

ARS AMATORIA

Book I

If any Roman has no mastery
In making love, then let him study me –
My poem shall make him expert in the field.
To skill all ships, by oar or sail, must yield
And winged chariots: and it is thus
With Love. Automedon was dexterous
With pliant reins, and Tiphys ruled the sea
As *Argo*'s captain: so Venus chose me
As Cupid's skilful master: folk will say
In terms of Love I am as good as they. 10
He's wild and apt to cross me yet a lad (10)
(And youth submits to rule). Once Chiron had
Taught young Achilles how to play the lyre,:
His peaceful art extinguished all the fire
Within his breast. He who could terrify
Both friend and foe, they say, was daunted by
A greybeard. At his master's stern commands
He'd offer for the lash those very hands
That Hector was to feel. It's Love *I* teach
Just as Achilles learnt from Chiron: each 20
A goddess' son, each wild. Yet anyhow
The bull will bow his neck under the plough,
The proud horse champ the bridle; so will Love (20)
Give in to me, though brandishing above
My head his firebrands and wounding me
With his keen arrows; the more violently
He burns or pierces me, the more I ache
To avenge the wound. I'll not make the mistake
Of claiming that I stole from you your art,
Apollo, birds do not to me impart 30
The future, nor in Ascrea's dales did I
Tend flocks of sheep while witnessing nearby
Both Clio and her sisters; it's know-how
That stimulates this verse of mine: so now
Attend an expert bard; it's sooth I say. (30)
Love's mother, kindly aid me. Hence, away,
You slender fillets, marks of modesty,
You gowns so long that nobody may see
The feet beneath: of sanctioned trysts I sing
And unscathed love-making – there's not a thing 40
To cause offence.

The object of your suit
 You first must strive to find: a raw recruit
 Unused to arms, you come to me for aid;
 The next step is to win your chosen maid,
 And, third, make your love last. That is my bound,
 The edge marked by my chariot's speeding round,
 The goal it grazes. (40)

While you still can use
 A free rein as you travel, you must choose
 A maid to whom you may say, 'Only you
 Content me.' She will not come swooping through 50
 The tender breezes, dropping from the skies –
 No, you must seek her out with your own eyes.
 The hunter knows when he must spread his nets
 To catch the stag and where the wild boar frets.
 Fowlers know shrubs and anglers know what burn
 Contains a horde of fish: and you in turn,
 Who want a girl's long love, must firstly know (50)
 All of their haunts. I shall not bid you go
 Upon a weary trek or cross the foam.

For although Perseus brought Andromeda home 60
 From dusky India and that Phrygian man
 Abducted Helen, Rome most surely can
 Provide so many belles that you'll declare,
 'Whatever's in the world, you'll find it there.'
 The wealth of crops on Ida, the supply
 Of grapes that fill Methymna, stars the sky
 Contains, fish in the sea, birds in the trees –
 There are as many girls in Rome as these!
 Aeneas' mother still lives here. Do you (60)
 Prefer a young one? Well then, into view 70
 Will come a real lass. Riper girls entrance you?
 There will be thousands at your call. Perchance you
 Will just be spoiled for choice. Maturer still?
 Here too, believe me, you can have your fill.

Just take a stroll beneath the portico
 Of Pompey when the sun comes near Leo
 Or where a mother, on that marble stone,
 To her own son's largesse affixed her own. (70)
 And you should not that colonnade eschew,
 Filled with old paintings, which was built for you, 80
 O Livia, and which bears your name today,
 Nor where the Belides once dared to slay
 Their wretched cousins – see, with new-drawn sword,
 Their father stands; nor yet can you afford

To miss Adonis, mourned by Venus, and
 The seventh day kept sacred by that band
 Of Syrian Jews. Nor either must you flee
 The Memphian shrine to Io – it was she
 Who changed into a heifer – (and she made
 So many what *she* was to Jove); where trade 90
 In legal matters is conducted (who
 Could credit it?) love prospers, and so you
 May find your flame in shrill-tongued courts. Below (80)
 Venus's marble shrine, an upward flow
 Of water from that Appian nymph is seen,
 And there quite often lawyers too have been
 By Love enraptured; clients he may shield
 From danger, not himself, though; see him yield
 \To gibbering, that clever man. While now
 A new case waits, he must as well, somehow, 100
 Deal with his own. And from her domicile
 Queen Venus laughs at him. And so, erstwhile
 An advocate, he now desires to be
 A client. Hunt in theatres principally,
 For all your hopes a much more fertile ground. (90)
 There may a love, or playfellow, be found,
 One you may dally with or else possess.
 As ants in one long column may progress
 With grain in mouth, or just as bees may fly
 To fragrant groves and pastures where, on high, 110
 They'll buzz the flowers and thyme, so likewise rush
 The smartest girls to that unending crush
 That is the games. So many times this mass
 Has made my brain a laggard as they pass.
 They come to see and *be* seen; modesty (100)
 Dies there, so say goodbye to chastity.
 It was you, Romulus, who disturbed those games
 (You were the first) that time the Sabine dames
 Consoled our widowed men. No curtains then
 Would grace the marble theatre, and, again, 120
 The ruddy stage with crocus was not sprayed
 And the whole scene was artlessly arrayed
 And fronds were simply set, palms germinated
 Upon the Palatine; seats turf-created
 Would hold the audience, their shaggy hair
 Topped with the odd leaf. Looking here and there,
 Each spots the girl he fancies while his heart (110)
 Is full of secret thoughts; his rustic art
 The flautist demonstrates, the level ground
 Thrice by the dancer, with a stamping sound, 130

Is beaten, and while everyone applauds
 Quite artlessly, the ruler turns towards
 The people and gives them the welcome cue
 For rape. Directly, by their hullabaloo
 Betraying their intent, they upped and laid
 Their eager hands upon each chosen maid.
 As doves, that very timid band, will fly
 The eagle, or as new-born lambs will try
 To flee the wolf, those girls now wildly sped
 In fear, their facial hue more white than red. 140(120)
 One fear! And yet the face of fear? Well, there
 Were just so many: some would tear their hair,
 Some blankly sat, some called upon their mothers,
 Some grieved in silence, while there yet were others
 Who cried aloud or sat in wonderment;
 One stayed, one fled; their very terror lent
 A kind of charm as they were led away
 As bridal spoil. If one were bold to say
 She wouldn't go, her man would simply sweep
 Her up into his arms and say, 'Why weep? 150
 Those honeyed eyes are sore! To you I'll be
 What Father is to Mother, just you see!' (130)
 Romulus, you alone knew how to give
 Your soldiers bounty: I myself will live
 The soldier's life if you should give such booty
 To me. And even now a woman's beauty
 Remains in danger since that hallowed right
 Of theatres. Also, do not shun the site
 Of racing contests. Many benefits
 The spacious Circus gives the people. It's 160
 Needless to whisper from behind your hand
 Or else by nods to learn to understand
 Her feelings. Join her (no-one will prevent it),
 Nestle right up – the rows will implement it, (140)
 For, though she frown, you're forced to snuggle in,
 And you may touch her. Here you may begin
 To chat – your first words public ones: "Whose steeds,"
 You slyly ask, "are those?" And you must needs
 Favour the ones *she* favours right away.
 And when the ivory gods - a long display - 170
 Come in, clap loud for Venus. Now, mayhap,
 A speck of dust will fall into her lap
 (It happens) – flick it off. And if no dust (150)
 Should fall, then flick off nothing: for you must
 Use any pretext for your gallantry.
 Suppose her gown should trail, then you must see

That you uplift it from the dirty ground:
 Right then reward for chivalry is found –
 She'll let you see her legs. And furthermore
 Turn round to see who sits behind you, for 180
 His knees may press upon her soft behind.
 A small thing will impress a trivial mind:
 To many has a cushion deftly set (160)
 Been serviceable; there is profit yet
 In fanning her in the oppressive heat
 Or placing a footstool beneath her feet.
 Such openings the Circus offers you
 For dalliance, the busy forum too,
 Scattered with sombre sand. Cupid has fought
 Upon that sand, so one has often caught 190
 A wound while watching others get run through:
 So while, his bet now placed, he asks her who
 Is leading in the field and strokes her neck
 And holds her in converse and seeks to check
 The programme, he now groans because he's hit
 By Cupid's weapon and, while watching it,
 He's *of* the contest too. Just recently (170)
 Did Caesar reenact a fight at sea
 Between the Greeks and Persians; girls and men
 From either coast flocked to the city then 200
 (Rome held the whole world). What man could not spot
 A girl to call his sweetheart in that lot?
 What tortures for so many did there spring
 From foreign loves! Caesar now plans to bring
 What so far all the conquered world has lacked:
 Far East, you'll now be ours – accept the fact.
 Parthian, you'll pay; rejoice, deceased Crassi,
 And you who suffered such barbarity, (180)
 You standards. Our avenger now appears –
 He claims the generalship, though lacking years; 210
 While still an untried youth he'll undertake
 A grown man's role in war. For heaven's sake,
 You timid people, don't enumerate
 Gods' birthdays – boldness is precipitate
 In Caesars. Heavenly power outruns its day
 And cannot brook the price of slow delay:
 Achilles crushed two snakes while he was wee –
 Still in his cradle he yet proved to be
 Jove's equal. Bacchus, even now you're young,
 But how much younger were you when you flung 220
 Yoked India into chaos with your vine- (190)
 And-ivy-covered wands? Boy, you shall shine

In arms (your father's pluck and influence
 Confirm it). That is how you should commence
 With such a name. Though now the young mens' prince,
 One day you'll lead the elders too; and since
 You have a father, guard your father's rights,
 And since you have a brother, set your sights
 On taking vengeance for his wrongs. To you
 Your father, and your country's father too, 230
 Gave arms; a father's realm your enemy
 Has filched; your swords are holy ones, but he
 Let fly pernicious arrows; duty and right (200)
 Will stand behind your cause; so may this fight
 Defeat the Parthians as they have been
 Defeated by their cause: may Latium win,
 Thanks to my prince, wealth from the Orient.
 Mars, Caesar, may your godheads now be lent
 To Gaius as he goes: for one of you
 Already is a god but one day too, 240
 Caesar, you'll join him. Here I prophesy
 That you will conquer, and my poems will I
 Commit to you that you may be extolled
 Up to the skies and with my words be bold
 To rouse your troops (o may those words not be
 Too meagre for your spirit!) Then hear me
 Tell of that fast-retreating "Parthian shot", (210)
 Of enemy backs and Roman fronts. So what
 Is left for you, o Parthian, if you flee
 In order to defeat your enemy 250
 When you yourself are conquered? Now already
 The god of war you worship looks unsteady.
 Most fair one, you will very soon be seen
 Behind four snow-white steeds, with golden sheen,
 Before you chiefs, weighed down with chains lest they
 Should try to flee as in the past. That day
 Shall joyful youths and girls look on this show
 And feel their hearts with passion overflow;
 If one should ask the chieftains' names or say,
 'What place is that?' or 'What rivers are they?' 260(220)
 Or else 'What are those mountains' you reply
 To all, even if she doesn't ask, and lie
 If you don't know, pretending that you do.
 'That's the Euphrates, ringed with reeds,' say you,
 'That's Tigris - see that blue hair hanging free.
 There the Armenians are, there Persia, see;
 That was a valleyed Persian town. Those there
 Are chieftains' (give their names too – fair and square

If possible, if not, make up some name
 That fits). Feasts, too, will aid you in your game; 270
 There's more than wine. Bright Love has often pressed (230)
 With his soft arms Lord Bacchus to his breast
 And when his thirsty wings are splashed with wine
 He stays there, sluggish, victim of the vine.
 He'll briskly shake them but it hurts to be
 Just touched with Love upon the breast. You'll see
 That wine gives courage and prepares the heart
 For passion, and vexation will depart,
 Drowned in the drink. There's laughter in the air,
 Even the poor take heart, and grief and care, 280(240)
 And frowns too, take their leave. Simplicity
 (Rare now) lays bare the mind, and trickery
 That god expels. There girls have captivated
 Mens' hearts and Venus has amalgamated
 With wine, thus supplementing fire with fire.
 Don't trust the lamp too much (a frequent liar):
 Judgment and beauty is impaired by night
 Plus wine. For Paris in the clear daylight
 Looked on those three goddesses and declared
 To Venus, 'You prevail.' Defects are spared 290
 By night's dark cloak, condoned is every sin.
 At that dark hour every girl has been (250)
 Thought gorgeous. Purple wool and jewellery,
 The face, the body, all these things must be
 Appraised by daylight. Why need I spell out
 Their haunts (your hunting-ground)? Without a doubt
 They would outnumber all the grains of sand.
 Why mention Baiae, then, or Baiae's strand,
 Its sulphur-springs? One man was heard to cry,
 While he was love-struck, 'All those people lie 300
 Who say this place is healthy.' Dian's home,
 A sylvan setting, isn't far from Rome,
 The regions gained by battle; she is chaste (260)
 And hates the darts of Love, thus many taste
 Her wounds and many more shall too.
 So far,
 On the unequal wheels of poetry's car,
 Has Thalia advised you as to where
 To find a maid and where to lay your snare.
 Now I shall try to teach that chief technique
 Of capturing the loved one that you seek. 310
 Men everywhere, be pliable, attend;
 And listen to the vows that I intend
 To give you, you plebeians. Be assured

That every girl may be possessed once lured (270)
 By hunting-nets. Sooner would birds in spring
 Or crickets in the summer fail to sing,
 A hound from Maenalus turn round and flee
 The hare, than should a smoothly courted she
 Repulse a lover; even one surmised
 To be averse you should not be surprised 320
 To find she's not. Both maids and men enjoy
 A stolen love; a man cannot employ
 Deceit too well, but women hide their feelings
 Adroitly. If a man, in Love's sweet dealings,
 Did not make the first move, be sure that she
 Will ask instead. For in the pleasant lea
 The cow moos at the bull, and at the horse (280)
 The mare will neigh. Ours is a softer course
 And not so frantic; for man's appetite
 Contains a softer bound. Byblis, alight 330
 With a forbidden love for Caunus (he
 Was her own brother) paid the penalty
 Gallantly, with a noose. Myrrha, also,
 Unfilially loved her father, so
 She's hidden now within the bark of a tree;
 And we're anointed by the tears that she
 Now sheds, the drops of which contain her name.
 There was a snow-white bull of noble fame (290)
 That dwelt in wooded Ida's shady dingle
 And right between its horn sported a single 340
 Black spot, the rest of him milk-white. Now he
 Caused every Cretan cow to yearn to be
 His own. Pasiphaë felt such a thrill
 To be his mistress, bearing an ill will
 Towards those comely heifers. It's a tale
 That's well-known; Crete herself can hardly fail
 To credit it, a liar though she be
 (She and her hundred towns). They say that she
 Plucked for her bull with unaccustomed hand (300)
 New leaves and tender meadow-grasses and 350
 Merged with the herd, unfazed by any care
 She harboured for her spouse. So, then and there,
 A bull crushed Minos. What now will you do
 With all the splendid finery that you
 Once wore, Pasiphaë? He has no call,
 That bull of yours, for pomp. What use at all
 Do you have for a glass while you are there
 Among the herd? Why do you comb your hair
 So often, foolish one? Yet trust that glass

Which tells you you're no heifer but a lass! 360
 You longed for horns. If Minos pleases you,
 Don't seek a paramour; but if you do, (310)
 Deceive him with a man! And so a queen
 Sped off into the groves as though she'd been
 A Bacchus-worshipper, deranged in mind
 And wine-inspired, her bedroom left behind.
 How often at some heifer did you glare
 And say: 'Why does my lover find her fair?
 She frisks before him on the tender grass
 And doubtless thinks she's comely, silly lass!' 370
 Then from the mighty herd she had her brought
 And dragged beneath the yoke (she had done naught
 To merit it), or else forced her to gasp
 Her last in bogus sacrifice, then grasp
 Her rival's entrails in her joyful hand; (320)
 Gods were appeased with countless rivals, and,
 Entrails gripped tight, she shouted out '*Now* go
 Delight him.' Now she wants to be Io
 And now Europe, for one was a cow,
 The other a bull's mate. However, now 380
This bull was duped by a maple cow, and he
 Made love to her, and so the progeny
 Betrayed the father. If the Cretan queen
 Had shunned Thyestes (o could it have been
 So hard to lack one man?), Phoebus would not
 Have turned his horses and his chariot (330)
 And made instead for Dawn. His purple hair
 Minos's daughter stole – her thighs now share
 Their quarters with wild dogs. Atreus's son,
 Although by Klytaimnestra overrun, 390
 Had mastered Mars and Neptune. Who's not cried
 At poor Creusa's flames and, at her side,
 Medea's children, slaughtered by her hand?
 Hippolytus was torn by mad steeds, and
 Phoenix, Amyntor's son, wept copiously
 From empty eyes. Why blind your progeny,
 Phineus? They're innocent! You'll make redress (340)
 Yourself. It was female licentiousness
 That caused those tragedies – it pierces more,
 It's stormier than ours. So girls galore 400
 Are out there for you. There will scarce be one
 Who will refuse you: whether they play or run
 They're thrilled just to be asked. If you're misled
 You're safe in the rebuff. Let it be said,
 However, there's small chance of that – when new,

Pleasure is welcome, and you'll find that you
 Are taken more by others' property
 Than by your own. It always seems to be
 Another farm that sports the richer yield
 And better beasts live in a neighbour's field 410(350)
 With richer udders. But first get to know
 The lass's maid: your overtures will go
 So much more smoothly then. See that she's nearest
 To all the intimations of your dearest
 And is a confidante in your love-play.
 With vows and pleas corrupt her every day:
 You'll get just what you seek if she's inclined.
 She'll pick the time (like doctors) when the mind
 Of her you want is pliable and ready
 For sport. She'll wanton then like harvests heady 420(360)
 With fruitfulness. While trammelled by no ill,
 Hearts open lie, and with her subtle skill
 Venus creeps in. When Troy was sad, her men
 Defended her, when happy, though, why then
 In cane that horse, weighed down with soldiery.
 Board her when she a rival's treachery
 Has felt. And see that she will vengeance take.
 Her maid will comb her tresses at daybreak –
 That's when you must acquire her aid and add
 An oar to sail: 'I think that its so sad 430(370)
 That you can't pay him back in kind', she'll mutter,
 And then persuasive words of you she'll utter.
 You're frantic for her love, she'll say. Quick, though,
 Before the sails drop and no breezes blow:
 For anger dies in time like brittle ice.
 You'd like to have her maid too? My advice
 Is that it's far too chancy. Some are so
 Impatient after sex, some are more slow;
 This maid will want you for herself, while that
 Will win you for her mistress, and thereat 440
 You're on a knife's edge: you *could* gratify
 Your lust with both, but *I* would say 'Deny
 Yourself'. I will traverse no perilous track (380)
 Nor rocky height. No, with me at his back
 No youth will be caught out. But if, while she
 Plays go-between, her comeliness should be
 Pleasing to you (not just her ministration),
 Acquire the girl first, then, in sequestration,
 Will come the maid: don't dally first with her.
 One thing I urge (if only you'll defer 450
 To this my art and all my words aren't thrown

By gales across the sea): let it be known –
 You must make *no* attempt or else succeed:
 When once she is a sharer in the deed
 The maid's removed as an informer. Say (390)
 A bird's been limed – she'll hardly get away.
 Those tangled nets a boar may not escape
 With ease. A wounded fish, its mouth agape
 Upon the hook, is yours now: first assail,
 Then press her hard, and surely you won't fail. 460
 But keep her secret well: if all her news
 Is well concealed, she cannot then but choose
 To be your confidante in your affair.
 If you believe that only those whose care
 Is tilling toilsome fields, or those who sail
 The seas, must watch for seasons, then you fail (400)
 In judgment. Not always must we entrust
 Our crops to guileful fields, not always must
 We launch our ships into the emerald sea,
 So likewise is it sometimes best that we 470
 Don't hunt young girls. The timing must be right.
 Perhaps it is her birthday, or it might
 Be April First when Mars and Venus mate,
 Or maybe when the Circus is ornate,
 Not with icons, but all the wealth of kings –
 Hold off then: hear! the warning signal rings!
 A gloomy storm! the threatening Pleiades!
 The tender Kid is merging in the seas; (410)
 So cease! If you should then the ocean brave
 You'll scarcely have the likelihood to save 480
 Your shattered bark. Perhaps you'll have a go
 The day the Allia was seen to flow
 With Latian blood, or on that seven-day feast
 For Syrians (of all days the least
 Fit for commerce). Beware her birthday yet;
 That day's a black one on which you must get
 A gift for her. Though you avoid it, she
 Will get one anyway. Proficiency
 In fleecing eager lovers they possess, (420)
 These girls. A peddler-man in ragged dress 490
 Will ply her when she's in a buying vein
 And spread his wares before he (you're in pain
 As there you sit); she'll ask you to survey
 The lot to make it look like you're *au fait*
 With such knick-knacks; and then she kisses you
 And *then* asks you to buy. 'Oh, this will do
 For years and years,' she'll swear. 'I need it now

And it's a darn good bargain anyhow.'
 'I have no cash at hand.' 'A note will do,'
 She counters quickly. Now you wish that you 500
 Had not learnt how to write. 'It's for my cake.'
 When she's an inclination then to make
 You give her gifts, presto! It's her birthday! (430)
 Sometimes she'll wail at some fake loss and say
 A jewel from her shell-like ear has chanced
 To slip. They ask for loans which, once advanced,
 Are not returned. You've lost and you will see
 No credit in that loss. Though I could be
 Blessed with ten mouths and tongues. I could not wade
 Through all the harlot's wily ways. The maid 510
 Must read smooth, waxy tablets (it was they
 Who shared your thoughts at first). Let them convey
 Your loving, flattering words and *everyone* (440)
 Must add strong pleas. For Hector, Priam's son,
 Achilles, prompted by his father's plea,
 Returned. For angry gods will often be
 Not deaf to prayer. Promise! What harm can be
 In promises? In promises are we
 All rich. Hope is long-lasting once conceived;
 That goddess, though she should *not* be believed, 520
 Is quite adaptable. Once she has got
 The gift, she may abandon you. Why not?
 It's gone and she's lost nothing. Always, though,
 Seem on the point of giving: even so
 A farmer is deceived by barren crops. (450)
 Thus, lest he lose, the gambler never stops
 Doing just that, and oftentimes the die
 Invites his hands to have another try.
 This is your task: to have her with no "fee"
 Before the act. Lest what she gives is free 530
 She gives yet more. A letter, then, must go,
 Written with coaxing words, that you may know
 Her mind and first explore the path: a note
 Found on an apple, which Acontius wrote,
 Betrayed Cydippe and, quite unaware,
 She was caught out by her own words. Take care,
 You youths of Rome, to learn fine arts, not just (460)
 To plead for trembling clients. Young girls must,
 Like senate, judges, populace, give way
 To eloquence. But hide your powers away, 540
 Don't let your eloquence show; try to eschew
 Affected words. It's only morons who
 Declaim to their sweethearts. Letters that come

Filled with such words have led to odium.
 Be credible, familiar, and yet
 Be plausible in every sentence (let
 It seem that you are *there* with her). If she
 Sends it you back unread, try to foresee (470)
 She'll read it one day and hold to your course.
 In time the stubborn bulls yield to the force 550
 Of ploughs, in time will horses undergo
 The pliant reins through schooling. Even so
 The iron ring corrodes through constant wear,
 Likewise the ground wears out the curved ploughshare
 Eventually. What's harder than a stone?
 Softer than water? Yet quite on its own
 Water will hollow stones. Penelope
 Herself, if you persist, you'll win one day:
 You know that Troy fell (late, it's true, but fell).
 She reads it but won't answer? Well, don't tell 560
 Her that she must reply; just guarantee (480)
 That she may read your flatteries constantly.
 Once she consent she'll *want* to answer you:
 By stages and degrees this will ensue.
 At first an angry letter comes maybe,
 In essence saying, 'Do not bother me!'
 She fears what she requests, what she does not
 She wants – 'Continue!' You will soon have got
 Your wish if you will only persevere.
 Meanwhile, with guileful attitude, come near 570
 The litter you may find her in and use, (490)
 If you are able, artful, cryptic clues,
 Lest hostile ears are listening. Possibly
 She strolls within the spacious gallery –
 Then dally there. Precede her, lag behind,
 Now hasten, now delay. Nor must you find
 It shameful to reduce the columns' span
 Dividing you, and join her, if you can,
 Side pressing side – let not her beauty be
 Unnoted: *that* she'll bring for you to see 580
 Upon her shoulders. Then you may peruse
 And marvel at her – think, if you just use (500)
 Your brows, and gestures, how much you can say;
 Applaud the pantomimist in a play
 Who plays a girl, show partiality
 To him who plays the lover. And when she
 Gets up, rise also; while she sits, you still
 Must sit: waste time, then, at your mistress' will.
 No curling-iron! Leave your hair alone,

Don't scrape your legs with biting pumice-stone; 590
 Let Cybele's priests do that, who ululate
 In Phrygian measures. A neglected state
 Befits a man; no hair-pin decked the head
 Of Theseus when he carried off, it's said,
 Minos's daughter, and Hippolytus,
 Though loved by Phaedra, never made a fuss (510)
 About his looks. Rustic Adonis, too,
 Was loved by a goddess. Just be sure that you
 Are clean, and bronzed by much alfresco toil,
 Your toga snug and free of specks of soil. 600
 Your shoe-strap must be smooth, your teeth mould-free.
 Your feet, too, must not swim, as in a sea,
 Within too large a shoe; your stubborn hair
 Must not be marred by faulty barber-care:
 Let hair and beard be trimmed with good technique,
 Nails short and clean, and, poking from your beak, (520)
 No hair. You should breathe out no fetid air,
 No billy-goat breath that she won't want to share.
 Let men who fancy men and girls of free
 And easy virtue do the rest. So, see, 610
 Bacchus calls to his bard: it is his aim
 To aid all lovers, and that very flame
 By which he burns he sanctions. That young she
 Ariadne roamed strange shores distractedly,
 Where little Dia's battered by sea-shocks,
 Just wakened, loose-gowned, barefoot, yellow locks (530)
 Now hanging free, her tender cheeks made wet
 By a remorseless thunderstorm. While yet
 She shouts and weeps, both acts become the maid.
 Through all her tears her beauty does not fade. 620
 She beats her tender breast and cries out, 'He
 Has left me, faithless one! What's left for me?'
 Then cymbals ring out loud across the sand
 And drums are beaten with a frenzied hand.
 She swooned and stopped. No blood was there (540)
 Within her body. Lo, with flowing hair,
 Come Bacchants and the wanton Satyrs, who
 Comprise the god's vanguard. Silenus, too!
 Perched on a crookbacked ass, he skilfully
 Clings to its mane, the old fool. And while he 630
 Pursues the Bacchants as they fly and smash,
 And while the useless horseman with his lash
 Goads on his steed, he crashes to the ground
 From off his long-eared mount; now hear the sound
 Of Satyrs crying, 'Father, up! Arise!'

And now comes Bacchus, right before their eyes,
 In vine-swathed chariot, laying on the knout (550)
 To his yoked tigers; now the girl's without
 Colour, Theseus and voice – three times she makes
 To flee, three times fear stops her. And she quakes 640
 Like sterile stalks wind-shook, or reeds that quiver,
 Small as they are, within a marshy river.
 He says to her, 'See, I will be more true.
 Leave fear, sweet Cretan I'll be spouse to you.
 The sky I give you: in the sky you'll be
 A star; a guide you'll be to ships at sea –
 The Cretan Crown.' At this, lest she take fright
 At tigers, he leapt from the chariot's height
 (The sand gave way) and clasped her in an embrace (560)
 (Nor could she struggle) and then from that place 650
 Abducted her. A god does everything
 With ease. 'Hail, Hymenaeus,' some folk sing,
 Others 'Euhoe'. A god, then, and his bride
 Met on a golden couch. If at your side
 Upon a couch there sits a maid whom he
 Now grants, pray that the Nyctelian deity
 And all the spirits of the night may spare
 You from a hangover. While you are there,
 You may use many cryptic words that she
 May feel are said to her, let the wine be 660
 Your ink and write light flatteries so she'll spy (570)
 Right on the table that she's yours. Let eye
 Meet eye, confessing passion. For, when mute,
 You may speak volumes. First, though, be astute
 And snatch the cup that touched her lips, then sip
 Where *she* sipped; food that's met her fingertip
 Request and touch her hand *while* you request.
 And aim to please her husband, too: it's best (580)
 To have him for a friend. Should lots decree
 The drinking, give him the first and see that he 670
 Receives your wreath. Let him have everything
 Before you, whether peer or underling;
 Let him speak first: I'll fix the quantity
 Of wine. Let mind and feet your servants be. (590)
 Above all, watch for wine-engendered strife,
 Of hands too quick to fight. Eurytion's life
 Was over when the fool was given wine
 And drank it. Both to tipple and to dine
 Should lead to merriment. If you can sing,
 Then do so; dance, if to the art you bring
 A pair of supple arms. Please how you May.-6-08

Real drunkenness can harm but, feigned, will pay
 Large dividends. So flounder in your speech -
 Then if you should transcend decorum's reach, 680
 It's blamed on too much wine. Wish her success (600)
 (And him who beds her, too, but, while you bless,
Think otherwise). Dinner done, the guests will leave –
 Act now! Draw near and touch her by the sleeve
 Just as she goes. Play footsie with her. For
 Now you can chat. Hence, Modesty, you bore!
 Both Chance and Venus aid the man who's brave.
 But do not let your eloquence behave
 Like poetry. Want it sufficiently, (610)
 It will appear. Your acting role must be 690
 A lover – speak in counterfeit distress;
 Convince her how you may – it takes much less
 Than you may think: all women think that they
 Are lovable: the plainest women say
 That they are pretty. But you may pretend
 And then will love indeed and, in the end,
 Become what once you feigned. (Then, ladies, be
 Compliant to pretenders. Falsity
 Will one day be true love.) Now use the art
 Of stealth and flattery to win her heart, 700
 Just as the overhanging water's-brink (620)
 Erodes against the water. Do not think
 It wearisome to praise her face, her curls,
 Her slender fingers, little feet: chaste girls,
 Just like the rest, delight in accolades:
 One's looks are pleasing even to young maids.
 Why, in the Phrygian woods, did not Juno
 And Pallas shame to lose that beauty show?
 One may look at the plumes on Juno's bird
 If one commends them – if, without a word, 710
 One stares at them she will that store conceal.
 Horses at the track delight to feel
 A pat on mane or neck. Another thing: (680)
 Do not be timid in your promising:
 A promise lures young girls; add to your oath
 Some god as witness. Jove is nothing loath
 To laugh at lovers' vows and give decrees
 That they be unfulfilled and 'cross the sea
 Be borne by the South Wind. He falsely swore
 By Styx to Juno. He himself, what's more, 720
 Approves this vow. It's right that gods exist,
 So let's believe they do. Add to your list
 Of things to do: 'Give to my deities

Both gold and frankincense,' for sleepy ease
 And carefree quiet's not for them. They're near, (640)
 So live an innocent life; be sure to clear
 All debts; let duty keep her pact; away
 All fraud!; commit no violence. Betray
 Women alone, and you'll be fine. Be true
 In all but this. Deceive the people who 730
 Deceive. They're mostly wicked: let them drop
 Into the traps they set. Once, Egypt's crop,
 It's said, lacked rain and lay for nine long years
 Quite dry. The Thrasius allayed the fears
 Of Busiris: he said that Jove could be
 Placated with a stranger's blood. Then he (650)
 Replied, 'You'll be the man and feed our land
 With water, Jove's first victim, here at hand.'
 Perillus in that savage bull was basted
 By Phalaris, the first who ever tasted 740
 His own unhappy work. It's only fair,
 For there's no juster precept anywhere
 Than that which states that all craftsmen of death
 Must by their craft gasp out their final breath.
 Let false oaths, then, cheat false oaths fittingly
 And women by their own example be
 Distressed. Tears, too, are useful. A teardrop
 Will adamant move: a worthwhile prop, (660)
 If you can manage it, 's a moistened cheek.
 If in the tear department you are weak 750
 (For tears don't fall to order), touch your eyes
 With one damp hand. Nobody who is wise
 Won't kiss and whisper coaxing words as well.
 She may not give you kisses – what the hell?
 Just take them anyway. At first she might
 Fight back and chide you; yet to lose the fight
 Is her intention. But beware that you
 Don't bruise her tender lips – it may undo
 Your plans, for she'll complain that she's ill-treated.
 The man who kisses but is then defeated 760
 And doesn't take the rest, should lose what he (670)
 Was given. Kisses past, it's plain to see
 That he's lost all his hopes. Unfortunately
 That isn't modesty – it's gaucherie.
 You may use force (they like it!); what they find
 Is pleasant to them, often they've a mind
 To give aversely. Sudden ravishment
 Delights them – they may call you impudent
 But take it as a gift. Who may be gained

But backs away, though seeming glad, is pained. 770
 Both Phoebe and her sister suffered force
 Yet each enjoyed it. Let me have recourse (680)
 To tell an apt tale of the Scyrian maid
 And her Haemonian beau. Beneath the shade
 Of Ida Goddess Venus gave some booty
 To Paris for his judgment of her beauty
 Against the other two; from 'cross the sea
 A daughter-in-law for Priam came, so she,
 A Grecian wife, now lived in Ilium City.
 The Greeks backed Menelaus out of pity 780
 (For just one man enkindled public cares).
 Achilles, prompted by a mother's cares,
 Pretended, to his shame, to be a maid
 A donned a woman's gown. What a charade! (690)
 Wool's not for you, Achilles! No, your due
 Shall come from Pallas' other arts. To you
 A basket's quite absurd! A shield is more
 Becoming to your arm; what's that skein for
 In you right hand (portending Hector's doom)?
 That spindle, toilsome worker at the loom - 790
 Discard it! Shake instead a Pelian lance!
 In that same bedchamber there was by chance
 A royal maid: when raped, she clearly knew
 He was no woman. I believe it's true
 He forced her, yet she wanted the invasion. (700)
 She often bade him stay on each occasion
 That he was on the point of leaving: for,
 The distaff gone, he now prepared for war.
 Where's that force now? Deïdamia, why
 Delay the man who raped you with a cry 800
 Of coaxing words? Well, though a kind of shame
 Attaches to the man who starts this game,
 A girl enjoys its fruits. A confidence
 Too great is his who hopes that *she*'ll commence!
 Let *him* be first, let *him* make supplication,
 Let *her* sweetly accept his imprecation. (710)
 Ask if you may: that's all she wants to hear;
 Just get it started: those whom Jove held dear
 He supplicated. No girl would ensnare
 Great Jove. But if you should become aware 810
 That all your prayers engender much conceit
 Then stop and step back: what beats a retreat
 Most girls desire; they dislike pushiness;
 So take it slow and you will bore them less.
 Don't always speak of love: let it be veiled (720)

As friendship. Sullen girls have been assailed
 This way; admirers thus turn out to be
 Inamorati; those who sail the sea
 Should not be white-complexioned: no, the sun
 And waves should make them swarthy, every one; 820
 The farmer, too, who in the open air
 Works in the fields with harrow and ploughshare;
 And you who chase the athlete's prize of fame
 Would be embarrassed by a pallid frame.
 All lovers should be pale – it's only right
 And fitting, though there may ne scores who might (730)
 Think otherwise: Orion wandered ashen
 In Sida's woods; at Chloe's lack of passion
 Daphnis was pale. A leanness proves you care;
 To cover with a hood your shining hair 830
 Would not be wrong. Those sleepless nights, the woe
 And care with which great love together go
 Make spare a lover's limbs. So that you may
 Achieve your love, be sad - thus one may say
 On sight, "You are in love." Now should I share
 Your misery or else make you aware
 That right and wrong commingle? Amity (740)
 Is just a name, but faith you'll find to be
 An empty name. It's not safe to extol
 Your sweetheart to a friend: he'll take your role 840
 Just as he takes your word. "But Patroclus
 Did not deceive Achilles; Pirithous
 Was safe from Phaedra. As Phoebus held dear
 Athena or as Castore was so near
 His twin Pollux so Queen Hermione
 Was with Pylades." If one were to be
 As green as that, then one might well expect
 That tamarisks come from apples or inspect
 A stream for honey. Only base things please;
 Pleasure's our only care; one's lack of ease 850(750)
 Delights another. Sad, but there's no foe
 Who should be feared by lovers; let him go
 Whom you think faithful – he's not safe for you.
 Beware a brother, kinsman, friend; that crew
 Will cause real fear. I was about to close
 But – use one thousand wiles to capture those
 One thousand women's hearts. The selfsame soil
 Does not produce all things: this brings forth oil,
 That vines, another's excellent for wheat.
 The world maintains as many hearts that beat 860
 As she does shapes. A wise man will apply (760)

Those many wiles and so diversify
 As Proteus change to water, lion, tree
 Or shaggy boar. Some fish are seen to be
 Ensnared by spears, others by hooks; yet more
 By ropes and nets: and you must first explore
 What works for different years. An older doe
 Will spy the snare from further off. Just so
 A simple girl may find you erudite,
 A prude may find you brazen, so her plight 870
 She'll feel at once and doubt you. Thus, we see,
 A girl who fears to make a guarantee
 To one who's honourable goes instead,
 To her abasement, to a mean man's bed. (770)

Some of my work's now done, some's still to do.
 Now anchored be my bark, I ask of you.

BOOK II

Three cheers! *Six* cheers! My nets have caught their prize;
 My poem in the happy lovers' eyes
 Tops Hesiod's and Homer's and they hand
 The wreath to me. Prince Paris left the land
 Of warlike Amyclae in this fond vein
 With stolen Helen 'cross the Aegean main.
 In this same mood, for his victorious car,
 Pelops took Hippodamia from afar
 On foreign wheels. Young man, wherefore the speed?
 Your bark's halfway, the anchorage I need 10(10)
 Is far from here. She's yours now thanks to me;
 That's not enough – my skill must also be
 Employed to *keep* her. Keeping what's acquired
 Needs just as much prowess as that required
 For getting it: one's chance, the other – skill.
 So now, if ever, give me your good will,
 Boy Cupid, Venus, Erato as well
 (Whose name is Love). I am about to tell
 Great things – the skill to keep Love always near,
 Boy-wanderer across our sweeping sphere. 20
 He's light and winged, hard to be repressed. (20)
 Minos did much to handicap his guest;
 Yet wings provided him a fearless route.
 When Daedalus had now confined that brute,

Half-bull, half-man, his mother's infamy,
 He said, "Most blameless Minos, let there be
 An end to my exile; my native land
 Should have my ashes. Therefore, since I'm banned,
 By unjust fate, to dwell there, give consent
 That I may die there. For my boy, relent, 30
 If you won't grant his father liberty.
 If you show him no mercy, then spare me." (30)
 That said, and many more things, even so
 He would not authorize the man to go.
 At which did Daedalus address his heart:
 :Now is your chance to show your skill and art.
 It's Minos who controls both land and sea,
 So earth and water are forbidden me
 For my escape. But there remains the sky:
 That way I'll go. Your pardon, Jove on high. 40
 I'll not attempt to touch your starry court.
 To flee this lord it is my one resort. (40)
 I'll swim the river Styx if I'm permitted.
 For me let innovations be admitted."
 Distress can often cause inventiveness.
 Who'd think a man could cleave the air, no less?
 He layers on his body birdlike wings
 And, through the mesh, some linen fastenings;
 With melted wax the lower parts are bound –
 An innovated work of art's now found. 50
 This gear his young son fingered smilingly,
 Not knowing that his father planned that he (50)
 Should wear it. "Here's the ship," his father said,
 "To take us home, that Minos may be fled.
 All else closed off, he cannot block the air:
 Break through it (for you can!) with this my pair
 Of wings. Callisto do not try to see
 Nor armed Orion. Take them! Follow me
 And you'll be safe! For if we go too near (60)
 The sun, the wax will not survive, I fear; 60
 And if we beat our wings a jot too low
 The nimble feathers in the sea will go,
 Becoming soaked. No, go between the two.
 Beware the winds, too, son. Be sure that you
 Apply your sails wherever they may drift.
 Meanwhile he tells the stripling how to lift
 His arms, while fitting on his work of art,
 As mother birds with nestlings will impart
 Advice to them. And now he fastens tight
 His own wings and prepares himself for flight, 70

Poised cautiously. When just about to go (70)
 He kissed his little son, his cheeks aflow
 With tears. A hill that rose above the flatland,
 Yet lower than a mountain – it was *that* land
 From which the two began their hapless flight;
 The father kept the lad within his sight,
 Holding his course. And now the boy began
 To revel in his trip, more daring than
 Before. (A fisherman with tremulous hook
 Glimpsed them and instantly his rod forsook 80
 His hand). With Samos on the left (behind
 Were Naxos, Paros, Delos too, enshrined (80)
 With Phoebus' oracle); on t'other side
 Astypalaea with her fish-stocked tide,
 Lebynthos, Calymne in wooded shade,
 Now Icarus with a youngster's rashness made
 Too high a dash, his father left below.
 The wings droop down, the waxy fastenings flow,
 Now liquid from the sun's proximity;
 His arms don't have enough mobility 90
 To hold the airy breezes. Racked with fright,
 He looked down at the sea, while instant night
 Descended, in his terror, on his eyes.
 The wax now gone, with just his arms he tries
 To fly, but nothing holds him. Down he falls (90)
 And cries, "I'm dropping, father"; as he calls
 The waters fold him in their green embrace.
 Poor 'father' (this no longer was the case)!
 He shouts out, "Icarus! Oh where are you?
 Where are you flying? Where have you gone to?" 100
 And then he spies the wings upon the deep.
 His bones are in the earth, the waters keep
 His name. Although Minos could not control
 A mortal's wings, I plan to assume the role
 Of one who masters Cupid. He's misled
 Who turns to magic arts or else instead (100)
 Hands out hippomanes. Medean charms
 Will never get you in each other's arms,
 Nor Marsian incantations; if such art
Did work, Circe would not have had to part 110
 From Ulysses, nor would Aesonides
 Have left Medea. Wan philtres do not please
 Young girls – they're harmful and can drive one mad.
 So you be loved (be absent all things bad!)
 Be lovable. Not merely face nor frame
 Can give you this. Though you're that very same

Nireus, whom Homer loved, or else Hyllas,
 Snatched by the Naiads, yet, to keep your lass
 Nor find to your surprise you're left forlorn, (110)
 Add wit to grace. Good looks with which you're born 120
 Are but a fragile boon. For while you climb
 The rope of years, they're eaten up by time
 And wither. Lilies don't forever flower,
 Nor violets; when the rose's final hour
 Has come, the thorn remains; now, handsome guy,
 Come grey hairs, wrinkles, making you skin dry.
 Add wit to beauty, make sure that it stays,
 For it alone will last through all your days. (120)
 Pursue the arts – it's a necessity –
 And learn that second language thoroughly. 130
 Not comely, Ulysses could yet speak well –
 He racked two goddesses of Ocean's swell.
 How often did Calypso grieve his speed
 In parting: oh, the ocean didn't need
 Those oars! So many times she'd ask that king
 About the fall of Troy, and this same thing
 He'd answer different ways. Upon the shore
 They stood, while fair Calypso asked once more
 Of Rhesus' cruel end. There in his hand (130)
 He held a staff and now, in the deep sand, 140
 He illustrates their fate. "Here's Troy," he said
 (He drew the city walls), "take that as read.
 Here's Simois. Imagine camp is there.
 And here's the plain." (He drew it). Everywhere
 Dolon's red blood was scattered on the ground,
 While he kept watch and surveyed all around
 For his Thessalian steeds. And just nearby
 Is Rhesus' bivouac. And here am I
 (I'd come back with the captured steeds by night) – "
 He was outlining more when, from their sight, 150
 Went Troy, and Rhesus' camp, and their great chief, (140)
 Erased by one swift wave. "The sea's a thief,"
 The goddess said, "to steal such folk away.
 So can you trust its conduct now?" I pray,
 Don't trust in faithless beauty; bank on more
 Than looks. Tact works, but harshness leads to war
 And hatred. We despise the battling hawks
 And wolves that prey upon the timorous flocks.
 The gentle swallow, though, we don't pursue
 And leave the Chaonian bird to bill and coo 160(150)
 In his own towers. Quarrels, then, away,
 And bitter words. Sweet discourse should hold sway

With placid Love. Let wives and husbands spar
 And think it nothing. That's just how wives are.
 Wrangling's their dowry; let your mistress still
 Hear welcome words. Not by some legal bill
 Are you united. Love performs law's duty.
 So give her pleasant words, extol her beauty.
 Make sure she's glad to see you. With my pen (160)
 I will not teach the rich – no, wealthy men 170
 Don't need my art. Who can hand out largesse
 At any time has ample cleverness.
 I yield to him, more forceful far than me.
 I coach the poor (I loved in poverty);
 In need of means, yet words I could bestow.
 Take care! No harshness! You must undergo
 Much more than wealthy men. My lady fair
 Once angered me, so I mussed up her hair.
 How many days that took away from me! (170)
 I do not think (I surely did not see)
 That I had torn her tunic, but she said
 That this was so – that saw me in the red. 180
 Be wise, then, shun your teacher's faults and fear
 Their outcome; fight the Parthians but here
 With your inamorata let there be
 Love's genesis, both peace and jollity.
 If your advances don't make her comply
 Stick at it: she'll be gentle by and by.
 A bough will curve and yield – if only you
 Will test your strength, you'll break that bough in two. (180)
 A river may be crossed, but never so
 If you should swim against the water's flow. 190
 Tigers and lions you'll some day subdue;
 Some day the bull will bear the ploughshare too.
 How brutal was the maid of Arcady!
 Yet one man's skill caused her to bow the knee.
 Milanion, they say, let fall a tear
 Beneath a tree since she he held so dear
 Abused him; bore those cheating nets; would gore, (190)
 With his ferocious javelin, wild boar.
 Hylaeus' arrows caught him; yet a bow
 Belonging to another we all know 200
 Much better. I'm not bidding you ascend
 The woods of Arcady, in arms, or bend
 Your neck with toils or to expose your breast
 To arrows. No, my principles all rest
 On circumspection. Yield to her resisting;
 You'll win then. Play the part that she's insisting

You play. Blame when she blames; what she may prize
 Prize too; say what she says; what she denies (200)
 You must deny also. She laughs - laugh too;
 She weeps – *you* weep. Let her impose for you 210
 Her precepts. Say she's tossing little dice
 Make an appalling throw; impose no price
 Should she with large ones fail – see that you get
 The fatal “dogs”. Or if her gambling bet
 Is “robbers”, let your warrior be quelled
 By her glass foe. Her sunshade must be held
 For her upon its rods, and see that you
 Make room when once you see her coming through. (210)
 Produce a footstool for her neat divan,
 And from her dainty instep, while you can, 220
 Remove her shoe (or slip it on). You'll learn
 Quite often, though you shiver in *your* turn,
 Within your lap you'll have to warm her hand.
 Don't think it base (oh well, it *is*, but grand!)
 To have a mirror with you. His stepmother
 Tired of sending one monster after t'other,
 Her stepson, gaining heaven which he bore
 Himself at first, they say held baskets for
 Ionian maidens, spinning the raw fleece. (220)
 And thus submitted Hercules of Greece 230
 Unto his mistress: don't do what he did.
 Let's say that at the forum she has bid
 You show up – get there early, leave there late.
 She says to meet you somewhere – no debate!
 Run! Fight the mob and be there! Say that she
 Is going home from some festivity:
 She calls – come as her slave! She goes to stay
 Upcountry and she wants you there. Delay
 Is odious to Love: wheels let you down? (230)
 Then walk! Don't let a hot day's heavy frown 240
 Defer your trek, nor snowy road nor rain.
 No laggards here, for Love is a campaign;
 No timid folk must guard her standards, then.
 In her soft camp much toil there is for men –
 Night, storms, forced marches, bitter tribulation.
 You'll often bear the clouds' precipitation,
 Ice-cold, and lie upon the naked ground.
 Now, Cynthian Apollo, it was found,
 Pastured Admetus' cows, and just a shanty (240)
 Was his abode: a domicile this scanty 250
 Was good enough for him, so why not you?
 Put off your pride, then, any of you who

Want lasting love. Should no smooth path prevail,
 Then through the open roof you quickly sail,
 Or some high window. She'll feel very good
 To be the cause of dangers you've withstood.
 And this will bind your love. Leander, you
 Could be without the girl you wished to woo.
 That she might know his mind, the Hellespont (250)
 You swam. Don't shame, for getting what you want, 260
 To win her handmaids over (for they're all
 Of use to you), her slave-boys also. Call
 Each one by name (you'll bear no loss thereby);
 Clasp hands with them, ambitious one. Supply
 A slave, who asks, with small gifts on the Day
 Of Fortune (it costs little). Also pay
 The handmaids something on the celebration
 Of Nonae Caprotinae when our nation
 Was hoodwinked by that Gallic marriage-dress.
 Make common folk your own, I say, no less. 270
 Include both gatekeeper and chamberlain. (260)
 I do not urge you, though, to try to win
 Her with expensive gifts; let them be cheap
 But (be creative!) apt. Thus, when you reap
 A fertile field or when your branches bend
 With heavy produce, call her slave and send
 Him to her with a basket of largesse
 ("From my estate", though she will never guess
 You bought them on the Sacred Way); they could
 Be chestnuts which Amaryllis *once* found good, 280
 Or grapes perhaps. Again, if you confer
 A pigeon or a thrush you'll prove to her (270)
 You care. When gifts like this cause her to see
 Agrim death and childless senility,
 It's shameful. Perish those who bring reproach
 With gifts. Warm-hearted verses let me broach.
 Alas, though, little honour's laid on these.
 If he be rich, a *foreigner* can please –
 Poems are admired, but great gifts are sought.
 Great honour is in gold – with gold love's bought. 290
 Indeed we're living in a golden age;
 Homer, though you arrive at this world's stage
 With all your Muses, yet you must depart (280)
 If you can offer nothing with your art.
 There are some learned girls, a most rare breed;
 The rest are not but feel a certain need
 To be so. Poems will work on either class;
 A poem will be acclaimed by any lass

When it's well read. So, forged for her delight,
 It's like a little gift. What plans you might 300
 Be hatching for yourself make sure that *she*
 Entreats of you. You're planning to set free
 A slave - see that she wants that too. Deciding (290)
 To save a boy from shackles or a hiding,
 For what you had determined anyway
 Make her the debtor. Yours the gain but pay
 The glory all to her; you nothing lose,
 She gets to power-play. Let her you choose
 Be sure you're spellbound by her comeliness.
 She's dressed in Tyrian garb? Then you express 310
 Your pleasure at that mode. In Coan maybe?
 Say Coan so becomes her. Say that she
 Is dressed in gold – let her mean more to you
 Than gold itself. She's dressed in wool? That too (300)
 You praise. She's by you in her underwear:
 "You burn me up," you say, but "Have a care,"
 You add in timid voice, "that you don't freeze."
 She's planed some time apart: approve it, please.
 She's curled her hair with tongs: appraise the style.
 She's dancing for you: praise her arms the while. 320
 Approve her singing; when she stops, complain.
 Enjoy the fun beneath the counterpane.
 Though she outdo Medusa, you'll discover
 She'll soon be mild and gentle to her lover. (310)
 Don't let her see deceit in what you say,
 Don't let your features give the game away.
 If hidden, art avails; if caught, disgrace
 Emerges and, quite rightly, will erase
 Your credit for all time. In autumn's glow,
 The grapes all flushed with wine while we don't know 330
 If we'll be chilled or hot from day to day,
 We cannot keep a languidness at bay.
 She may bear up but, if confined to bed
 By autumn queasiness, let her be fed (320)
 With all your love and fondness constantly;
 Sow now, reap later in great quantity.
 And don't be squeamish with her foul disease –
 Thus she will let you do just what you please,
 Weep, kiss her, let her all your teardrops drain
 With her parched mouth; and openly maintain 340
 Your vows and, just as often as you may,
 Have happy dreams to tell her day by day.
 Have an old woman come to sanitize
 With eggs and sulphur the chamber where she lies.

All this will show a loving tenderness;
Such things have led to a bequeathed largesse.
But don't incur her hatred for your care:
Solicitude has limits everywhere.
Don't make her fast or drink a bitter potion;
Your rival can do that.

You've reached the ocean – 350

Don't journey with the wind you used before.
While love is new, its power you must store
By practice. So eat well and you'll be sound (340)
In time. The bull you fear, you would be found
Caressing when it was a calf; the tree
You lay beneath was once a twig. And see,
A river's small at birth but then it finds
Its strength by movement and where'er it winds
It gathers up great streams. Let her inure
Herself to you: custom, you may be sure, 360
Is best – until you have it, then, don't fade:
Always be seen and heard by your young maid
Both day and night. When you are free from doubt
That you'll be missed when you are not about, (350)
Then let her rest: a rested meadow yields
A worthy credit, for the arid fields
Drink up the heavenly rain: a modest flare
Took Phyllis when her paramour was there,
But once Demophoon had sailed away
She blazed with passion's flame; Penelope, 370
When crafty Ulysses was on the seas,
Was racked with ardour; and Phyllacides,
Laodamia, was an absentee.
A brief delay is best, for atrophy
In love ensues in time – new love holds sway,
The former dies. While hubby was away,
Lest she should lie alone, did Helen find (360)
A guest's warm arms. You fool, she's left behind,
Menelaus! In the same house guest and wife!
You madman, do you think that a dove's life 380
Is safe with hawks, or that a full sheepfold
Is safe from mountain wolves? Now, truth be told,
No sin did she commit, nor Paris too:
He did what any one of us would do.
To give both time and place to adultery
Compels it; she just used your strategy.
What should she do? Her man's away and here's
A very cultured guest, and she has fears (370)
Of sleeping in an empty bed. No, no,

Let Menelaus see to it; and so 390
 Was in the house! No tawny wild boar can
 Be quite as savage when at fury's height,
 Toppling the vicious dogs with sudden bite,
 Nor lioness giving suck nor tiny snake
 Hurt by a careless foot than when you make
 A woman jealous and a rival steals
 Her man: she's blazing and all that she feels
 Is written on her face; she casts about
 For fire and steel, all modesty thrown out, 400
 And rages like one Bacchus-struck. The Phasian, (380)
 By means of her own children, took occasion
 For vengeance on her broken marriage-rights
 And trespass of her husband; set your sights
 Upon this evil mother, now restyled
 Into a swallow – see, her breast's defiled
 With blood. Strong love thus meets its nemesis,
 So cautious men should shun a sin like this.
 "Get just one girl" is not what I have said:
 Even a girl who's just a newlywed 410
 Can hardly hope for that! Have fun, but cover
 Your guilt with modest stealth; don't hurt your lover (390)
 By seeking glory by it. Give no gift
 Whose knowledge by the other may be sniffed;
 Confound the times for your iniquity
 And, lest she in some well-known sanctuary
 Should catch you, never meet in the same place.
 Peruse each letter that you write in case
 They read (as oft they do) more than you penned.
 Wronged Venus wages just war – she will send 420
 The weapon back – you're grieving now, not she!
 When Agamemnon was content to be
 With just one woman, she was decorous. (400)
 It was his falseness made her lecherous.
 Chryses, she heard, with fillets and with bay
 Could not prevail with him to make a stay
 Of execution for her own sweet daughter
 Chryseis' grief she learned and how the slaughter
 Was long delayed. This, though, was mere hearsay,
 Cassandra *saw* it. Now he was the prey 430
 Of her preyed on. Now the queen invited
 Aegisthus to her bed and thus requited
 His wrongs. Now, should your sins be brought to light,
 Continue to deny them in despite. (410)
 But don't be meek or fawn exceedingly –
 That smacks of guilt. Yet labour constantly:

Just one thing counts for reconciliation –
 Deny your former love through copulation.
 The noxious savory some recommend –
 I call that poison. Or they'll mix a blend 440
 Of pepper and sour nettles, and old wine
 With camomile. She shuns such a design
 To win her joys, the goddess who abides (420)
 Upon Mt. Eryx' high and shady sides.
 Eat Megara's white onion and that herb,
 The garden rocket, Hymettian bees disturb
 To get their honey; nuts the sharp-leaved pine
 Produces, eat as well. Do you align
 Yourself with magic, learned Erato?
 My chariot round the inner post must go. 450
 I bade you hide your crimes, but now I say
 You must reveal them – go the other way.
 Don't call me fickle: for ships' companies
 Aren't always driven by the selfsame breeze. (430)
 Now Thracian Boreas propels our craft,
 Now Eurus, often Zephyrus abaft
 Will swell our sail, often the southern breeze.
 See how a charioteer will feel at ease
 With slackened reins, but then again his art
 Holds back the horses as they forward dart. 460
 Some girls indulge themselves most timidly
 And nothing gain – if they nor rival see,
 Their ardour drops; the mind, in prosperous days,
 Grows proud, nor is it easy to find ways
 To cope with fortune. As a fire grows frail
 And hides while on its surface ashes pale, (440)
 But touched with sulphur finds its vanished flames
 And now its light returns to it: thus dames,
 Torpid and free from cares, their passions dead,
 Must have their heat by sharp incentives fed. 470
 Make sure she fears of you and reignite
 Her lukewarm heart; make sure that she turns white
 At your misdeed. How truly blest is he
 Of whom a wronged girl grieves! As soon as she
 Has heard, unwillingly, of his offence,
 She falls, poor thing, her voice, her hue, gone hence. (450)
 Let me be he whose hair the Fury tangles;
 Let me be he for whom her cheeks she mangles,
 Whom she beholds, tears in her tawny eyes,
 Whom she can't leave, however hard she tries. 480
 But let her time to grieve be short, lest pique
 By slow degrees a greater power seek.

But long before this, throw your arms about
 Her neck and let her cry her torment out
 Against your chest; and kiss her as she cries;
 Make love to her – like *that* her anger dies!
 Peace is restored! After her wild defiance (460)
 (A certain foe), then seek the sweet alliance
 Of Venus' joys and she will gentle be.
 All arms are put aside and harmony 490
 Now reigns. Believe me, reconciliation
 Lives there. The doves who fought in detestation
 Now bill and coo sweet words. In the beginning
 Was one whole mass without an underpinning;
 All seemed alike – the stars, the sea, the land;
 But soon the sky was placed above us and
 The sea around us; chaos now withdrew (470)
 To its own space, and now the forests knew
 Wild beasts, the ether birds; and, fish, in seas
 And streams you swam; mortals in lonely leas 500
 Now wandered – unformed shapes and brutish power;
 In woods they lived, ate grass, a leafy bower
 Their chamber; no-one knew, for many a day,
 His fellow-man. Beguiling bliss, they say,
 Assuaged those savage beasts. Now in one spot
 A man and woman stood and, since they'd got
 No tutors, taught themselves just what to do;
 So Venus executed her sweet due (480)
 Most guilelessly. Each bird acquires a mate,
 Beneath the water fish may cast their bait 510
 For one to share love's pleasures; stag is tracked
 By hind, snake cuddles snake; the carnal act
 Dog does with bitch; ewe revels in the tup;
 Bull pleases heifer; billy-goat goes up
 His grimy mate; to fury agitated,
 Mare trails her mate, although they're separated
 By water. Give strong medicine for her rage
 (For it alone can her wild grief assuage). (490)
 They supercede Machaon's remedies;
 Your peccadilloes will be purged by these. 520
 As thus I sang, Apollo suddenly
 Appeared and plucked his golden lyre - oh! he
 Was such a sight: his hands were full of bay,
 With bay his hair was decked. So he did say,
 "Lewd Love's instructor, bring your pupils here
 To this my shrine whose motto we revere (500)
 (That we should know ourselves), for only he
 Who knows himself will love judiciously

And act according to his enterprise;
 A handsome man, then, must make sure she sees 530
 His face. You have good colour? See you lie
 With shoulder bared. You speak well? Then fight shy
 Of tight-lipped silence. A capacity
 For singing bids you sing, and, should you be
 An expert drinker, drink. But do not play
 The orator in midst of a parlay,
 Even if you are one; frenzied poets, too,
 Don't read your poems out loud. That's Phoebus' view:
 You must obey his precepts to the letter: (510)
 His holy utterance could not serve you better. 540
 To closer matters now; wise lovers gain
 Their wishes by my art; the ploughshare's lane
 Won't always render profits and, no less,
 A breeze won't always aid ships in distress:
 So little helps the lover; much more, though,
 Will harm him; he must know he'll undergo
 Great suffering; for just as many hares
 As live in Athos, bees that Hybla bears,
 Berries the sky-blue tree of Pallas grows,
 Shells on the beach, so many are the woes 550(520)
 That come from love; we feel the poisoned darts.
 They'll say your girls has gone to foreign parts,
 Even though you've seen her; think she's gone indeed
 And you're deceived. Now you've been guaranteed
 Entrance one night but see, the door is barred:
 Persever! O the ground that's foul and hard
 Encamp yourself. Perhaps some lying maid
 Will say: "Why does her our doorway invade?"
 Cajole both your harsh mistress and the gate,
 Which you must now with roses decorate 560
 The roses from your brow. Should she agree,
 Go to her; if she shuns your presence, flee:
 A freeborn man must not become a pain. (530)
 Why should your girl be able to maintain
 That she could not escape you? For your face
 Won't always aid you. So don't think it base
 To take her verbal and her physical blows
 Or plant your kisses on her lovely toes.
 Why tarry over details? For my heart
 Wants greater themes. As I my words impart, 570
 Attend to me, you folk, devotedly.
 Stern tasks I seek – thus merit needs must be.
 My art demands hard labour. Tolerate
 A rival patiently; merely await

The prize (for you in Jove's high citadel (540)
 Will be installed). These things of which I tell,
 Assume are from Pelasgian oaks, not me;
 My art has nothing greater. Say that she
 Should beckon: bear it. Should she write to him,
 Don't touch the tablets; and indulge her whim 580
 In all her travels. This is tolerated
 In wives by husbands, when facilitated
 By gentle Sleep. I am not, I confess,
 Supreme in this art. What should I profess?
 My counsel falters. Could one, in my eye,
 Give flirting signals to my girl, while I
 Accept it and not give my wrath free rein? (550)
 Her husband kissed her. Man, did I complain!
 My love is fierce. Nor was it only once
 That this flaw harmed me. That man is no dunce 590
 Who grants access to others. Best, no doubt,
 To nothing know: blot every signal out
 Lest her mendacious cheek proclaim no trace
 Of shame. Don't bring to light your girl's disgrace;
 Let her transgress and think she's not been caught.
 Detection heightens love: when Fate has sought
 Two equally, each sticks to each's own (560)
 Misdeed. There is a story that's well-known
 In Heaven – Mars and Venus were once trapped
 By Vulcan. Mars was totally enrapt 600
 By Venus, once a dreaded god of war
 And now become a lover. None was more
 Gentle than Venus, so she was not shy
 Or unresponsive to his pleas. Oh my,
 How many times she laughed fortissimo
 At Vulcan's legs and hands rough-fashioned so
 By fire and by craft. In Mars's sight
 She aped her husband (she was a delight,
 With charm and beauty mixed). Once, nonetheless, (570)
 They had concealed their trysts, for discreetness 610
 Shadowed their sin. Discovered by the sun,
 However (who could fool that currant bun?),
 Those acts of hers to Vulcan were made known
 (A bad example, Sun, that you have shown;
 So beg a boon of her: breathe not a sound,
 She'll give it if she can). He cast around
 Their bed his hidden nets (and over too),
 Beguiling sight; the two now rendezvous
 (He'd faked a trip to Lemnos) and are snared, (580)
 Quite nude; the gods are called; oh, how they stared 620

At both of them!; Venus's tears, they say,
 Could scarcely be prevented; nor could they
 Conceal their faces – nor their genitalia.
 One laughed and said, "This shackling regalia,
 If it's a burden for you, pass to me,
 Brave Mars!" In course of time were they set free
 Through prayers to Neptune. Mars to Thrace retires,
 To Paphos she: the act of their desires
 Once hidden, now was open and all shame
 Was wholly absent. He has, all the same, 630
 Madly confessed he acted stupidly, (590)
 Regretting all his skill. Thus cautioned be:
 Such toils are outlawed by Dione's fate.
 Don't snare a rival, never lie in wait
 For secret notes; those by water and fire
 Made honest men, if they have the desire,
 Let *them* do things like that. Hark one more time:
 No sport but *legal* sport. There's no pastime (600)
 That has a long skirt here. Who'd dare give out
 The rites of Ceres to the undevout 640
 Or Samos's great rituals? Playing dumb
 Is no big thing, but if you *should* keep mum,
 Yet don't, that's quite a fault. It's only just
 That Tantalus, for being mouthy, must
 Grapple in vain at apples, desiccated
 In water. Cytherea has dictated
 Above all not to leak her mysteries;
 I warn all gossips not to go to these.
 Though Venus' rites do not in chests lie low
 Nor bronze gets thumped by many a frenzied blow, 650(610)
 Yet they're a common feature – only thus
 That they be held in secret among us.
 When she disrobes, Venus, with her left hand
 And stooping, covers her erotic gland.
 Beasts couple far and wide: and from these deeds
 Maids turn their faces. All our furtive needs
 Require both door and chamber: we must veil
 Our genitals with a shift and never fail
 To act in darkness (if not total black, (620)
 Then less than open light). A long time back, 660
 When roofs kept neither sun nor rain away
 But oaks gave food and shelter, folk would pay
 Their debt to Venus, not beneath the sky
 But in the groves and caves they found nearby.
 Such was a pristine people's sense of shame.
 But now the act of love's a means to fame;

No cost is high except the power to crow.
 Shall you make conquest of whomeverso
 That you may meet, just so you may aver
 To anyone, "I had her too! Yes, *her!*" 670
 If there's a lack of girls to indicate
 That you have had them, must you then narrate (630)
 A tale of shame? But this is nought so far,
 For some will counterfeit and say there are
 None whom they haven't had (which they'd deny
 If it were true). If some run off, they lie
 And make up names and, though the girls escape,
 The story keeps the trespass of the rape.
 Foul guardian, close the doors on her, attach
 A hundred bolts to that unyielding latch. 680
 What safety's left? For he who now has thieved
 Her good name is alive and wants believed
 What never happened. Rarely I confess
 My true loves and with solid furtiveness (640)
 I hide my dark amours. You shouldn't chide
 Your girlfriend for her faults, which many hide
 (A useful ploy): Andromeda's pink glow
 Was blithely borne by her wing-footed beau.
 All thought Andromache unduly tall,
 Yet Hector thought her relatively small. 690
 Get used to heartache and avoid its sting;
 Age mollifies; first love feels everything.
 A stripling bark's young branch to ruin goes (650)
 When lashed by wind; yet soon that same tree grows,
 Hardened by time, and bears adoptive fruit.
 The body's weaknesses time will uproot;
 Faults cease to be a snag. A youthful nose
 Can't bear bulls' hides, and yet the odour goes
 As it becomes accustomed gradually.
 We soften flaws with phraseology: 700
 A pitch-black woman call 'of dusky hue';
 A cross-eyed maid 'Venus'; another who
 Has yellow hair 'Minerva'; one whose frame (660)
 Is quite unhealthy 'slender'; call that dame
 Who's tiny 'trim'; call 'of a full physique'
 A fat maid; and so therefore when we speak
 Of faults, they are obscured by near-virtues.
 Don't ask, her age, don't ask her under whose
 Two consulships she saw the light of day
 (The rigid censor's job, not yours, I'd say), 710
 Especially if her youthful bloom is spent
 And she's a 'certain age', dark hairs now blent

With white, which she must pluck. This age, you'll learn,
 Or yet a later one, will serve your turn.
 That field has crops, that field you well may reap.
 Endure, while you your youth and strength may keep.
 Soon bent old age will come on silent foot. (670)
 Row, plough, wage war, or all your muscle put
 Into pursuit of girls: this too is strife,
 This too demands your strength. A longer life 720
 Gives women greater practice in this art
 And this alone will artistry impart.
 By elegance their years they rectify
 And strive to seem not old; they'll with you lie
 A thousand different ways (no painting can (680)
 Offer as many). Every maid and man
 May share Love's joys – they need no spur to gain
 Its pleasure. Sex which doesn't wholly drain
 Both partners doesn't interest me at all:
 So dalliance with a young boy tends to pall 730
 I hate a maid who gives because she must –
 She's thinking of her wool, in want of lust;
 Pleasure through duty does not pleasure me:
 May no girl feel responsibility.
 I love to *hear* a woman's satisfaction
 And let her beg me to prolong the action; (690)
 And see her crazed, my conquest in her eyes,
 Denying any contact, through her eyes,
 For some time – benefits Nature bestows,
 Not on young maidens, but instead on those 740
 Of five and thirty years. Drink fledgling wine,
 You hasty ones; be ancient vintage mine,
 Poured from a jar put down in bygone days.
 No young plane-tree can battle Phoebus' rays,
 And new fields bruise the feet; so would you say
 Hermione tops Helen? Or Gorge (700)
 Her mother? No, if you have set your sights
 On riper flesh, you will attain your rights
 If you just persevere. Two lovers lie
 On that divan: Muse, do not cast your eye 750
 Beyond that room's closed door. They don't need you
 For fluent chat; their hands find much to do;
 Their fingers find employment where Love's darts
 Are felt in secret; for those martial arts
 Of warlike Hector weren't his sole forte – (710)
 He played the lover with Andromache.
 Achilles, too, with his fair concubine,
 When weary from the fight, found anodyne.

She let him touch her with those very hands
 So often steeped in blood of Thracian bands. 760
 You wanton, did this please you -that your frame
 Was touched by one who from the battle came
 A conqueror? Believe me, the delights
 Of Venus can't be hurried to their heights
 But must be teased through lingering delay.
 When you have found a place of which she'll say,
 "I like it there!" put modesty aside (720)
 And pleasure her: and, as the watery tide
 Reflects the sun, her eyes will brightly spark;
 She'll moan, she'll groan, she'll purr there in the dark. 770
 Don't hold her back and spread your sails too wide,
 Nor let her get ahead, but, side by side,
 Pursue the goal: then, perfectly replete,
 You both may lie, your blissfulness complete.
 This balance must you keep when you may take
 Your time and dark forebodings do not make (730)
 Your future coupling gallop; when delay
 Is dangerous, apply all oars, don't stay
 The horses, ply the spur.

My work is done:
 Crown me, you grateful lovers, every one, 780
 Wreath myrtle leaves all through my fragrant hair.
 Podalirius topped all Greeks in healing care,
 Aeacides in fights; sagacity
 Was Nestor's forte, while in augury
 Calchas was best; the son of Telamon
 Beat all at spearsmanship; Automedon
 Was the best charioteer; by that same token
 Am I best lover. Let my praise be spoken (740)
 Extol my poetry and let my name
 Echo throughout the world in mortal fame. 790
 I armed you; Vulcan armed Achilles too,
 And as Achilles conquered, so should you.
 And yet, whoever takes an Amazon
 With my true steel, may he inscribe upon
 His booty: NASO WAS THE MAN WHO TAUGHT ME.

Look now, it seems that tender maids have sought me
 That I may give advice to them, so next,
 You ladies, you yourselves will be my text.

BOOK III

Against the Amazons their ammunition
 I gave the Greeks; and now, as an addition,
 Penthesilea, I can give to you
 And to your troops some ammunition too.
 Battle on equal terms; may victory
 Be won by those to whom kind Dione
 And her globe-flying boy give approbation.
 Hostilities evince discrimination
 When naked maids fight armed men; shame thereby
 Adheres to you, you soldiers. "Tell me why," 10
 Someone will ask, "do you to a venomous snake
 Add further poison or a captive make
 Of sheep to rabid she-wolves?" Don't imbue
 All women with the sins of just a few;
 Judge each one by her worth. The Atrides (10)
 Charged Helen and her sister, Oeclides,
 By Eriphyle's crime, went, still in breath,
 On living steeds down to the Land of Death;
 Penelope, though, while Ulysses waged war,
 For one decade, then for a decade more 20
 Wandered the seas, was chaste. Consider, too,
 Protesilaus and that lady who
 Died with her husband all too soon, and, see,
 Alcestis repossessed the destiny
 Of Admetus, replacing on the bier (20)
 Her husband. Said Evadne, "Take me, dear
 Capaneus, and I'll be intermixed with you,"
 And then she leapt into the flames. Virtue
 Is female too, by dress and name: of course!
 Her people love her! (though I don't enforce 30
 Such feelings by my skill: my bark is apt
 For smaller sails. My tutelage is mapped
 For wantonness: the wisdom I impart
 Is how to love a maid – such is my art).
 No woman handles flames or savage bows –
 I seldom see men overcome by those. (30)
 Men often cheat but tender women barely -
 A guileful woman you'll discover rarely:
 The cheating Jason spurned his children's mother,
 Medea, promptly taking up another! 40
 And, Theseus, as for you, you left your wife
 On alien sands and fearful for her life
 Of ocean birds, alone. Why is Ways Nine
 So called? The woods for Phyllis ever pine,
 Shedding their leaves. Though known for piety,

Aeneas gave Dido the agency (40)
 Of her own death. What led to your destruction?
 Each one of you was lacking Love's instruction;
 You lacked the skill: by skill is Love maintained.
 You'd still be in the dark, but I'm ordained 50
 By Cytherea to keep you edified.
 She stood before me. "Are maids justified
 In being so mistreated? Fighting men
 Against an unarmed flock! Your two books, then,
 Enlightened *them*; enlighten maids as well.
 Who censured Helen once was heard to tell (50)
 Her praises later. Harm no cultured miss
 But seek her favour ever." And with this
 She gave me from the myrtle on her brow
 Some berries and a leaf. I took them: now 60
 I felt their godlike power, and the air
 Shone purer than before and every care
 Fled from my heart. Thus she inspired me:
 So listen, ladies, you whom modesty,
 Laws and your own rights concede freer scope,
 Beware your coming dotage: thus you'll cope (60)
 And not waste precious hours. While you can,
 Indulge your youth: years flow more swiftly than
 A stream and neither can be summoned back.
 So take advantage: age's lightning track 70
 Ensures for you that what's to follow pays
 Far fewer dividends than early days.
 That withering plant was once a violet,
 From which I picked a garland. You can bet
 That one day you, who now reject your beaux,
 Will lie at night, alone and cold as snow, (70)
 A crone; and at your door there'll be no fight,
 Nor will you, at Aurora's early light,
 Find roses round your threshold. Quickly, too,
 Your skin will wrinkle and the rosy hue 80
 Will vanish from your cheeks; and the white hair
 Which you have had since girlhood (so you'll swear)
 Is now quite scattered all around your head.
 Snakes throw old age off as their skins they shed;
 With horns cast off, as a stag is hardly old;
 Our assets flee unaided; so be told -
 If you don't pluck the flower, it will fade, (80)
 And furthermore the days of youth are made
 Yet briefer by childbirth; for if you reap
 A field too many times, it cannot keep 90
 Its salad days. He caused no blush in you,

O Moon, that man Endymion; you too,
 Aurora, felt no shame to take as booty
 Cephalus, and though Venus, the Queen of Beauty,
 Acquired Adonis (and she mourns him still),
 She forced Mars and Aeneas to her will.
 Learn from the goddesses, you ladies, then
 Give satisfaction to your lusty men.
 They cozen you? What's lost? The joys remain;
 Though they a thousand pleasures may attain. 100(90)
 Iron and flint by use are worn away;
 That part endures and fears no loss. And, say,
 Who'd stay a man from smothering a lamp
 Or guarding waters of the ocean's damp?
 What woman tells a man, "It won't avail"?
 What's lost except the water in your pail?
 My words won't lessen you, they teach you not
 To fear an empty loss: loss is not got
 By giving. Stronger blasts will carry me,
 But while in port, let there a *light* breeze be. 110(100)

First, body-care: from grapes well cultivated
 Does Bacchus make fine wine and, elevated
 To lofty heights, a field may thank fine earth;
 Beauty's a gift from god; yet beauty's worth
 How few can boast? So many have a need
 Of this resource. Care gives good looks, so heed –
 Neglected looks will vanish, though you be
 A very Venus. Girls of antiquity,
 Had they their own attractiveness neglected,
 Would by their cultured beaux have been rejected. 120
 Andromache was dressed in hardy guise –
 A hardy soldier's wife! So – no surprise! (110)
 If you were Ajax' wife, would you be clad
 In finery, when for *his* clothes he had
 Seven ox-hides! Yes, plain simplicity
 Ruled then, now Rome is golden – here you see
 All treasures of the conquered world: compare
 The past and present Capitols who share
 Her space: the dwelling of *two* Joves, you'd say.
 The senate-house reflects its fine array 130
 Of senators; but the entire thing
 Was built of wattles when Tatius was king.
 The Palatine, beneath our leading men
 And Phoebus, shines in splendour, but back then
 Was grazing land for beasts meant for the plough. (120)
 Let others love the past – I'm glad that *now*,

And not before, is when I had my birth:
 These times are apt for me to walk this earth,
 And not because we're mining stubborn gold
 And all those shells which countless seashores hold, 140
 And mountains shrink by marble's excavation
 And seas are kept at bay through elevation
 Of masonry. No, culture is my plea -
 No longer have we that rusticity
 That lasted till two generations back.
 But let your ears expensive jewels lack
 Which dusky Indians take out of the sea, (130)
 Nor reel under the heavy gravity
 Of gold sewn in your clothes: we often shun
 The riches that we seek. Now everyone 150
 Is caught by neatness: don't have messy hair;
 The merest manual touch can make you fair
 Or mar your looks. Nor does embellishment
 Have one face only" let each maid present
 What's best for her and check it in her glass.
 For what looks best upon a long-faced lass
 Is hair that's unadorned but with a part.
 Laodamia used this very art.
 A round-faced girl should leave a little knot (140)
 Upon her head so anyone may spot 160
 Her ears. Another might arrange her hair
 Upon one shoulder. Phoebus had a care
 To look like that when he took up his lyre;
 One yet, like girl Diana, might desire
 To build it, as that goddess used to do
 When she the frightened beasts used to pursue.
 One looks her best when whose waving locks flow free;
 Another's hair should tightly fastened be.
 One likes the Cyllenian tortoiseshell,
 Another waves her hair. You cannot tell 170
 How many acorns grow on our oak trees
 Or yet the number of Mt. Hybla's bees (150)
 Or that of wild beasts in the Alps – just so
 I may not count the many styles which go
 Under the name of fashion: every morn
 Yet more are added; some do not adorn
 Their hair at all; that hair which yesterday
 Lay loose is now arranged in neat array.
 Art copies chance: so, see, when Alcides
 Had lately brought her city to its knees 180
 And saw Iole, "Her I love", he cried.
 With countless raving Satyrs at his side,

Deserted Cretan, thus did Bacchus raise
 You up into his car. So many ways
 May loss be compensated – nature's kind
 To women's beauty! We, alas, all find (160)
 How open wide we are. Our hair, with age,
 Fall out, like leaves which feel the North Wind's rage.
 One maid may try to colour her grey hair
 With German herbs, seeking a hue more fair 190
 Than it has been before, another may
 For countless ersatz tresses duly pay,
 Buying new locks for old. It's no disgrace –
 We clearly see them bought before the face
 Of Hercules and of the Muses too.
 And why should I discourse of clothes with you?
 I need no flounces nor no Tyrian dye (170)
 Immersed in wool. Since cheaper colours lie
 Within your gaze, it's lunacy to wear
 Whole incomes on your body. Look, the air 200
 Is blue when cloudless and there is no rain
 Brought by the mild South Wind: but yet again
 It can be golden (like the ram, who, we
 All know, redeemed both Phrixon and Helle);
 It imitates the waves, whence comes its name:
 The nymphs were thus apparelled, I would claim.
 Or it's like saffron (such a garment cloaks
 The rosy goddess every time she yokes (180)
 Her daylight-bringing steeds); add to this list
 A Paphian myrtle, purple amethyst, 210
 A snow-white rose, or else a Thracian crane,
 Your chestnuts, Amaryllis, or again
 Your almonds; some wools have the sobriquet
 Of "wax". As many blooms the earth can say
 She yields, when on the vine its buds burst forth
 In pleasant spring and back up to the north
 Flees horrid winter, just as many dyes
 (And more) wool drinks: but choose with care your prize –
 Not every tint is fine for every maid.
 A snow-white skin adores a dark grey shade, 220
 Like that of Briseis – when dragged away (190)
 She sported such a hue; white, I may say,
 Suits dusky maids: Andromeda looked best
 In white (that's why Seriphos was oppressed).
 "Don't let your armpits smell," I came so nigh
 To saying, "nor be hairy-legged." But I
 Am not advising maids from Caucasus
 Or those who drink, o Mysian Caicus,

Your waters. Need I urge you not to let
 Your teeth grow grey or ever to forget 230
 To wash your face? You know how to employ
 Your powder; who's unable to enjoy (200)
 A natural blush must blush through artifice;
 For thus her naked brow does every miss
 Paint in and use a patch to cloak a cheek
 That's spotless. And don't think it wrong to seek
 A little ash to smear about your eyes
 Or saffron, one of sparkling Cydnus' dyes.
 I wrote a slender female make-up guide
 (A toilsome task, though – that can't be denied): 240
 Look there for rescue for a blemished beauty;
 On your behalf I don't sidestep my duty.
 Don't let your lover see those boxes, though: (210)
 For it to work the technique must not show.
 For how could paint smeared over all your face,
 As heavily your lover sees it race
 Down onto your warm bosom, not offend?
 Yes, wool-oil stinks, though Athens' shepherds send
 The juice of filthy sheep to Italy.
 A deer's marrow gets no assent from me 250
 When openly applied; I won't approve
 The open scouring of teeth. These prove
 Of use but are unsightly in the act;
 So many things there are which please in fact,
 Though ugly in the doing: works of stone
 By tireless Myron, though now so well-known,
 Were once a lifeless mass, an inert thing; (220)
 Gold must be crushed so you may mould a ring;
 The clothes you wear were once just filthy fleece;
 That gem, while in creation, was a piece 260
 Of rough stone – it's now, wringing her damp hair,
 Nude Venus – artistry beyond compare.
 Let's think you're sleeping while you primp and poke;
 It's best that only at the final stroke
 You should be seen. Why should I know the way
 You paint your face? I should be kept at bay
Outside your chamber. That unfinished toil
 Should not be glimpsed. There's much men should recoil
 From seeing. Most of what you do would gall (230)
 If shown; those golden pictures would appal 270
 In theatres, for the wood just by a sheet
 Of gold is hidden; one may take one's seat
 When all the work is done and not before;
 Therefore in private, too, should beauty's store

Be readied. Openly, though, comb your hair
 Cascading down your back. And have a care
 That at that time your temper's not displayed,
 Nor loose your locks too much. Don't bait your maid:
 I hate a girl who claws her servant's face (240)
 And stabs her in the arm. And, in her place, 280
 The servant brings down curses on her head
 While holding it and weeping words are said
 About the hated hair while there she bleeds.
 A woman who has serious hairstyle needs
 Must place a sentry outside her boudoir
 Or do her maquillage where no men are,
 The Bona Dea's shrine. Out of the blue
 A girl heard I was calling. What'd she do?
 She panicked and her hair became a mess
 As she arranged it. May such shamefulness 290
 Be suffered by my foes! May this disgrace
 Befall young Parthian maids! Observe the case
 Of bulls without their horns, of grassless leas,
 Of leafless plants, bald heads – each one of these (250)
 Is ugly. Leda, you've not come to me
 That you may be advised, nor, Semele,
 Have you, no more have you, Sidonian maid,
 Across the sea by that false bull conveyed,
 Nor Helen (Menelaus claimed her back,
 As well he should, and Paris didn't lack 300
 The wit to keep her). Maidens flock to me,
 Both fair and ugly, though it's plain to see
 The numbers of the latter far eclipse
 The former, for the comely don't need tips
 On skill, their gift their thrilling artless beauty:
 The sea is calm? The sailor quits his duty,
 Secure from harm. The sea's composure ends? (260)
 That's when he seeks assistance from his friends.
 Rare are a lady's features, nonetheless,
 That lack a fault: remove all ugliness. 310
 You're short? Then sit, lest, when you're on your feet,
 Folk think you're really sitting on a seat;
 Lie on a couch (and, lest your height be guessed,
 Let clothing hide your feet as there you rest);
 One over-slender should full garments wear,
 Her robe draped loose; pale ladies, have a care
 To use bright stripes; dark ladies, use the aid (270)
 Of Pharian fish; white sandals must be made
 To mask one's ugly feet, lean limbs must bide
 Within their bonds, and little pads must ride 320

On lofty shoulders, and around a chest
 That's narrow place a band; it's always best
 For one fat-fingered or rough-nailed to speak
 With but few gestures; if your breath should reek
 Don't talk while eating and a distance place
 Between yourself and your young fellow's face.
 If you've a tooth that's oddly-placed or black
 Or oversized, a laugh will set you back (280)
 Considerably. Who'd think that girls should learn
 The art of laughing? Good taste served your turn 330
 In this as well: and smile but moderately
 With tiny dimples; let your top teeth be
 Masked by your lower lip; don't laugh until
 Your sides shake – let a light and girlish trill
 Trip from you. One girl might her face distort
 With hideous cackling, another sort
 Might seem to weep, while laughing all the while,
 Another laughs a laugh that's mean and vile
 And not unlike a foul she-ass who brays (290)
 Beside her rough millstone. In every phase 340
 Of life this art can serve. Women discover
 The way to seemly weeping with their lover,
 And when and how to cry they surely know.
 Words get defrauded of their rightful flow,
 The tongue will have to lisp at their decree.
 There's charm in this defect: deliberately
 They'll mangle sounds and speak worse than they may:
 All useful stuff – hear what I have to say;
 Learn feminine grace in movement: no mean share
 Of poise exists in this: it can ensnare 350(300)
 Or else repel. One woman oscillates
 Adroitly, as her tunic undulates,
 Blown by the wind, and proudly splays her feet;
 Another, like a farm-wife red as beet,
 Takes giant, straddling steps. As elsewhere, though,
 Use moderation in the way you go:
 One's too contrived, another's unrefined.
 Your shoulder should be bare, and have a mind
 That from the left it may be clearly seen:
 Snow-White, that's best for you: I'm always keen 360(310)
 To kiss a shoulder where it's been laid bare:
 The Sirens' voices, wafted through the air,
 Lured ships, however rapidly they sped:
 Ulysses almost broke his bonds, it's said,
 On hearing them (the ears of all his crew
 Were blocked with wax). Yes, songs allure, it's true:

Let girls learn singing (many use their voice
 Where other use their face). They have much choice:
 The Roman marble theatre's stock-in-trade,
 The songs we hear whose every note is made 370(320)
 In the Egyptian style. A girl I'd tutor
 Must learn to play the lyre to win a suitor;
 Orpheus could move the lakes of Tartarus,
 As well as rocks and beasts and Cerberus.
 Your strains, most just avenger of your mother,
 Caused stones to change one building to another;
 Though mute, a fish is reckoned to have shown
 He loved Arion's lyre (the tale's well-known).
 Learn too to play the harp with either hand:
 That fits love's sport. And learn to understand 380
 Callimachus's Muse, the Coan's too, (330)
 And drunken old Anacreon; now who
 Is sexier than Sappho? – study her,
 And him whose Geta's always craftier
 Than the girl's father he deceives; and read
 Tender Propertius' works or, for a need,
 Con Gallus or Tibullus; also know
 About the fleece which caused Medea woe –
 That famous tawny fleece in Varro's story,
 And roving Aeneas, through whom Rome's glory 390
 Was spawned, to us a legend more well-known
 Than any other. Writings of my own
 May p'raps be joined with these and not assigned
 To Lethe and someone will have a mind (340)
 To say "Read these fine poems of our tutor
 Who gave precepts of love both to the suitor
 And to the maid, or choose out of his three
Amores books something which soothingly
 You may recite or, with a practised tone,
 Read from the *Letters*; till then quite unknown 400
 To others, he conceived this form of art."
 O grant it, Phoebus, o your will impart,
 You pious bardic gods, and every Muse
 And hornèd Bacchus! Maids must learn to use
 Their dancing skills and move expressive arms, (350)
 After the wine is set. A dancer's charms,
 There up on stage, are loved: such pliancy
 Has lasting polish. It discredits me
 To talk of small things – throwing of the die
 And of the potent counter, how to shy 410
 Three dice and how to cleverly compute
 Which faction you should join and which dispute,

And play the Game of Robbers cautiously,
 One piece before a double enemy
 Brought down, the warrior fighting in the list
 Without his ally, his antagonist (360)
 Resuming many times; into a net
 Let the light balls be thrown, nor any yet
 Be moved except when taken out; one game
 Is subtly played by setting up a frame 420
 Of lines that number twelve and thus within
 This tiny board you may your victory win
 By joining up your pieces (three per side).
 Invent a thousand games: retain your pride
 And learn to play – and thus you'll win his heart.
 A clever throw – well, that's the easy part; (370)
 Much harder, though, is to control one's ways:
 One tended to lose one's fortune when one plays:
 One's zeal's found out, one's heart stripped wholly bare,
 For malformed anger, lust for gain lives there, 430
 Quarrels and brawls and agonizing woe;
 The air is filled with cries and people throw
 Reproaches at each other, supplicate
 The angry gods. Beware! Pleas dominate!
 I've seen them lead to tears. May Jove expel
 From you such foul reproaches which may dwell (380)
 In you to sway someone! These games to maids
 Were lent by lazy Nature; richer aids
 Are giv'n to men: swift balls, the javelin,
 Hoops, armour, horses forced to canter in 440
 A circle; but the Campus is not for you,
 Nor yet the Virgin, icy maiden, nor you
 May venture down the placid Tuscan stream;
 You may, though, (and it's quite a useful theme)
 Stroll through Pompeian shades after the heat
 Of the Maiden's airy steeds; visit the seat (390)
 Of laurelled Phoebus – that's the Palatine
 (He wrecked Cleopatra's ships in the foamy brine);
 The monuments of Julia and Augustus' wife
 And of his son-in-law whose naval strife 450
 Has gained for him a wreathèd victory;
 Or Isis' altars or those theatres three,
 The bloodstained sand, the hot wheels' turning-place.
 What's veiled's not known nor craved: a pretty face
 That's never noticed means it nothing gains.
 An unknown lyre no-one's applause attains
 Though you all other singers should surpass,
 Even Amoebeus or Thamyras; (400)

Had Venus not been brought before our eyes
 By Apelles, then, never to arise, 460
 She would be still beneath the deep blue sea;
 There's nothing more a poet wants to be
 Than famed: of all our pains that is the end.
 Once gods and kings their patronship did lend
 To us; the choruses of old would see
 Great prizes; bards had venerability
 And sacred glory; monetary gain
 In large amounts we'd frequently attain:
 Ennius won closeness to great Scipio (410)
 (Being from high Calabria), although 470
 The ivy's dormant now – the watchful care
 Of all the learned Muses now must bear
 The name of sloth. And yet the drudgery
 Is worth it: for if in obscurity
 The timeless *Iliad* had lain, then who
 Would have known Homer? Or Danaë, too,
 If she'd remained pent in her citadel
 Into old age? And therefore every belle
 Should wander out-of-doors. So many sheep
 The she-wolf stalks to capture one she'll keep; 480
 Jove's eagle, too, on many birds will fall: (420)
 A pretty maid should show herself to all;
 Perhaps there's one whom she can captivate;
 And in all kinds of places let her wait,
 Eager to please, and focus all her mind
 On looking beautiful. There's power, you'll find,
 In chance at any spot: always be angling
 And where you least expect it there'll be dangling
 A fish; hounds often vainly roam around
 On wooded mountains – then a stag is found 490
 Within the nets unchased. For you may see
 That bound Andromeda could not foresee (430)
 Less than that tears might please? Often a man
 Is sought at funerals: then, if you can,
 Don't hold back tears and let your hair hang free.
 Those men, though, who profess gentility
 And handsomeness, who neatly comb their hair,
 Avoid! They have a thousand ladies fair,
 It's clear. Their love's a rover and won't stay
 In one fixed spot. What is a girl to say 500
 When *he's* more smooth than *she* and has more men
 As well? You'll scarcely credit it, but then
 You should: Troy would be standing yet today
 If she had only chosen to obey (440)

Her Priam's words. There are those who will feign
 True love and thereby seek indecent gain.
 Don't let that over-shiny, oil-slick hair
 Or tiny shoe-strap tucked with so much care
 Into its crease deceive you. Don't be duped
 By ultra-gauzy dress or fingers looped 510
 With rings (yes, more than one!). Of these, perchance,
 One elegant chap may be a thief and glance
 With passionate desire at your gown.
 "Hey, give it back," you'll hear all over town
 From looted maids, their outrage in their tone. (450)
 From golden temples Venus, hard as stone,
 And Appian nymphs observe these altercations.
 Many there are with dubious reputations:
 O amorous deception's their offence.
 From others' quarrels gain experience 520
 Lest your front door admit a charlatan.
 Don't ever trust the avowals of that man
 Called Theseus, maids of Athens: he'll appeal
 To gods he used before. You cannot feel
 Belief in him who has become the heir
 To Theseus' crime, Demophoön, the fair
 Young Phyllis having been deceived. If he (460)
 Should give fair promises, then equally
 Promise yourself; and should he give, then you
 Should give him joys that have been bargained too. 530
 She who receives a gift and then disclaims
 Love's joys can snuff out Vesta's watchful flames,
 Rob Io's temple, even give her lover
 Aconite mixed with hemlock. I must cover
 More relevant ground: now, Muse, no reckless haste,
 Slacken your reins. Your quest must now be placed
 In letters penned in fir-wood: let a servant (470)
 You trust receive the note. Now be observant
 And check to see if what he wrote is fake
 Or if he's truly anxious. Take a break, 540
Then answer it: a break will spur all beaux
 As long as it be short. Don't promise, though,
 Too easily, but yet, to his appeal,
 Don't be too obstinate: cause him to feel
 Both fear and hope; each time you spurn the man,
 Make sure his hope is more prevailing than
 His fear. But, maids, write with a certain grace
 That has the common touch. There is a place (480)
 In men's hearts for plain words. A doubtful lover
 Has often been excited to discover 550

A letter, but then one small phrase that's ill
 His injured charm! But since you have a will
 To dupe your men, you still do not wear
 A matron's band, you ought to have a care
 That in a servant's hand your note is penned;
 Don't trust a recent slave-boy for that end:
 I've seen deceptive girls thus panicky
 And doomed to endless bondage (false is he
 Who keeps such pledges – they're like Etna's fire). (490)
 One fraud can cause another to retire, 560
 I think, and laws exist to authorize
 Armed men against armed men to surely rise.
 Learn to trace many figures (perish they
 Who made this counsel requisite!); nor may
 You answer if the wax is not smoothed clean,
 Lest that two hands upon one page are seen.
 Your lover in your notes must seem to be
 A woman, so for "he" you must write "she".
 If I may be allowed to turn away
 From small to greater matters and display 570(500)
 Full sails, it's beauty's mission to control
 Vile humours: fair peace suits each human soul,
 Wild rage suits beasts. Rage makes the face dilate,
 Makes blood black, causes eyes to coruscate
 More savagely than Gorgon fire. "Away,
 My flute, begone." Pallas was heard to say,
 "You're hardly worth it": you too – should you see,
 While in a rage, a glass, your face would be
 Unrecognizable to most of you.
 Pride is offensive in your features, too: 580
 Eyes that are soft and gentle must beguile (510)
 Lord Cupid. Wanton haughtiness is vile
 (Credit the wise); often a face that's mute
 Has signs of hatred: therefore follow suit,
 Look back at him, return a winning smile;
 He nods? – nod back in corresponding style.
 This prelude over, Cupid now lets go
 His foils and puts sharp arrows to his bow.
 Glum women, too, I hate; let Ajax prize
 Tecmessa – we, a jovial band, have eyes 590
 For merry maids. I'd never supplicate
 Tecmessa or Andromache for a mate; (520)
 I scarcely can believe, although I must
 (For they bore children) there was ever lust
 Between them and their men. Did that crabbed wife
 Ever call Ajax 'love-light of my life'

Or other pleasing words? Who will preclude
 Making taking of a major interlude
 As instance for a minor? Should I dread
 The name of leader? For, let it be said, 600
 A good commander rules a century,
 Puts some in charge of horse, while others he
 Assigns to standards: you too must reflect
 On each man's specialty, and then elect (530)
 A place for it. The rich may give largess,
 The fluent good defence, those who profess
 The law forensic aid. We poets should
 Send poems: we are a crew supremely good
 At love. Both far and wide we all proclaim
 A loved one's beauty. Nemesis has her fame, 610
 And Cynthia, Lycoris is well-known
 Toe East and West, queries about my own
 Corinna are abundant. Treachery
 Is far from sacred bards, our quality (540)
 Is fashioned by our art: there is in us
 No aspiration, we're not covetous
 Of gold; we shun the forum and instead
 We treat of secret places and the bed;
 But readily we're caught, with ardent fire
 We burn, true always to our heart's desire. 620
 Our spirit's softened by this gentle art;
 Our nature and our aim play the same part.
 Maids, show Aonian bards a kindly face:
 They're sacred and possess the Muses' grace.
 With Heaven we have blest communication
 And it's from thence we get our inspiration. (550)
 From learned bards it's sin to hope for gain;
 Alas, no woman trembles at this stain.
 Pretend, though, let your greediness not show;
 Just one glance at your nets – there goes your beau! 630
 A rider will not use the same restraint
 Both for a trained horse and for one who ain't;
 To snare a young man or one more mature
 Will not necessitate the self-same lure:
 A tyro, new to Cupid's soldiery, (560)
 Comes to your room, fresh spoil – make sure that he
 Knows only you and bind him snug and tight
 Just to yourself; a fence of ample height
 Must round your gathered harvest be erected.
 Avoid a rival: while you're unconnected 640
 With others in your power, you'll prevail;
 With allies government and Love both fail.

Old soldiers' caution and judiciousness
 Will win them love (cadets can manage less
 Successfully); they'll not break down her door
 Nor blaze with passion nor attempt to gore
 Her cheeks nor rend her garments, nor their own,
 Nor tear their hair (that's for young lads well-known (570)
 For youthful fire); with equanimity
 He'll bear the fearful scars. You'll find that he 650
 Burns slow, like damp hay, or wood newly-hewn
 On mountainsides. This love's a surer boon,
 The other's harsh, although it's more acute:
 So lay a lightning hand on love's sweet fruit,
 So fast it disappears. Let everything
 Be known (the enemy's gates are broached), let's bring
 Faith to unfaithfulness. That which is gained
 Too easily is hardly well maintained
 For lasting love: so mix the odd rebuff (580)
 With joyful love-play. Have him sleeping rough 660
 Outside your door and mumbling "Cruel gate!",
 Submitting, threatening. Sweetness we hate;
 Rouse us with bitter juice: often as boat
 Advanced by timely winds can't keep afloat.
 A wife cannot be loved because her man
 May meet her anytime. But if you can
 Employ a door and post a watch thereat
 To keep him out, one day a welcome mat
 Shall herald love. Put your blunt swords away!
 Fight now with sharp ones. It's as clear as day 670
 That with my very weapons I'll be sought. (590)
 While in the nets a lover's lately caught,
 Let him have hopes that he alone will share
 Your chamber; later let him be aware
 Of a rival and the joint prerogative
 Of sex: remove these skills, his love won't live
 Much longer. When the barrier starts the race,
 A champion horse runs best with steeds to chase
 And outstrip. Pain stirs long-dead eagerness.
 I cannot love without it, I confess. 680
 Don't let its cause, though, seem too manifest
 So that he thinks he knows more, while distressed, (600)
 Than actually he does. A surly guard
 (Some slave whom he imagines) makes him hard,
 As does her husband's overwatchfulness:
 For pleasure that comes safely offers less;
 Though freer than Thais, pretend some fear.
 The door's more apt, but let your man appear

Via the window, and seem timorous;
Let some sharp maid rush in and say, "That's us – 690
We're finished." Hide your apprehensive beau
Some place. Mix with the fear some love-sport, though,
Lest he should think your trysts are not worthwhile. (610)
I nearly let it pass how to beguile
A crafty husband or a smart lookout.
A bride should fear her spouse, there is no doubt,
And be well-watched. Such is propriety,
Laid down by laws, our chief and modesty.
A freedwoman like you, though, who could bear
Being watched as well? Would you learn to ensnare? 700
Attend my rites. With guards just as profuse
As Argos' eyes, deceit will still produce
Results (be strong-willed!). Should a guard prevent
Your writing of a letter when you're sent (620)
To bathe – just send it with a compliant maid,
Behind a band in her warm bosom laid.
Why, she could hide a packet in her sock,
Or in her shoe your winning letters lock!
Should he note this, then let him turn about
That on her back your words are smuggled out. 710
Penned with new milk, a letter may hoodwink
(Revealed by sprinkling coal-dust on this "ink").
A stalk of moistened flax does the same thing;
Beneath a blank sheet hidden words may sing. (630)
Acrisius took care to guard his daughter,
And yet it's clear somebody must have caught her,
For he became a granddad. What's the use
Of guards when theatres here are so profuse,
And girls may choose to watch yoked steeds compete;
When they may shake the sistrum from their seat 720
And worship Isis; when they may be seen
In places where their friends have never been
Allowed to go; or when the eyes of men
Are banned from Bona Dea's shrine (bar when
She summons them); or when the baths provide
The chance for love-play, while the guard's outside (640)
Watching her clothes; or when, should there be need,
Her lying friend gets sick, willing to cede
Her bed (however ill); or when we're taught
By the adulterous key, and access sought 730
By you is offered not by doors alone?
Wine in abundance also has been known
To thwart a guard, though brought from Spanish hills;
Deep sleep can be induced by certain pills

That serve to steep the eyes in Lethaeon night.
 Her helpful maid will easily delight
 The hateful man will slow erotic play
 And keep him by her side in long delay. (650)
 What is the point of filling this whole book
 With trite advice? You can get off the hook 740
 By offering the guard one tiny fee.
 Both mortals and immortals, we may see,
 Succumb to bribery. A gift will woo
 Jupiter himself. What's a wise man to do?
 (A fool, too, welcomes bribes). His mouth is shut
 Once he is bribed. A guard must take his cut
 But once, however, and his loyalty
 Must last a long, long time. The help that he
 Has given he will often give again.
 "Don't trust your friends," I've said. It's not just men 750(660)
 That this applies to. If you're too naïve,
 Then others take your place, obtaining leave
 To hunt *your* hare. She who has offered me
 Both bed and board – it's not just once that she
 Has done it. And a very pretty maid
 Must never serve you: such has often played'
 Her mistress' role with me. What lunacy!
 Why do I freely seek the enemy,
 Betrayed by my own words? The bird won't steer
 The fowler to her haunts, nor will the deer 760(670)
 Teach hounds to run. Expediency, behold:
 I'll give my precepts faithfully. Take hold,
 You Lemnian maids, of swords to conquer me.
 See to it (and it's effortless) that we
 Believed we're loved. Those who have strong desire
 Possess swift confidence. With fiercer fire
 Let her regard her beau and deeply sigh
 And ask why he is late; and let her cry,
 Invents a bitter rival and then maul
 His cheeks with scratches. In no time at all 770
 He's won; he'll truly pity her and say, (680)
 "Her love is causing her to waste away."
 A well-dressed, handsome man would think, for sure,
 That *goddesses* would fall for his allure.
 Take any slight with calmness and don't let
 The talk of rivals make you feel upset,
 Nor be too credulous: Procris will teach
 A bitter lesson for just such a breach.
 By flow' red Hymettus' purple hills id found
 A sacred fountain in the soft, green ground. 780

Small trees compound a grove; strawberry trees
 Obscure the earth; laurels and rosemaries (690)
 And myrtle, black as pitch, are fragrant there;
 And brittle tamarisks are everywhere,
 And cultured pines and blossoming box-trees
 And thin lucerne. The gentle western breeze
 Blows all this oscillating greenery
 And makes the grass-tips tremble. Here you'd see
 Young Cephalus enjoying sweet repose –
 When he was tired, he often came to doze, 790
 Without his hounds or servants, and he'd sing,
 "O wand'ring breeze, invade my breast and bring
 Relief to my hot frame." A reprobate
 Distressed his wife with what he'd heard of late. (700)
 When Procris heard the name of "Aura" said,
 Thinking she was a rival, as one dead
 She swooned with sudden grief; she turned quite wan,
 Like early winter's leaves whose hue is gone,
 The clusters picked, like cornels which we may
 Not yet eat, or ripe quinces which will weigh 800
 Their branches down. When she came to, she tore
 From off her breast the flimsy robe she wore
 And scratched her wretched cheeks and straightaway
 Fled through the streets, her hair in disarray, (710)
 In frenzy like a Bacchus acolyte.
 She left her friends in the glen when in clear sight
 Of the grove, which now she entered silently
 And unafraid. What in your lunacy
 Went through your mind as there you lurked apart,
 Procris? What fire surged through your maddened heart? 810
 This "Aura" would appear and you would spy
 Their shameful deed, you thought! But now you'd sigh,
 "I shouldn't be here. I don't want him caught,"
 Now *want* to catch him. Two extremes thus fought
 Within her loving breast. Informer, name
 And place command belief: the mind may claim (720)
 Its fears are true; when she beheld the ground
 Pressed with a body's print, did her heart pound
 Within her fluttering breast. Now came midday,
 Now shadows shortened – they were now midway 820
 Between the evening and the coming dawn.
 There comes now Cephalus, Cyllene's spawn,
 From out his woods and splashes on his cheek
 The fount's refreshing water. There you sneak,
 Procris, suspenseful; meanwhile Cephalus lies
 On the accustomed greensward while he sighs,

“Swift breezes, Aura, come.” The poor girl learned
 The sweet mistaken name and she returned (730)
 To sanity, her cheeks now overspread
 With colour and, to clasp the man she’d wed, 830
 She rose and brushed aside the greenery;
 Thinking that he had seen some quarry, he
 Leapt swiftly to his feet, his weapon drawn.
 Poor man, what are you at? This is no fawn –
 Alas, she was impaled. “You’ve pierced,” she wept,
 My loving breast. This spot has always kept
 A wound from Cephalus. Too soon I die,
 No rival’s target. Earth, then, you must lie (740)
 But lightly on me. Now my spirit’s flying
 Into the air that I mistook. I’m dying: 840
 With your beloved hand close up my eyes.”
 To his sad breast he holds her as she dies,
 Bathing the cruel gashes with his weeping.
 She passes, and her spirit, slowly seeping
 From her rash heart, is caught upon the lips
 Of her poor spouse. But back to carnal tips:
 Uncovered matters I’m obliged to teach
 So that my weary bark may safely reach
 Her harbour. Here you’re waiting anxiously
 To hear of feasts and want advice from me 850(750)
 In that department too. The lamps in place,
 Make a late entrance, full of style and grace –
 That works, delay’s a useful procuress:
 Though plain, you’ll seem a positive goddess
 To tipsy men, and night will hide your flaws.
 Select food with your fingers (social laws
 In dining count for something); don’t be seen
 To smear your face with hands that are unclean.
 Don’t eat at home before, come to the table
 Peckish; eat somewhat less than you are able. 860
 Should Paris see his Helen gourmandize,
 He’d hate her for it, saying that his prize (760)
 Was foolish. Fitter for a maid is wine:
 Cupid and Bacchus happily combine.
 Note, if the head endures, the reason, too,
 As well as balance, stays; and see that you
 Do not see two of things. A maid who’s juiced
 Looks ugly – she deserves to be seduced
 By *anyone*. Nor, when the table’s cleared,
 Should you drop off: in slumber much is feared 870
 That’s full of shame. To carry on I blush,
 But kindly Venus says to me, “O tush,

What flusters is above all else my sphere. (770)
 Know each herself; one's method must adhere
 To one's corporeal needs. The same position
 Will not be fit for everyone's fruition.
 If you are beautiful, then lie supine,
 But if your back should be expressly fine,
 Let it be seen. Milanion's shoulders bore
 Atalanta's legs. Yours, too, should all the more 880
 Be seen if they're attractive. If you're small,
 Bestride him. Since she was extremely tall,
 The Theban bride would never make a steed
 Out of her Hector. Tall maids with a need
 To flaunt their lankiness should plant each knee (780)
 Upon the bed, the neck to some degree
 Stretched back. Should you possess two youthful thighs
 And flawless breasts, then let your lover rise
 And stand, while you lie sideways on the bed.
 Don't think to free the hair upon your head, 890
 As the Thessalian mother did, is ill-
 Becoming. Arch your neck and let it spill.
 Childbirth has creased your belly? Then rotate
 Like the swift Parthian and operate
 Your backwards steed. Endless varieties
 Of love exist. One's simple and all ease –
 The half-reclining method. I, however,
 Will with my Muse reveal more truth than ever (790)
 Did Phoebus' tripods or the horned Ammon.
 This art, then, which I long have made my own 900
 Trust (if you trust at all): there's guarantee
 Within my poems. Women be set free
 Down to their very marrow while they take
 The fruits of love, and let that treasured ache
 Invade both equally. Let flattery
 And honeyed murmurs never cease to be;
 Let dirty talk embellish your love-games.
 And you whom Nature has forbade love's flames,
 Dissemble pleasure with mendacious sighs.
 (Unhappy girl whose source of rapture lies 910
 Quite dead, this rapture man *and* maid should share.) (800)
 But when you must dissemble, have a care
 Not to be caught; see that the way you move
 And even use your eyes both seem to prove
 Your pleasure's real; let rapid exhalation
 And words convince your beau of your elation.
 Ah shame! That part of your corporeal frame
 Has secret signs. A woman who would claim

Reward after the act would not commit
Much impact to her prayers. Do not admit 910
Daylight into your chamber: best he see
You dimly.

Now I'm finished. Time that we
Dismount the swans whose necks have borne the yoke. (810)
So come on, all you maids, my student folk,
Now, as the men before you, you may scrawl
Upon your spoils NASO HAS TAUGHT US ALL.

