

# SILVAE

By Publius Papinius Statius (45-96 A.D.)

*Translated by William Thomas Sherman*

[wts@gunjones.com](mailto:wts@gunjones.com)

## *Prefatory Note*

As much as for any other reason, this present translation of Statius' *Silvae* was undertaken in an effort to expand and improve my knowledge of Latin, myself having becoming a student of that language only late in life.

For the original Latin text, historical and mythological references, and assistance generally in decoding and rendering Statius' often strange and sometimes perplexing verse into English, I am indebted to and relied heavily on J. H. Mozley's version from 1928. Where possible, and for purposes better acquainting myself with grammar and vocabulary, I have purposely striven as much as possible for a literal translation, while endeavoring to preserve the inherent feelings and spirit of the thing. Though well aware of the oft quoted secondary school admonition to not force a word for word approach, all in all I am reasonably satisfied in having been largely successful in securing what seems to me Statius' meaning – though naturally others are more than welcome to judge for themselves.

*William Thomas Sherman*  
Seattle, Washington

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## II. A Wedding Song for Stella and Violentilla.

From whence have the Latin hills sounded with sacred song? For whom, Apollo, do you stir the plectrum, ivory on the shoulder with hair dangling down, new music to make? Behold from afar, to the din of melody, the goddesses depart from Helicon and with nine lamps that flicker the ceremonial fire; gathering for the marriage a tuneful undulation from the Pierian springs. Among them lofty Elegy, with customary wanton look, draws near the goddesses, and urges and solicits that in future an added tenth foot be seen, and desires herself slipped in unnoticed and mingled in the sisters' midst. The mother of Aeneas herself leads, with lamp in hand, the bride submissive with a sweet honest blush, herself the sacred couch prepares, and with a Latin garland has disguised the divine hair, tempers her face and cheeks, eager as she is to pass for less beside the new bride.

I know the day and reasons for this sacred rite: For you these sing -- swing wide the gates -- for you, Stella, the chorus; for you Phoebus and Euan [Bacchus] and the swift Tegeaticus of Maenalian shades bring wreaths. neither charming Love nor Grace cease showering innumerable flowers and a cloud of fragrance on the close embrace with the welcome, snow-white limbed spouse. On your brow alone roses, on your brow alone violets and lilies mixed are received, as you obstruct them away from the chaste glances of the mistress.

Thus the day for the kept white fleece of the Fates has arrived, where for Stella and Violentilla having professed [their vows] the wedding is proclaimed, let care and fears yield, and misleading fraud and the falsity of a ballad cease, let Rumor be silent: that love freed has consumed restraints and bypassed rules: used up are the fables of the vulgar and already have citizens long told of the kisses they have seen. You however dazed, although having been granted such an abundance of a night, you chose and having been permitted by the divine right hand, you even still fear the vows. Put, sweet poet, put aside the sighs; she is yours. Let it be allowed setting out across the open threshold to go, to return by a step: there is no place now for doorman, law, or shyness. Seek at last the embrace to sate - it takes hold! and remain together to recall [those] nights [apart.]

Worthy indeed would be the reward, if Juno should assign you the labors of Hercules, and if the Fates gave you monsters to battle, if seething Cyanean seas to seize. On account of so great as this, it was worth the law of Pisa to run trembling and to hear the roaring of Oenomus following behind. Not more daring would it be if you were a shepherd seated on Dardanian Ida, these indeed would be gifts, [indeed] not even if instead cherishing Dawn had snatched and carried you away to the breezes in the Tithonian yoke. But what cause brought to the poet the unexpected joys of the bridal couch? Here with me, delightful Erato, this teach me, while the doors and halls warm with the throng, and many staffs sound the lintels. He is free to move them with apt conversations and they learn to be taught to hear the [traditional wisdom of the] homestead.

Per chance, where rests the brightening milky region of heaven, cherishing Venus lay nightly in the marriage bed; dissolved in the hard embrace of her Getic mate. A line of tender cupids press the bed posts and couch of the goddess; they seek the approving signs by which to bear the torches, that she might command those with which hearts are to be reached; Whether she prefers on lands or seas to rage, or to embroil the gods or still yet to vex the Thundering One. Not yet having fixed her soul to the heart's desires, weary she [i.e., Venus] lays upon the coverlets, where once the partner of guilt [Mars] having been discovered they crawled to bed into Lemnian bonds [made by Vulcan.] Here a boy from the bustle of the winged companions, to whom with most fervent mien and a nimble hand with the never failing arrows, thus from the midst of the tender troop with voice speaks out - pressing to silence his quiver-bearing brothers.

"As you know, mother," he says, "there is no work which my right hand is slow to; whomever of man or god you have given [to me], [with passion] he burns. But once, by the tears and propitious begging with prayers and vows of men, grant us to be moved, o mother: indeed not out of adamant hardness we have been created, but in truth we are your brood. There is a bright youth from the Latin nation, whom from elder patricians born and having joyed nobility now has brought and set down [here] titles of beauty from our heaven. One time with dense and quavering quivers, I pointedly pierced him - sweetly for you. Although many Ausonian matrons have sought him as a son in law, I subdued the victim of the powerful

mistress to bear the yoke and to hope for long years to be so commanded. But her at last gently - for this you decreed - we had weakly strung the bow; by love's lamp sparingly. From thence the anxious youth overwhelms the many fires, as I am an astonished witness, how much by night and day he endures my urgings. Not any else have I more vehemently brooded over, mother, digging with repeated wounds. I also saw this [modern-day] Hippomenes with longing run the cruel race-course, nor did he thus wax pale at the turning point: I saw and praised this youth of Abydos competing with his arms and hands at the oars, and I lighted the way ahead of him [when he was] swimming: The savage heat warmed him less than it did the wide seas: you, oh youth, having passed over [even] veteran lovers. I myself was stupefied you had been so hardened by the swelter and I made firm those spirits [of yours] and with smoothing feathers removed the sweating from your eyes. How often has Apollo complained to me, that I am grief to the poet! Now, mother, gratify the loved marriage. He is our devoted comrade and ensign bearer; He can recall arms-bearing labors, famous deeds of men and fields with bloody streams. But for you he has given the soothing plectrum and has preferred to walk with poets and to weave the laurel with our myrtle. He has rolled back the slipping or else external wounds of youth; alas! how great the veneration, mother, of the Paphian godhead; he having wept bitterly the deaths of our dove."

He finished; and coaxing clung to the neck of the tender mother and warmed her breast with nearing wings. Thus so invited, she replied with unresisting glance: "Grand indeed and of rare powers, which I myself have shown, the youth desires the Pierian [Muse's] pledge. I marveling at the excellent splendor of this beauty, for whom glory of homeland and of patrimony have vied in honors, and with the earth sinking under me have received and cherished her; nor, my child, have my hands ceased adorning her curved neck and cheeks and to draw forth her locks with thick balm. She has sprung forth [to become] a flattering likeness to me. Behold from afar brow and hair suggesting high graces. Measure in what [qualities] she stands out above Latin matrons: how much the maid hard presses Latonian nymphs and [like] how much I myself [have given competition to] the Nereids. This girl is worthy to arise with me on the blue waves and would have been able to sit astride our [water-borne] shell; and if she had been able to scale to these blazing seats to enter these abodes, [even] you, [my] Loves, might err [thinking her me.] Determined, I have given her wealth in beauty, yet she conquers with the riches for the soul.

"We grumble now of greedy Seres despoiling the denuded grove, and that the buds of Clymene go wanting freshness, that the green Sisters weep not enough, few fleeces blush with Sidonian dye, and rarely are crystals frozen for the ancient snows. For her Hermum and Tagus run with reddish sand - not enough for cultivation - for her Glaucus and Proteus and all the Nereids are commanded to seek Indian necklaces.

"If, Phoebus, you had seen her in Thessaly, Daphne would have wandered through the fields secure, if on the shore of Naxos she was seen next the couch of Theseus, Bacchus [Euhain], flying Gnosus, had forsook the maid deserted. But that Juno had placated me from long quarreling, the Ruler of the bright air had taken on the disguising wings and horns for her, truly Jupiter would have fallen on her in [sheets of] gold.

"But given to the youth desiring, for you child, is the height of my powers, even though lamenting to bear the yoke of a second marriage the girl oft refuses. I sense now she herself yielding and in turn [ready] to warm to the husband."

Having thus spake she raised her celestial limbs from the bed and exiting the proud portal prompted the Amyclaeon swans to their teams. Love happily seated had harnessed them; carrying the matron on the jeweled car through the clouds. Presently the Iliadean citadel on the Tiber is seen: the towering palace spreads out before them and the shining divinities of the dwelling, exulting, applaud at the swan's arrival. Not sullied by gleaming stars is the honored seat of the goddess. Here are Libyan and Phrygian marble, here the hard verdant stones of Laconia. Here curved onyx shine, here rocky veins the same color as the deep sea, the purple of which the master of Oebalian and Tyrian copper vessels oft envies. Pressing roofs depend on columns innumerable; satisfying oak timbers shine with Dalmation metal. The cold of the ancient forests exclude falling rays [of the sun], transparent fountains are alive in the marble. Nor does Nature preserve her [usual] succession: here Sirius chills, winter warms the home and ground and makes the year for them mild.

Fond Venus exults at the sight of the mighty houses of the foster-child second to none, than if morning star had arose from the deep sea to [find] Idalian homes and the Eryxian shrine. Then herself reclined alone upon the couch speaking: "For what purpose [is] this continually useless sleep and restraint on the bed, oh delightful to me among Laurentian girls? For whose sake [is this] manner of customs and devotion? Are you never to submit to the masculine yoke? A more sad time of age even now will come. Exercise beauty and make use of gifts that are fleeing [with time.] Not therefore for such [reason] did I give to you my pride and splendor of face, that you should pass through the years widows as if you were not dear to me. Enough, indeed too, much to have despised past wooers. In fact here is given to you one from among all that with complete vigor loves and is to be marveled at, needing neither beauty or ancestry. For what experienced youths throughout the city, what girls, have not heard his songs? Thus indulging let him proceed with the Ausonian guardians - resolve to raise aloft up the twelve torches prior to the festive day; surely now he has stirred Cybele's portals and selects the song of the Euboean Sibyl. And now the Latian parent, whose rightful mind is foreknown to me, will bestow the purple garment on the youth and the magisterial ivory - these a greater glory - laurels to celebrate recent Dacian spoils.

"Come therefore, unite with the marriage bed and cast off the idleness of youth. What nations, what hearts have I not joined with love's flame? Flocks of sustaining herds and hard wild beats do not refuse me, lands themselves with the air I release for wedlock, when the clouds disperse into showers. Thus the succession of things returns to the ages of the world. Had I not been joined a to a Phrygian mate, from whence [had come] new glory to Troy and the abductor of the burning gods, from whence of Lydia [had come] he who had revived my Julian tribe on the Tiber? Who would have laid down the sevenfold walls of Rome, head of imperial Latium, unless a Dardanian priestess had secretly taken Mars [in her arms], and without me preventing her?"

With such flattering pronouncements she excites the honor of the speechless bride. Having protested with tears the man's attendants near the threshold, now the gift and prayers return to her mind, now recalls the songs of the poet and of Aster's [i.e., "Stella's" bride] [sung] throughout the city, before the banquet of Aster's, at night of Aster's, at dawn of Aster's - "Hylas" was never shouted so much. And now begins to soften the sharp heart-strings, and appears to herself to have been hard. Honor to the couches, most pleasing among Latin poets, since the hard measured way is begun and you have comprehended the labors of taking refuge! Thus the river [i.e., Alpheus] deserting shining Pisa, having been long inflamed in outward love affairs, draws chastely to streams in a submerged course. until at last with panting mouth he imbibes the Sicilian springs; the Naiad [i.e., Arethusa] marvels at the sweet kisses nor can believe her husband has arrived from the open sea.

What a day, with the bright eagerness of the gods, it was for you then in this office, Stella, how greatly breasts leapt with the vow, when with fitting sweetness the face of the mistress assented to matrimony! To have appeared to go and wander for a little [moment] through glittering heavens! The shepherd rejoiced less on Amyclae's sands with Helen coming to the Idaean ships; not such was seen in Peleus at Thessalian Tempe, [or] when Chiron with upright horse's body saw from afar Thetis approaching on Haemonian lands. How long the constellations delay! How slow is Aurora to [heed] a husband's consecrations!

But faraway, the son of Leto, father of poets, with Semele's Bacchus, perceiving Stella to prepare the marriage, stirs Delos, stirs Nysa to their swift processions. The Lycian hills and the cool retreats of Thymbra, along with Parnassus, you sound for him; they reverberate in Pangaea and Ismara, and the one time festive shores of Naxos. Then the companions go in through the beloved doors in song: here they carry the harp, here with speckles behind the golden hide, here the Bacchic wand, here the plectrums; here brows wreathed with laurels, one with a Minoan crown sets his hair.

Hardly has the day passed, and now with all in fellowship excelling, already each home bustles with merry retinues. with leaves making green the door posts, cross-paths blaze with torch-flames, and the greater part of celebrated Rome rejoices. Every honor, anointing powers arrive at the door ways, each purple toga in the tumult rubs elbows with a plebeian. Here have mixed knights and youths with a company of matron gowns in distress. Each of them happy calls out, but more of the crowd envy the bridegroom. At one time formerly Hymen, reclining against a door post, had sought an untried poem of marriage to sing that might delight the





sight is given here of voices, and almost hands, passing over them. Thus Calcis' waves drive forth to flow back, thus, having separated, the boundless Bruttian shore surveys Sicanian Pelorus.

What will I sing for the first or middle [part], where will I rest the end? Will I not I admire the gilded timbers, or from whence the Moorish door frames, or the bright veins of colored marble, or the nymphs issuing forth through all the dens? Here I am drawn by the eyes, here by the mind. Shall I speak of the venerable age of the groves? Do you discern, what streams of rivers below, or what in the forests you gaze at, the stately halls passing over in silence, night will be silent, where for you, with all quiet and with no knocking from whirlwinds, murmuring darkness summons slumber? Or what baths, upheld by a grassy foundation, steam having been placed upon the frigid banks over fire? With the vapors of two furnaces joined, the river laughs at the panting nymphs hard by the tumbling stream.

I saw the arts of ancient hands and lively metals of various kinds. It is a labor now to remember the figures of gold, or ivory, or gems worthy to be fitted to fingers, each thing with silver first, or tricked in lesser bronze, and tried [the work of] teams of enormous colossi. I wander in view pondering through all I regard, I tread not influential riches, for splendor flowing from on high and bright brass reflecting sea shells to be revealed to me alone. Where various arts have painted upon the floor new figures. the ground joys: one's steps tremble.

Why now should I marvel at vast dwellings, or why arrange my verse to sing about distant abodes? Why thou, a tree which, in the midst of houses, roofs have been protected by, and posts emerging in fluid airs, which under no master will be suffering savage two-headed axes? And mayhap unknown to you already an elusive Naiad or Hamadryad owes you for untrammelled years.

What Marcia, shall I relate twice to you about alternate courses accumulating, and deep white basins amid whirling fountains, which hidden lapse into an oblique river, streams running boldly through lead channels? Should Elis alone lead a path, under Ionian floods, a sweet river to Aetna's port? There Anio itself, by way of caves and a spring, eluding abandoned night under mystic blue mantles, here and there throwing its fragile longings over the moss, or into great glassy pools descends and claps the swimming waters. In that shade Tiber reclined, there Albuia yearns to immerse her sulfurous locks; this home could separate woodland Phoebus from Egeria and widow cold Taygetus of Dryad choirs and summon Pan from the Lycaen forests. Since if Tiryinthian temples would grant other lots of fate, the sisters of Praeneste would have migrated. Why should I praise you twice-bearing orchards of Alcinous, who never have sprung forth in the air with empty limbs? Let the homes of Telegonus, Laurentia of Turnus, the acres of Lucrine and the cruel shore of Antiphates yield, yield Circe's glassy summits with wolves howling of Dulchia and the proud seats of of Anxur, what the gentle old woman owes to nourishing Phrygia: yield now the Antian shores, where you with the wiles of suns recall the winter's rain filled clouds.

Here doubtless are contemplated weighty matters, here one is oppressed by fruitful weather and exquisite quiet and the deep brow with bright light and carefree pleasures, which the Gargettian elder [Epicurus] would himself prefer, leaving his Athenian park deserted; it were worth it to have sought this place through Aegean storms and Hyades' star of snows and under the stars of Olenus, if one may trust Malea with ships through the way of seething Sicilian tides: why should pleasure close by demean the eyes? Here the harp delights Tiber's Fauns, Alciden himself, and the words of Catillus with a greater song: whether for you the spirit contends with Pindaric plectra, or you raise the lyre for mighty heroes, or you stir up enough livid anger with [satire's] blackening blight, or your letter brightens sundry cares.

Oh worthy the riches of Midas and Croesus and with Persian treasures added, bravo to the goods of the soul, to whose watered countryside Hermes owed hastening through the golden banks and the gleaming sand of the Tagus! Thus frequenting learned leisure, thus having disclosed to all clouded hearts an end, I pray you may surpass the old age of Nestor.

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#### IV. Thanks Given on the Recovery of Rutilius Gallicus from an Illness.

Huzzah, [verily] you are gods on high, the task of Clotho did not spin on inexorably, dear Astraea returns the pious to Jove having reconciled doubts while Gallicus sees the stars. You are divine. You are to the heart, Germanicus - who would deny? Fortune blushed to rob your empire of so great a minister. The neck remains nearest to the ruinous thread of the immense weight of old age and [only] grows strong again in other years. Therefore the ready cohorts, which honor city banners, often take refuge in your bosom from the complaints of the agitated forums, where the city laws and the toga plead your rulings in long grievances, let joys contend, from the ranks let our hill resound, and murmurs of rumor for the worse be silenced! Clearly long life returning remains and will remain, in whose clement guardianship [are entrusted] the powers of undaunted Rome. No new ages will have been clothed so much in calamities, nor will crime, renewing, have sinned at the altar of Tarentum.

Yet I will not invoke Phoebus, though deaf to me without a plectrum for him, nor the Aonian goddesses with Pallas the tenth, nor the gentle young of Tegeae or Dirce: come yourself and attend new strengths of the soul, you who will have sung before; for having learned not so much without the divinity of Ausonia, you have bestowed on men of the toga ample grace and intellect and judgment to the Hundred. It is proper that inspired Pimplea deny the thirst of the poet [satisfaction], nor should he be given a partner in Pirene: better to me are abundant whirlpools in a draught, which is snatched from your fount, or plain words joined when freed from established customs, or when sweet eloquence is subdued by art and regards our [poetic] rules. Wherefore go, if to Ceres we return her gifts and wine to Lyaeus and Diana at the rotunda still receives all riches of spoils and captive booty, and the Power of War [i.e., Mars] the weapons of captives: When yourself, Gallicus, of greater eloquence, of speaking abounding in riches of the sublime, scorn not to worship with the delicate lyre. The wandering moon is encircled by stars while into the ocean lesser rivulets plunge.

What rewards of the city has careful love of custom released to you! What then did I know of the ignorant mob bewailing those able lives of the patriarchs and knights? Thus the blessed Curia feared not Numa failing, nor lofty knights [the plight of] Pompey, nor women [the death of] Brutus. This is the thing: reluctant to hear of sad shackles, to spare not [oneself] nor walk away from blows high power commands, but much arming themselves to win strength and to deem worthy humble hands and praying words, to restore laws to the courts of justice not drive out magistrates and appease the sword with the toga, thus the way to deep hearts, so one trusts reverence by mingling with it love. The grave harshness of fate itself frightened all, and with evil not even delaying for youth the peril of sudden danger. Not that this is the blame of old age - indeed these undertakings scarcely exceeding twelve [ceremonial] lustrations - but the labor of a vigorous mind exerting command on its faculties for the watchful care of Caesar, a pleasant chore. Hence inward rest has [in others before] crept insidiously into weary limbs and a lazy neglect of life.

Then the god, who close the high Alpine ranges signifies with holy name the Apollonian groves, looks back, alas, praying for the safety of so dear a child of his, and cutting short any delay:

“With me here, Epidaurian offspring,” he says, “go now with glee: it is given - the means to advance forth! - to restore the greatness of [your] powers. Let us preserve by assailing now pained fibers distending: Let there be no fear of a deadly blow: Past limit Jupiter will praise these arts. For not a soul plebeian sprung or one without right divine do I preserve. And so briefly, while we pass under the roofs, I will make ready. The race itself having returned to their [original] nobility; the source lies not hidden, but with the light following is overcome, and, having yielded, joys in the illustrious descendant. To him also [is] the foremost strength of the toga: mighty and bright in eloquence; having trained in countless camps, he soon gained the principal settlements of the west and every band under the sun, having in leisure of peace sworn the sword no permission to be ungirded and slacken. Him strengthening Galatea dared to reproach in war - myself also - through nine harvests Pamphylia and warlike Pannonia feared the bow and with Armenia in flight dreading the Araxes now is suffering a Latian bridge. Why should I turn over repeating the twice [bestowed] commands and duties [for him] in great Asia? He might indeed wish to have these [offices] thrice and four times for himself, but the greater annals of a magistrate, having been promised to him not once, called him home. Wherefore should I praise the wondrous compliance of Libya’s tribute and a triumph having been sent in the midst of peace and how immense the riches he delivered over which no one





The hazy Hyades with such great clouds hides  
not the lands nor melts a Pleiadean star,  
as by wedges Winter with hail subdues  
the people of Latin serenity.  
Let Jupiter prolong clouds through the world  
and threaten showers for spacious fields,  
whilst THESE rains from OUR Jove are endured.

But look, he goes into the theater stalls  
through all ranks with splendor, with care  
seating the common people with no less honors.  
These carry bread baskets,  
white napkins, and fine dinners;  
others serve languid wines;  
you'd think them so many Ganymedes.  
That world, which is upright and austere,  
clans and togas together,  
as well as so many others, oh blessed,  
you nourish and feed.  
Snobby Annona knows not this festival.  
Go, Vetustas, compare the age now  
with the ancient time of golden Jove:  
not then did wines flow thus so freely,  
nor grain so fill up the late year.  
By one table is fed each rank,  
children, women, common folk, knights, senators:  
liberty relaxes reverence.  
But even you - who to be idle here,  
which of the gods could have promised this? -  
entered with us the shared banquet.  
Now they, whoever they are,  
whether fortunate or needy,  
glory themselves a table fellow of the leader [i.e., Caesar.]

Among these, pleasure flees the noise  
of novel luxuries and polished gaping;  
a coarse and naive woman stands with sword  
as she takes the fight to shameless men!  
You might believe the horsemen of Thermodon  
charging to Tanais river or the wilds of Colchis.  
Here impudent nature enters with a row of dwarves,  
which by brief finishing too soon,  
she bound at once into a knotty mass.  
Swords set in, wounds devour,  
- what a band! - and threaten death to them.  
Father Mars grins at the bloody host  
and with cranes falling with cries of cheating  
marvels at the ferocious fighters.

Now under the approaching shades of night  
what tumult succeeds upon the dispensing of riches!  
Here enter easy girls to be purchased,  
here it is admitted by all, what in the theaters  
pleases by beauty or is proven by art.  
Here the puffed up of Lydia applaud with the crowd,  
and there are the clacking cymbals of Cadiz,





pouring wines from the mouth and disturb [you] from all the sweet booty? Who will disrupt with a whisper the morning slumbers, [your] departure having been imposed by obligations, stay by arts the coverlets and revive [you] in the doorway with kisses? The interrupting hand entering once more, who will spring forth with brief expressions of adoration and encompass [your] shoulders with outstretched arms? Quiet the home, I admit, left empty the households, and in the rooms and at the tables a gloomy stillness!

What wonder that an affectionate a sustainer so honors a funeral? You were rest and a safe haven for the master in old age, you the means of delight, you the pleasant recourse of a troubled heart. The uproar of a barbaric slave platform spun not you, nor when an infant were you mixed in with tawdry Egyptian merchandise, nor speaking devised words of pre-arranged wit did you with lascivious deliberation search out for and furnish mistresses. Here a home, here an ancestry of a master at once both with family dwellings dear and children obedient to your joys, not seeking importance of rank, but when you had been immediately been taken from the womb, the master exulting first raised you, and hailing with a clear voice, spoke with judgment, and embracing bore to his bosom someone deemed to have himself begot. It is right for me to have spoken with favor of pious parents, and you, Nature, I pray you may permit, to whom it is first given through the world to sanctify oaths of the soul: not everyone of near blood or one having descended from a series of a well bred race binds; often new pledges assumed are deeper and glide forward in the connecting. It is necessary to have given birth to children, and it pleases to have chosen [to do so.] Thus with tender flattering half-beast Chiron overcame Haemonian Peleus for Achilles, nor did elder Peleus accompany the son in arms at Troy, but it was Phoenix that adhered there to the illustrious offspring. Evander from afar wished for the return of Pallas rejoicing, [but] faithful Acoetes [in fact] beheld the battles. And when at a distance that the father might hold back within the bright stars, it was wave-tossed Dictys who made beautiful the winged Perseus. What should I say with piety of foster mothers living [as] parents? What say you Bacchus, after funeral ashes cheated you of a mother, [of your] more safely crawling to the breast of Ino? With Ilia, now secure from a Tuscan father, and reigning in the waves, Romulus wearied Accam carrying him? I have seen cross-weaving branches from a stranger [tree] go higher in an oak than its own. And already mind and soul had made you a father to him, but not by customs or ornamental display: And yet even now, having clasped with a murmur the voices of those crying, you loved the child's infant wailings.

He as a rude flower that stands high in the mild meadows and will expire with the first south winds, tender thus it conquered day with a proud passing face and was leaving behind many similar [sorts of] years. Or had he stood, with fettered limbs curving, in wrestling schools: you'd think him conceived of a mother from Amycla, Apollo might have traded Oebalus for him, or Alicides substituted Hylan; or if attired an Attic Greek, he might have flowed eloquently with the words of Meander: have extolled rejoicing the echo and tresses of beauties and subdued impish Thalia with a roseate crown; or had he bespoke the labors of old Maeonia and Troy or of the calamities of the late returning Ulysses: the father and teachers themselves would have been struck with astonishment. No doubt Lachesis touched the cradle with an ill-fortuned hand, and Envy certainly was cherishing that boy at the lap embracing: those cheeks and grown up hair to adorn, these arts to display and words to instill, for which now we mourn. He had begun to match the labors of Hercules for his years, though as yet near to infancy; already even so, stepping vigorously, with greater measures of cultivation, and having seen the clothing for the boy diminish in size - when what vestments for you, what garments did not the mild master hurry! Not with short doublets straining the torso, or tight cloaks constricting the arms; not he with irregular folds, but ever gathering for the years, wrapped woven fabrics in scarlet mode [for you] to wear, now lawn greens for following the chest, now coloring with delightful purple, now he made glad the fingers with vibrant gems: the crowds of comrades, the gifts, did not cease: he wanted only the bordered toga for modest propriety.

These the fortune of the home. Suddenly Parca [one of the Fates] lifted a hostile hand. For what, goddess, do you extend the savage weighty claws? Does not beauty, does not a time of weeping move you? Him not violent Procne would have torn for a [hated] husband, nor a wild vicious Colchian [Medea] have hardened in wrath for, nor have cast out [even] were this Aeolian Creusa [wife of Jason]; from him mad Athamas would have turned [aside] the grim bow, though hating Hectorean ashes Ulysses will have wept casting him from Troy of the Phrygian towers[.] [Come] the seventh day, and now lacking vigor the eyes numb, now it is Juno [in the underworld] below with encompassing hand that preserves the hair. He however, with the Fates pressing in on the fragile years, sees you with withering expression and faltering tongue murmur; in



you of emptied heart now breathes out all that remains, alone he remembers you alone, calling he hears clearly your mouth stir, for you he leaves the [remaining] words and consoled forbids a grieving groan. It is pleasing, oh Fate, even so that death did not consume slowly the dignity of the prostrate boy, and he went below to the shades untouched as one of those undefiled bodies free of blame.

What, should I speak of obsequy fires, prodigious offerings, and the mournful luxury of ardent funerals? What, of yourself in purple ascend to heap upon the sad pyre, of Cilician bouquets, of herbal gifts from India, of Arabian, Egyptian and Palestinian perfumes to soak the burning hair? Each desires to bring all that is lavish and to incite the estimation of Melior, thinking lost riches nothing; but he does not arrest the hated blaze, nor are dense flames wanting. Dread seizes the senses. I feared for you Melior, formerly the most calm of individuals, near and at the summit of a conflagration for the dead! Did he then seem light hearted and affable? From whence [therefore] the barbaric fright and hands of a savage mind, while on the recoiling earth only the unjust light of day pours down, and now equally pitiless [to us] you rend robes and chest together, and seeing visions of the beloved press cold kisses, caressing? There were father and mother prostrate with woe, but to behold you [even] the parents were astonished. [Yet] why [should this seem] strange? All the crowds and folk going before [you] bewept the impious deed [of the youth's death], by the Flaminian road which crosses the Mulvian causeway, while undeserving it the child is surrendered to the doleful flames, and by his form and age merits the lamentation: Of such a kind, in the Isthmian harbor, shipwrecked Palaemon, having been borne forth from the sea, lay placed beneath the mother; thus also having been cut down by serpents, an insatiable fire consumed Opheltis, playing in the snake haunted grass of Lerna,

Set aside dread of death and cease to fear its menaces: Cereberus with three heads will not bark, nor a sister [a Fury] with flames, nor hydras arising terrify him; but he [Charon] from the interior, the wild sailor of the implacable skiff, will come athwart the sterile embankments and burning shores, lest the means for the boy to have embarked be harsh.

What announces to me the offspring of Cyllene with glad wand? Is there not some happiness in so severe a time? The boy knew the noble likenesses of the face of the lofty Blaesus, while oft at home he saw you with a heart binding new garlands and rubbing clean wax images. When midst the Ausonian shores he recognized him of Lethe's stream cleansing the procession of Quirinus' princes[.] First on arrival with quiet trepidation he joins with the steps of the foremost and pulls on [their] robes, thereupon he follows further; by pulling more he is not spurned, but pardoned, [the other] trusts [him to be] from a descendant's stock. Next when, with the pledge of a friend, he perceived the beloved with the pledge of a friend and the lost child as a consolation to Blaesus, he raises [him] from the ground with pride and binds himself long to the neck [in embrace] then carries him by the hand joying, what gifts of gentle Elysium, he extends bare branches and silent birds and pale flowers with battered shoots. Nor does he forbid him to have remembered you, but from a kind heart mingles and divides [with you] the love by turns.

Here an end to the ravaging. Yet why now should you sedate wounds and lift a head immersed in sorrow? All you see discharging their duty [of dying] or will die: they go to meet nights and days and stars, nor does it profit their schemes on the solid ground. For who should weep the death of noble and common people fallen? These wars, these oceans demand [their deaths]; for these love [demands] destruction, and for those madness wild with desire, (but I should be silent about distempters); these stiffening in the mouth of Winter, those in the restless fire of fatal Sirius, these gaping remain pale in rainy Autumn. Whatever undertakes birth, fears the end, we all will go, we all will pass: for innumerable shades Aecus shakes the urn. But he, whom we lament, happy escapes the hazardous chance of untrustworthy men, gods, and an unforeseen life, immune from fate. He did not ask for, nor did he dread meriting death: we anxious citizens, we the unhappy, for whom from hence the last day, for whom the exit of the time of life, is uncertain, for whom threatens lightning from the stars, which echoes fatally in the clouds. Have none of these things persuaded thee to bend? But bend freely [then.] Be present here having let go at the dark threshold, Glaucus, for whom only all means are obtainable - the ferry man cannot protect guiltless souls, nor he [that is] a comrade from pitiless wild beasts - : you, delight hearts, you, forbid cheeks to flow and having blessed nights with kind reassurances fill out the countenances of the living, and refuse having to have died, and leaving [your] sister desolate, you who can do so, and proceed to find a way for the unhappy parents.









deserted couch and the office of bewailing the spouse taken away, and grim the groans and laments of sisters and brothers: but from deep and afar it enters into deeper feelings and a lesser stroke [oft] outlasts greater wounds. A family servant - thus blind Fortune that by hand mixes the names of things knows not hearts -, but you, Ursus, grieve for a loyal family servant, but in love and faith he has merited these tears, to who was joined a freedom of mind greater than pedigree. Do not suppress tears, be not ashamed; Let that grief break the restraints and hard days if it so pleases - you bewail the man - alas for me! I supply the torches [of mourning] myself -, your man, Ursus, for who in welcoming servitude with kindness, for who nothing [was done] with sadness, was willingly commanding of himself. For who [themselves] in deaths having been thrown should fault these sorrows? The Parthian laments a steed having been slain in wars, and [it is for] Molossians to weep over faithful hounds, and birds to have a funeral pyre, and the stag [of Silvia] a Maro [i.e., Vergil to lament him in the Aeneid, VII, 483-499.] Why, if not a slave also? I myself saw the demeanors and I observed you [to be] very much the master of [his] choosing; But greater in accordance with the expression of the spirit and the manifest customs of gentle breeding, a Greek and Latin daughter [in law] much would have wished and desired to have given birth to such [a son.] Not with such concern did the clever Cretan recall proud Theseus with a thread, nor Paris seeing such a rustic have brought down Spartan loves into reluctant ships upon the seas, nor do I deceive or [merely] lead a song with conventional license: I saw and still I see, [yet] singing not with a kind of charm with which Thetis hid Achilles on the virgin shore, nor with that adroit lance of Achilles which Troilus discerned, fleeing round the walls of fierce Phoebus. Of what a sort you were! See from afar [one] more beautiful than all boys and men, and [in this] less only to [his] master! Of him [the boy] one was before in good looks, so much the bright moon precedes lesser torches and so much Hesperos overwhelms other fires. Not for you a feminine look and face with splendor atop supple graces, dubious kinds of form of a sex crossing over that command reproach, but a stern manly grace; not insolent and flattering glances, but an austere fire in the eye, to be seen now handsome in a helmet, as Parthenopacus was; unaffected and with fitting awe in [his] plumes, and with the youthful flashing flourish of the eyes not yet blocked over [by age]: such a boy Eurotas lead forth from Leda's gulf, of a time of life to be preserved thus untouched, and [when] a lad commends [his] first years to Jove, he takes undertakes Elis [i.e., one of the sites of the "Olympic" games.] For from whence else might I be able in song to have recalled afresh decency of manners, calm of temper for the mind, and a tender soul more mature for his age? Not infrequently he willingly castigated master with high zeal and was helping in councils; with you [both] sad and laughing, and never did his countenance take cue from your own: deserving as well to precede in renown Haemonian Pylades [i.e., Patroclus] and [i.e., like Theseus] the trust of Cecrops, but let this be the end of praises which fortune permits: not more loyally did Eumaeus, with distressed outlook, await the return of tardy Ulysses.

What god or for what ends choose such sad wounds? From whence [is it that] the harming hand of Fate [is] so fixed? Oh to think how stronger [in adversity] you would have been, Ursus, stripped of riches and abundance! Even if rich Lorci, smoking in ruin, had belched Vesuvian fires or surging rivers had inundated the Pollentians or the onset of Lucanian Acir or Tiber had turned the deep waters to the right [sic], you would have suffered the gods with a serene face, or if nurturing Crete and Cyrene should refuse [their] trust and harvests and which bountiful Fortune from [her] bosom gives back to you with happiness. But wretched Envy, with the knowledge of griefs, sees the ways and vital aspects of the soul [and] will injure [them.] Just now at the limit of adult life that most beautiful youth had tried to bind with some three Elean lustres in three years. Dour Nemesis attended with pitiless mien, and first filled swelling eyes, [but] added brightness and set free speeches more sublime than customary, alas! Favoring with deadly pity, himself will be seen having tormented the dead lying down with hateful embrace and, in obligation, struck and despoiled with cruel crooked cruel hand the awe inspiring. Hardly had the Morning Star at the fifth sun rise laid out his dripping horse: already Philetus, you were seeing the hard savage shores of old, and unfeeling Acheron, where for the sound of [your] master cry out! Not more harsh the mother, when alive, blackened terrible arms wailing for you, nor [less so] the father; and surely the brother who saw the funereal rites blushed at being overcome [with emotion.] But [your corpse] not taken away in the [ignoble mortuary] fires for slaves: the flame exhausted the fragrant harvests of Saba and Cilicia, the cinnamon lifted way from the bird of Pharia and juices from Assyrian grass pouring and the tears of the master: so much to drink up these ashes, continuously drank this pyre; since not for you did the Setian wine snuff out the white cinders, nor the sinuous bones by the firewood that the marble enclosed, more welcome pitiful ghosts than the lamentations. But does it even help? Why, Ursus, do we give back to sadness? Why do you maintain what is lost and in the breast love a wound unjust? Where is the noted eloquence for those having been taken



she flung aside the long sufferings of Orpheus  
and said:

“Oh youth dedicated to the Muses,  
soon to pass over the ancient bards,  
you will not stir rivers, nor the herds of wild beasts,  
with the plectrum, nor ash trees of Thrace,  
but the seven summits and the Tiber of Mars  
and skilled equestrians and the senate of purple  
will you draw forth in eloquent song.  
Let others attend the ruined nights of Phrygia,  
and the late returning path of Ulysses,  
and the ship of reckless Minerva,  
tracks well trodden by poets:  
You dear to Latium and mindful of the nation  
lay bare more powerfully the Roman drama.  
And yet first tender in years  
you will play on Hector and the chariots of Thessaly  
and the suppliant of the gold of mighty Priam,  
and will lay open the seats of inferiors,  
ungracious Nero in flattering theaters,  
and by you is our Orpheus discovered.  
you will speak the abominable fires  
of the criminal master roaming the heights of Remus.  
From here you will give honor and title  
to chaste Polla with pleasing elocution.  
Soon having started youth more noble  
you will roar forth of Philippi pale with  
Italian bones and the wars of Phasalia,  
of the leader shattered midst the arms of the god,  
grave Cato devoted to freedom  
and Magnum pleasing to popular favor.  
Pious you will weep bitterly  
the crime of Pelusian Canopus  
and will give to cruel Pharaoh  
a tomb deeper than that for Pompey.  
These things in the prime of youth you will sing  
under age, years before Virgil’s “Culex”  
[i.e., years younger than Virgil when he wrote “The Gnat.”]  
The Muse of Ennius of wild roughness  
and the lofty madness of erudite Lucretius  
will submit, as also will he [i.e., Apollonius of Rhodes]  
who led the Argonauts through seas  
and he [i.e., Ovid] who transformed the first bodies.  
What greater should I mention? “The Aeneid” itself  
will be honored by the Latins singing with you.  
Not only will I grant the splendor of songs,  
but also with genial torches I will ascribe  
proper teaching to your talent,  
a kind charming Venus and Juno might give,  
models with simplicity, good taste,  
judgment, tradition, grace, decorum,  
as well will I shout before your doors  
a wedding hymn with festive singing.  
Oh too weighty and fierce Parca [i.e., a lesser god of Fate]!  
Oh never long have high places been given [to anyone] by Fate!







kings fleeing the grove of Trivia at apt Aricia steamed and by a great torch, knowing the secret of Hippolytus, the lake glimmered; Diana herself decks worn out hounds with garlands, cleanses arrow shafts, and permits the protected wild beast to pass, while at all chaste hearths, the Italian land honors the ides of Hecate. Yet I, though for me a farm of my own under the Dardanian hills of Alba, the gift of the great prince [i.e., Domitian], and running waves at home to alleviate the cares of heat would be sufficient, you observe I had not by name the rocks of the Sirens and the host deity of eloquent Pollius, the peace of a man assiduously learning songs untried and new customs and flowers of the Pierian Muses. By chance we reflect on the day of Trivia, while on a wet shore, away from the usual narrow gates and roof laden with foliage, ward off suns wide open under a tree, and heaven withdrew and the radiant light of a sudden yielded to thin clouds and the west wind made damp with deep violet; the kind of rainstorm Saturnia carried to Libya, and fertile Elyssa was given to a Trojan husband while witnessing nymphs wailed in hiding. Wreathed in garlands, we scatter festive dishes and attendants haul away the wines; nor [is there] a place quests might depart to, although [there are] countless farms rejoicing on the height to seat a home and at many a summit the rich mountain gleams: but approaching clouds threatening, they were urged to seek the nearest [spot for cover] and trust fair weather will return. With the name of a sacred temple having been spoken, a slight dwelling stood and at the humble abode the least pursue great Alcides, hardly spacious to shelter wave-tossed sailors and searchers of the deep. Here we assemble with all the throng, here opulent feasts, swelling crowds and a most grateful cohort of servants of shining Polla are pressed together. No doors to take to, the constricted temple is insufficient. The god of Pollius blushed and laughed, with delighted heart enters, and with affectionate forearms lays hold of the man.

“Then,” he says, “grantor of wealth, you are he who with a lavish intention filled equally the houses of Dicharcheus and youthful Parthenope? He who has fashioned for us so many mountain peaks, so many verdant groves, so many stones, faces imitated in gold, and so many living wax figures engraved by the eye? For what was this home, what this land, before it joyed you? You have bedecked the bare rock with a long path. And where there was only a trail, now for you stands a high portico with distinct columns, lest the way seem mean, you have contained the lusty nymphs with a twin covering at the shore of the curved beach, I could scarcely enumerate the works; and only for me, Pollius, poor and unworthy? Yet I nevertheless enter such dwellings cheerfully, and I love the strand you have stretched out. But Juno looks down on the seat and quietly laughs at my latest domicile. With effort, give to the temple worthy altars, which ships with fair sails would be unwilling to pass by [without saluting], which the celestial father having been sent for to the crowds of gods at banquets and which a sister from on high might come to [as] a temple guest. It should not intimidate you that the solid shield of the mountain opposite harden and by immense age never be consumed: I myself will be near and help such great endeavors and tear through the rough bowels of the unyielding earth. Begin and dare trusting in the exhortations of Hercules. The heights of Amphion [i.e., in Egypt] or the labor of Pergamum [i.e., at Troy] will not have been made to stand more quickly.”

[Thus] he spoke and left behind [his] mind. Without pause, when in the likeness of a web [i.e., latticed network] the plans had been composed, innumerable hands enter into concurrence: to chop down these woods and to raise the timbers, with these concerns to sink the foundations in the soil, part of the damp earth [for bricks] is baked that will protect from winters and keep out the frosts, indomitable stone melts in the curved furnace. It is indeed but a special labor to raze by contract the cliffs opposite while refusing the rocks with iron. Here, he the father of the site, with the Tiryinthian arms having been layed on, sweats and alone, abasing himself with the mighty twin axe, when the sky is veiled in the heavy shade of night, digs. Fertile Caprae and green Taurubulae resound, while an echo profound falls back on the level plains. Not so at grand Aetna it sounds when Brontes and Steropes strike the busy anvils, nor greater is the clangor from the den of Lemnia, when Mulciber embosses the flaming aegis and furnishes Pallas with chaste adornments. The boulders diminish, and craftsmen returning under the rosy light [of dawn] marvel at the work. Scarce another year breathes, and Tirynthius from the enormous height looks down on the rich commotion and challenges [with envy] the adjacent houses of the step-mother [Juno] while he invites Pallas to worthy shrines. Now are given over the proofs of the peaceful trumpet, now the burning sand smoke with pungent sacrifices. Not Pisaeon Jupiter or the father of shaded Cirrha would disdain these honors. Nothing with sadness at these places; let the sad Isthmus yield, let fierce Nemea yield: here a happier child makes offering. The young Nereids themselves bound wantonly from pumice caverns [beyond]: they cling to the wet rocks nor does it shame to observe the nude wrestlers in secret. Timbered



oceans of the variegated world obey, confine tightly Boreas [i.e., the north wind], Eurus [i.e., east wind] and Notus [i.e., south wind] hurled from the mount: solely with Zephyr may the forces of the welkin be, may he alone constant drive and float aloft the ships on the highest billows at sea; until he bestows your glad sails, free of the whirlwind, on the Paraetian strands.”

We are heard. He himself [i.e., Aeolus?] calls and reproaches boat and seamen delaying. Behold my heart, already cold with fear, slips and, though dread of the omen warns, I cannot withhold the tears suspended at the rim of [mine] eyes. And now, the rope cast off, the sailor separates the ship from the lands and lets down the narrow bridge onto the sea. From abaft the hard master with a far cry sunders and wrenches apart the faithful kisses and embraces, nor permits one long on the dear neck to be detained. And yet [only] at the very last will I return from each citizen back onto the lands, nor now leave but with the keel falling away.

For who daring of character, having been rudely torn apart from wretched creatures, made the sea a passageway and drove out and cast forth the blessed offspring of solid earth on to a sea of widening waves? For was that not of more reckless power which joined icy Pelion to Ossa’s height and pressed panting Olympus to two yokes [i.e., land and ocean.] Do you not strain continually in such great measure [also] to cross marshes and lakes and to relieve with bridges narrow currents? With abruptness, we sail everywhere in the naked breeze and fly native lands in the small enclosure of the ship. From thence the furor of the indignant gale has roared with winds from heaven and more than enough lightning from the Thunderer. Earlier in a listless dream the ships were numb on the smooth water, nor were they daring to be covered in the foam of Thetis, nor were clouds sprinkling the tides. With the ships having been seen [by the clouds], the waves began to swell, and a storm arose against man. Then in justice I protest the lowering Pleiades and the Olenian goat [i.e., star Capella], then Orion more inauspicious than [was his] wont; Behold he flies the roving billows through the exploits of the small ship, and by keeping long watch of the mast in the slender light, little by little vanquishes so many fears encircling. Whatever beyond that remains with you, a pledge of our affection, will carry, Celer. By what thought now will I be able to endure day or sleep [at night]? What all fearing or ready herald will overlook you at the mouth of the sea in the frenzied wave of Lucania, while the torture of Charybdis surges or the virgin ravisher of Sicily [i.e., Scylla] pours forth, which headlong hastening bears you to the habits of the Adriatic, a Carpathian peace; of a kind that would carry you away; as was the daughter of Agenor [i.e., Europa] by the deception of the flattering bull? Yet I merited [such] moaning. For why did I not active come from the camp with you or unknown comrades seeking exotic India and the chaos of Cimmeria? I should have been standing by the war trumpets of the king with my standard, whether with spear in hand, you grasping the reins, or swearing by oath to the soldiers; and although not a companion or your calling, certainly I will be admired to have been present. If formerly Phoenix, venerated by great Achilles, came to the shore of Ilion and Thymbraean Pergamum not ready for war or sworn by oath to swelling Atrides, wherefore [then should] my love be [thought] ignoble? Yet with a faithful heart, I will follow your sails and never be distant from the promises of days long gone by.

Isis, at one time housed within the caves of Phoroneus, now queen of Pharos and divinity of the breath-taking orient, receive the Mareotic ship with bronze sistrams [i.e., rattle like instrument used in ceremonies of Isis], and the singular youth, to whom a prince of Latium has given ensigns the East and the cohorts of Palestine to bridle, lead him with gentle hand past your festive thresholds and sacred harbors. Stand over him that he may discover from whence is permitted the fecundity of the marshy Nile; why the shallows settle and the bank, formed by the swallows’ clay, confines the waves; why Memphis envies, or why the shore Therapnean Canopus runs riot [in play]; why the gatekeeper of Lethe guards the Pharian altars; why mean animals equal mighty gods; what altars life-imbued Phoenix prepares for himself, what fields Apis deems worthy or in what flood of the Nile he sinks himself, having been honored by tremulous shepherds. And lead to the Emathian shades, where the warlike founder of the city, steeped in the nectar of Hybla, hardens, and the snake haunted den, where Cleopatra, drowned in alluring poison, fled the Ausonian chains of Actium; and further lead him unto the Assyrian seats, the armies having been commanded to escort the youth of Mars; goddess, bequeath [him hailing] from Latium, [that] he may not be a novice guest: for these things the boy sweated in the fields, having been much noted of yet greater [accomplishments], in the [honored] light of the [noble] tunic; already yet [possessed] of a strength to outrun the squadrons in quick circuit and, with the javelin, to shame the arrows of the East.





Yet comrade through what waves do I drag you? And though I should travel to the icy Arctic to remain or upon the misty channels of western Thule, or the impenetrable source of the sevenfold Nile, you would urge the journeys. And since yours - truly whom kind Venus joined by fate to me in the flowering years and preserves into old age -, yours, which to wound [in love], still yet a youthful wanderer, you first fixed me untried in marriage, and your responsive reins I willingly took in, and once I press onward, the reins inserted will not be changed. You bringing shining Alban gifts with shining leaves, and [I] having been dressed in the consecrated gold of Caesar, and your wreathed body embraced, you gave me breathless kisses; you, when the lyres were being disowned at our Capitol, you felt hurt with me surviving savage and thankless Jove; you, advancing with the first sounds, with vigilant ear and after a murmur carried off all our nights in song; you [were] the sole partner of long toil; when in years with you my "Thebaid" came into being. Being snatched as like nearly to stygian shades, when already I could hear at hand the Lethean streams, I saw you, and preserved [my] eyes now failing in death. Of course drained by fate, Lachesis gave to me only time to be pitied by you, with the mighty gods fearing your displeasure. After this do you now hesitate to go a bosom comrade on the chosen path? Ah, where are the faiths so well known and tested through experience, where are the righteous Latin and Greek heroines of old? Penelope would have gone gladly to the community of Ilion - for what might deter lovers? -- if Ulysses had suffered it; Aegiale complained, Meliboea complained to be left behind and how - how fiercely - did Bacchante make wailing. Not less than these you have known to give faith and life to husbands. Thus assuredly do you yet still seek the ashes and shade of the previous [spouse], thus with a heart lamenting, receive the excessive obsequies for the consort of song a second time, [but that] now are mine. Not different for you is the care of a daughter, thus also you love [as] a mother, thus never from the breast recedes your daughter, you stay fixed to the inmost sanctuaries of the soul night and day. Not so does Alcyone of Trachis encircle nests, nor Philomela, cherishing spring-tide homes, transfer as security [her] life.

Now she supports you, alone on a widowed bed that wears away the unfruitful leisure of beautiful youth. But the marriages with plenteous pine torches will come [for her], they will come. Thus surely [her] goodness of mind and form merit; whether she seeks the lyre embraced or with ancestral voice resounds for the Muses to hear, and prevails on my songs, or with a soft motion spreads open [her] radiant arms: modesty and truthfulness outlast cleverness and art. Will not she shame polished boys, [but] not you Cythera, remiss in this distinction? Not only does fertile Rome bring together marriage beds and kindle festive pine torches; and son-in-laws are given to our land. Not so much does Vesuvius' flaming peak, and dire storms from the mountains, impoverish towns trembling with citizens: they stand and thrive with peoples. From here by the augury of Phoebus are the abodes of Dicarchus founded, the harbors and hospitable shores of the world: and here are walls imitating a tract of great Rome, which Capys filled with imported Trojans. Not rare also are gentle Parthenope and our own little framers, for whom alone, having crossed the seas, Apollo himself revealed the dove of Dione.

I endeavor to convey to you these habitations - for neither barbaric Thrace or Libya is my native soil - which combines the mild winters and cool summers, which the unwarlike sea washed [sic] with languid waves: untroubled peace with lazy seats and spare time for life and [where] never are rest and finished sleep disrupted. No madness in the forum or laws strained in quarreling: strength of equitable customs alone is obeyed and without rods and axes. Why now do you magnify the refinement and splendors of places and temples spaces interspersed with innumerable columns, the dual structure of the covered and uncovered theater and the five years of the Capitoline ceremonies nearby? Why should I praise the seashore and liberty of Menander, which mixes Roman honor and Greek license? Nor are their lacking round about [there] the delights of a varied life: Whether, on a most alluring coast, at vapor exhaling Baiae, or seeing the inspired dwellings of prophetic Sybil, [or] the ridge with the memorable oar of Ilion, it may be sweet; whether for you the dripping vineyards of Bacchic Gaurus, where Pharos, envied by the night-roving moon, raises reassuring beacons for frightened sailors, and the Surrentine hills beloved of manly Lyaeus [i.e., Bacchus], which the mind of inhabitant Pollious esteems before all others, and the healing lakes of Aenaria and Stabiae reviving [you]: will I speak to you of the thousand loves of our land? But it is enough here wife, enough to have so said: it [i.e., land] created me for you, committed me a companion for the long years. Surely is not this mother and nourisher to be seen [as] the honor of both [of us]? But more ungrateful that I, who unites with your character, should doubt: you will come, dearest spouse, and arrive before long besides; without me the Tiber, the leader of waters and the house of arm-bearing Quirinus, will appear unworthy of you.





#### BOOK IV

Status to his Marcellus, Greetings.

I found a book, most dear Marcellus, that I should dedicate to your sense of responsibility. For my part, I think otherwise than invoking the divinity of the great emperor [with which] to have begun my trifle: but this has three [such poems(?)]; the fourth of which touches on your honor. In the first of these, however, I have paid homage to consulship seventeen of our Germanicus; in the second I give thanks honoring his most hallowed feast; in the third I marveled at the highway of Domitian, where he removed the most burdensome hindrance of [excess] sands [i.e., obstructing the road.] For whose benefit you as well will receive in a most timely manner my epistle, which I write for you in this book from Naples. Next is a song lyric to Septimius Severus, a youth, that you know among the most decorated of the second [i.e., equestrian] order, and indeed your fellow pupil, yet less a formal obligation than one [personally] dear to me also. For the Hercules at table [statuette] of our [friend] Vindix a subsequent honor, which from me and from its enthusiasm merits [attention], and [which] I can claim credit [for] even by you.

That Vibius Maximus with a name of dignity and eloquence to be loved by us was given witness to enough in the letter to him regarding the edition of my “Thebaid” which I published; but now I ask him also to return sooner from Dalmatia. To it is joined a short poem to my fellow native Julius Menecrates, a splendid youth and the son-in-law of my [friend] Pollius, for whom I am glad that he has honored our Naples with a number of volumes. Plotius Grypus, a youth of higher rank, I return a more worthy little work, but in the interim, I have inserted in this volume some hendecasyllables which we laughed together over during some Saturnalias.

Wherefore then is there more in the fourth “Silvae” than in the preceding books? Lest some think to have urged, who criticized as I hear, that I had cast aside this kind of stylus [i.e., writing.] First, it is pointless to argue against a thing done; then much of these I had already given to lord Caesar, and how much more to consume than is this? Moreover, is it not permitted I indulge a joke? “In secret,” he says. But we see also ball games and play acting with birds [?, i.e., “palaris”; “fencing” in one translation, or similarly “pales or stakes”?] is permitted. At last, whoever reads something of mine reluctantly, at once professes himself an adversary. So, why should I agree to his counsel? In sum, truly I am one who is traduced; let him [then] be silent or let him joy. Yet you, Marcellus, will defend this book, and if at this juncture it seems less, we will hold back. Farewell.



#### I. Seventeenth Consulship of the Emperor Augustus Germanicus.<sup>3</sup>

Happy the purple [i.e., consulship, not principate] of Caesar with twice eight festivals, and Germanicus opens upon a distinguished year and springs forth with the new sun, and the grand constellations, shining more clear, he first and greater than the morning star. Let the laws of Latium exult, joy ye aediles, and more proud Rome with sevenfold summit strike the upper air, and the hill of Evander applaud more than other heights: new powers have moved up on the Palatine hill, and the twelve-fold lictors [of the consulship], receiving rest, and the Senate, with prayers, joys to have overcome the modesty of Caesar. Even the great reviver of immeasurable age, Janus himself, raises [his] countenances and gives thanks at both thresholds, whom you have bound by Peace from all neighboring war and commanded to establish and to swear obedience to laws in a new forum, behold from hence he lifts [his] hands thrown backward and thereupon with double voice speaks these [words]:

“Hail, great parent of the world, you who prepare with me to renew the ages, your Rome desires to discern you ever so great during my month; thus the times to be born, thus times to be born, thus is it fitting to enter upon the years. Give continual joys to the annals; Let him encircle these shoulders with many folds of

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Domitian





the deep under, the languid four-footed [animal]  
creeps along with the chariot pole.  
Yet the way now, that [once] wore out  
the entire day, is hardly made in two hours.  
Not [by] the stretched pinions of birds  
through the stars, nor by ship,  
will you proceed more swiftly.

Here the initial work was to set up the tracks,  
to cut back the uncultivated grounds, and  
to excavate and bear away the inner grounds;  
next was to refill the emptied trenches  
in a different manner and to prepare  
the lap [of the road] with [its] ridge's end,  
lest the soils give way, lest a doubtful  
bed, with pressing stones, give way  
to treacherous foundations;  
then to secure the path with collected knobs  
and thick pegs here and there.  
Oh, how many hands labor together!  
These chop wood and strip the mountains,  
these raise rocks and timbers with iron;  
these bind stones and construct the work  
with the powder and baked dirty tufa;  
these dry by hand the soaking cavities  
and drive off lesser streams from afar.  
These with the right hand  
are able to hollow out Athon  
and without a floating bridge can block up  
the grim sea of groaning Helle.  
these, unless the gods forbid the way,  
could have Ino's small Isthmus  
mingled [with] the straits.  
the moving shores of forest are agitated,  
the noise travels through the midst  
of distant cities, and from hence and thereon  
cluster-bearing Massicus at once sends back  
a shattering echo to Gaurus.  
Quiet Cynme, the Liternian marshes  
and listless Savo marvel at the sound.

But [the river] Vulturnus, the golden head and  
the broad swamp with the soft sedge impeded,  
raises the face and reclining on the  
great arch of Caesar's bridge  
with raucous throat(s) overflows  
with such [words as these]:

"Noble builder on my plains,  
who having poured into my unfrequented vales,  
you have bound the unlearned skirts  
of the hollow with laws of propriety,  
now I, that also was impatient and threatening  
having before scarcely suffered skittish boats,  
now I bear a bridge passable by foot;  
I who had been accustomed to seize lands

and to whirl forests - it shames [me]! -  
I begin to be a river;  
Yet I give thanks and so great is the service,  
since under you as leader,  
with you commanding [I] yield,  
since you are to be read [as] the supreme arbiter  
and perpetual victor of my bank.  
now you you honor me with a blest path  
nor do you permit dirtying and widely  
remove the wicked shame of barren soil,  
nor would I oppress the dusty air while  
the bay of the deep Tyrrhenian sea cleanses me,  
just as Cinyphian Bagrada silently creeps  
the banks amidst the Punic fields,  
but such will I bear, that on a shining course  
I might be able with a pure stream rival  
the sea and nearby tranquil Liris.”

These things the river [spoke] together [as]  
the marbled expanse raised itself from the huge ridge.  
The entrances of this prosperu threshold  
is an arch, with trophies of the warlike leader  
and shining all with the metals of Liguria,  
as great as he who decks the clouds for rain.  
The traveler roused is turned there  
there Appia itself is left behind Appia abandoned.  
then more quickly and keenly the course,  
then the force delights even the yoked teams;  
as when the weary arms of the oarsmen  
and the sails are fanned with the first breeze.  
Come all therefore, that under the foremost sky  
you honor the faith of the Roman father,  
come forward and visit at the path of the nations,  
come more swiftly laurels of the East.  
Nothing opposes longing, nothings delays:  
he who at first dawn left the Tiber behind,  
at evening sails first Lake Lucrinus.

But how at the inmost end of the recent road,  
where Apollo reveals the ancients [sibyls] of Cumae,  
I discern white with fillets and tresses!  
Are we deceived by the vision?  
Or does the Sibyl bring forth bay leaves  
of Chalcis from the sacred grottos?  
Let us submit; lyre, restore now the song:  
it must be silent, a more divine poet begins.  
Behold! while in new intervals she rotates  
the head widely, she celebrates the Bacchic rites  
and fills up the road. Then with virgin mouth  
thus she calls out:

“I spake, stay river and fields, he will come -,  
he will come favoring heaven, who will  
lift the foul forest and putrid sands  
onto lofty bridges and a road.  
Lo! Here is the god, Jupiter himself





V. A Lyric Ode to Septimius Severus.

Happy in the honors of a little farm,  
where ancient Alba cherishes the Trojan lares,  
and I hail steadfast and eloquent Severus  
with unaccustomed [lyre] strings.

Already savage winter o'erwhelmed by high suns  
has conceded to the Parrhasian North,  
now with the north wind disheartened  
the sea and earth gleam with [mild] Zephyrs.

Now all the tree is covered with the annual  
foliage of Spring, now I've learned  
the complaint of birds and untried song  
which silent winter set in place.

The frugal soil and vigilant hearth  
with much light have consoled us  
and the pots have been emptied  
that seethed only with Bacchus.

Not a thousand wooly flocks bleat,  
nor does the cow bellow for sweet amour,  
and if when one is singing to the master  
the quiet field cries out in protest.

But after the native country, the land  
with the first cares is loved by me,  
here the warlike queen of battles  
adored my songs with gold from Caesar,

when you striving might lift each peril  
from the breast of a companion,  
as Castor trembled at all the din  
of the Bebrycian arena.

Hold, did a grandmother of Leptis beget  
in remote Syrtes? This time she will bear  
Indian harvests and snatch rare  
cinnamon from the scent bearing Sabaeans.

Who that has strolled on every peak of Rome  
would not think of sweet Septimius?  
who would deny [you] to have been fed at  
Juturna's fount on the rich remnants?

No wonder the power: forthwith you enter  
the Ausonian port, ignorant of the shallows  
of Africa, and an adopted son, you  
as a boy swam in Tuscan eddies.

Here a lad 'midst content, pledged to  
the Senate, in the glow of the select purple  
you thrive, but, innately a patrician,  
pursuing immeasurable labors.







your Thebes:

For Maximus I attempt to refine music;  
now will the garland be taken from uncut myrtle,  
now a greater thirst and a more chaste  
stream must be sipped.

When will they return you to sweet Latium  
from the Dalmatian mountains, where  
Dis having been seen, the pale digger  
comes back the same color as mined gold?

Behold me sprung from nearer lands  
yet these do not restrict me  
to the pleasant port of indolent Baiae  
or the trumpeter known to the arms of Hector.

Our Muse is torpid without you,  
the guide of Thymbra [i.e., Apollo] himself  
comes more late than [his] wont, and lo  
at the first turns [i.e., in the course] my Achilles hesitates.

Of course with you as our trusty advisor  
much of the "Thebaid," excoriated with revision,  
attempts with audacious string the joys  
of Mantuan renown.

But we grant mercy slowly, since you have laid  
at empty hearths the nurtured offspring.  
oh happy day! Behold another  
Maximus comes to us!

Childlessness must be fled with every effort,  
which the unfriendly heir presses with pledges,  
demanding the honest friend - alas it shames!  
a funeral soon.

Childlessness has not been buried with tears:  
longing for a home it stands captive surviving  
and the spoils of death threatening  
deems itself the [funeral] fire.

May the noble infant long endure,  
and [his] path, not distracted by many things,  
thrive in the customs of the homeland  
and call forth the deeds of the grandsires!

With but little you will recall your swords,  
which to Eastern Orontes you carried,  
with the banner of the bridled squadron  
guided by Castor's right hand;

that he followed the swift  
lightning of unvanquished Caesar  
and gave harsh law to the fleeing Sarmatians,  
under one heaven to live.

Yet may the lad learn first your character,  
to each who review the melancholy of the world  
you restore the brief words of Sallust  
and the ward of Timavus.



VIII. Congratulations to Julius Menecraten.

Swing open the gates of the heavens, Parthenope, and fill the consecrated temples with the billowing clouds of Sheba[’s incense] and with entrails of [sacrificial] animal [offerings]; behold the of famed Menecrates increases now with a third shoot. For you the noble crowd of princes thrives and is consoled for the losses from raging Vesuvius. Do not permit that the privileged information only go round the festive sanctuaries of Naples: strike and let the beloved harbor of the comrade, the land of gentle Dicarcheo - and as well Surrentum dear to the dripping go - enwreathe the altar with garlands. Where the shore of the maternal ancestor surrounds the throng of descendants and whom contend in returning like countenances. Let the pre-eminent uncle with the Libyan spear be glad, and those also born to him whom Polla holds and lifts to a loving bosom. Well done, oh youth, you, who meriting so much, give lights to our country, lo the home of the masters shakes with the sweet tumult of so great shouting. Let black Envy withdraw afar and with livid feelings turn elsewhere: To these fair Atropos pledged old age and the glory of lasting virtue, and ancestral Apollo laurels. Therefore it was an omen that the most august father of the Ausonian city has given you the welcome right of threefold offspring. So often Lucina has come and entered again the pious dwelling. Thus, I pray, may the home stand with fertile abundance and never be altered in its sacred gifts. Bravo, that also your progeny more frequently have grown in virile strength, yet the maiden too must be happy for the young man [i.e., their father] they obey! - virtue is more suitable for these, it will grant to her descendants more quickly-, of the sort Helen [at Sparta] was already worthy [along] with the mothers at the wrestling schools, she strolled amidst the games of Amyclaeon brothers; or as like the face of heaven, when on a serene night two radiant stars have drawn near with the moon in between.

Yet I by no means protest without difficulty, rarest of youths, and I even get angry complaining, inasmuch as those who love are angered. Was it so fitting for me to know the joyous news from what is shared by all? And when you third infant wailed, a letter did not issue forthwith announcing the momentous event, that it might have been directed to heap up festive fires for the altars, entwine the lyre, decorate doorposts, bring out the jar worn out with Alban fumes and signalize the day with song, but late and helpless only now do I sing my vows? This is your fault and shame, but is indeed not permitted to prolong further complaining; behold the throng with jollity and that defends the father. Whom may you not conquer with this group?

Gods of our Fatherland, whom with great auguries upon the seas, the Abantian [i.e., Euboean] fleet conveyed to the Ausonian shore, and you Apollo, leader of a people long migrating, whose bird, still yet on the smooth left shoulder sitting, happy Eumelis gazing on adores, and you, Attic Ceres, to whom, ever on the panting course, ever flourish in silence the votive lamp of mystery, and you, Tyndarids, whom not dread Lyncurgus and shadowy Therapnae have worshipped more: watch over these dwellings of the homeland [along] with its common folk. May there be those who, with a voice for the age, please the city weary with crowds, labors and riches and preserve the youthful name, may the original ancestor reveal to these the peaceful customs, and the bountiful splendor and zeal for both beauty and virtue. By all means wealth and family, with the first light, permit her to enter patrician doors, with the public itself under these, if only the divine will of invincible Caesar, prone to the good, should be near to strike the threshold of the Senate of Romulus.



IX. Facetious Verses for Plotius Grypus.

This is indeed a joke, Grypus, that you  
sent me a little book - for a little book.



## BOOK V

### I. A Funeral Song for Priscilla.

If it was for me to easily shape by hand wax likenesses or to animate ivory or gold with impressed figures, by this means I would have taken up, Priscilla, a consolation for your husband. For [his] excellence in piety merits a face stamped with color by Apelleus, or to return [you to him] with feeling born from the hand of Phidias. Thus it is attempted to bring away the shadow of a king and manage the prodigious cares and contest with Death, while it fatigues the artist, and in each metal he seeks to love you. But mortal [is] the honor, which the agile right hand loves. We for you. Most rare spouse of a celebrated youth, with a just lyre we endeavor to furnish an end not long dim that will bespeak the eternal, Apollo favorable only comes to me by whoever is always joined to Apollo and [whom] Caesar approves: [there is] no other better way to shut the sepulcher from view.

Late indeed is devised a remedy for so great a grief, when with the constellations the wheel of Phoebus turns another year; yet when there are besides fresh strokes on the first black wound of the house, what approach then [was there] to the unhappy ear of the bereaving husband? Then it was a consolation to weep, to rend vestments, to weary companies of servants, to overcome the utterance of anguish, and to batter the unjust heavens with mad lamentations. Though from the woods and streams Orpheus himself attended and been near that the groans be comforted, and might equally touch each maternal oracle, and all the priests of Apollo and Bacchus: no song, no strings for the gods of pale Avernus and the Eumenides [i.e., the Furies] had been heard to appease or bid adieu [even] to the locks of hair: such great grief reigned in the stupefied breast! Even yet does the flattened scar still flee to wailing, while we sing, and a downpour from the wife's husband press hard on the weighted eyes. But even now do the devoted eyes have these tears? Wondrous faith! More quickly the Sipylean matron carries away the exhausted cheeks, more quickly the dews of sorrow fail Tithonia, or the mother of Achilles sated and will grow weak crashing storms [i.e., with her ocean waves] against the tombs. Well done hearts! The god notes these things who turns the reins of the world and nearer to Jove directs human actions, and beholds mourning; and mysterious attendants of the bridal couch! From such he yet again comprehends the examples, since you hold dear the shade and cherish the obsequies. Here is the purest ardor, here is merited love from a lord to be commended by the censor.

No wonder, if Harmony united you mingled together and gathered you to the heart in one long unbroken chain. She indeed was married before and was permitted pine [i.e., marriage] torches to another husband, but it was, as if [still] in [her] maidenhood, you were joined to all inmost being and with an embracing soul she cherished you; just as an elm tree loves a vine socializing with contemporaneous shoot, and the grove mixing with the deity prays for autumn and joys to be wreathed in the loved clusters of fruit. Some are extolled for [their] distant ancestors or for the gift of beautiful form, but are without the benefits of customs, and deceptively powerful of praise [i.e., are powerful as a result of being praised], they lack truth: although for you family, a happy appearance and much that husbands will wish for also would shine, from you is the greater honor, to have known one bed, to stir one fire under hidden sinews. No plunderer of Phrygia vitiated that love, no Dulichian suitors, nor an adulterer who had traduced a brother's stainless marriage with Mycenaean gold. If you would give Babylonian wealth, tons of Lydian treasures and the mighty riches of India, China and Arabia, she would have preferred to die undefiled in humble poverty and exchanged life for good repute.

Not the too great stiffening sad brow in dread behaviors, but an unaffected and cheerful faith mingled with gracious modesty, since if perilous fear had summoned her to greater customs, for the husband she gladly would have rescued him from armor bearing troops or the dangers of lightening fires on the midst of the sea. Well it was that such was not recommended by an adversary, since for you with concern for the [marriage] bond, how great the pale worry for the spouse! But better [it was that] your vows to the husband merited the way of favoring divinities, while night and day you weary the gods, while you will have knelt a suppliant at all the altars and adore the bright guardian of the present lord. You had been heard, and Fortune came on a benign footing. Of course the upright youth saw [your] industrious calm and faith intact and girded with a breast of care, you would be awake to feeling and worthy to pursue such great changes with a sober heart, HE saw, he who knows all his own and will go widely round inspecting each of [his] ministers. This is not strange: he sees the approach of the dawn, what the south and stormy north wind do, is borne by

the toga, and [his] counsel sanctions judgment itself. He conquering imposed an immense mass and a weight scarcely tractable on shoulders - for there are not other sacred responsibilities more numerous for the master -, to send wide into the great sphere of Romulus the commands of the leader and to manage by hand the powers and bounds of empire; what from the north, what the roving Euphrates, what banks of twice-named Ister, what the banners of the Rhine might carry off, how greatly far the limits of the world will be passed in receding from the loud flood of Thule - for all the happy leaves [i.e., news] raised up on all the pikes, and no lance marked with infamous feathers [i.e., bad news] - in addition, if the trust deserving master should separate [i.e., sort] the swords, with whom who to expand a century [i.e., a Roman army unit], with whom he might prevail to breakdown [a century in size], a cavalryman sent among maniples who had anticipated a cohort, who would be more excellently fitted in the order of an illustrious tribune, for whom to give the signal to a wing of bridled horses is more worthy; to have known before hand even a thousand changes, whether the Nile will immerse the fields, or Libya will perspire with the rain-bearing south wind; and if I would count all, nor more does winged Tegean with interpreting wand announce from the high stars, and what the maid of Juno drops through the liquid ether and binds the rain with a colored arc of mist [i.e., a rainbow], and what laurels of yours, Germanicus, Fame, on a winged course, carries; having gone ahead a day late day under the Arcadian stars, and leaves the daughter of Thaumias [i.e., Iris] in mid-heaven.

How excellent gods and men beheld you on a kind day, Priscilla, when first your husband was promoted for remarkable exploits! You nearly surpassed himself, while, with breast prone outpouring, you rolled up with such great eagerness before the sacred feet of the well-deserving lord. She joys not [even] thus on the Aonian height whom the father of Delos placed in command of the mystic cave, or [she] to whom venerable Bacchus assigned the law of the first wand and the ensigns of the stupefied [Bacchic] throng. Yet from here neither was quiet changed nor did honesty swell [i.e., in pride] with the favorable changes: Habits remain the same to a modest mind with increased fortune. She maintains the anxious zeal of the husband and at the same time urges he restrain labors. She hands over moderate dishes and sober cups, and to the master teaches an example; just as the Apulian mate of a frugal farmer or one tanned by the Sabine sun, who at the prospect of the stars sees now the time of the man worn from service to have arrived, hurrying she arranges the tables and cushions having awaited the sound of the returning plow. I speak little. With you she was a comrade in the icy Sarmatian north, the storms of Ister and pallid frost of the Rhine, was also with you hardened in courage through every summer, if the camps allowed, she would have wished to wear quivers, have wished to parry with a wide Amazonian shield; provided that she might see you in a dust cloud of wars near the lightening steed of Caesar, brandishing a divine lance, and bestrewn with the sweat of the great spear.

Thus far a favorable lyre. Now [however] is the time, Phoebus, to set aside your [laurel] leaves and to bind the foliage with [those of] the sad cypress. For what deity tied Envy and Fortune in implacable kinship? Who commanded hostile goddesses to be fighting eternally? Will [the one] not mark some home, which pitiless she would not fastened instantly with light, but that [the other] drives out joys with a savage right hand? The unperturbed and mirth-filled gods of the household flourished: there was no sorrow. For how, although faithless and fickle, could Fortune be so frightened with Caesar favorable? Livid Fate finding a way, a cruel power invaded the pious dwelling. Thus are vineyards suffused wafted with the malignant south wind, thus the wheat field ages with excessive rain, thus the hostile wind envies the swift ship and beclouds successful sails. Priscilla of exceptional loveliness is seized by Fate; just as the glory of the forests is the foliage of the tall pine, whether dissolved from the root or falls by the punishing fire of Jove, despoiled it murmurs no more to the breeze. What are probity, a chaste faith, or divine worship that they benefit the supreme being? On every side black blows surround the unhappy circle of death, the unfeeling strings of the Sisters are drawn tight and left over is the farthest part of the expired thread. No concourse of servants, no extensive healing arts remedied the evil; companions on every side with feigning visage notwithstanding pretended hope, she observes the husband weeping. He asks anyone only for the pure streams of Lethe from below, now anxious he weeps at every altar, seals the gates and rubs the thresholds with [his prostrate] breast; now with great entreaty he invokes the divinity of Caesar, alas the unfeeling course of fate! Is there not something which he [i.e., Caesar] may not permit? How many obstacles of mortal years would have been able to approach, had you, father, held the sway of all judgment? Death locked out in the blind abyss would have groaned and the Fates have placed aside the destitute threads of life.

And now sink the faces with her eyes at the very last wandering and ears deafened, but that the voice of the husband alone is distinguished; him only the mind returned sees in the midst of death, him the ailing one envelopes bravely with forearms having turned [to him] the stiffened cheeks, not with the remaining light, but she prefers to be sated solely with the sweet spouse. Then thus the dying solaces the one united with her in love: "Part of my living soul, oh would that I could leave to whom the years which cruel Atropos snatches from me: show no more tears I pray, strike not the breast with savage lamentation, torment not the consort's flying shade. I do indeed leave the marriage bed, yet I save in death's succession what came before: I have for the better had done with long old age; I saw you some time ago shining in every flower, I saw you draw nearer and nearer into high favor. There is not now for you judgment by the fates or any celestial power: I bear these away with me. I begin freeing you on the path, exert yourself for the sacred and love without rest the spacious genius and power [i.e., of the emperor.] Now because you yourself desire to be enjoined, grant gold everlasting to the Capitoline seats, that the countenance of holy Caesar may gleam [in a statue of] a hundred weight and inscribe the love of a close devotee. Thus will I not see the Furies nor low Tartarus and be admitted to the ends of blest Elysiums." These things said the companion, gliding away, clasped the clinging arms, without sadness transferred the soul to the lips of the husband and pressed [closed] her eyes with [his] loved right hand.

Yet the youth with great heart, inflamed with grief, now fills with frenzied cry the widowed home, now he desires to lay up the sword, now reaches to steep heights - comrades scarcely restrain [him] -, now he lay bound to the mouth of the departed and urges [himself] wildly with a heart overwhelmed by grief, just as the torpid wife was sighted, the Odrysian poet [Orpheus], setting the plectrum aside on the Strymonian [bank] was struck dumb and without song wept at the sad pyre. Even he erect broke down at this time of life, lest you should pass on into Tartarean chaos unaccompanied, but the confident mind of the leader marveling by sacred commands and a greater love forbade it. Who could survey obsequies and funereal gifts of unfortunate ostentation with worthy song? From all there pressed together in long procession flows an Arabian and Cilician spring, and Sabaeen flowers, grains of India snatched before their time, and frankincense from the temples of Palestine ablazing, at the same time Hebraic perfumes, Corcyran leaves and Cinyrean buds; she herself lies at a late hour recumbent on high cushions shaded with Tyrian covering. But the husband alone is seen by all of the throng; to him are turned the eyes of great Rome, just as if the youth was bearing [his] last sons to the tomb: anguish in his expression, hair and cheeks holding only night. Her they call happy and set free with a tranquil end, [and] the tears [rather] are shed for the husband.

There is a place, where lying before the premiere city the great Appian is born and where Cybele places aside groans in Italian Almo and recalls not any longer Ida's streams. Here you are veiled gently veiled by the peerless husband with Sidonian purple - for he was not able to suffer fuming ashes and the roar of the funeral pyre - and arranged for Priscilla a happy bed. Labors of time will be able neither to seize longer lifetimes or stain dried limbs: the venerable marble breathes such great riches, having soon been transformed into various remarkable likenesses: here is Ceres in bronze, here the bright one of Gnosso, there Maia with a dome, here Venus acceptably in stone. They receive a face not unworthy of glorious divinity: the servants and customary throng gather round the obsequies, then are duly prepared the couches and busy tables. That home, a home! Who would call it a mournful tomb? This devotion of the deserved husband seen you would at once exclaim: "There he is, I recognize his minister, who lately built the sanctuary of the eternal nation and placed his [kindred] stars into another heaven." Thus, when a great ship has set sail from the Pharian shore on a new passage and now, with innumerable ropes on each side and bearing broad sails, has extended the arms of the mast and entered the [sea] lanes, a small lowly craft proceeds on the same smooth sea and claims for itself a part of the vast South wind.

Why, most eligible of youth, do you nurture these immoderate tears in the heart and forbid long grief to depart? Surely you don't fear that Priscilla might tremble at the barking of Cerberus? For the blessed dead he is silent! May not the sailor [i.e., Charon] in the shallows push away and arrive more late [to his destination]? Promptly he places and conveys well-deserving shades peaceably on a hospitable skiff. In addition, if when the shade comes with the praise from a pious husband, Proserpine directs happy torches to come forth and heroines of old and come out from the sacred grottos to relieve the sad darkness with the purple light of evening and for the spirit prepare in advance the flowers of Elysium. Thus Priscilla goes under to the departed; there a winning suppliant she beseeches the Fates for you, she placates for you the





take away peace from funeral pyres that merit prayer; but in you, upright fellow, I discern a look persuasive and furnishing such fine utterances: “Spare, I pray, the ashes: that destiny was the noxious wrath of the Fates and the crime of a god, Who sees mortal feeling too late, nor pauses at the threshold when attempting crime and furnishing minds with the unspeakable. Let those days perish with time and let not the coming age believe such was possible! Certainly it is for us to be silent and many things buried in night and let us suffer the reproaches of own clan to be covered o’er. He expels punishments who for the care of his people repays Devotion with due authority, revisits homelands, and whom all sin fears. These things and to be weeping is to us revenge enough. Would that it might be permitted in fact to persuade the savage Eumenides and turn away Cerberus from the timid shade and more quickly to give by your hands the forgetful stream [i.e., of Lethe.]”

Well done with spirit, youth! Yet the crimes of the mother increase. Not only pious, but without pause were you laying claim to high courage. Not long ago when it chanced a companion paled at a falsely imputed crime of unmerited report, and with many a Julian judge the court of justice was gathered around, rose up and brandished chaste lightning: you, although not [yourself] suffering before the court of justice and severe laws, yet hidden in the silent umbrage of devotions [i.e., of a friendship], and as yet an unarmed recruit and obliging a friend, you sustained the assault, defending against fright and enemy spears. Never did Romulus and the Dardanian [i.e., Aeneas] of old behold such [youthful] years in a toga to war in the midst of the carnage of the forum, so greatly were the city fathers astounded by your attempts and exertions, not any less did the guilty fear you. Equal vigor in the limbs that are and qualified for brave action, they follow a great soul commanding. I myself recently saw you on the shore of the Tiber, where the Tyrrhenian wave foams with the shallows of Laurentum, pressing the course, with a bare heel goading a bold steed, and with a threatening countenance and right hand: - if what is spoken be trusted, I was stupefied and thought [you] a soldier armed- : thus handsome Ascanius on Gaetulian mount and shaking a Trojan lance, went a hunter into the step-mother’s fields and with the father [i.e., Aeneas] made [the mistress of] unhappy Elissa burn [with passion]; not otherwise did Troilus with nimble wheeling adroitly evaded the menacing horsemen, or he whom, at the high turrets of Arcady, going round the turning points in the Theban dust, the Tyrian mothers viewed with not disapproving eye.

Therefore come - the sure indulgence of the leader strikes on and a brother furnishes a path of cheerful promise - arise now with great soul and take up the manly concerns of the camp. Mars and the Attic virgin will instruct the battle lines, Castor the cavalry to flank, Quirinus to rattle the arms on the shoulders, who trusted you, with so young a neck, to make ring cloud-born shields and arms untried in slaughters.

To what lands of Caesar’s therefore will you go into the world? Will you not swim northern streams and [ice] broken Rhenish rivers or will you perspire in the heat laden lowlands of Libya? Or will you shake the summits of Pannonia or the shifting homes of the Sarmatians? Or will the seven headed Ister [i.e., the Danube] hold you and in the flowing shade with [the isle] of Peuce’s paramour? Or will you be situated in the ashes of Solyma and the captive palm-groves of Idume, not esteeming the happy woods for herself? Since if the land held in check by the great parent should receive you, how much the untamed Araxes will rejoice! How much will the fields of Caledonia exalt glory! Where the ancient inhabitant of the wild land will recall to you: “Here the parent was accustomed to bestow laws, here on the grassy sod to address troops of cavalry; widely stretched apart watch towers and fortresses - do you see? - he furnished and encircled these walls with a ditch; these gifts, these weapons he dedicated to divinities of war, - you [can] still examine the trophies -; he dressed himself here from those summoned to arms, [it was] here he seized the armor of the British king.” Just as Phoenix related to Pyrrhus, preparing victorious wars against the Trojans, [about] unknown Achilles.

Happy Optatus, you, who trusting in green youth, will harden no matter the roads and valley, perhaps also - so may the divinity of the prince be near - you, and unwearied comrades united to friend, be girded at the side [with swords], with which Pylades from pious custom and the son of Menoetius [i.e., Patroclus] wielded in Dardanian wars. Of course these harmonies are with you, this love is yours and I pray it may endure! Now the years of life more vigorously fly us; and for me I will aid [your] heart with vows and prayers! Yet if by chance I will disturb with customary murmuring and the fathers of Romulus come to [hear] my songs, [if] you are in need of me, Crispinus, and through all obstacles, I would dispatch my Achilles and he will look about for you. Yet you will better arrive - the omens of the poets hurry not in vain



Why should it be permitted that a mother, seated upon the warm [funeral] pile of the son, reproach the gods and the bronze threads of the Sisters more, or that as she beholds the fire of a youthful spouse, she overcomes the hands of a crowds opposing and holding her; about to die alongside the burning husband? Perhaps I should also strike the gods and envious Tartarus: even one wretched from afar might go to view a funeral. But not only does Nature give herself to grieving in rightful Piety; for me, father you, taken from life, go youthful and at the first threshold of the fates to harsh Tartarus. For neither did the Marathonian maid weep less sparingly at Icarius' destruction by the crime of savage countrymen, than did the mother Astyanax falling from the Phrygian citadel. So that she [i.e., Erigone, daughter of Icarius] at the final halter [i.e., for suicide] stifled [her] groans: yet it was a shame for, you after the funeral of great Hector, to have served a Haemonian husband. Not I, what melodious underworld offerings of fixed utterance the swan sends forth at death, nor will I invite to the ancestral pyres what the winged [maids] of Tyrrhenia from the black cliff very sweetly menaced the mariner with, nor what Philomela moans and complains with tongueless murmur to the cruel sister: all too familiar to the poet. Who has not at a burial bespoke all the tearful branches and buds of the daughters of Helios, and the boulders of Phrygia, and dared music contrary to Phoebus, with trustworthy Pallas [herself as well] not having joyed at a flute [i.e., on such an occasion?] Piety, forgotten of men, recalls you to heaven and Justice with a tongue of redoubled Eloquence bewails you, and Pallas and the Heliconian court of learned Phoebus; for whom it is labor to lead Aonian songs in six foot [meter] and those for whom, by measuring a poem with care to the tortoise-shell, Arcadia of the lyre was the name [given] and those under all the globe which Wisdom numbers sevenfold on the height of fame, who in dread buskin [i.e., stage costume for a tragedy] thundered the furies and hostile stars from heaven upon the homes of kings, and they who wore out wanton strength on sweet Thalia, or by a [metrical] foot crippled heroic ambitions. For having embraced all with spirit, the author lets it be known wide all the powers which may be spoken of, or if it pleased to refrain with Aonian rhythms, or if with voice loosened and freed to scatter rainstorms and harmonize with plain speaking.

Lay forth, Parthenope, from the sudden dust the half-demolished faces, and breathe from the mount and place [thy] hair upon the tombs and sunken burial of a great offspring, whom not any of the heights of [Athenian] Munychia and shrewd Cyrene better excelled or bold Sparta gave birth to. If you were cast from an obscure stock, lacking of fame and with no holding in the race, you had approved him a fellow Euboean citizen with you and more of the Greeks than is thought of [one with] blood. So often joined with yours he surpassed the times, when in laudatory verse he would sing at the appointed quinquennial feasts; with an expression exceeding the Pylian of old and the face of the Dulichian monarch and a brow bound up with the splendor of either. You were not deformed born of obscure blood, nor without the light of noble birth (although the fortune of the parents was constrained by expenses); for Infancy with wealthy ceremony chose you to put aside purple mantle given with honor of lineage and the aristocratic gold of the breast. In [your] coming out at once the Aonian sisters smiled with favor, and Apollo, already charming to me, lowered and dipped the lyre of the boy into the sacred river. The glory of fatherland is not simple, and the origin of birth depends on an ambiguous contest of a twin lands [i.e., Rome and Greece.] Grecian Elea reports you derived from their tribe of Latin colonists, where the ships master [i.e., Palinurus] was vigilant [but] perished unhappily in the midst of the waves; yet from thence a greater from his long line of life it [i.e., Elea] approved...Parthenope [i.e., ostensible gap in text]...other and different cities compete as birth places of [that] Homer they all commend; [but] he [i.e., Homer] is not a true [son] with these, the glory of fraud maintains [a] huge [count of] victims. And there, while you offer life years of well wishing [i.e., in the way of poetry], promptly are you taken to contests of ancestral purification hardly [meant] be be completed [even] by [grown] men, [so] swift and daring [you were] by nature for renown. The Euboean common folk were in awe at the youthful songs and parents showed you to [their] children. From whence your voice was frequent, and not without glory, at sacred battles: not as often did green Therapnae applaud at Castor's racing course or the triumphant brother [i.e., Pollux] at a boxing bout. But if inclined to have been victorious at home [then]: what a prize [it is] now to merit being covered betimes with the boughs of Phoebus, now with the grass of Lerna, now with the Athamantian pine, yet with so many times having been wearied, did you nowhere bring forth boughs, did Victory [ever] take away [from you] or touch the hair of another?

Here for you to be trusted with the pledge of the fathers and honored manliness, with you to be guided by a preceptor, to learn the customs and deeds of forbearers - who fell at Troy, how Ulysses was delayed, how many steeds and battles of men Maenides maneuvered in verse, and how much the old man of Ascrea [i.e.,

Hesiod] and [he] of Sicily [i.e., Epicharmus] enriched the patriotic peasants, where, with convention prevailed upon, the voice of Pindar's lyre might return, and Ibycus entreated of the birds, and Alcman was sung by the gloomy Amyclae, fierce Stesichorus, and reckless Sappho, not dreading the Leucadian cliffs, having undertaken the manly leap [i.e., in the taking of her own life], and those others the lyre has deemed worthy. [It was for] you to spread the learned songs of Battus' son [i.e., Callimachus] and the hiding places of wily Lycophron, of obscure Sophron, and the the refined mysteries of Corinna. Yet why do I speak trifles? You were accustomed to bear equal yoke with Homer and to match hexameters with liberated verses, while never suffering what is more brief to be relinquished. What wonder, if those who left homelands seek you out, those from the Lucanian field, those from the mountains of stern Daunus, those that wept over the neglected home for Venus and the country of Alcides or the maid from the Sorrento's summit that cast a watch on the Tyrrhenian deep, which nearer the bay with the war trumpet and oar, was observed long ago by one from the Ausonian hills, by a sojourner from a hearth-god of Cyme, which they sent from the port of Dicarchus and Baiae's shore, where, with the deep mixed with middling shallows, fire breathes on the waters and homes watch over hidden passions? Thus to Avernus' rocks and the dark cave of the Sibyl came peoples from every side asking; she sung omens of the Fates and deeds of the gods, a not ineffective prophetess despite foiled Phoebus. Soon also you instruct the future princes and the shoot of Romulus and stand firm, leading into the footsteps of the fathers. Under you thrived the Dardanian searcher of the secret fire, who hides the inner sanctums of furtive Diomedes, and from thence the boy became acquainted with the sacred rite; being one to approve you showed arms to the Salii and certain fore-warnings of the skies to augurers; to whom is the right to recite Chalcidic song, why the hair of Phrygian flames could be concealed, and your many strokes gathered up [which] the Luperci feared.

And now perhaps one from that company gives laws to Eastern nations, another keeps in check Iberians, another at Zeugma shuts out Persian Achaemenids, these curb the wealthy of Asia, these other those of Pontus, these improve the forums with peace-maintaining laws, these hold dutiful station at the camp: you are the source of praise. To shape youthful hearts, neither Nestor or Phoenix, guide of an untamed ward, contended to shape youthful hearts for you, nor Chiron who, with Aecides wishing to hear sharp trumpets and bugles, subdued him with a different song.

While you celebrate such excellent things, suddenly Erinys [i.e., a Fury], from the Tarpeian mount, stirred the fire and provoked battles in Phlegra. The Capitol houses are alight with sacrilegious pine torches, and the cohorts of Latium took up the Furies of the Senones [i.e., a Gallic tribe.] Scarcely the flames rest, nor yet had this funeral pyre of the gods settled, when at the firebrands you, with vigor, chant many consolations for the razed temples, and would, with affectionate countenance, mourn the captives and crushing blows. The Latin princes and Caesar, the avenger of the gods, are amazed, and from the midst of the fire the Father of divinities nods in assent. And now it was his mind to weep with pious song at Vesuvian conflagrations and groan at the destruction overhanging the native country, when the Father removing the mountain from the lands lifted it to the stars, and cast it far and wide upon the unhappy cities.

The tuneful groves of Boetia at the time striking me also, when from your race descending I spoke the goddesses receiving: for [it was] not so much for me the stars, oceans and lands, which custom owes to the parent [of poets], but whatever distinction you first bestowed on this lyre, is to hope for fame in the tomb and not to be uttered to the multitude. You were as like the Latin fathers, such as often I might flatter with song, and I the happy spectator of the gift that you might appear! Oh how bewildering to weep with joyful prayers and respectful fears amidst glad modesty! How that day was yours, how for me there was no greater glory! When such observes the youth he begot on Olympian sand, the more the one strikes, the more he is slain deep within the heart; the spectators attend, he is watched by the great Achaeans, while frequently he covered up [his] eyes with a draught of dust and vows to die for a captured crown. [Alas] that for him so great under you a witness, I bore on the head only ancestral leaves, gifts of Ceres, and Chalcidic garlands. Hardly could the field of Dardanian Alba contain you, if through me you might carry off wreaths bestowed by the hand of Caesar! What strength to supply that day, how much of old age it was able to take away! For since the [award of] oak tree did not mixed with the [award of] olive [honor] press me, and hoped for honor has fled: how sweetly [it is that] you should take hold the unattainable [prize] of the Tarpeian Father! With you as our teacher, the "Thebiad" followed on the ancient first steps of the poets; You roused my song, laid out the deeds of heroes, and taught the bounds and settings of territories. Without you a path with uncertain bound fails for me and the sails of a ship made destitute darken. Not only did





On the War in Germany - a fragment

lights: the humble good sense of Nestor-like Crispus and Fabius Veiente - the purple marks each as mighty, thrice by name have they filled the list of memorial festivals - and Acilius, near to the confines of Caesar's palace.

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William Thomas Sherman  
1604 NW 70th St.  
Seattle, Washington 98117  
206-784-1132  
[wts@gunjones.com](mailto:wts@gunjones.com)  
website: [www.gunjones.com](http://www.gunjones.com)