

TRISTIA II

You books, unhappy objects of my sweat,
What have I now to do with you – I who's
Been made abject by my own wit? Why yet
Do I seek out the newly-censured Muse,
The cause of all my guilt? A penalty
Once-merited is not enough? Mankind
Would know me by my verses, but for me
The signs were adverse – Caesar has consigned
To oblivion my *Art*, myself, my ways
Condemning. You remove my occupation 10
And you for the remainder of my days
Remove the charge. I own the condemnation
Is just. My wakeful toil has met its price:
A penance for my talent has been found.
I to the learned Sisters would be ice
And justly too, if I were sane and sound –
These deities fatal to their votary.
Such madness, though, is friends with my sick plight
That now I'm on a fateful odyssey
Back to those crags, just as back to the fight 20
The conquered gladiator makes his way,
The shipwrecked vessel to the frothing sea
Returns. Perhaps, like that man who held sway
Over Teuthrantian land, likewise for me
This will both wound and cure me, and the Muse
Who angered him will also mitigate
His wrath; often great gods a poem endues
With pity. Caesar himself would stipulate
That mothers and daughters both of Italy
Should chant to turret-wearing Ops devotion, 30
And Phoebus during that festivity
Seen by just one age. May I have the notion,
Kind Caesar,, to importune that your ire
Be eased by these examples and my art.
It's just, of my deserts I'm no denier –
Such shame as that my lips will not impart.
If I had not transgressed, what leniency
Could you have had? My fate provided you
With means for grace. If each iniquity
Of men caused Jupiter to hurl anew 40
A thunderbolt, he'd soon be weaponless.
Now that his frightening thunder's died away
He dissipates the seas and cloudlessness

Reigns in the air. So lawfully we may
 Call him the lord and sire of deities;
 The world holds nothing mightier. You too,
 The lord and sire of Romans, practise these
 Precepts, who bear the same name! You do
 Indeed – no-one could hold the reins of sway
 More mildly. Many times a conquered foe 50
 You pardoned (things going the other way,
 As victor he would not have used you so).
 A number weighted down with wealth I've seen,
 And honours too, who fought against you; when
 The battle ended, so expired your spleen.
 Each side offered its temple-gifts; your men
 Rejoiced in victory but, glad to be
 The conquered, so your foes made merry too.
 My cause is greater for they say of me
 That I have never battled against you 60
 Nor looked for martial power.
 By sea land, heaven, by you, present and clear,
 I swear my heart and soul to you are firm
 (For they could be no other). That you'd near
 The heavenly stars many years from hence
 I hoped, while just a part of those who prayed
 The like. I offered loyal frankincense
 And to the public prayers proffered my aid
 With those of mine. What cause was there to say
 My books, even those which have convicted me, 70
 Were full of you? You've only to survey
 My greater opus, which is yet to be
 Fulfilled, treating of far-fetched transformation
 Of bodies: you will find therein comprised
 My praise and pledges of my adoration
 Towards you. Your name cannot be aggrandized
 By poetry, it has no room to grow.
 Jove has sufficient fame yet he's delighted
 To hear his deeds related and to know
 That he's the theme of song – he hears recited 80
 The Giants' battle and enjoys the praise.
 Others extol you in a loftier style,
 More apt for you and with more crafted lays
 Sing of you. Yet a man may make him smile
 With just a whiff of incense equally
 As with a hundred bulls. He who narrated
 My trifles to you was an enemy
 More cruel than all the rest and thus frustrated
 The chance of having fairer arbitration.

With your displeasure who could be my friend? 90
 I scarce was my own friend. A habitation,
 When shaken and then settled, will depend,
 The whole of it, upon the yielding section.
 Fate finds a crack and, gaping, all is wrecked
 And falls. Therefore I've earned men's disaffection
 Through that one poem and, seeing your aspect,
 The public rightly follows you. And yet
 You favoured, I recall, my life and ways
 When, as I cantered by you, our eyes met
 (You'd given me that horse). But if no praise 100
 Or honour reaches me, yet all the same
 I suffered no impeachment. Nor to me
 Was wrongly given any case that came
 Under the triumvirs' authority.
 I settled private cases, too, with no
 Censure, and all confessed my righteousness –
 Yes, even those who were defeated. O!
 Were it not for that late unpleasantness
 My safety from your judgment was assured
 On more than one occasion. This last pain 110
 Has finished me. So many times secured,
 My ship's now sunk by this one hurricane.
 No small part of the flood has damaged me:
 No, the whole ocean's fallen on my head.
 Why put at fault my eyes? Why did I see...?
 Why, thoughtless, to a state of guilt be led?
 Actaeon glimpsed Diana by mistake
 When she was quite unclothed – nevertheless
 His dogs made him their prey. One has to make
 Atonement even among the gods, I guess. 120
 When one is wronged, mischance is no defence.
 The day my dreadful error ousted me,
 Perished my poor but stainless residence-
 Yes, poor indeed but it was deemed to be
 Illustrious and no less dignified
 Than others when our forebears walked the earth,
 Neither for wealth nor need identified,
 Whence came knights known for neither. Though in birth
 And riches it is poor, it's not unknown
 Thanks to my talent; this I've exercised, 130
 It seems, too callowly, and yet I own
 A great name uniformly recognized.
 Naso the learned know and dare to allow
 This poet among their friends. My habitation,
 Though cherished by the Muses, topples now

Beneath one (though not minor) accusation.
 But it could rise yet if our injured ruler
 Could check his anger, though his leniency
 Has shown this anger to be somewhat cooler
 Than I had feared. My life he's given me; 140
 This side of death he mellowed. Lord of all,
 What self-control! You did not then abstract
 My family wealth, as if life were too small
 A gift. Nor did a senatorial act
 Condemn me. No selected referee
 Decreed my exile. You yourself, as fits
 A prince, with stern words took revenge on me
 (Quite rightly). Your pronouncement, too, though it's
 Harsh in its threats, is lenient in name:
 A *relegates*, not a deportee, 150
 Your words befit my fate. No greater shame
 Attaches to a thinking man like me
 Than to displease a man as great as you;
 A deity can sometimes be assuaged.
 The clouds dispelled, a bright day meets our view.
 I've seen a vine-rich elm which Jove has raged
 Against with his own bolt. Though you bar me
 From having hope, yet I'll hope nonetheless.
 That I can do despite your stern decree.
 Great hope attends me, prince of gentleness, 160
 When I regard you, but it fades away
 When I regard my deeds. As when the sky
 Is buffeted by winds that don't hold sway
 With constant wrath and fury but now die
 And silent grow that you'd surely suppose
 They had resigned their power: similarly
 My alternating panic comes and goes,
 Giving and taking the expectancy
 Of your reprieving me. therefore I pray
 To all the gods who give to you long life 170
 And shall in days to come, as long as they
 Love Rome, and by our land, now free from strife
 Under your fatherly care, of which of late
 I was a citizen, - may you obtain
 A grateful Rome's affection, which you rate
 Through deeds and through your spirit, and, again,
 May Livia live with you her lifetime span,
 Fit for no-one but you to be your mate -
 You'd suitably be an unmarried man
 Without her for no other wife would rate. 180
 May your son, too, live in security

And rule into old age with one yet older
 And, stars not yet at full maturity,
 May your grandsons, as now they do, still shoulder
 Your and their father's burden; in this way
 May Victory, familiar to your sword,
 Appear and seek the standards whose display
 Is common and hover around our lord
 And place a laurel on the shining hair
 Of him through whom you war, to whom you cede 190
 Your auspices and gods – you're everywhere,
 Half present, caring for Rome's every need,
 Half far away in savage war employed.
 May he come back the victor, shining high
 Upon the laurelled car. May I avoid
 Your cruel bolt, I pray, a bolt which I
 Know all too well. Rome's father, pardon me –
 Do not forget that name nor take away
 The hope of my appeasement. Here's no plea
 To be allowed back home, though one might say 200
 The mighty gods have often granted more;
 A milder, closer exile would ensure
 A punishment much lighter than before.
 Cast among adversaries, I endure
 Extremes, no exiles farther. I am sent
 Alone to seven-streamed Hister, crushed below
 Callisto's icy pole in banishment,
 The Colchian and Teretean foe,
 The Cizices, the Getae scarce deterred
 By Danube's streams. All other folk, for crimes 210
 Much greater than my own, have yet incurred
 No exile more outlying. Only climes
 Of cold and enemies and ice-bound streams
 Are more remote. Here on the grim Black Sea
 Are situated Roman sway's extremes:
 Not far from here is the sovereignty
 Of the Basternae and Sauromatae,
 The last of Italy's rule that's barely got
 A toehold. I beseech you that I be
 New-relegated to a safer spot 220
 That with my fatherland concord as well
 Be not removed and I might not take fright
 At folk scarce kept in check by Hister's swell
 Nor that, a Roman citizen, I might
 Be caoptured by an enemy. It's banned
 By right to barbarous shackles to succumb
 While Caesars live. Two crimes, a poem and

An error, brought me down. I must be mum
 About the one: for I'm not so renowned,
 Caesar, that I may wound you one more time 230
 (Once was enough). The other's still around –
 One obscene poem charging me of the crime
 Of teaching foul adultery. So, true,
 Celestial minds may somehow be outwitted
 And many things may fall beneath your view;
 The gods and heaven is Jupiter committed
 To supervise and therefore has no leisure
 To care for smaller matters; so likewise,
 While of the universe you're taking measure
 (A universe that is your charge), your eyes 240
 Will miss your minor cares. Would you indeed,
 The leader of the world, desert your charge
 That you my elegiac poems might read?
 The weight of Rome's great name is much too large
 And does not lie so lightly upon you
 That you can turn your mind to pettiness
 And scan my leisure's toys. You must subdue
 Pannonia, you've also to suppress
 Illyria, Raetia, Thrace now cause alarm,
 Armenia sues for peace, the Parthian foe 250
 Holds out to you his bow with timorous arm
 And standards he had seized some time ago.
 Now Germany your youthfulness describes
 In your own son, who for one lord of action
 Takes arms, another lord. Our stat defies
 All others in its greatness. Not one fraction
 Is weak. You're wearied by the city, too,
 While guarding laws and morals, which you'd make
 Like yours. Nor is such leisure given you
 As to your subjects. Plus, you undertake 260
 So many arduous wars. Would I, then, stand
 Amazed that, with a ponderous supply
 Of tasks, you've never taken out or scanned
 My trifles? If you'd put some leisure by,
 However, as I'd hope, you would have seen
 No trespass in my *Art*. I must admit
 That they do not project a serious mien
 Nor for a man like you are scarcely fit:
 But that's not why the law condemns my book
 Nor does it teach young Roman maids. Indeed, 270
 Lest you suspect my readership, just look
 At four lines in Book I where you may read:
 "Keep off, fine headbands, marks of modesty,

And low-worn ruffles! I shall but contrive
 Legitimate dalliance. No iniquity
 Is present in my poem.” You’ll see that I’ve
 Strictly removed all ladies from my book
 Whom stole and headband shelter. But you say,
 “On someone else’s art a dame may look
 And, though no pupil, still may take away 280
 That knowledge. Let her nothing read, therefore –
 From every poem she’ll learn, and learn to err.
 If tending to transgression, from that store
 The wherewithal for vice will cling to her.
 Just let her read the *Annals* – poetry
 Is nowhere ruder – and the men who lay
 With Ilia she’ll find and then, if she
 Reads *De Rerum Natura*, she will say
 “Who slept with fostering Venus so the strain
 Of the Aeneadae could flourish?” Soon I will, 290
 If it may be sequentially, explain
 That any kind of poetry can cause ill
 Within the soul. But not for that shall all
 Books be at fault. Each plus a minus shows.
 What’s of more use than fire? And yet you’d call
 An arsonist a felon. Medicine goes
 From snatching safety from a sufferer
 To curing him. It shows what herbs can aid,
 What harm. The thief, the cautious traveller
 Both wear a sword – one for an ambushade, 300
 One to protect himself. Now, oratory
 Is learnt to plead just caused yet will guard
 The guilty, crush the worthy. If it be
 Read with an upright mind, then it’s not hard
 To see it injures no-one. “But there are
 Some women I deprave.” He’ll who’ll assever
 A thing like that is wrong and goes too far
 In crediting my work. The Games, however,
 I own, the seeds of sinfulness display.
 Remove them all! So may have discovered 310
 A reason to transgress when the hard clay
 Has by the scattered seed of Mars been covered.
 Revoke the Circus! Too much license there:
 A girl may sit next to a man whom she
 Has never met. Since girls will saunter where
 They’ll meet a beau, why should the piazza be
 Wide-open? What pace is more dignified
 Than where the temples are? That, notwithstanding,
 A girl should shun if she’s inclined to slide

Into misdeeds. For if she should be standing 320
 In Jupiter's temple, she will meditate
 Upon how many mothers he's created.
 Worshipping Juno, she will contemplate
 How many rivals have infuriated
 That goddess. Seeing Pallas, she'll demand
 Why she had brought up Erichthonius,
 A child of sinfulness. If she should stand
 In Mars' great temple, your own gift, Venus,
 Contiguous to the Avenger, she'll espy
 Before the door in the image of a man. 330
 Sitting at Isis' shrine, she will ask why
 Saturnia drove her clean across the span
 Of the Ionian and the Bosphorus seas.
 Endymion will bring Luna to her mind,
 Anchises Venus, Iasion Ceres.
 All can corrupt folk of the smutty kind,
 Yet each stands harmless in its proper site.
 Composed alone for courtesans, the first
 Page of my *Art* warns dames who are upright
 To stay well clear. Should any woman burst 340
 Into a place a priest has disallowed,
 She shows her guilt. It implicates no wrong
 To read soft verse, however. Dames endowed
 With chastity may read many a song
 That treats of vetoed subjects. Oftentimes
 A stern dame looks at girls who are unclad
 And ready for all kinds of lustful crimes.
 Vestals have harlots' bodies seen yet had
 No cause for punishment. Why is my Muse
 So loose? Why does it foster intimacy? 350
 My fault and patent guilt I can't refuse
 To own and rue my tastes and faculty.
 Why did I not in verse vex Pergamum,
 Felled by the Greeks? On Thebes, its duelling kin,
 Seven gates with seven chiefs why was I dumb/
 I had also had material within
 Our warlike Rome. It is a pious act
 To sing one's country's praises. So, in short,
 When with your celebrated deeds you'd packed
 The whole known world, from themes of every sort 360
 I could have chosen one. Just as the sun
 Attracts our eyes, your deeds would have appealed
 To me. The charge is not a worthy one.
 I plough a meagre field; that subject's yield
 Was great. A boat that bobs in a small lake

Should not take on the sea. Perhaps I could
 (Though maybe not!) be fitter just to make
 Light verse and lesser measures; if you should
 Command me to take on the Giants slain
 By Jupiter, the toil would weaken me. 370
 A richer mind is needed to attain
 Success with your great works: the poem might be
 Defeated by the theme. I dared to try,
 However; but I thought I failed you there
 And – such a sinful thing! – it seemed that I
 Detracted from your powers. Back to the fare
 Of youthful poems, those songs of lighter verse,
 I went and with amours of make-believe
 I fired my breast. That project now I curse!
 Fate led me on and now do I receive 380
 My penance through my own capacity.
 Why was I taught? Why was I educated
 At school? Why did I ever, ever see
 Beguiling letters? Now I'm alienated
 From you by my lewd verse and by my art
 Which leads to banned liaisons, you suppose.
 There are no brides to whom I would impart
 Deceitfulness. When one so little knows
 Of something, can he teach it? I have penned
 Songs of delight and pleasure which, however, 390
 Won't cause any disgrace that will append
 To me. There is no husband wheresoever,
 Even among the *plebs*, with any doubt
 About his parentage. *My* quality
 Is not my poems', trust me – my life's without
 A stain, my Muse is happy and carefree –
 A great part of my work is merely lies,
 Allowed more scope than he who's written it.
 A book does not reflect the soul but tries
 To bring to life a wealth of subjects fit 400
 To charm the listener. If this were not true,
 Accius would be cruel, those who sing
 Of fierce warfare pugnacious, Terence, too,
 Would be a seasoned fan of revelling.
 And, in conclusion, I was not alone
 In writing love-poems: retribution, though,
 Was only mine. Was old Anacreon
 Not teaching love and drinking? And Sappho
 Surely taught girls to love! Yet both scot-free!
 Callimachus, you were not harmed, yet you 410
 Acknowledged your own sexuality

To readers many times. Menander, too,
 In all his charming plays teems with romance,
 Yet boys and young girls read him every day.
 What subject does the *Iliad* advance
 But that of an adulteress and a fray
 Between husband and lover. What is there
 Before Briseis fanned Eros's flame
 And fury in two chiefs was made to flare?
 What did the *Odyssey* tell but how a dame 420
 Was by a multitude of suitors wooed?
 Who else but the Maeotian has narrated
 Of Mars and Venus apprehended, nude
 And by a net in lewd love implicated?
 How but by mighty Homer do we know
 Of two goddesses burning for one guest?
 No written art as tragedy is so
 Sedate, yet many themes of love we wrest
 From it as well. A stepmother's blind lust –
 That's the *Hippolytus*. Now, Canace 430
 Is famed for brother-love. Pelops, you must
 Admit, bore the Pisaeon maid away
 On Phrygian horses, Cupid at the reins.
 Who with her children's blood wetted her sword
 Was by unlucky love roused to her pains.
 Once of a sudden love transformed a lord
 And his beloved into birds. Today
 For her son Itys grieves his mother still.
 And if Thyestes had for Aerope,
 His sister, not been roused to do her ill, 440
 We'd not read of the Sun's steeds turned aside.
 Foul Scylla would not be for tragedy
 A theme if love had not made her decide
 To cut her father's lock. You plainly see
 Both Clytaemnestra's and Aegisthus' wrong
 In Electra and Orestes, quite insane.
 Why mention what has been expressed in song,
 The Chimaera who was by Bellerophon slain
 (He whom a guileful hostess *almost* slew).
 There's Atalanta and Hermione, 450
 Cassandra, priestess of Apollo, too,
 Beloved of Agamemnon, Danaë,
 Andromeda, there's Haemon, Semele,
 Alcmena, for whom two straight nights united,
 Admetus, Theseus, Protesilaus, he
 Who Was the first Pelasgian to alight
 On Ilium's shore. There's also Iole,

Deidamia, Deianeira, Ganymede,
 And Hylas. Time, though, will abandon me
 If I should try to publish every deed 460
 Of tragic love; my book could scarcely hold
 The names alone. There is a tragedy,
 Mixed with coarse laughter and with terms of bold
 Shamelessness; yet there was no penalty
 To him who made Achilles feminine
 And weakened his brave exploits in his verse.
 Aristides confessed his sharing in
 Milesian crimes but did not bear the curse
 Of exile. He who wrote a history
 Of filth (the downfall of the mothers' seed), 470
 Eubius, and the man who recently
 Wrote *Sybaritica* – neither had need
 To flee from home, nor did they who weren't mute
 About their own affairs. Such things abide
 In legacies of men of versed repute
 And by our chiefs' bequest they still reside
 In public libraries. Nor in foreign stuff
 Alone I'll plead my case. Many a scroll
 That's Roman has frivolity enough.
 Though sober Ennius took on the role 480
 Of warlike poet – great in wit, though raw
 In method – though Lucretius clarified
 The roots of rapid fire and foresaw
 Three elements' demise, Catullus sighed
 Often in wantonness for her whom he
 Gave the false name of Lesbia: not content
 With her alone, he made an inventory
 Of many loves, acknowledging his bent
 For faithlessness. Wee Calvus's excess
 Was similar – his intrigues he revealed 490
 In various metres. Why should I address
 Memmius and Tigidius, who concealed
 No shameful name? Add Cinna to the store,
 More wanton Anser, Cornificius
 And Cato, both light poets. And, what's more,
 The wrongly-named Perilla, Metellus,
 Whom you now call Metella. Add the name
 Of him who took the Argo overseas
 To Phasia – he could not but proclaim
 His intrigues. No less dissolute than these 500
 Were Servius and Hortensius. Such men
 Of excellence who would not imitate?
 Aristides was rendered by the pen

Of Sisenna into Latin, yet no hate
 Attached to him because he introduced
 Crude jokes into the story. No disgrace
 Attached to Gallus to have caused a boost
 To Lycoris's fame, though he lost face
 For too much wine which caused his tongue to tattle.
 Tibullus cannot trust the words he hears 510
 From Delia because he's heard her prattle
 Her lies about him to her spouse. He lets
 Us know he taught her how she might beguile
 Her guards and now admits that he's oppressed
 By his own art. As if to make a trial
 Of some gem on her finger, he has pressed
 Her hand, he now recalls, time and again
 And spoke with nods and digits and created
 Unspoken signs at table. He'd explain
 How bruises may be quite eradicated: 520
 He begs observance from a careless spouse
 For too much dalliance and he knows wherefore
 Her dog is barking when before the house
 Alone man strolls and right before the door
 There is much coughing. For such trysts as these
 He offers much tuition and advice
 To brides how they with artful strategies
 May dupe their spouses. This, though, was no vice –
 Tibullus is still popular and he
 Was famous when you first became our prince. 530
 In our winning Propertius you will see
 Instructions such as these but, ever since,
 No shame has stuck to him. Them I succeed
 (For charity forbids me to disclose
 The names of living men). I must concede
 I did not fear that my own bark, of those
 So many plying the same sea, although
 The rest were safe, would sink. Others have penned
 Of dice: - a sin particularly low
 To our forebears – what value to extend 540
 To *tali*; how to get top score; shunning
 The nasty "dogs"; the *tessera*'s count; when you've
 Given out a challenge, what's the proper thing;
 How should the patchwork soldier make his move
 In a straight line; when you have lost a man
 Between two enemies; how he may know
 Pursuit and apprehension; how he can
 With a companion into safety go;
 How small boards have three pieces on each side

Whereby to win's to keep them all abreast. 550
 Others – I won't describe them all - abide
 That waste our precious time. Some have addressed
 The various shapes of balls and how they're shied,
 Some swimming, some the hoop, some mastery
 Of make-up, others yet have specified
 The laws of feasts and hospitality;
 Others the clay by which cups are created
 And which jar should accommodate which wine.
 Now subjects such as these are celebrated
 In smoky winter. Yet there's not one line 560
 That damns their authors. Led astray by these,
 I wrote non-serious verse: the penalty
Was serious, though, for my frivolities.
 To sum up, not a single bard I see
 Crushed by his Muse: just me! What if I'd penned
 Foul mimes which always show a banned affair,
 A natty lover and a wife who'll send
 Her careless spouse deceiving letters. They're
 Watched by the man, the marriageable girl,
 The boy, the matron, the majority 570
 Of senators, their ears soiled by a whirl
 Of filthy words, the eyes inured to see
 Many disgusting things, and when the spouse
 Has been bamboozled by some new device,
 He is applauded by the entire house
 And favoured with the palm. Because not nice,
 The stage rewards the poet handsomely,
 The praetors paying substantial amounts
 For such a plethora of villainy.
 Augustus, take a look at the accounts 580
 Your games involve: such thing as these, you'll find,
 Cost you a pretty penny. These you've seen
 And shown to others – everywhere so kind
 Is your nobility – and you have been
 Phlegmatic as you watched adulteries
 With eyes by which the whole world benefits.
 If it be right to pen such mimes as these,
 Promoting vice, a lesser penance fits
My subject-matter. Does the stage decree
 Licence to suchlike works, rendering none 590
 Prone to reproach? With choreography
 My poems have been performed for everyone.
 And often they would even lure *your* eyes.
 Just as our home shine with the effigies
 Of famous ancient men, somewhere there lies

A small frame showing sundry intimacies
 And forms of love: there's Ajax with the air
 Of anger, there's Medea plotting slaughter,
 There's Venus wringing droplets from her hair
 And seeming scarcely covered by the water 600
 That bore her. Others sing of weaponry,
 Some of your forebears deeds, some of your own.
 But envious Nature now has granted me
 A narrow space. My strength is overthrown.
 Now Vergil brought into your *Aeneid*
 A Tyrian couch as well as "arms and the man"
 And there is not a single part amid
 The whole poem that's read my more people than
 That taboo match, while in his youth he'd played
 With Phyllis dallying with her tender beau 610
 In raptures in bucolic mode. I made
 An error in that meter long ago
 (Old fault! New penance!); I had published verse
 And passed you often when you criticized
 Our work: a knight, I did not earn the curse
 Of censure then. Too heedless, I surmised
 The poems I penned when young would not harm me,
 Yet now I'm old, they do - late retribution
 For early work, an issued penalty
 Long after its initial distribution. 620
 But do not think that all is frivolous:
 I've often to my bark grand sails allowed –
 Six *Fasti* in six books, each terminus
 Completing each one's month. To you I vowed,
 Under your name, this poem, newly recorded,
 Caesar, though halted now by destiny;
 A handiwork of kings I have accorded
 Grave Tragedy which suits her gravity.
 I sang of corporeal alteration,
 Never completed. O that you'd abate 630
 For just a short time your exasperation
 And give command for someone to narrate
 Those few lines which proceed from early days
 Up to your reign! You'll see how tenderly
 You used me and How ardently I praise
 Both you and yours. There is no injury
 To any in my verse nor accusation.
 All guiltless, I avoided mordant spleen:
 No poisoned jest ever took up its station
 Anywhere. Of all the writers we have seen 640
 There's only one who by Calliope

Will be undone – myself! I'm sure, therefore,
No Roman joys in what's befallen me
But rather grieves. I reckon, furthermore,
None mocks my fall if to my open mind
Indulgence has been granted. So, I pray,
Heed these and other things and be more kind,
Our care and safety! Not, lord, that I may
Return unless my long expatriation
One day oppress you, but that I may be
Safer and have a little relaxation
Perhaps, with equal crime and penalty.