

PROPERTIUS BOOK I

I

Cynthia with her sweet eyes first captured me,
Alas, unversed in Love till then. For he
Forced me to drop my gaze of constant pride
And trampled on my head. That evil guide
Instructed me at innocent girls to sneer.
The madness sadly lasted one whole year,
Though I am forced to bear the enmity
Of the gods. By always finding drudgery
Milanion curbed the fury of the maid\
Atlanta – once he wandered in the shade 10
Of Arcady's caverns, crazed, seeking as prey
Wild, shaggy beasts. Beneath the rocks he lay
Groaning, struck by Hylaeus's club: and thus
He quelled the swift lass. Oh, how vigorous
Are love's good deeds and loyalty! As for me,
Love's dull and contemplates no strategy,
Forgetting all his ways from times gone by.
But you who draw the moon out of the sky
And practise magica fire-rites, now see
That you reverse my mistress' mind that she 20
Pales more than I do! For then I would swear
That you could draw the stars out of the air,
Draw ghosts as well, with Colchian witchery.
You friends who saved me from my malady,
Seek aid for an unsound heart. I will endure
Both fire and sword, while this would then ensure
That I could vent my wrath. Across the sea
To distant countries you may carry me,
Where no maid knows my route. But linger here,
You folk to whom god lends a compliant ear: 30
Live safely matched in love. To me, however,
Venus gives bitter nights, and Love will never
Leave off. Avoid this plague and do not trade
Your wonted bed. If tardily you've paid
Attention to my words, you will address
Them later with a great deal of success.

II

What good is it your hair to titivate
And walk in Coan garb with slinky gait,
My sweet? Why douse your locks with myrrh that's brought

Through foreign trumpery? And why deface
 With purchased ornaments your natural grace,
 Not letting your own goodness shine? It's true
 None can improve the beauty given you
 By nature. Naked Love hates trickery.
 The untilled earth creates a panoply 10
 Of flowers; ivy grows better on its own;
 Arbutus grows more beautiful all alone;
 In natural channels water knows how to stream;
 Painted with natural pebbles, shores will gleam
 The brightest; birdsong's more harmonious
 When lacking skilfulness. It was not thus
 Castor was mad for Phoebe, progeny
 Of Leucippus, and he sister similarly
 Did not thus capture Pollux; Evenus' 20
 Daughter brought Idus and ardent Phoebus
 To blows upon her father's banks and yet
 Not thus; Hippodamia did not get
 Pelops with ersatz glamour: each one's face
 Owed nought to gems: their colour one might trace
 Upon Apelles' works. They did not yearn
 To use cosmetics so that they might burn
 Their beaux with passion: for them chastity
 Was beauty fair enough. You do not see
 Yourself, I'm sure, inferior to these:
 A girl's adorned enough if she can please 30
 One man; all the more, Phoebus and Calliope
 Gave you both songs and the lyre graciously;
 You're charming and your witty conversation
 Won Venus' and Minerva's approbation
 With all your others talents which will bless
 Me evermore with sweetest happiness
 Your love will bring, but first you mustn't be
 Enamoured of their prodigality.

III

Like Ariadne when she swooned and lay,
 Deserted, as her lover sailed away,
 Or like Andromeda, sleeping after she
 Was set free from the rugged promontory,
 Or as a Bacchic reveller from Thrace,
 Spent with incessant dances, drops in place
 Upon Apidanus' grassy bank, to me
 Did Cynthia seem to breathe so peacefully
 With head on hands, as I. Late in the night, 10

Lurched drunk, each slave now jiggling his light.
 I, not quite senseless yet, tried tactfully
 To reach her couch; two passions grabbed at me:
 Here Love, here Bacchus, both gods pitiless,
 Urged me try her where she lay and press
 My head beneath her deftly and to take
 A kiss or two, but I, afraid to wake
 Her up, shrank from that chiding cruelty
 I'd known before, yet I stared fixedly
 At her AS Argos did when he espied
 Io's strange horns. I now was letting slide 20
 My garland from my brow and settling
 It on her temples, then assembling
 Her fallen locks; and then I stealthily
 Gave her some apples which repeatedly
 Rolled to her lap (no thanks does sleep supply):
 When sometimes she would sigh or stir, then I
 Stopped breathing. Sensing some vain prophecy,
 Thinking some dream brought you anxiety,
 That you were being forced against your will;
 The busy noon flashed by the window-sill 30
 With light that would have stayed, its gentle beams
 Opening her eyes, and then she said, "It seems"
 (One elbow propped upon the fluffy bed)
 "Some girl has chucked you out, and in her stead
 You come to me. Where have you spent all night
 That was my due? And now, the starry light
 Snuffed out, you come to me, exhausted. O
 May you spend nights like this, you so-and-so,
 And make me wretched! Cheating sleepiness,
 I spun bright thread and, in my weariness, 40
 To Orpheus' music, softly I complained
 Of all those lengthy hours you remained
 In someone else's arms. Thus, tightly caught,
 I ceased my tears – this was my final thought."

IV

Bassus, why praise so many girls and try
 To make me change and from my mistress fly?
 Why not just let me, in the time left me,
 To live my usual life of slavery?
 You praise the beauty of Antiope,
 You praise the charms, too, of Hermione
 And all the girls the age of beauty wrought,
 But Cynthia would set their fame at nought.

Were she compared with lesser charms, much less
 Even a harsh would his views express 10
 To favour her. It has the smaller share,
 However, in my wrath, this beauty: there
 Are greater charms to make me lose my head:
 Well-bred complexion, physical grace, in bed
 The secret thrills I learned. The more you try
 To break us up, the more you're foiled, for I
 Am pledged to her. You waste your time: for she
 Shall hear of this and her hostility
 She'll voice. She'll snub you now and will not let
 Me be your friend (such sin she'll not forget). 20
 She'll blacken you with other girls: too bad
 For you – no hospitality will be had
 In my house. No shrine will be too low
 To accept her tears, and she will not forgo
 Any sacred stone. No loss can she abide
 More keenly than when love is cast aside,
 Her charms now lying idle, specially
 When that love is my own. Here is my plea -
 I pray that thus she ever may remain
 Nor give me any reason to complain. 30

V

You envious man, don't talk so enviously:
 Just leave the two of us to harmony!
 Madman, what do you seek? To undergo
 My sweetheart's wrath? The ultimate in woe
 You're chasing; you would travel lucklessly
 Through unknown fires; poisons of Thessaly
 You'd drink. She's not a slut – you can't compare
 The law with those who are. She will not bear
 To check her anger. Should she not regret
 Your prayers, what countless woes can you expect 10
 From her? she'll bar your sleep; her fierceness can
 Allow her to put screws in any man.
 When spurned, how often will you run to me,
 Brave words turned into sobs pathetically,
 A-tremble, sadly weeping, signs of fright
 Upon your face – a truly ugly sight:
 You'll strive for words but on your lips they'll flee
 As you complain, and in your misery
 You'll not know where you are or even who!
 Then will my girl harsh bondage force on you, 20
 And when the door's shut in your face, you'll learn

How safe it is as homeward you return.
You'll not so often wonder now when I
Have such a pallor in my face or why
My body's shrunk to nothing. Your affair
Your high birth will not help – Love does not care
For family portraits. But if one small trace
Of infidelity should show, you'll face
A scandal for your noble name. From me
You'll gain no ease, for I've no remedy 30
For my own sadness. Lovelorn, we'll be pressed
To weep in turn upon each other's breast
So, Gallus, don't ask what my girl can do:
You'd suffer much if she should come to you.

VI

The Adriatic, in your company,
Tullus, I'd brave, likewise the Aegean Sea
Or climb the northern mountains, or I'd tack
South to Morocco, but I am held back
By a clinging sweetheart, pleading urgently
And changing colour frequently. So she
Shrills passion at me nightly and insists,
Should I deceive her, not one god exists;
She says she's mine no longer and she throws
Out threats sad sweethearts utter to their beaux. 10
An hour's all I can take of this. O he
Who's cold in love can go to purgatory!
Why should I visit learned Athens, why
See ancient Asia's affluence when I
Meet her abuse before I leave dry land
And have my face scratched by her manic hand?
Her kisses were owed, she'd say, but to the breeze
That stayed the ship and that no cruelties
Top those of a faithless man. You must assay
To exceed your uncle's merited rank and pay 20
To our allies the old forgotten rites.
For your young days had little time for nights
Of love – your thoughts ran on our warring nation.
May Cupid not give you the aggravation
And griefs I've had! Fortune has willed that I
Lie prostrate ever, so, until I die,
Allow this worthlessness to be my care.
Many have perished in a long love-affair:
Among their ranks may the earth cover me
As well. I was not born for soldiery 30

20

30

Or fame. It's Love's warfare that Fate has planned
 For me. Whether the rich Ionian land
 Or where the waters of Pactolus flow
 Through Lydia's fields, whether on foot you go
 Or ply your oars at sea, nevertheless
 You'll prove to be a national success.
 Be sure, should you sometimes remember me,
 That I was born to live unhappily.

VII

Ponticus, while you sing of Thebes and strife
 Between two brothers and, upon my life,
 Vie with great Homer (may your poetry
 Be treated by the Fates delicately)
 I am, as is my wont, still wrestling
 With my love poems and looking for something
 To use against my harsh girl. I perforce
 Must serve my grief and not my wit, the course
 Of my bleak youth bewailing. That's my fame,
 My way of life, and thence I'd have my name 10
 Renowned. The fact I've pleased a scholarly maid,
 And I alone, and that on me were laid
 So many unjust threats, let people praise,
 And many a disdained beau in future days
 Avidly read my verse, thus profiting
 By all my pain. Should Cupid's arrow zing
 Through you as well – that god-sent injury
 I'd not have wished! - farewell, that soldiery,
 Those seven hosts: you'll weep that they must lie
 Forever dead; and now in vain you'll try 20
 To wrote light verse: Love, coming tardily,
 Won't grant you song. You'll then look up to me
 Often as no mean bard. I'll be preferred
 Above Rome's literary men. Youths will be heard
 Over my grave to say, "You who lie there
 Expressed our passion best." Therefore beware
 Of proudly scorning what I write. When late,
 Love taxes you at a prodigious rate.

VIIIA

So are you mad? Do you now think again
 Because I love you? Do I matter, then,
 To you less than the Illyrian land?
 Is he, whoever he is, to you so grand

That you'd go anywhere with him alone?
 Do you not shudder when you hear the moan
 Of stormy seas? And can you make your bed
 On the hard deck of some ship, and can you tread
 With tender feet hoar-frost and tolerate,
 Cynthia, strange snow? Could I but duplicate 10
 The winter's storms that the Pleiades may delay
 The sailor and you cannot sail away
 From Tuscany, and the cruel winds can't make light
 Of all my prayers, and I, a pitiful sight,
 Am not left on the empty shore to wail,
 Fists clenched, at you. However, may you sail
 With Galatea's blessing, faithless one,
 Whatever you've deserved, by what you've done,
 From me. When you leave land upon the tide
 May I not see the favouring winds subside 20
 So you may round Cape Thunder's shores and pass
 To Oricos' safe haven! There's no lass
 Who'll lure me from complaining at your door
 Of what you've done to me, and, furthermore,
 I'll never cease to ask some mariner
 Or other, "Tell me, what port shelters her?
 She shall be mine, though on the Artacian strand
 She settles, or beyond the Thracian land."

VIIIB

She's here to stay – she's pledged so. Enemies,
 To hell with you. I've won: my ceaseless pleas
 She couldn't block. Let lustful jealousy
 Renounce false joys: my Cynthia's ceased to be
 A traveller on a course that no-one knows.
 She loves me and, because of me, she chose
 Rome as her favourite city. She'd rebuff
 A kingdom without me. It is enough
 To lie upon a narrow bed with me
 And to be mine, whatever quality 10
 Of life that we have, rather than to own
 Hippodamia's legacy, the throne
 Of an ancient kingdom, and the plenitude
 Of Elis which provides its steeds with food.
 Though he gave much to her and will give more,
 She will not leave me to enlarge her store
 Of gifts. With gold I could not turn her head
 Nor with the pearls of India ; instead
 I used endearing verse. The Muses, then,

Exist and Apollo aids us amorous men. 20
 I trust them: Cynthia's mine! On stars that shine
 I walk, for whether its night or day, she's mine!
 A rival cannot steal my love away -
 That boast will live when I am old and grey.

IX

Mocker, I told love would come to you
 And you'd no longer speak as free men do:
 You've been brought down, submitting abjectly
 To your girlfriend – purchased but lately, she
 Now gives the orders. When it comes to loves,
 I can't approximate Dodona's doves
 In prophesying which young men should be
 Subdued by each young maiden. Misery
 And tears have made me expert in love's game.
 Would I could banish love and earn the name 10
 Of novice! What, you wretch, can it avail
 You now to rant grand epic or to wail
 About the walls built by Amphion's lyre?
 Mimnermus' verse is stronger in love's fire
 Than Homer: calm Love seeks a gentle lay.
 I beg of you, put those grim books away
 And sing what every girl prefers. You're mad,
 Because there's much material to be had
 Real grief has not yet touched you and you're still
 Not pale, the first spark of the coming ill. 20
 Then with Armenian tigers would you deal
 And bear the iron chains on Ixion's wheel
 Rather than a thousand times feel Cupid's bow
 Strike to your heart, unable to say 'No'
 To her you love. For Love's never decked out
 A single souls with easy wings without
 Crushing him with the other hand. Don't be
 Deceived that she is satisfied: once she
 Is yours, into your heart she'll deeply prey,
 Her spell too strong for you to look away, 30
 Or lie at another's door. He'll not reveal
 Himself until your very bones can feel
 His hand. Whoever you are, leave well alone.
 His constant lures. Even each oak and stone
 May yield to them, so we must then allow
 You are more likely to, poor soul. Right now,
 For shame, admit your gaffe. You'll better feel
 If you the source of your downfall reveal.

X

Sweet night it was when I beheld your first
 Moments of love as both of you then burst
 Into tears – it is delightful to recall!
 I often invoke it – how I saw you fall
 Into her arms, Gallus, and elongate
 Each word. Upon my eyes a heavy weight
 Was pressing and the Moon across the sky
 Sped midway with her steeds: nonetheless I
 Could not avert my eyes from your romance:
 Such animation! You gave me the chance 10
 To gain your confidence, so take from me
 The bounty of our shared felicity.
 About your pangs I've learnt discrimination.
 Lovers who've parted I can reconcile:
 A girl's harsh door I can unlock; meanwhile
 The fresh wounds of another I can mend:
 My healing words aren't trifling, my friend.
 Cynthia taught me what we all should shun
 And what pursue: something, then, has been done 20
 By Love from me. Of a moody girl beware -
 Don't brawl with her, keep mum for long or dare
 To talk down to her. And do not, if she
 Wants something, frown upon her gracelessly,
 Denying her, and do not let her spend
 Kind words on you in vain. When spurned, she'll tend
 To show chagrin. When hurt, she'll have no mind
 To ditch her fitting threats. Thus will you find
 The weaker and more humble you will be,
 The more success you will enjoy. For he 30
 Who's found one girl from whom he'd never part
 Is he who'll never have an empty heart.

XI

Cynthia, while you dally at Baiae,
 Where lies a causeway on the shores built by
 Hercules, and gaze at waters that once lay
 Beneath Thesprotis' kingdom but today
 Are near Misenum, does anxiety
 Some night induce you to remember me?
 Am I still in your heart's core? Or is there
 Some rival who's pretending now to care
 An steals you from my verse? (a girl will stray

When unwatched, breaking promise, and betray 10
 Her beau) I'd rather wish you were afloat
 On the Lucrine, sat in a tiny boat
 With little oars, or cloistered where folk swim
 Through Mysian waters that to give ear to him
 Seductively whispering, in security
 On some discreet beach. Though you're known to me
 As loyal, yet for every love there's fright.
 So pardon me if you feel any slight
 From what I've earned and blame it on my fear.
 I could not be more watchful for my dear 20
 Mama or think of life without you! You're
 My home, my parents, Cynthia: nay moy, what's more,
 You are my v=every happiness. When gay
 Or sad among my friends, I always say,
 "My Cynthia was the cause." So, speedily
 Quit venal Baiae, for her shores will be
 The cause of many a lover's last farewell,
 Shores which indeed have made a living hell
 For virtuous girls. A curse, then, on that place
 Which ever has to lovers brought disgrace. 30

XII

Why often charge me, Rome, with sloth and say
 That Cynthia is the cause of my delay..
 Far from my bed she lies, as far indeed
 As Hyspains is from Po. She cannot feed
 My wonted passion with her fond embrace
 Or whisper in my ear. I once found grace
 With her: no man was lucky enough to be
 Adored by one with such intensity.
 We challenged Envy: have I, then, been ground
 Down by a god? Was it a herb that's found 10
 On Promethean hills that pulls lovers apart?
 I've changed: long journeys alter a woman's heart.
 How soon a great love flees! I must alone
 Face lengthy nights and a tiresome drone
 To my own ears. A paramour who can
 Weep in his mistress' presence is a man
 Who's happy (Love's ecstatic when he's, sprayed
 With tears), or, spurned, seeks out another maid
 (Changed bondage pleases, too). For me, however,
 I cannot love another and can never 20
 Break off from her: my Cynthia was, for me,
 The first love and the last she'll always be.

XIII

As always, Gallus, you rejoice to see
 Me all alone, for Cynthia's gone from me.
 Wretch, I'll not copy your delight: therefore
 May no girl ever play you false. While your
 Fame in deceiving maids continues to grow
 And you take care to be no constant beau,
 You're now in love at last, belatedly.,
 Your features wan. One girl this penalty
 Will now exact for all those miseries
 Of others. She will put a stop to these 10
 Tawdry affairs, and, while you look around
 For new attachments, you will not be found
 To be her friend. It's not through augury
 Or spiteful rumour this news came to me:
 I saw it! Would you, then, my words, gainsay?
 Long weeping, round her neck your arms you'd lay,
 Eager upon her longed-for lips to die.
 The rest I blush to tell. No strength had I
 To part you, such was the mad ecstasy
 Between you. Even Neptune could not be 20
 So ardent when embracing his Tyro
 Disguised as Enipeus. Hercules was not so
 In his first joys with Hebe after fire
 Had ravaged him on the Oetnaean pyre
 One day outstripped all lovers; torridly
 Your torch was kindled in your veins, while she
 Will not allow your former haughtiness
 To influence you, for your own eagerness
 Will drive you into bondage. We can't be
 Surprised at this, for she is evenly 30
 Matched with Leda, whom Jove chose, matched also
 With her three daughters. I could further go -
 She's more seductive than the goddesses
 Of Greece, and, by the force of what she says
 ,Seduces Jove. But since you any day
 Will die for love just this one time, you may
 Exploit it, for you merit it. It's new,
 This incident that has befallen you:
 Be happy, then. For you may she alone
 Suffice for all the girls for whom you moan. 40

XIV

By Tiber though you loll without a care
 With Lesbian wine or Mentor's silverware,
 Gazing now at the skiffs that swiftly go,
 Now at the barges slowly pulled, and though
 The grove lifts up its trees, with tops as high
 As those of Caucasus, all this can't vie
 With my sweet love. To great prosperity
 Love won't submit. For whether a night with me
 My Cynthia passes or spends a whole day
 In carefree love, Pactolus wends its way 10
 Beneath my roof and from the Indian Sea
 I pluck gems. This proves kings will yield to me
 In joys. Until I die, may these abide!
 May opulence, when Love's not on my side,
 Be absent! Mighty heroes she can break
 And even cause the hardest hearts to ache:
 She'll come to Araby nor will she dread
 To board a purple couch or on her bed
 To make a poor lad squirm tortuously.
 What good, then, are his varied silks? While she 20
 Is happy with me, I will not delay
 To scorn such gifts or any monarch's sway.

XV

I often feared your harsh inconstancy,
 Cynthia, but never such foul treachery
 As this. What peril grips me! But you're slow
 To see me kin my dread. You fiddle so
 To readorn your hair and fix your face
 And on your breast some eastern jewel place,
 Juts like a girl eager to love just so
 For hr new beau. Calypso, in her woe,
 As her Odysseus sailed back out to sea,
 Was less affected, though disconsolately 10
 Weeping. She sat distressed, with unkempt hair
 Day after day, calling the sea unfair,
 And though she never saw him after, she
 Grieved to recall their long felicity
 Not thus Hypsipyle, full of dismay,
 As Jason by the winds was snatched away,
 Stood in her empty room. Hypsypyle
 Felt no love ever after, once that she

Swooned when she welcomed Jason. Borne away
 To death on Capaneus's funeral day, 20
 Evadne symbolized Greek chastity.
 Alphisiboea slaughtered vengefully
 Her brothers for her spouse, thus cutting through
 The ties of kindred bloodlines. So that you
 Might be a noble legend, none of these
 Could mend your ways. Do not your perjuries
 Recall, my Cynthia, and do not provoke
 The gods now they've forgotten them. The yoke
 Of your trash deeds I'll bear should injury
 Befall you. Deep rivers would to the sea 30
 Flow back, seasons reverse, before I should
 Cease loving you. So be whatever you would
 But not another's. Your eyes must not be
 So worthless, eyes through which your treachery
 I trusted! For by them you testified
 That they would fall, if ever you had lied,
 Into your hands. Can you look at the Sunday
 With them, unshaken, knowing what you have done?
 Who made you blench and turn all shades and cry
 Unwillingly? They've done for me, and I 40
 Must warn young men like me that girls to us
 With their allures are disingenuous.

XVI

I saw great triumphs in antiquity,
 A door vowed to Patrician Chastity,
 Thronged with gold chariots, moist with tears that were shed
 By suppliant captives. Nowadays, instead,
 I'm scarred with nightly drunken quarrelling,
 Often complaining of the battering
 From ill-bred hands; vile garlands hang from me,
 Excluded lovers' torches constantly
 Before me. I'm unable now to defend
 My mistress from foul allegations, penned 10
 In obscene verse; she can't clear her good name
 But is compelled to live a life of shame,
 More shameful than these times, and I must weep
 At the long watch a lover has to keep.
 He won't allow my portals rest as he
 Attempts to win her with clear melody:
 "You're harsher, door, than she. Why are you still
 And closed against me with your rigid sill?
 Unbolt and let me in! You won't be stirred

Or pass on but one stealth, loving word. 20
 Is there no end to this? Am I to be
 Left on your tepid threshold, shamefully
 Asleep? Night, stars, the chill breeze at cockcrow
 Grieve for me on my bed of constant woe.
 Would that I might speak just one word to breach
 An open crack upon that wood and reach
 The ears of my dear mistress! A lthough she
 Is stubborn as the rocks of Sicily,
 Harder than steel and iron, sobs will rise
 Amid her tears from her unwilling eyes. 30
 Now she is cradled by another guy:
 My words, unheeded, through the night wind fly.
 Door, you alone cause all my misery,,
 Ignoring all my gifts; no sympathy
 You show, your hinges mum. My grumbling
 Won't bother you. What bitter jests I fling
 At you. Hoarse with complaints you let me spend
 Long, anxious vigils at the laneway's end.
 I've often sung to you fresh poetry,
 Kissing your steps and praying secretly 40
 My dues to you, you cheat." He cried out so,
 With pleas that all you wretched lovers know,
 Outdoing the larks. Her lover's lamentation
 And her own sins have caused my defamation.

XVII

From Cyhthia I had the gall to flee
 So gripe to lonely gulls deservedly.
 Cassiope's port won't see me safely land,
 My vows all wasted on a heartless strand.
 Cyhthia, the winds, although you are not here,
 Support you: see, the gale's threats are severe.
 Will these squalls never end? Will this small swath
 Of land cover my corpse? Make of your wrath
 A kindlier thing: think that the treacherous sea
 And mirk should be sufficient penalty. 10
 Will you request to know of how I died
 And never hold me close to you dry-eyed?
 Perish the ma who fashioned ships to be
 The first to sail across the reluctant sea!
 Was it not easier to subjugate
 My mistress' rage (she's harsh, though all girls rate
 Below her far) than look upon a shore
 Hemmed in by unknown woods while searching for

The Dioscuri, which I need as a guide.
 Were it at home that by some fate I'd died, 20
 Ending my grief, my gravestone underneath
 My buried love, she would have made bequeath
 Of her dear hair at my graveside and laid
 My bones inside a rose-bed that she'd made
 And cried my name and begged the earth to be
 But light upon me. You, the progeny
 Of lovely Dor is, sea-nymphs, come, unfurl
 Our white sails while in happy dance you whirl.
 Should Cupid swoop down, grant a lover ease
 And give to him a quieter shore than these.

XVIII

This lonely place won't give my gripes away:
 The zephyr in the empty groves holds sway.
 I'll pour my heart out with impunity
 Unless the rocks themselves break faith with me.
 To tell of your disdain where shall I start?
 When was it you began to break my heart,
 Cynthia? I was a happy lover: now
 I've gained a mark of shame from you. But how
 Did I offend? What charges changed you so?
 Is some new girl the cause of all your woe? 10
 Come back, capricious one – no girl has put
 Across my threshold her exquisite foot.
 Though much ill are you owed from my distress,
 I'll never ramp up my ferociousness
 That I should cause your lovely eyes to weep.
 Or is it that my warmth I often keep
 Inside, not changing hue, my loyalty
 Unspoken? Trees, be witness, if a tree
 Knows love, you beech, you pine, favoured of Pan,
 How often underneath your shady span 20
 Do I exclaim while writing 'Cynthia' there
 Upon your delicate bark! Ah, many a care
 You caused me, cares which your door only knows!
 Faint-hearted, I have learned to stomach those
 Proud orders while complaining stridently
 Of what you did. What's the reward for me?
 Cold rocks and endless hills and comfortless
 Repose, and my complaints I must profess
 To twittering birds. May 'Cynthia' resound
 Through the woods, the rocks re-echoing the sound. 30

XIX

Cynthia, I don't fear grim death nor resent
 The fate owed to my pyre, but to be sent
 Thither without your love's a thing I dread
 More fully than the fact of being dead.
 Cupid has not caused me to be so blind
 That your sweet love could ever flee my mind.
 The son of Phylaeus could not forget
 In hell his lovely wife, hankering yet
 To touch her, so he went to Thessaly
 And their old home. Whatever I shall be, 10
 They'll always call me yours. Great love will go
 Even beyond the shores of death. Although
 The lovely heroines from the Trojan War
 Should greet me, still your looks would please me more
 And thus (so may the righteous Earth allow),
 Although your life for many years from now
 Shall stretch, I'll weep for you. If only you,
 When I am ash, could have this feeling, too!
 Then anywhere I'd feel no bitterness
 In death. Yet you would cause me such distress 20
 If you should spurn my grave, compelled to flee
 And wipe cascading tears unwillingly!
 Even a loyal girl is lured away
 By constant blandishments. So, while we may,
 Let's live and love together happily -
 Love lets us down however long it be.

XX

Gallus, I have advice for you, to pay
 For your unwavering love – don't let it stray
 From you: mischance comes to a heedless beau:
 The Argonauts found out that this was so
 By the Ascanius. I see your flame
 Is like Hylas in beauty and in name.
 Whetehr through Umbria's woods your boat may go
 Or you should bathe your feet in the Anio,
 Whether you should walk on the Giants' strand,
 Whether you're greeted wherever you land, 10
 Beware the wanton Nymphs (as amorous
 As are their sister Dryads) lest, Gallus,
 Bleak hills and icy crags should always be
 Your quest, and pools not met with formerly.

Once, in a foreign land, such woes as these
 Were suffered by the ill-starred Hercules
 From Pagasae's docks the *Argo* once, they say,
 Set out upon a journey far away
 To Phasis. The, beyond the Hellespont's sound,
 they reached the Mysian cliffs. There on the gound 20
 The heroic band spread leaves because the shore
 Was pleasant. Jason's squire went to explore
 Further afield and from a distant spring
 Sought out fresh water. Meanwhile, following,
 There went two brothers, North Wind's progeny
 (Zetes and Calais, alternatively
 Ahead) and with suspended feet they tried
 To kiss him, each in turn, but he'd deride
 Them both and with a bough he'd beat them back.
 At last they both left off their winged attack 30
 But to the Hamadryads wretchedly
 Went Hylas. Here the fountain of Pege
 Was set beneath Aganthus' height, the love
 Of the nymphs there. Dewy apples hung above,
 Self-grown, and in the meadows lilies grew,
 Their whiteness setting off the crimson hue
 Of poppies. Boyishly with delicate hand
 He plucked them, leaving now the task he'd planned;
 He bent above the lovely pool to see
 His fair reflecyon kin this truancy. 40
 With lowrered hands he then prepared to cup
 The water as he leant to take it up.
 The Dryads left their usual occupation
 Of dancing and, in wondering admiration
 Of Hylas' beauty, dragged him as he fell
 Into the pool. At this he gave a yell.
 From far off Hercules cried out his name,
 But from the distant hills nothing else came
 Upon the breeze. So guard your life, my friend,
 And thus avoid fair Hylas' fateful end.

XXI

Hurt on the Tuscan walls, soldier, you yearn
 To dodge your comrade's doom: why don't you turn
 Your bulging eyes to me? For I am he
 Closest of all your fighting company.
 Thus may your parents at your safe return
 Rejoice: from your tears let your sister learn
 That Gallus, though he passed without a scrape

Through Caesar's soldiers, he could not escape
An unknown hand. Whatever bones she'll see
Scattered there, say that they belong to me.

XXII

Tullus, you ask about my rank and where
I live and whence my lineage, for we share
Eternal friendship. Well, if you have heard
Of Perugia, where so many were interred
In Italy's sad days, when strife in Rome
Gripped her own folk – Etruria, my home,
You grieve me dreadfully because you bear
My kinsman's bones, unwilling yet to spare
A modicum of earth to sprinkle on
His wretched bones – in Umbria, hard upon
The plains that lie below, with fertile earth
Upon its fields, my mother gave me birth.

10