and lay their scorched faces upon their husbands.

But ours is a faithless sort of brides, no girl of ours will play faithful Euadne or devoted Penelope.

25 Happy the peaceable youth of the country people in the old days, whose opulence was the harvest and the tree ! Their presents were to give quinces knocked down from the bough, and a panier filled with crimson bramble-berries, now to crop a handful of pansies, now  
30 a mixed tribute of lilies brightly shining through a maiden's basket, and to carry a cluster of grapes arrayed in their own leaves or some bravely coloured bird of a plumage all shot with a glassy iris<sup>2</sup>. These were the endearments that purchased the kisses which girls in those days gave to their woodland gallants by stealth amid the fastnesses of the rocks. A fawn's pelt  
35 covered the lovers all up, and the grass grew deep to make a natural bed for them ; a pine tree leaned over

<sup>1</sup> or of spendthrifts.

<sup>2</sup> *vitricoloris*.

and surrounded them with lazy shadows. There was no penalty for seeing goddesses naked. A horned fogleman with his full-fed ewes behind him, the ram came home by himself to the empty yard of the god 40 turned shepherd ; and all the gods and goddesses to whom belongs the protectorate of the fields were ready with a kind word at your hearths, as '*Friend, whosoever you are that pass this way, you shall hunt the hare in my walks, or the wild fowl, if that may be your game. And you must call me from the crag and take Pan 45 for your comrade, whether you try for a prize with the liming-rod or with the hound*'.

But nowadays the sanctuaries are cold and dull in forsaken groves ; devotion is beaten from the field and they all worship gold. Gold has hounded out faith, gold makes a market of right and wrong ; the law runs after gold, and, the law once gone, cleanness of heart 50 soon goes the same way. Charred portals take Brennus to witness, his sacrilege when he made for the Pythian domain of the unshorn God. (But the mount trembled in his laurelled peaks, Parnassus scattered frightful avalanches upon the Gaulish array.) Thracian Polymestor took a bribe of gold and crime entertained 55 Polydorus with treachery for hospitality.

Golden bracelets tempted Eriphyle; she must get them to wear : and Amphiaraus—his team is all in pieces and he nowhere to be found !

I will pronounce my message—and oh, that my country might take me for a true diviner !—Proud 60 Rome is breaking beneath her own prosperity. This is

a sure truth I speak, but I find no credit. No, neither was that Trojan Bacchante in old days destined to be accepted as a true prophetess in the woes of Pergama : she alone said that Paris was building doom for Phrygia, she alone said that the Horse which crept against them was fraught with deceits to ruin her country.

65 Ah, here was a madness which might have served her country and her father well ! That unavailing tongue proved by experience that gods spoke true.

#### XIV *Multa tuæ, Sparte,*

*He praises the licence of the  
Spartan Women in bodily exer-  
cises and in manners.*

THERE is much that I admire in the charter of  
thine athletic discipline, Sparta, but still more  
the many blessings of thy virgins' exercises ; that a girl,  
naked among wrestling men, can practise these bodily  
prowesses without disrepute, when the eye cannot over-  
5 take the ball stealing its rapid volley from hand to hand,  
and the ringing noise of hooked stick and reeling hoop  
is heard ; and a woman can stand dust-soiled at the  
utmost goals, and take her trouncing at the rough sport  
of fight-as-you-please. Now with a thong she binds  
her exulting wrists to the glove, now she whirls the  
10 ponderous throwing-disk in a circle : she makes the  
ring thunder with the trampling of her horses. She  
girds her snow-white flank with a sword, and fences her

virgin head with the hollowed bronze (like the bare-breasted warrior throng of Amazons who bathe in the waters of Thermodon); anon she follows after her home-bred hounds over the long ranges of Taygetus, her hair sprinkled with hoar-frost: she is like Pollux 15 and Castor on the sands of Eurotas, the one a champion at fisticuffs to be, the other at horsemanship—and between the pair, they say, Helen bore arms, breasts bare, and the gods her brothers did not blush 20 for her.

Why, then this Spartan law forbids lovers to part, and one may be by the side of his love at the open street corner; there is no terror, no watch and ward over a close-barred girl, no stern revenge to be feared from a harsh husband. You need send no envoy ahead, but just speak about your own affair: no time lost in wearisome rebuffs. No crimson coverlets cheat the straying eye; no wearisome court to be paid to the worshipped beauty in her house.

But here your lady walks surrounded by a vast throng; there is not even the little room to get so much as a 30 finger in; you shall not discover what are the proper looks and phrases of entreaty—the lover turns it over and over, how he shall come at her, and all is dark.

Ah, Rome, hadst thou but mimicked the canons of the Spartans and their combats, I would have loved thee all the better for this excellent thing!



XV

*Sic ego non ullos*

*To Cynthia, in which he begs  
her not to be jealous of  
Lycinna.*

AS I hope never again to know any rude alarms in  
love, and never to watch through a night with-  
out you, I swear it : When the garb of a hem-frocked  
boy became a disgrace for me to be clothed in, and free-  
dom was allowed me to acquaint myself with the way of  
5 love, my accomplice in those first nights and who hand-  
selled my untried heart was that Lycinna whom I won,  
—ah, not by any presents that I gave her ! And now  
here is the third year (it is not much less) drawing out  
since then, and I can hardly remember so much as a  
dozen words passing between us. Your love has  
buried everything, and never a woman since you has  
10 put the sweet fetters upon my neck.

I will take my text from Dirce, mad with jealousy  
upon so belated<sup>1</sup> an arraignment — that Antiope,  
daughter of Nycteus, had once been her Lycus' bed-  
fellow. Oh, how many a time the queen seared the  
pretty locks of her rival, and struck her fingers into the  
soft face with all her might ! Oh, how many a time did  
15 she load the handmaid with unjust portions to spin,  
and bade her lay her head on the hard ground ! Often  
she left her to lodge in foul darkness, often she refused  
her so much as a drink of water when she was starving.  
Jupiter, dost thou not yield any aid to Antiope when

<sup>1</sup> *sero.*

she has so many troubles? A rough chain is spoiling 20  
her hands. If thou art a god, it is to thy dishonour  
that thy love should be a slave : who but Jove must  
Antiope call upon when she is in bondage? Unassisted  
though, with such bodily strength as she could summon,  
she burst the royal gyves upon her two hands. Then  
with trembling feet she ran to the crags of Cithaeron. 25  
It was night, and sorry lying on the hoar-frost scattered  
abroad. Often, as she wandered, she was alarmed by  
the noise of the Asopus' current and thought her  
mistress' steps were coming behind her. The mother  
driven off from her own sons' steadings, found Zethus 30  
hard and Amphion softened at her tears. Then, it  
was like the hour when the waves abate their mighty  
commotion because the Levanter has left off  
tilting against the South ; so the noise of the sand  
shrinks to less and less and there is peace on the shore,  
so did the poor woman bow her knees and droop and  
sink.

Loving duty came at last, though late : the sons 35  
perceived their fault. Thou, old man who well  
deservest to be guardian to Jove's sons, thou dost  
restore the mother to her boys ; and the boys bound  
Dirce fast under the mouth of a tameless bull to be  
dragged. Antiope, recognize the hand of Jove ! It  
is to thy proud satisfaction that Dirce is drawn along  
to have many many places for her dying. Zethus' 40  
meads are stained with blood, and Amphion fell to  
chanting a paean in triumph upon the crags of Aracyn-  
thus.

But *you* must forbear to tease poor undeserving Lycinna. You women let anger run headlong and  
 45 know no drawing back again. Let no tittle-tattle about me put your ears on the alert; I can love none but you even when I shall be burned by the logs of my funeral pyre!

## XVI *Nox media, et dominae*

*He is summoned by a letter at midnight to join his mistress at Tivoli.*

**M**IDNIGHT—and here is a letter of my mistress? come for me: she has commanded me to attend at Tivoli without delay, where the gleaming summits display their double towers and the water of Anio tumbles into spacious pools.

5 What must I do? Trust myself to the enshrouding darkness and then tremble at violence ready to venture an attack upon my person? Yet if I put off this behest because of my fear, there await me tears crueller than any nocturnal foe. I had offended once, and I was down among the dead men for a whole year afterwards.  
 10 Oh, there is no gentleness in her dealings with me!

And after all there lives not the man to harm lovers, for they are sacred: on these terms one is free to walk in the very thick of Sciron's Road. If a man shall be a lover he is free to walk on Scythian shores, and no man will presume to be savage enough to do him any hurt.  
 15 The moon furnishes him with guidance, the stars point

out the rough places, Love himself walks before and knocks the lighted torches into a blaze, the cruel fury of dogs open-mouthed for a bite, turns aside; this sort of men has a safe road at any season whatever.

Who indeed would not scruple to dabble himself in the scanty blood of a lover? Venus in person bears 20 them company against whom the door is barred.

And yet had the certainty of burial attached to my fall, death would be a good bargain for me at this price. She will bring me perfumes and deck my sepulchre with garlands, sitting to keep guard by my grave. Please the gods, she may not bestow my bones in crowded 25 ground where the multitude passes in a restless thoroughfare. Lovers' barrows are so dishonoured after death. I would fain be hidden in sequestered ground beneath the tresses of a tree, or buried in an unknown shore, banked high with sand-heaps. I like not to be famous in the midst of the highway. 30

## XVII

*Nunc, o Bacche,*

*To Bacchus: a promise of devotion if the god will give him sleep.*

**M**EEKLY, O Bacchus, do I now grovel at thine altars: give me peace, father, and furthering sails. Thou hast power to assuage the scornful pride of furious Venus, and there is healing for sorrows in thy liquor. By thy means lovers meet and lovers part: do 5 thou wash this mischief out of my heart, O Bacchus. Surely Ariadne who rode to heaven behind thy team

of lynxes, stands for witness among the stars that thou art not unpractised. For this plague of mine which maintains the old fires in my bones, the cure must be  
10 death—or thy wine. For an abstemious night always racks the solitary lover, while hope and dread keep his heart veering between either manner.

But if, thanks to thy gifts, Bacchus, sleep shall be fetched to enter my bones<sup>1</sup> at this fevered season, I also  
15 will grow vines and plant the hills in rows; and no wild beast shall pull at them, for I will be watchful. Only let my tubs swell up with purple juice, and the fresh grape stain the feet that tread it, I will spend the residue of my days in thy name and the name of thy horns, and  
20 be called the poet of thine achievement, O Bacchus.

I will tell how an Aetnean thunderbolt brought thy mother to bed of thee, how the arms of India were routed by the dancing bands of Nysa; of Lycurgus idly raving over the unfamiliar vine, and the death of Pentheus gladdening the three troops; how the  
25 Tyrrhene sailors leapt down from the ship which was now all vine-tendrils, into the wide waters—and lo! so many bellying dolphin-shapes!—how in the midst of Naxos the streams smelt sweet for thee, from which the multitude of the Naxians drink draughts of thy liquor.

Thy white gorge burdened beneath the drooping  
30 clusters, a Lydian bonnet shall encircle the hair of Bassareus; thy polished nape shall be oozy with perfumed oil, and thou shalt brush thy bare feet with thy

<sup>1</sup> or to pass through my fevered temples and enter . . .

flowing robe. Dircaean Thebes shall beat the soft tambourine; goat-footed Pans shall sing to the open stops of the reedpipe; hard by, Cybelle the great goddess with the tower-crowned head shall drub the harsh cymbals to keep time with measures from Mount Ida. 35

And before the temple doors—a bowl, pouring the wine which the priest's golden goblet has skimmed in thine honour.

Themes for no mean buskin, I will rehearse them with the breath of pride which peals in Pindar's utterance: do thou but get me quit of this masterful slavery and overbear this fretful head of mine with slumber!

### XVIII *Clausus ab umbroso*

*Elegy on the death of M.*

*Claudius Marcellus.*

YE dank Baian ponds of warm water, where the sea plays against the barriers that lock him out from the forest-shaded Lake of Avernus, by sands where lies also Misenus, the Trumpeter of Troy, and the echoing causeway runs which the labour of Hercules built (in the place where cymbals clashed to greet the god of Thebes when he went on a gracious errand to visit the cities of mankind); but, O Baiae, now grown abominable with great reproach, what god has taken his station beside your flood in enmity? 5

By these waters overwhelmed he has sunk his face down to the waters of Styx, and now he is one of the vapours which flit to and fro over your pools.

Pedigree and worth, his most excellent mother, his tender alliance with Caesar's hearth—what did it all profit him? Or, but yesterday, the awnings that floated over such a full theatre? Or all that his mother's handiwork had contrived for him? He is dead; and  
 15 his years stood still at the twentieth; so many excellent things did his date confine within so small a compass.

Go to! lift high thy spirit and fashion imaginary triumphs; take pleasure in whole theatres rising to their feet for acclamation; outdo the rich stuffs of Attalus, and let all the pageant glitter bejewelled at  
 20 the grand games—thou shalt give all these vanities to the fire!

However, all do so; this way come highest and  
 4 lowest degree: an ill road, but all the world must foot it.

There are the three growling gorges of the dog to make our peace with, and the general wherry of the old curmudgeon to be embarked upon. Yonder is one that  
 25 warily ensconces himself in iron and brass: do as he may, death hauls him out from his hiding-place.

Good looks could not dispense Nireus, nor force dispense Achilles; the wealth which Pactolus' flood breeds, did not avail Croesus<sup>1</sup>.

31 But, as for thee, may the Mariner convey to the place whither he ferries good men's shades<sup>2</sup>, the body which has thy soul for its tenant no longer: it has taken the road of Claudius the conqueror of Sicily, the road of Caesar, and passed to join the stars.

<sup>1</sup> *vide* ii. 6. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *at tibi nata . . . quo traicit . . .*

## XIX

*Obicitur totiens*

*To Cynthia. That lust has  
more empire over Woman than  
Man : with instances from  
Mythology.*

**T**IME and again you upbraid me with *our* wanton will : trust me, it is rather *you*, who are subject to such appetite. It is *you* who know no control over the enthralled mind when once you have spurned shame and burst your curbs. You shall sooner 5  
appease a fire in a harvest field—rivers shall run backward to their fountain-head—the Syrtes afford a quiet harbour, and cruel Malea a kindly shore and proper welcome to sailors—than anyone have power to check your career and daunt the pricks of your tempestuous 10  
naughtiness. Witness, she who suffered the slighting pride of the Cretan bull, and put on the pretended horns of a timber cow ; witness, Salmoneus' daughter on fire for Thessalian Enipeus, she that nothing would satisfy but she must be swamped bodily by the river god. And Myrrha, she too was a reproach, who kindled with desire for her old father, and was en- 15  
sconced in the leaves of a new sort of tree. Yes ! Why need I make mention of Medea and the day when the mother's passion wreaked its atoning rage in the massacre of the children ? Or of Clytemnestra, on whose account the whole house of Pelops stands damned for debauch in the eyes of Mycenae ? And thou, 20  
Scylla, bought and sold by the handsome face of Minos,



shearing thy father's kingdom off in a purple lock. Such then was the dowry this maiden had pledged to the enemy! Ah, Nisus, love has used treachery to unbar  
 25 thy gates! Now, you unmarried maids, burn your flambeaux to happier purpose! See the damsel is slung and dragged astern of the Cretan bark. Not without good cause though! Minos gives judgement on the bench of Orcus. As a conqueror he dealt justly with his foe nevertheless.

## XX

*Credis eum iam*

*He pleads with her to give up  
 his faithless Rivals and return  
 to him.*

**D**O you think it possible that he whom you have seen set sail away from your bed, is now mindful of your looks? O hard heart that could barter a girl for gains! Was all Africa worth<sup>1</sup> so much, sir, that you  
 5 could refrain from tears? And you, foolish girl, are making believe about gods and imaginary promises, while I daresay he has got another love to hug to his breast. You have sovereign beauty, you have the endowments of chaste Pallas, and a brilliant renown reflected from your scholar grandsire: your house is  
 10 blest by fortune—had you but a faithful friend. Faithful I will be; make haste, beloved, to my pillow!  
 13 My first night is at hand! I have been given a first  
 14 night's span! O Moon, stay longer at this our first

<sup>1</sup> *tanti quin lacrimas.*

bedding! And thou too, O Sun, who dost all too  
 amply detail thy summer fires, abridge the lingering  
 daylight's journey! We must first establish our agree-  
 ment and seal our charter, and I must draft my terms  
 for this love is new. This is a bond which love in  
 person fastens with his seal: witness to it, the wheeling  
 Crown of the goddess among the stars.

(O the many hours that shall pass and still my talk  
 outstay them, before Venus bid set on to the joyous  
 encounter!) For when the pairing is not made fast by  
 loyal engagements, a night may be spent in watching,  
 and no gods to avenge it! Also desire soon delivers  
 from the fetters which he has imposed; the first omens  
 must be the bond of loyalty for us.

So thus it shall be: *Whoso shall break the plighted  
 altars of our troth, and desecrate this wedding sacrament  
 by any strange union, let all such pain and grief as is  
 customary in love fall to him; let him yield himself a  
 victim to the tattling of tell-tales; let his mistress'  
 windows never be opened to him for all his weeping; let  
 him love always, and always want the fruition of love.*

## XXI

*Magnum iter*

*He will make a voyage to  
 Athens, to cure him of his love.*

I AM fain to undertake a great voyage to the scholar  
 city of Athens, that the lengthy travel may deliver  
 me from the oppressions of love. For a man's tender  
 interest in his girl grows by ceaselessly surveying her:  
 love supplies himself with his own chief nourishment.

5 I have tried everything for a chance of escape in any quarter. No: the god in person overbears me at every turn.

Yet my mistress admits me scarcely at all or once in a while after many rebuffs; or if she does consent, there is the confidante sleeping at the farther edge of the bed. There can be no other help for it: with a  
10 change of country love shall be as far removed from my heart as Cynthia from my eyes.

Away then, my comrades! Drive the ship through the sea, and take your appointed spell in pairs at the oar! Hoist your sails taut to the masthead, and good luck to it! Now the sailors have a breeze to prosper their watery way.

15 Ye towers of Rome, fare ye well; and you, my friends; and you, my beloved, however you have treated me, farewell!

So now I must ride upon the Adriatic deep—strange quarters for me!—and be fain to approach in supplication the gods whose great voice is in the waves. And when, after that, my schooner safe over the Ionian  
20 Sea has soothed her weary sails in quiet water at Lechaëum, for the remainder, you, my feet, must make haste to support your task where the Isthmus sets a bar of land to either sea. Next when the shores of Piræus harbour shall receive me, I shall mount the curtained stretch of Theseus' Way.

25 Once there, I shall apply myself to correct my mind in the alleys<sup>1</sup> of Plato, or in the gardens of the master

<sup>1</sup> *stadiis*.

Epicurus ; or I shall pursue the study of the tongue, the weapon of Demosthenes ; and for the study of books, the witty relish of master Menander : else painted panels at least shall captivate my eyes, or some perfect piece of craftsmanship in ivory, or maybe in bronze. 30  
 Or else the span of years, or the long interspaces of the deep shall ease my wounds in the secrecy of my bosom. Or if I die, it shall be thanks to fate, and not wrecked by a disgraceful love ; and so shall my dying day not ill become me.

## XXII *Frigida tam multos*

*To Tullus : In which he asserts that there are finer sights to see in Italy than in all the world.*

**H**AS chilly Cyzicus found favour with you, Tullus, for all these years, the isthmus of Cyzicus which is sluiced by the water of Propontis? Dindymus and the instruments of Cybelle fashioned in sacred bronze<sup>1</sup>, and the road which<sup>2</sup> bore away the horses of Dis the Ravisher? If you have a fancy for the cities of Helle, 5 the daughter of Athamas, still be touched, O Tullus, by my longing desire ! You may behold Atlas charged with all heaven to carry, the Gorgon's head which Perseus' stroke severed, the gibbet-trees of Sinis, the 37 rocks that gave such an ill welcome to the Greeks, and the timber which is bent to its own doom ; the steadings 38

<sup>1</sup> *Dindymus, aere sacro fabricata inventa Cybellae.*

<sup>2</sup> *quae.*

of Geryon, the marks in the dust where Hercules and  
 10 Antaeus wrestled, and the dancing-grounds of the  
 Hesperides ; you may roll the flood of Colchian Phasis  
 faster with your own boat's crew, and in person pick  
 up all the track that the Pelion-built vessel sailed, where  
 the pine-trunk forced to take on the feature of a novel  
 15 prow passed shyly buoyant between the rocks with  
 Argus'<sup>1</sup> dove for a pilot ; or any place of curious pil-  
 grimage, be it coast of Ortygia or coast of Cayster ;  
 or where the river-flood governs a sevenfold issue :  
 —all marvels shall give way before the land of Rome.  
 All that ever was in any place, Nature has put it here.  
 Here is ground rather apt for war than agreeable to crime:  
 20 Fame is not ashamed of thy chronicle, Rome. For we  
 stand no less in the strength of duty than of the sword :  
 anger itself can hold its conquering arm in control.

For waters we have Tiburnian Anio, Clitumnus from  
 the walks of Umbria, and the Marcian sluice—that  
 piece of everlasting workmanship, the Alban Lake and  
 25 the reeds of the consort Lake Nemorensis<sup>2</sup>, and that  
 health-giving well that Pollux' charger drank at. But  
 here are no asps to glide on their scaly belly ; the  
 waterfloods of Italy stream not with strange boding  
 monsters. Here clank no fetters of Andromeda, punished  
 30 in her mother's stead ; Ausonia boasts no banquets like  
 that from which the Sun turned in dismay ; we know  
 nothing here of fires that burn to the undoing of an  
 absent man while a mother works her own son's  
 destruction ; no cruel Bacchanals hunt Pentheus in

<sup>1</sup> *Argea.*<sup>2</sup> *socii Nemorensis harundo.*

a tree ; no changeling hind unfastens the Danaan fleet ;  
 here Juno never had power to dress a rival's head 35  
 with a crescent of horns, or disfigure her good looks  
 with the ugliness of a cow.

This is your mother, Tullus, this the fairest abode ;  
 here you must seek those high dignities which your 40  
 birth comports ; here is a free people to employ your  
 eloquence, here the large promise of after generations,  
 and the happily-sorted love of a bride presently to be.

### XXIII *Ergo tam doctae*

*On the loss of his Writing  
 Tablets.*

SO my most scholarly writing tablets are lost, and  
 oh, the deal of excellent writing lost with them !  
 Well-worn by my often handling, now<sup>1</sup> that very  
 familiarity bade them not betray trust though they  
 were not sealed, they had come to know how to make  
 my peace with girls in my absence, and in my absence 5  
 speak certain nicely turned phrases.

They had no golden settings to make them dear : it  
 was common box-wood and coarse wax. Yet such as  
 they were, they always remained loyal to me, and  
 always had a good success vouchsafed them. 10

Maybe this was the message committed to those  
 tablets : *'I am angry because yesterday you delayed,  
 master Indifferent. Have you somebody else prettier?  
 Or do you hint some horrid imaginary scandal at my*

<sup>1</sup> *quoniam.*

expense?' Or she said, 'You must come to-day: we  
 15 will have an idle pastime together. Love has made ready  
 an all-night welcome'.—And much pleasant wit besides,  
 such a girl can invent when she is on thorns and a long  
 hour to while away in fond slynesses.

Oh mercy! to think of it! Some miser is ciphering  
 20 his account on them and pigeon-holing them among  
 his pestilent ledgers!

If anyone restores them to me, he shall have a present  
 of gold; who would care to keep a bit of wood for  
 a treasure?

Run boy, and make haste to post this advertisement  
 on some pillar, and write that your master lives on the  
 Esquiline.

## XXIV *Falsa est ista tuae,*

*To Cynthia. His eyes are  
 opened and he recants his love.*

**Y**OUR proud trust in a pretty face has been put  
 upon, woman, whom my partial eyes once made  
 so haughty! Cynthia, it was my passion which bestowed  
 such honours upon you: are you ashamed to owe your  
 renown to my verse? I have often praised you by a  
 5 confusion of divers charms, that passion might deem  
 you to be what you were not; and many times has  
 your complexion been likened to the rosy morning  
 when you had a procured whiteness on your face all the  
 time!

And this it was that neither the friends of my family  
 10 could rid me of, nor Thessalian witch wash it away in

the wild sea. This confession I will now make : fire and steel could not wring<sup>1</sup> it from me, nothing but veritable shipwreck in the Aegæan Main. I was caught and stewed in the cauldrons of Venus ! I was a prisoner with my arms pinioned behind my back ! Aha ! now my garlanded ships have made the harbour, 15 the Syrtes are past, my anchor is let down ! Now, at last I begin to find my wits after the weary wild surge ! Now my wounds have closed up to wholesomeness !

Ah, Lady Good-Sense (if there be such a<sup>2</sup> goddess at all), to thy Sanctuary I give myself ! So many vows 20 of mine had been lost on the deafness of Jove.

## XXV *Risus eram positus*

*To Cynthia : Renunciation  
and Reproach.*

**I** WAS made a mock of: the tables were laid and there was a gay supper party, and anybody was allowed to be clever at my expense.

Five years did I manage to serve you loyally : you shall often bite your nails and regret my faithfulness. I am no whit touched by tears : these were the same 5 tricks which ensnared me ; you always used to weep from deceit, Cynthia.

I shall weep at departing, but my wrongs are stronger than weeping. It is you who will not let a well enough sorted pair run in harness together.

Now farewell to the threshold which has shed tears

<sup>1</sup> *coacta sed.*

<sup>2</sup> *adeo es.*



10 at my pleadings, and to the door which my hand never  
broke despite my anger.

But as for you, let the burden of age press heavy on  
you with the weight of dissembled years, and come the  
wrinkle which bodes disaster to your good looks ! Ah,  
when the mirror upbraids you with your wrinkles, then  
may you long to pull out the white hairs by the root !  
15 May it be your turn to be denied the door and suffer  
the slights of pride ; and may you repine when you are  
an old woman, and done by as you did !

These are the curses of destiny given to my page to  
preach : learn to dread their fulfilment for your beauty !

## BOOK IV

### I *Hoc quodcumque vides*

*Dialogue between Propertius  
and a Babylonian soothsayer,  
who corrects his poetical am-  
bitions.*

PROPERTIUS. All that you here behold, stranger, all  
this vast range of Rome, was hillside and grass before  
Phrygian Aeneas ; and Evander's exiled cattle lay  
down together in the place where stands the Palace  
consecrated to Phoebus of the Ships. These golden  
5 temples grew up for gods of clay, who took it for no  
reproach that their hovels were rudely fashioned. The  
Tarpeian Father thundered from a bare crag ; and Tiber  
came like a strange intruder upon our herds. Where

yonder House of Remus has arisen above the steps, a single hearth was once the hugest realm of the brothers. 10 The Curia which is now tall and splendid with its hem-frocked Senate, was tenanted by a Signiory of fathers clad in skins, simple souls; a horn served to summon these old-world Quirites to a parley; those hundred elders often made a Senate in a meadow. No undulating canvas hung over the spaces of the theatre; the 15 boards did not reek of ceremonial saffron. None studied to go after outlandish gods in those days when the multitude quaked on tiptoe of emotion at the rites of their fathers; and the yearly feast of Pales was solemnized<sup>1</sup> with lighted wisps of hay, even as nowadays 20 we commence our purifications by the maiming of the horse. Vesta was so poor, she rejoiced in the garlanded asses, and a team of lean cows drew the shabby furniture of her service. Fatted pigs were the purification of their humble street corners, and the shepherd made his acceptable sacrifice of sheep's entrails to the music of reed pipes. The ploughman, clad in hides, 25 wielded a whip of bristly thong: whence the lewd Fabian Lupercus gets his ritual. The primitive soldier was not a man all gleaming in warrior-like menace: their fighting was a naked mellay with fired stakes. Lygmon in his bonnet of wolf-skin planted the first 30 Captain's Quarters, and great part of Tatiush's state was among his sheep.

From such origins came the Titiens, the heroic Ramnes, the Luceres of Solonium<sup>2</sup>; from such origins

<sup>1</sup> *celebrata.*

<sup>2</sup> *Soloni.*

Romulus came to drive his four white horses. Of course Bovillae was less suburban when the city was so small ; and Gabii, which is now brought to nothing, was a huge multitude. Alba, sprung from the omen of the  
 35 white sow, stood and was mighty : and (will you believe it ? ) even the man of Fidenae was a long journey distant<sup>1</sup>.

The nursling of Rome has nothing from his first fathers but the name : shall he not believe<sup>2</sup> that the she-wolf is fostermother of his race ? Thou, Troy, didst send hither thine exiled gods to better purpose. Aha !  
 40 what auguries attended the passage of the Dardan bark ! From the first the omens promised well in that the opened belly of the Wooden Horse did her no harm, when the trembling father swung on his son's neck, and the flames scrupled to burn those dutiful  
 45 shoulders. Now came the high courage of Decius, and the axes of Brutus, and Venus in person conveyed her Caesar's arms in those conquering arms of Troy's resurrection which she carried. It was fortunate ground, Iulus, that gave harbour to thy gods.

Fortunate, if indeed the Avernian tripod of the  
 50 quaking Sibyl told Remus that he must sanctify his fields on the Aventine ; nay rather, if the utterance of the Trojan prophetess, late fulfilled, were true in regard to his ancient majesty, King Priam : '*Back with the horse, ye Danaans ! This is an ill victory ! The land of Ilium shall live, and Jove give arms to these ashes*'.

<sup>1</sup> *ac tibi . . . longa erat ipse via.*

<sup>2</sup> Read the line as a question.

Best of nurses for our state, thou she-wolf of Mars, 55  
 what walls have grown up from thy milk ! The walls !  
 These are the theme of which I would set myself to  
 treat in devout verse : alas that the utterance of my  
 mouth is so meagre ! Nevertheless, whatever stream  
 shall flow out of the slender wells of my heart shall all 60  
 do service to my country. Let Ennius encircle his  
 speech with an unkempt garland ; as for me, reach me  
 forth leaves from thine ivy, O Bacchus, that Umbria  
 may be puffed up and glory in my books, Umbria the  
 native country of the Roman Callimachus. Whoso  
 descries a fortress which clambers up out of the vale, 65  
 let him think of those walls according to my genius !

Be gracious, Rome ; for thee rises my task. Give  
 me bright promise, my countrymen ; and no sinister  
 auguries salute my endeavour ! I will make a song of  
 Rites and Days and Ancient Names of Places : this is  
 the goal towards which my steed shall sweat ! 70

HOROS. Whither away so blindly, my truant  
 Propertius, to make a song of destiny ? The distaff  
 stands amiss and the thread is composed amiss. The  
 song is but a summons for tears ; Apollo turns his face  
 away. You will rue the words you demand of a reluct-  
 ant lyre. I will cite you sure things and sure vouchers 75  
 thereto ; or I am no prophet skilled to move the symbols  
 upon the brazen sphere.

I am Horos whom Babylonian Orops begat, which  
 was himself a scion of the stock of Archytas, and my  
 house derives from Conon as an ancestor. I take the  
 gods to witness that I have not disgraced my kindred,

and that in my books nothing comes before truth.  
 80 Nowadays they have made profit of the gods and (Jove  
 is deceived by gold) the repeated emblems of the  
 ecliptic wheel, both the stars of Jove which are favour-  
 able and them of Mars which are full of rapine<sup>1</sup>, and the  
 orb of Saturn, disastrous to every living soul. What  
 85 designs *Pisces* are hatching, and the gallant constellation  
 of *Leo*, and *Capricornus* dipped in the western wave—  
 I<sup>2</sup> will reveal it: '*Troy, thou must fall, and rise again as  
 Trojan Rome*': and I will sing far-distant burials by  
 sea and land. When Arria brought forward her two  
 90 sons (she would give arms to her sons despite the god's  
 gainsaying) I revealed that they could not bring home  
 their pikes to the hearth of their fathers: and now  
 sure enough, two graves confirm my truthfulness. For  
 it so happened that while Lupercus was protecting his  
 horse which had been wounded in the face, the horse  
 fell forward and alas his rider did not take good care  
 enough of himself; whereas Gallus fell before the  
 95 bloodstained beak of his eagle in the attempt to keep  
 safe the standards committed to his charge. Poor  
 doomed lads! Two deaths at the door of their covetous  
 mother! That was a genuine testimony gained, but  
 I could well have spared it. When Lucina prolonged  
 100 the pangs of Cinara and the sluggish burden of her  
 womb remained obstinate, it was I also who said '*Let  
 her make such a vow as shall prevail with Juno*'; she  
 brought forth, and my books bore away the palm.

This is a truth which neither the sandy cavern of

<sup>1</sup> *rapaces.*

<sup>2</sup> Read comma for full stop after *aqua*.

Jove in Libya unfolds, nor the entrail which speaks its  
 message of divine lore ; nor yet if one shall have an eye  
 for the motions of a crow's wing ; nor dead man's shade 105  
 which comes forth at the waters of sorcery : the way  
 of the sky must be observed, the path of truth across  
 the stars ; and sure faith sought from the Five Zones.

Calchas shall be a weighty example. He let go the  
 fleet from Aulis where it was happily weatherbound 110  
 to dutiful rocks ; likewise he dyed his blade in the neck  
 of Agamemnon's daughter and the son of Atreus set  
 bloody sail. Yet the Danaï came not home. O dis-  
 mantled Troy, restrain thy tears and consider the inlets  
 of Euboea ! There is Nauplius reaching out his aveng-  
 ing fires at nightfall, and Greece is adrift on the waters, 115  
 overwhelmed by her own booty. Ah, conquering son  
 of Oileus, now ravish and fondle the prophetess whom  
 Minerva forbids to be plucked away from her robe !

But no more of these old chronicles ! Now I will  
 come down to your horoscope, and you must begin  
 to attend unflinching to a new tale of woe. Ancient 120  
 Umbria bred you in an illustrious home : do I lie, or is  
 the verge of your native country touched where <sup>1</sup> misty  
 Mevania sheds the dews of her weald and the waters of  
 the Umbrian Lake grow warm with summer heats, and  
 on the crest of clambering Asis a wall rises : that is the 125  
 wall which your talent has made all the more illustrious ?  
 And you gathered (what ought not to have been  
 gathered at that age,) your father's bones, and found  
 yourself driven to retire into a slender home : for al-

<sup>1</sup> *qua*.

though many a steer turned up your acres, the dismal rod  
130 of the surveyor robbed you of your well-tilled estates.  
And, in time, when you had doffed the golden locket  
from your innocent neck and put on the gown of inde-  
pendence in presence of a mother's gods, Apollo  
dictated somewhat of his own music to you and  
forbade you to bawl and thunder in the bedlam of  
the law courts.

Now Elegy must be the verse you fashion, and  
135 slyness the secret of your work. This is the camp for  
you. And then all the rest of the throng will write by  
your example. You shall go through your soldiering  
in the tender warfare of Venus, and Venus' boys shall  
find you a profitable adversary ; for one girl makes a  
140 mock of all the victorious palms you may have won ;  
and though you may knock away the hook that sticks  
tight in your chin, you shall be none the better off—  
the gripper shall still keep you<sup>1</sup> fast by the muzzle! You  
shall see darkness and light according to her sovereign  
whim : there shall not so much as a drop fall from  
your eyes unless at her bidding. Neither shall a  
145 thousand watches help you, nor all the seals you may  
set upon her doors : when a woman is fairly bent on  
playing false, a chink is enough. Now though your  
ship be at grips in the very midst of the waves, and  
though you go out to meet armed men in combat  
yourself unarmed, and though the earth quake and  
part asunder with a chasm—what you have to fear is  
150 the sinister back of the eight-footed *Cancer*.

<sup>1</sup> *tu*o.

## II

*Quid mirare meas*

*In an epigraph to his statue  
the god Vertumnus gives an  
account of his name and office.*

WHY do you wonder to see so many shapes belonging to one person? Listen: they are the inherited tokens of the god Vertumnus. I am a Tuscan, Tuscan born, and feel no remorse that I forsook the hearths of Volsinii in times of warfare. I like well this throng of mine, and I delight not in an ivory 5 temple: it is enough that I can see the Roman Forum.

There was a time when Father Tiber took his road this way; indeed they say the noise of oars was heard upon the smitten reaches of water. But after he granted this much ground to his nurslings, I took my name from the *converting* of *amnis*, the river, and was called 10 the god Vertumnus.

Or you may believe it is rather because we have a charge upon<sup>1</sup> the first fruits of the *reverting annual* increase, that the god Vertumnus has his worship. For me the first grape among the yellow clusters begins to be spotted with purple, and the chevelure of the corn-field swells with a milky core of grain: at my feet you survey sweet cherries and autumn plums, and mul- 15 berries crimson at the midsummer time. Here the grafter pays his vows with a wreath of orchard stuff when his pear-tree has lent an unwilling stock to bear apples.

<sup>1</sup> *praecipimus*.



Attend<sup>1</sup>, lying Hearsay! I have another key to  
 20 expound my name: thou must believe none but the  
 god's own tale about himself. My nature is easily  
 trimmed to all shapes: turn me into which you please,  
 I shall still be comely. Dress me in muslins of Cos,  
 and I shall make none too prudish a girl: put me on  
 a toga and who will gainsay that I am a man? Give  
 25 me a scythe and bind my forehead tight with a wisp  
 of hay; you shall swear that these hands have mown  
 a grassfield. Time was, I carried arms, and I re-  
 member I was well spoken of in them; I saddled myself  
 with the heavy panier, and in that style was a reaper.  
 Sober enough at disputes, but when you put a garland  
 30 on me you will vow that liquor is gone to my head.  
 Give me a bonnet for my headgear, I will steal the  
 semblance of Iacchus; and the semblance of Phoebus,  
 if you will but give me the quill. I shoulder the nets  
 and go hunting: but if I take my cane, I am Faunus,  
 35 the god of fowling for feathered game. Vertumnus is  
 counterpart also of a charioteer and of one that shifts  
 his agile poise from horse to horse. Let occasion offer  
 and I will make a raid on the fishes with my rod;  
 and I will go dapper as a pedlar in loose-flowing tunic.  
 I can play the shepherd stooping<sup>2</sup> on his staff, and  
 40 likewise carry roses in baskets through the dust of the  
 lists. Nay, why should I add (what I am chiefly re-  
 nowned for) that the gifts of gardens are well seen in  
 my hands? The blue-green cucumber and the pot-  
 bellied gourd is my emblem, and the kail-bundle tied

<sup>1</sup> *vaces.*<sup>2</sup> *curvare.*

up with a frail rush ; and not a flower opens in the meadows but will droop forward becomingly if you put 45 it on my forehead. Now because being one I yet could be *converted* into *omni*-formity, the tongue of my country named me from this circumstance. And thou, Rome, didst appoint a reward for my Tuscans (whence to this day the street of the Tuscans has its 50 name) in the days when Lycomedius came with his confederate forces and shattered the Sabine forces of savage Tattius. I beheld the breaking ranks and the tumbling weapons, and how the enemy had turned tail in ignominious rout.

Now vouchsafe, O Father of the gods, that the 55 gowned multitude of Rome may pass evermore before my feet.

I have six lines left over. I will not keep you long, Sir, who are hurrying to answer your bail : this is the last chalk-mark and my race is run.

I was once a stump of maple, the scamped handiwork of some botcher's hook, before Numa was king : a 60 needy god in my favourite city. It was thou, Mamurrius, graver of the bronze shape, who hadst the skill to found me so deft to apply myself to all trades ; and may the Oscan mould never bruise the craftsman's cunning of thy hands ! The work is one, but more than one dignity is given to the work.

## III

*Haec Arethusa suo*

*A Letter supposed to be written by Arethusa to Lycotas at the Wars.*

**A**RETHUSA sends these messages to her Lycotas—if it is possible you are *mine* when you are so often away. If any part of the writing, though, be so stained that it shall be missing when you come to read it, these stains will have been made by my tears ;  
 5 or if ever a letter baffle you by the frailty of penmanship, it will be the token of a hand fairly at death's door.

Now Bactra has seen you revisit the East, now the Seric foe mounted on his fortified charger ; the wintry Goths, and Britain with her painted chariots, and the Indian strange-skinned beside his Eastern wave. Is  
 10 this a husband's loyalty? Are these nights a pleasure<sup>1</sup> answerable to that hour when, an innocent girl, I surrendered to your instances? That torch which went before me for good luck as I went to my bridegroom's house, it took its grisly light from the ruins of somebody's funeral pyre ; I was sprinkled with water  
 15 from the pool of Styx ; no proper fillet was bestowed on my hair : the god did not attend to bless my bridals.

Ah, they hang at every gate, my sinful vows—and this is the fourth cloak I am weaving for your campaigns !

Death to the man who first hacked an entrenching

<sup>1</sup> *hae par lascivia noctes.*

stake out of a harmless tree, and fashioned a husky <sup>20</sup>  
bone into a plaintive trumpet! More than Ocnus *he*  
deserves to sit sideways twisting the rope and feed the  
ass's hunger for all eternity!

Tell me, the breastplate does not blister your  
delicate arms? The heavy spear not gall your un-  
warlike hands? Better these hurts than that any girl <sup>25</sup>  
leave such marks with her teeth on your neck as  
I should weep at! They say your face is thinned away  
with wasting: but I pray your wanness may be caused  
by longing for me.

As for me, when the evening star brings in the rueful  
nights, I kiss any such weapons of yours as lie here left <sup>30</sup>  
behind; then I complain that the quilts will not lie  
smooth across the whole bed, and the birds which  
give warning of daylight, will not utter their notes.  
On winter nights I toil at my task for you at the  
front, and I stitch the Tyrian woollens which are  
destined for the sword; and I learn in what quarter  
flows that Araxes which you have to master: how  
many miles a Parthian horse can go without water. <sup>35</sup>  
I am fain to learn all about painted worlds out of a  
map, and the manner in which some wise god disposed  
the places on the earth; which land is sluggish with  
frost, which crumbling with sultry heat, what wind <sup>40</sup>  
serves well to make Italy by.

There is only my sister to sit out my sorrowful watches,  
and my pale nurse forswears herself 'that these delays  
are incident to the winter season'.

Happy Hippolyte! She carried arms, this bar-

barous woman, one breast bare, and covered her tender head with a casque. Oh, that the camp had been open  
 45 to Roman girls ! I would have been the devoted burden of your soldiering ; mountain-range of Scythia should not have hindered me when the Father keenlier<sup>1</sup> binds the deep waters into ice with his cold.

All love is great, but greater towards a lawful husband : this is a flambeau Venus in person fans into a lively blaze.

Yes, why (I ask you), why should the crimson colour of Punic stuffs shine bright for me, and the water-clear crystal bedeck my hands ?

All is deafness and silence here ! Scarcely does one maid open the locked tabernacle of the Lares, her customary task on the first day of each month—how few  
 55 and far between ! I love the voice of my lapdog Glaucis whining : she is the only creature that claims your place in my bed. I cover the chapels with blossom, I clothe the crossways with holy leaves, and the herb Sabine crackles on the old hearth. If either an owl has stood and hooted on a neighbour's rafter, or the  
 60 stunted flame of the lamp has required a touch of strong wine, that day passes sentence of slaughter against the new-year's lambs and the high-girt servers bestir themselves warmly to make fresh perquisites.

Do not, I beg you, value so dearly the boast of having escaladed Bactra, or the linen wrappers looted from  
 65 some perfumed Emir—when the leaden load of the whirling sling scatters abroad in volleys, and the

<sup>1</sup> *acrius*.

treacherous bow whistles menace though the horses are in retreat !

And, one thing,—as you hope to subdue the children of Parthia and march with a lance of honour behind the horses in the triumphal pageant—keep the troth of my bed untainted ! On these terms and none but 70 these I would have you back again. And when I carry your weapons to pay my vow with them at the Capene Gate, I shall write beneath them '*A girl's gratitude for her man's safe return*'.

## IV

*Tarpeium nemus et*

*The Story of Tarpeia, her love for Tatius ; and how she betrayed Rome to him.*

**M**Y tale shall be of the Tarpeian grove and the ignominious burying-place of Tarpeia, and how the portals of ancient Jove were taken.

There was a flourishing wood ensconced among ivy-grown fastnesses of rock ; many a tree murmured to the noise of native rills : the branchy home of Silvanus, whither a melodious flute summoned the sheep away 5 from the sultry sun to come and drink. This spring Tatius fences in front with a stockade of maple, and, for more assurance, rings round his camp with mounded earthworks.—What was Rome in those days when the Curetian trumpeter made the neighbouring 10 rocks of Jove quake at his deep lingering notes ? And Sabine pikes stood in the Roman Forum where now

a subject world comes to the judgement seat. For a wall there were the hills; where the buildings now hedge the Curia about, was a spring the warhorse used to drink at. From this place Tarpeia drew  
15 spring water for her goddess; a pitcher of earthenware poised heavily on the top of her head.

And could one death be bad enough for the wicked virgin who presumed to play false to thy fires, Vesta?

She saw Tatius displaying his knightly graces on the  
20 sandy plain, and uplifting his weapons amidst the yellow waving horsehair: and she was thunderstruck at the king's looks and his kingly accoutrement: the pitcher  
25 dropped from between her heedless hands. Many a time she feigned that something boded in the unoffending moon, and she must dip her hair in the river; many a time she offered silvery lilies to the winsome nymphs that Romulus' spear might not harm the good looks of Tatius; and as she mounted the Capitol, growing dusk in the first smoke of evening, she brought home her arms all gashed by the rough  
30 brambles. Sitting down on the Tarpeian summit she wept for her wounded heart, abominable in the sight of neighbouring Jove, and said—

*' O ye campfires and headquarters of Tatius' squadron and Sabine array which hast given such scandal to my eyes, oh, that I might sit prisoner at your hearths, if but I could be pointed out for the prisoner of Tatius! O hills  
35 of Rome and Rome set upon the hills,—and farewell also to their Vesta, whom my sin has put to shame. The horse which must land my love safe in camp, is yonder horse*

whose mane Tattius himself disposes to the right hand !  
 What wonder that Scylla wrought a heartless crime on her  
 father's hair, and had her white loins turned into heartless  
 dogs ? What wonder if one betrayed the horns of her mis- 40  
 begotten brother on that day when the labyrinthine road  
 was revealed by picking up the line of her clue ? What  
 a reproach am I going to make for the maids of Ausonia,  
 I the chosen attendant upon the virginal hearth, and guilty  
 of this outrage ! If anyone shall wonder that Pallas' fires 45  
 are quenched, let him pardon : the altar is sprinkled with  
 my tears !

To-morrow, says report, there will be a purification<sup>1</sup> all  
 over the city. Do thou take the dew-drenched back of the  
 prickly ridge. All the way is slippery and treacherous,  
 because it ever harbours unheard waters in its deceitful 50  
 course.

Oh, that I were acquainted with the spells of the magic  
 muse ! This tongue of mine should also have rendered aid  
 to my beautiful one. To thee belongs the embroidered robe  
 of state, not to him who can boast no mother but was bred  
 up by the cruel teat of an inhuman she-wolf. If, though,  
 a foreign queen in an ancestral hall be suspect, yet I bring 55  
 thee no mean dowry—the betrayal of Rome. If not for  
 that, yet, that the rape of the Sabine women go not un-  
 atoned, ravish me and so pay requital by the law of like-  
 for-like ! I am able to part the armies already engaged  
 in combat. Come, ye brides, and take occasion by my  
 wedding gown to make a treaty of reconciliation. A tune, 60  
 Hymenæus ! and thou, master trumpeter, silence thy

<sup>1</sup> purgabitur.



*barbarous din ! Trust me, you warriors, my marriage pillow shall be the appeasement of your strife !*

*And now the fourth bugle pipes the approach of daylight, and the very stars droop and glide into Ocean. I will*  
65 *hazard a sleep, and try for dreams of thee : see that thou visit my eyes as a gentle phantom !'*

She spoke, and resigned her arms to a fitful slumber, unwitting that she had taken fresh torments of madness to bed with her. For Vesta, the blessed safe-  
70 guard of the Iliac ember, feeds her sin and puts still more firebrands in her bones. She bolts beyond control, like some daughter of Strymon who careers beside the swift Thermodon with bare breast<sup>1</sup> showing through the rent in her vesture.

It was a holiday in town (the Fathers named it Feast  
75 of Pales) the first<sup>2</sup> birthday of the walls ; the yearly banquet of the shepherds, games in the city, when the village platters drip with opulence, and when heaps of blazing hay are set here and there for the tipsy crew to fling their grimy feet over. It was Romulus' pleasure  
80 that the watches should break up on furlough, the trumpet be adjourned, and the camp be hushed.

Tarpeia, judging that her time was come, holds a parley with the enemy : the bargain is spliced, she herself designing to accompany the bargain.

The hill was hazardous of ascent and disregarded because of the holiday : in a moment she falls upon the dogs with a sword before they could give tongue. It  
85 was a general scene of slumber ; but, Juppiter<sup>3</sup>, one

<sup>1</sup> *fectus.*

<sup>2</sup> *qui.*

<sup>3</sup> read *Iuppiter* as a vocative.

there was resolved to watch over the execution of thy vengeance. She had betrayed the trusty gate and her helpless country, and now she boldly demands her wedding day—such day as she may please to appoint. But Tatius (yes, the enemy would not show any esteem for crime) said ‘*Put on the wedding garment, and mount upon my royal bed!*’; and, so saying, he overwhelmed 90 her beneath the heaped weapons of his company. Such, maiden, was the dowry proper to thy services!

The hill gained his surname from Tarpeia the guide : ah, mistress sentry, herein is thy reward though thy doom was not unjust <sup>1</sup>.

## V *Terra tuum spinis*

*To Acanthis : a Bawd.*

**M**AY earth envelop your grave in thorns, bawd, and your shade have senses enough to be thirsty—you would not like that! May your spirit find no rest nor peace with your ashes, and avenging Cerberus frighten your vile skeleton with starving howls! Oh, she had skill to melt the cold refusals of a very Hippolytus! 5 Ever a bird of the worst omen for happily mated pillows, she would have brought Penelope herself to make light of hearsay about her husband and marry the gay Antinous. If she so please, it shall be possible for magnet not to draw iron, and for the bird to play step-mother to her own nestlings. Why, let her but put 10

<sup>1</sup> *non, vigil.*

her Colline herbs to work beside the trench, and the solid ground would dissolve away in running water. She could boldly impose her terms on the spellbound moon, dissemble her gait and person in the disguise of the nocturnal wolf, and blind the sharpset vigilance of  
 15 husbands by her cunning. She gouged out the unoffending eyes of crows, she consulted the owls how she might have my blood, she gathered *hippomanes* the essences of the teeming brood-mare.

20 She would wheedle away the money with her words<sup>1</sup> . . . 'If you care for the Orient strand of the Dorozantes, my golden girl, and the shell which flaunts under the waters of Tyre, and Eurypylus' webs of Coan fabric, and mouldering patterns cut  
 25 palm-bearing Thebes sends, or cups of porcelain fired in the kilns of Parthia—then flout honesty! Down in the mire with the gods!—Let lies prevail!—shatter the laws of ruinous chastity!'

'It lends you a value, even to pretend there is a man  
 30 —employ pretexts. Love will come running back all the stronger for a night's postponement. If he happen to have disarranged your hair, anger is well: and presently you must subdue him by putting a price on peace. Last, when the embrace has been purchased and you have pledged him his pleasure, be sure and feign that these are days of abstinence in the religion of Isis.  
 35 Iole must importune you with hints '*This is April*' and

<sup>1</sup> *exorabat opes verbis*. The remainder of these lines is unintelligible and apparently corrupt beyond remedy.

Amycle be dinning into your ears ' *The Ides of May is your birthday* '.

He sits, your humble votary : set your high chair and write—write anything ! If he is frightened by these arts, you have him ! Always keep fresh marks of bites about your neck, which he may think were given in a mutual struggle. And do not take a fancy to play the 40 disesteemed part of Medea, the inseparable—she presumed to make overtures, and got a scornful rebuff for her pains ; rather the costly Thais of elegant Menander, when the adulteress in the comedy outwits some wily Geta.

Adapt yourself to your man's disposition : if he 45 swaggers about his singing, go with him and join him in a tipsy duet. The porter must be awake for givers ; deaf to all who knock empty handed, let him dream on for ever, lying against his close-drawn bar. Neither must you dislike a soldier because he is not a pretty stuff to make gallantry out of, nor a sailor—if he bring pence in his hard worn hand ; nor such as have had their Schedule of Particulars hanging on their out- 50 landish necks, when all tattooed they skipped in the midst of the Forum. Have an eye to the gold, not to what hand proffers the gold ! If you listen to verses, you will have nothing but fine words to put in your pocket !

' *What does it profit, sweet life, to walk with bedizened 55 hair, and play off the delicate folds in a muslin of Cos ?* '

When the man gives you the verses and gives you not the present of Coan muslin, let *his* lyre be deaf to you . . . without the pence !

While it is springtime in the blood, while it is the season that has no wrinkles, make the most of it, for fear lest time skim off a something from your face to-morrow! I have seen the rose-gardens of spicy Paestum in full promise of life, lying grilled beneath a scirocco in the early morning.<sup>70</sup>

These were the precepts with which Acanthis swayed my mistress' mind, until her skin grew so wizened you might count the bones through it<sup>1</sup>.

65 But now, O Sovereign Venus, accept my thank-offering, a necklaced ringdove's gorge slit before thy hearth. I saw the phthisis grow to a choking lump in her wrinkled throat, and bloody spittles come out at the gaps in her teeth; I saw her breathe out her rotten life into the coarse blankets which had served her father  
70 before her: the hearth was chill, the scanty crib shivered. For funeral-pageant she had the disguised fastenings of her scanty hair, a bonnet grown colourless with filth and squalor and the dog which used (to my chagrin) to be only too wide awake when the latch ought to have obeyed my thumb unperceived.

Let the bawd's grave be an old wine jar with the neck broken short, and a strong growth of wild figtree crush it down atop. Come all you lovers, and pelt this burying-place with stones, and mingled with the stones bestow your curses.

<sup>1</sup> *ossa per erosam.*

VI *Sacra facit vates;*

*Ode for the Festival of Apollo  
Palatine in commemoration of  
the Victory at Actium.*

THESE are mysteries the poet solemnizes; let there be such a silence as befits the mysteries, and let the heifer fall smitten before my altar-fires. Let my Roman tablet vie with the ivy-clusters of Philetas, and my urn afford me the waters of the Cyrenaean poet. Give me soft unguents, give me the dignity of acceptable frankincense and let the woollen ring pass three times about my fire. Asperge me with water; let the ivory flute sip the cream of Mygdonian vintages to offer a song thereof at these fresh-built altars. Get ye gone far aloof, all ye mischiefs; ye harms, depart into another clime: a taintless laurel branch makes soft his new way for the poet.

My Muse, we must rehearse the temple of Apollo Palatine: this is a matter deserving of thy goodwill, Calliope. The song is indited to Caesar's glory: while Caesar is sung, do thou Jupiter thyself, pray, attend!

There is a haven of Phoebus which runs away toward shores Athamanian, where the bight of the Ionian lulls the noise of its waters; this is that Actian sound which keeps the record of the Iolcian<sup>1</sup> keel: no difficult voyage for the seaman's prayers.

At this place the world's forces met in encounter:

<sup>1</sup> *Iolceae.*

20 the huge bulk of pine-timber took station on the sea, but the omen did not assist their oars alike. On the one part a navy sentenced to be given over to the Trojan Quirinus, and pikes foully sped by a womanly hand ; on this side Augustus' vessel, her sails filled with the auspicious promise of Jove, and ensigns already skilled to conquer in the national cause.

25 And now at last Nereus had curved the lines of battle to a pair of crescents, and the water was quivering with a rich pattern of lights flashed from the weapons, when Phoebus quitting that Delos which by his protection stands fast (for it was the only movable isle which sustained the anger of the Southerly gales), took his place over the ship of Augustus ; and a strange fire  
30 thrice blazed in slants of sidelong flamboyance. He came not with show of locks unbound on his neck, and unwarlike melody of the tortoise-shell lyre, but with such mien as he looked on Pelopean Agamemnon and emptied the Dorian camp in funerals on the insatiable  
35 faggots ; or such as when he unstrung the coils and rings of Python, the snake whom the unwarlike lyres had dreaded. Anon he spoke :—

‘ O deliverer of the world who art come from Long Alba,  
O Augustus, proved greater than thy grandsires who  
fought beside Hector, conquer by sea, the land is thine  
40 already ! This bow does battle for thy cause, and all this  
burden upon my shoulders is partizans with thee. Release  
thy country from fear : she puts her trust in thee for her  
champion ; she has charged thy prow with her universal  
prayers. If thou fail to defend her, then Romulus, augur

of her walls, saw not aright the course of birds on the  
 Palatine. Nay, their oars venture too near! Shame on 45  
 the Latins that with thee for Chief the waters should suffer  
 the sails of a royal fleet! Neither must thou be afraid  
 because their armada sweeps the water with a hundred  
 wings: they glide upon a reluctant sea. And as for their  
 prows carrying forms which threaten to hurl rocks worthy  
 of the Centaurs, thou shalt find them to be but hollow  
 beams and painted terrors. It is the cause which shatters 50  
 or exalts the soldier's strength; if there be no just cause  
 behind him, shame dashes the weapons from his hands.  
 The time is come, let the ships engage! I, the creator  
 of this occasion, with my laurelled hand will guide the  
 beak of the Julian vessel.

He spoke, and spent all his quiverload on his bow; 55  
 second only to his archery came Caesar's spear.

Rome conquers by the faithfulness of Phoebus: the  
 woman pays forfeit: her royal state is borne broken  
 across the Ionian waves.

Caesar from his Idalian star wonders at his son 'I am  
 a god, and yonder is the proof that my blood runs there!' 60

Triton plays a flourish to escort the conquerors; all  
 the goddesses of the sea clapped their hands around  
 the ensigns of liberty: She makes for the Nile, mis-  
 mounted on a fugitive wherry. Only one thing—  
 she will not die on a bidden day. Why, the gods had  
 better mercies! what triumph forsooth would one  
 woman have been, in streets where once Jugurtha  
 marched captive!

65

So Phoebus of Actium derived his monument from



this, that the single arrow he aimed vanquished ten vessels.

I have sung of war enough : Apollo the conqueror  
 70 now demands his cithern and doffs his weapons for the  
 dances of peace. Now let the gay banquet enter the  
 luxurious grove, and sweet allurements of the rose flow  
 down over my neck ; now for a pouring out of wines  
 which have oozed from Falernian presses, and thrice let  
 75 the saffron spike of Cilicia lave my hair. When poets  
 are drunken the Muse makes their wit all the sharper !  
 Bacchus thou art wont to prove prolific to thy brother  
 Phoebus. Let one proclaim the subjection of the fenny  
 Sycambrians, another sing of Cephean Meroe and the  
 dusky kingdoms, another make mention how the Par-  
 thian did penance by his tardy terms and say '*He must*  
 80 *give back the ensigns of Crassus and presently he shall*  
*surrender his own. Or if Augustus shall spare the quivers*  
*of the East at all, let him defer those trophies till his sons*  
*can take them ! Rejoice, Crassus, if thou art not quite*  
*senseless amidst the dark sands : the road is open to thy*  
*tomb : Euphrates gives permission'.*

85 Thus will I prolong the night with goblet and song,  
 until day fling beams of light upon my carouse.

## VII *Sunt aliquid Manes :*

*Cynthia's ghost visits him and  
 upbraids him.*

**T**HE dead have being : death is not the term of  
 everything, and the lurid shadow escapes from the  
 defeated faggot. Yes, methought I saw Cynthia rest-

ing on my bed, Cynthia who was but lately laid in earth at the roadside of the roaring thoroughfare. (It was 5 the hour when the burial of love made my sleep waver in the balance, and I bewailed the cold realm of my bed). She had the same hair in which she was carried out to the grave, the same eyes; her side was clothed in a half-charred garment, and the fire had gnawed at the familiar beryl on her finger, and the water of Lethe 10 had tarnished the surface of her lips. This figure had the passion and the voice of her breathing self, but the thumbs cracked on her brittle hands as she scolded.

*'O faithless, and past hope of mending for any girl! can sleep so soon exercise his powers upon you? Had you so soon forgotten the sleights of the wakeful Suburra, and 15 my window rubbed smooth by our nightly tricks? How many a time have I let down a rope to you and climbed through and swung there till I reached your neck, hand over hand! Ah, the secret bond whose deceiving terms the 20 winds would not listen to, but scattered them at random!*

*But nobody cried aloud upon my eyes at my passing: one day would have been granted me if you had called me back.*

*No watchman rattled with a split reed beside me, and 25 the pinch of the scanty earthenware coffin hurt my head. But—worst of all—who saw you bowed over my dead body, in a black garment warm with falling tears? If you were too proud to walk further than the gates, at least you might have bade my bier go more slowly thus far. O thankless! Why did you not in person pray for a 30 wind to blow on my faggot? Why were not my fires*

sweet-smelling with nard? Throwing of hyacinths (they cost nothing) and cracking a jar to consecrate the tomb—was even this too great a thing to expect?

35 Lygdamus must be burnt! Though he be born and bred in the house, the slab must be white hot for him: I marked it, my draught of wine was discoloured by foul play. Else it is Nomas, the sly trollop, who filters<sup>1</sup> a mysterious brew: the fiery potsherd will declare her hands guilty. A woman who was but lately exposed to the common eye and would  
40 make a night of it for a trifle,—and now the hoop of her gilded skirt leaves marks on the ground; if one of their tattling tongues has spoken of my looks, the new mistress portions out a heavier task to her, cruel basketfuls for punishment. Petale has a taste of imprisonment in the grimy stocks because the poor old woman carried a wreath  
45 of flowers to my tomb; Lalage is hung up by her twisted hair and scourged because she presumed to ask something for my sake.

She has melted down the gold of my effigy—and you allowed it!—determined to endow herself out of my funeral faggot.

But I do not upbraid you, Propertius, though you do  
50 deserve it: long was my reign in your books. I swear by the skeins of destiny which none can ravel up again, as I hope for mercy from the growling threefold Dog, I have kept faith with you. If I speak false, may the viper hiss  
55 in my grave and make a lair over my bones. Because there is a twofold place severally appointed beside the unsightly river, and all the boats<sup>2</sup> row their diverse course,

<sup>1</sup> colat.

<sup>2</sup> cumbaque.

part this way and part that. One conveys the adulteress Clytaemestra, another carries the Cretan princess who made the monstrous wooden counterfeit of a cow. But look! the other sort sails fast on a garlanded pinnacle to the place where the paradisaical air fondles the roses of 60 Elysium, where are the strings of melody, and the brazen cymbal-disks of Cybelle are heard and Lydian quills obey the company of bonneted musicians. Andromeda and Hypermestra, the sinless brides, tell their story—souls of heroic legend! the one complains how for her mother's 65 fault they bruised with fetters her arms and her hands that deserved not the cold cliff; Hypermestra tells her story, how her sisters dared a great deed but she had no spirit for that crime. So we heal the loves of life with the tears of death, while I conceal many reproaches of your un- 70 faithfulness.

But now I have a charge to give you, if so be you care at all, if Chloris' herbs do not keep you wholly enslaved. Let not my old nurse Parthenie want for aught in her quaking years: she had the power, and you never found 75 her covetous. And my favourite Latris, who gets her name from her employ,—she must not hold out the mirror for a new mistress.

All the verses that you ever made on my name, I would have you burn them: cease to entertain my praises.

Drive the ivy away from my barrow: the lithe clusters struggle, and it throtilles my bones with its twisting tresses. 80 Where Anio, fertile of orchards, comes prostrate on the bosky acres, and by virtue of Hercules' protection ivory never grows sallow—write a verse worthy of me in the

midst of a column, but short and such as the charioteer  
 85 from town may read as he runs: *HERE LIES GOLDEN  
 CYNTHIA IN TIBURTINE GROUND. A NEW GLORY  
 HAS BEEN ADDED TO THY BANK, O ANIO.*

Neither must you think scorn of the dreams which come  
 from the Righteous Gate: when dreams are righteous, they  
 speak in earnest. At night we are borne gadding abroad,  
 90 night releases the imprisoned shades, and Cerberus him-  
 self casts off his bar and prowls. Our charter bids us  
 return to pools of Lethe at daybreak: we are the pas-  
 sengers, and the Mariner reviews the freight when it is  
 passed over. Other women may possess you now; ere  
 long I shall be sole owner. You shall be with me, and  
 bone shall fret bone closely mixing.'

95 When she finished these communications with me  
 to the tune of such plaintive pleading, the shade van-  
 ished from between my claspings arms.

## VIII *Disce, quid Esquilias*

*He consoles himself with a  
 Supper-party in Cynthia's  
 absence.*

**Y**OU must hear what it was that broke up the con-  
 duit-quarter of the Esquiline in such a rout to-  
 night, when the crowd of neighbours ran from the new  
 park.

Lanuvium is the ancient charge of an immemorial  
 dragon: a place where an hour is not ill spent upon so

rare an excuse for a halt. Here is the sacred abyss, 5  
which breaks away sharply in a viewless chasm ; and  
here enters in (ah, maiden, beware of all such journeys!)  
the gratification paid to the fasting snake when he de-  
mands his annual provender, and spurts his hisses from  
the bottom of the ground. These are rites at which  
girls turn pale as they go down and lightly commit a 10  
hand to the serpent's mouth. He seizes on the victual  
which a virgin proffers to him ; the very baskets quiver  
in the virgin's hand. If they prove chaste, they return  
to fall on their parents' necks, and the husbandmen cry  
' *It will be a fruitful season* '.

To this spot my Cynthia drove off with a pair of 15  
clipped ponies : Juno was the motive, but still more  
the motive was Venus ! Prithee tell, thou Appian  
Way, what a triumphal progress she made of it as the  
wheels careered over the flagstones, when the scandalous  
brawl resounded in the secret tavern—if in my absence, 20  
yet not without a smirch on my good name. She herself  
was a sight to see as she sat poised on the end of the  
pole and dared to manage the reins despite the rough  
going—for I say nothing about the silken phaeton of  
the smooth, worse than shaven young dandy, and his  
dogs with bangles on their thoroughbred Molossian  
necks.—He will have to sell his soul for a wage, to be 25  
stuffed with filthy prizefighter's fare, as soon as he has  
a beard to blush at, too strong for his polished cheeks.—

Since outrages to our union were done so often, fined  
of my pleasures, I made up my mind to carry the war  
into a new country. There is one Phyllis a neighbour

to Diana of the Aventine, not very charming when she is sober, but when she is in liquor nothing comes amiss.

30 For another there is a certain Teia who lives in the Tarpeian Grove, a fair creature, but when she is drunk one man will not be enough for her. I resolved to disarm the sting of the night by inviting them, and refresh my sly adventures with an obscure affair.

35 There was one sofa for the three of us on the private lawn. You ask how we reclined? I was between the two. Lygdamus acted cupbearer; we had a summer service of glasses, and wine of Methymne—racy Greek liquor. The piper belonged to the Nile; Phyllis for castanet-girl: nice roses, but no artifice about them  
40 —handy for scattering. And Magnus in person, a shrunken little parcel of limbs, tossed his stunted arms in time to the clattering boxwood. But, fill up the lamps as we would, the flame would not burn steady, and the table slipped and fell face upward on the trestles. And for my part when I tried my luck at the  
45 knuckle-bones and sought to throw a *Venus*, a ruinous *Dogs* tumbled up every time. They were singing to deaf ears and baring their bosoms to blind eyes: oh, I was miles away from them all, at the gates of Lanuvium—when suddenly a noise was heard at the hinge of  
50 the doorway, a creaking and a slight stir in the forepart of the house; and in a moment Cynthia threw the two leaves of the door wide open. Her hair was not elaborately dressed, but she was so handsome in her wild fury! My fingers relaxed and the cup fell from my grasp; my lips turned white, all loose with drinking as they were.

Her eyes cast lightnings, she raged as a woman can rage. Here was a sight to see : it was as good as the taking 55 of a town ! She let fly with her angry nails at Phyllis' face. Teia, terrified, screams for water—not far to seek in that quarter !

The uplifted lights aroused the honest burghers from their sleep, and all the alley was full of uproar—oh, the mad night they made of it ! The two wenches took 60 refuge in the first tavern in a dark street, their hair all pulled about and their clothes half falling off their backs. Cynthia rejoices over the spoils, runs back triumphant and massacres my face with blows aimed at random ; 65 she puts her brand on my neck by biting till it was all bloody, and more than all else she strikes my offending eyes. Well, after she had wearied her arms with trouncing me, Lygdamus is unearthed from his hiding-place under the left leg of the projecting sofa-head. When he was haled forth he implored me upon my soul to help him. Lygdamus, I had no power : I was 70 your fellow prisoner !

And so at last with humble pleading hands I came to terms, while she would hardly allow me to touch her feet, and said—

*' If you would have me forgive the offence you have committed, listen to the form of conditions which I shall require. You shall neither stroll in Pompey's shade dressed in your 75 best, nor when the sand is sprinkled in the gay Forum. I will have no slewing round your neck askance towards the gallery in the Theatre, no litter stopping uncurtained for you to loiter beside. But Lygdamus, first and foremost—*



*Lygdamus, the whole cause of my complaint, must be sold and drag a pair of fetters on his feet.'*

She proclaimed her terms : I replied ' I will be bound by the law '. She laughed with pride at the sovereign authority I allowed her. Next she censured every place which the intruding damsels had touched, cleansed the  
85 threshold with fresh water, commanded me to change all my dress twice over, and thrice touched my head with burning sulphur. And so when the bed had been new-made, sheet for sheet, I did not fail of my part, and the whole couch was the field of our reconciliation.

## IX *Amphitryoniades qua*

*The Legend of Hercules at Rome ; how Cacus robbed him of his Oxen, and how he founded the Ara Maxima.*

**I**T was the time when the son of Amphitryon had driven his steers from the stalls of Erythea, and he came to a yet unsubdued hill, the sheepwalks of the Palatine : here the tired drover stayed his tired beasts,  
5 on the ground where the Velabrum lay swampy with its river, and the mariner sailed his vessel in City waters.

But the cattle were not left unharmed : such ill faith did Cacus keep towards his guest : he outraged the honour of Jove by a theft. Cacus was an inmate of the  
10 place, a robber in a terrible cave, who uttered three several voices through as many mouths. That there

might be no evidence of his barefaced robbery, he dragged the cattle tail-foremost into his cave ; but not unobserved by the god—the steers bellowed ‘Thief’ and their owner’s rage made havoc of the thief’s unpeaceable quarters. Cacus lay smitten in his three foreheads by the Maenalian mace, and Hercules said <sup>15</sup>  
 ‘Go, my Kine ; go Kine of Hercules, last labour of my club, Kine twice won, twice my booty,—go, and with a prolonged lowing establish the Fields of the Kine. Your pastures shall be a famous Square in Rome’. <sup>20</sup>

He had spoken, and now his palate was dry, and his mouth tortured with thirst : Earth, alive with inward waters, affords none for his service. Only, afar off, he heard the laughter of cloistered maidens, where<sup>1</sup> a grove gave covert in a circle of shade : the close precinct of the Women’s Goddess, wellsprings of holy resort, and mysteries not lightly discovered to any male. Crimson <sup>25</sup>  
 fillets laced the sequestered portal ; the mouldering hovel glowed with the blaze of a fire incense-fed ; a poplar tree adorned the fane with tall foliage, and birds sang in the covert of the thick shade. <sup>30</sup>

He rushes hither (the dust stood deep on his dry beard), and in front of the door he flings out wild words unworthy of a god :

*‘I beseech you who sport in the hallowed fastnesses of this grove, open your hospitable sanctuaries to the weary. I roam in want of a spring, and hereabouts the place is <sup>35</sup> full of the noise of waters : I ask no more than the cupful of my hand dipped in a stream. Did you ever hear tell*

<sup>1</sup> ubi.

of one who hoisted the round earth on his back? I am  
 he. The world I carried calls me Alcides. Who has not  
 heard of the valiant gests of Hercules' club, and his arrows  
 40 never-failing against beasts of carnage? And how to  
 one man only the darkness of Styx showed light [and the  
 Dog howled to find himself baled out whether his master  
 Dis would have it or no<sup>1</sup>]? Why, though you were con-  
 secrated to the worship of that Juno whose enmity I rue,  
 my very stepmother would not have shut her waters against  
 45 me. If, though anyone is afraid at my mien, my lion's  
 bristles and my hair all scorched with the suns of Libya,  
 I whom you behold, I have performed menial service in a  
 purple robe and done the daily task at the Lydian distaff;  
 50 a soft girdle clasped my shaggy breast, and I made a likely  
 enough girl with these hard hands?

Thus Alcides: but the gracious priestess (whose white  
 locks were tied by a scarlet band) answered thus:—

'Forbear your eyes, Sir, and depart from this awful  
 grove—nay, get you gone and quit these portals while  
 escape is still safe. This altar which guards itself by the  
 55 seclusion of this hovel is forbidden to men under a sanction  
 of terrible atonement. Tiresias the prophet paid a great  
 price for looking at Pallas when her Gorgon was doffed  
 and she bathed her valiant limbs. The gods grant you  
 60 other springs! This remote sluice is the one water  
 which reserves its secret passage for maidens.'

Thus the beldame. But he burst his way through  
 the masked entry with his shoulders: the closed door  
 could not stand against his angry thirst.

<sup>1</sup> *et gemere attractum Dite vetante Canem.*

Now as soon as he had drained the stream and so got the better of his drought, ere yet his lips were fairly dried he establishes this stern ordinance :—

*‘This corner of the world harbours me now, as I drag 65  
my load of destiny: this land scarce gives my weary limbs  
access. Let this Ara Maxima which I dedicate upon re-  
covering my herd, this Grand Altar’, says he, ‘made by  
the operation of my hands, never give entrance to the  
worship of any maidens: let Hercules’ thirst go not un- 70  
avenged for all time’.*

Hail, father Sanctus, holy one, to whom even cruel Juno is now grown partial. Sanctus, be pleased kindly to accept of a place in my book. This is he whom Tatius’ town of Cures installed in his temple as Sanctus because he had with his own hands cleansed and sanctified the earth.

## X *Nunc Iovis incipiam*

*On Jupiter Feretrius, why he  
is so called; with historical  
Instances of the winning of  
Spolia Opima.*

**N**OW I shall endeavour to set forth the Reasons—  
Why of Jupiter Feretrius, and three instances  
of arms taken from as many commanders. This is  
no light stage which I must surmount, but honour  
gives me strength. I care not for a garland gathered  
from an easy hill.

Thou, Romulus, wast the first to handsel the prece- 5

<sup>1</sup> *Herculea aeternum.*

dent of this prize, and come home full of an enemy's spoils, when Acron the Caenine made for the gates and thou, prevailing, didst lay him low with thy spear upon his horse already overthrown. Time was, this Acron, Herculean captain from the citadel of Caenina, was the  
10 terror of our marches. He presumed to hope for spoils from the shoulders of Quirinus, but he yielded his own and not dry of his blood either. Romulus saw him brandishing his lance before the hollow towers, and forestalls him with vows beforehand accepted: '*Juppiter,*  
15 *here is a victim shall to-day fall in thine honour, even Acron*'. His vow was made, and the man fell a spoil to Juppiter. Thus was the father of the City and father of valour accustomed to conquer: his own spare fireside schooled him to put up with a wintry camp. He was  
20 alike a horseman and ready with bit and bridle, alike ready at the plough; and he bedecked a yeoman's bonnet of wolfskin with a soldier's plume of bristling horse-mane. His shield was not damascened with inlay of bright alloy; the oxen he slew furnished him with a supple thong for his baldric.

Next follows Cossus in virtue of his killing Tolumnius the Veientine, in the days when only stern enterprise could avail to conquer Veii: the noise of war had not  
25 yet over-past the Tiber, and the utmost prize was Nomentum and the two or three acres of captured Cora. Alas, ancient Veii! In those days thou also wast a kingdom, and the golden bench was set in thy public place also: now the bugle of the lazy shepherd pipes within  
30 thy walls, and they reap the fields amid thy bones!

It chanced that the Veian chieftain took his station on the top of the gateway tower and, confident in the city whence he was fighting, suffered a parley. While the ram battered the wall with brazen horn, where the long mantlet covered the advance of the besiegers' works, Cossus said '*Better for the brave to meet in 35 combat on the field*'. And without more ado either champion halts in a place upon the flat ground. The gods aided the Latin's hands, and Tolumnius' severed neck bathed a Roman's steeds with blood.

Claudius beat back the enemy, when they passed over from the Rhine, on the day that the Belgic target of the 40 huge chief Viridomarus was carried home. Vaunting his race to be from the Rhine-god himself, he was adroit at letting fly his Gaulish javelins from the chariot which yet he kept in control. But as this warrior in striped breeches was flinging his missiles from the advancing array, Claudius gashed his throat and the hooked necklace fell to the ground, his prize.

Now the three spoils are laid up in a temple. The 45 Reason-Why of Feretrius is that chief smites (*ferit*) chief with the sword doubting not that good luck attends him; or it may be that because they carried (*ferabant*) these vanquished arms on their own shoulders, hence Jupiter has his proud altar under the invocation of Feretrius.

XI *Desine, Paulle, meum*

*Elegy for the tomb of a noble Roman Lady, Cornelia daughter of Cornelius Scipio and wife to L. Aemilius Paullus.*

CEASE, Paullus, to beset my tomb with your tears; the black door is not thrown open to any prayers: when once a death has entered the infernal jurisdiction, the ways are fast with inexorable adamant. Though  
 5 the god of the dusky court should hear your pleading, doubt not but those deaf shores will drink up your tears. Vows move the gods above: once the Ferryman has taken his pence, the lurid gate shuts bolt and bar on the half-consumed faggot<sup>1</sup>. Such was the law the mourning trumpets proclaimed when the unkind torch was  
 10 put to the fuel and made away with my person from off the bier. Marriage with a Paullus, chariots of my grandsires—what have they profited me? Or the many warrants of my good name? Cornelia has not found the Fates any less cruel: and I am a pinch of dust for five finger to gather.

15 O sentenced nights, and O ye sluggish pools and meres, and O every wave that envelops my goings, untimely I came hither, aye, but not guilty: let your master give gentle terms to my shade here. Nay rather if there is an Aeacus who sits in judgement and  
 20 the urn set before him, let the ball be allotted and he

<sup>1</sup> *obrosos.*

shall pass sentence upon my bones ; let his brothers be assessors to him, the Minoian tribunal ; the stern company of Eumenides attend, and all the court await on tiptoe of eagerness. Sisyphus, take respite from thy great burden ; Ixion's wheels be silent ; deceiving water, ah, suffer thyself to be seized by Tantalus<sup>1</sup> ! Let Cerberus have the grace to attack no shades to-day ; 25 let his bolt be silent and the chain lie unfastened.

I plead my own cause : if I speak false, may the penalty of those sisters be mine and their luckless pitcher weigh heavy on my shoulders.

If one has honour of a grandsire's trophies, then the kingdoms of Africa tell of my grandsire the conqueror 30 of Numantia : a second host presents the Libones on my mother's side, to challenge comparison, and either house has proud records to stand upon. In due time when maidenly frock gave place before nuptial torch, and a new kind of knot gathered up the well-beloved bride's hair, I was united to that couch of yours, 35 Paullus, from which I must thus depart. It shall be read of me on this stone that I was the wife of one husband. I summon the ashes of my forefathers (Rome holds their memory in awe) under whose proud records Africa lies battered ; I summon thee, Perseus<sup>2</sup>, whose heart was spurred to adventure by thine ancestor Achilles, and 40 him who shattered thy house despite Achilles thine ancestor—to bear witness that I abated not the rigour of the censorial canon, and that my home had no stain to blush for. Cornelia was no forfeiture to spoil the

<sup>1</sup> *Tantalo o.*

<sup>2</sup> *te, Perseu, proavo.*



worth of these grand trophies : rather she made part and parcel in the high pattern of this great house. Neither did my day suffer any change : it is sans reproach throughout ; my life was noble from the first  
45 torch to the last.

By the gift of my nature I drew such statutes from the blood which ran in my veins, as would not permit any fear of the judge to reform me. Be they who they may that shall cast into the urn their stern verdicts on me, none shall be the worse esteemed for sitting by  
50 my side : not that Claudia whose cable made the reluctant Cybelle advance, Claudia the rare priestess of the towered goddess ; nor she whose white linen displayed a living heat on the hearth when Vesta called her to account for her covenanted fires.

Neither did I injure you, sweet soul, my mother Scribonia : what is there that you would have otherwise in me but my doom ? A mother's tears, a city's lamentations speak to my praise, and my bones have Caesar's sigh for their advocate. Sorrowfully he protests that in my life I was a worthy sister to his daughter,  
60 and we saw tears fall from a god. Yet I lived long enough to win the noble dignities of a privileged attire, and I was not carried off from a childless house. You, my Lepidus, and you, my Paullus, are my consolation after death : my eyes were closed in your embraces. I saw my brother also twice hold his chair of office : he  
65 had been appointed consul when his sister was carried off betimes.

Daughter, born to be the pattern of your father's

censorial rule, see that you copy me and hold fast by one husband. And you all must support the breed by your line : I put out from shore in my bark with a cheerful heart to think there are so many of my people to enlarge my destinies.

70

This is the utmost wages of womanly triumph, when frank report praises the well-deserving dead in her funeral fires.

Now I commit the children to you, the gages of our union : my tender thought for them breathes yet, burned into my very ashes. You, their father, must play a mother's part by them : all that little company of mine must now be carried on your neck. When they weep and you kiss them, add my kisses to yours : the whole house begins to be your charge now. And if you shall grieve at all, let it be where they cannot witness it ; when they come, make pretence to kiss them with dry eyes. Let the nights be enough time, Paullus, for you to weary out for my sake, the nights and the dreams which often by faith take on my features. And when in secret you shall talk to my effigy, give a loose to your thoughts as though I could make answer to all and each.

80

If, though, the door must see a change in the wedding-bed over against it, and a wary stepmother sit on my couch, then, my sons, do you commend and accept your father's marriage ; she will be captivated by your behaviour and surrender. And do not praise your mother too much : if the new is compared with her predecessor, she will turn the frankness

85

90

of your talk into slights upon herself. But if he remember and rest satisfied with my shade and think so highly of my ashes, you must learn from the beginning to divine the approach of old age in him and leave him no road of access to the sorrows of a mateless man.

95 May what has been wrested away from me, be added to your years ; and Paullus rejoice at old age because of my offspring.

And so all's well : as a mother I never put on mourning ; the whole flock came to attend on my funeral.

This is the sum of my pleading. Witnesses arise and  
100 weep for me, while beloved earth requites me with the wages my life has earned. The very heavens have yielded entry to a virtuous behaviour : may my deserts entitle me to have my bones conveyed on the waters of dignity.



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