**Ovid *Amores* II**

An extra: *Amores* I.1

### **Book I Elegy I : The Theme of Love**

Arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam  
    edere, materia conveniente modis.  
par erat inferior versus—risisse Cupido  
    dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem.  
'Quis tibi, saeve puer, dedit hoc in carmina iuris?               5  
    Pieridum vates, non tua turba sumus.  
quid, si praeripiat flavae Venus arma Minervae,  
    ventilet accensas flava Minerva faces?  
quis probet in silvis Cererem regnare iugosis,  
    lege pharetratae Virginis arva coli?               10  
crinibus insignem quis acuta cuspide Phoebum  
    instruat, Aoniam Marte movente lyram?  
sunt tibi magna, puer, nimiumque potentia regna;  
    cur opus adfectas, ambitiose, novum?  
an, quod ubique, tuum est? tua sunt Heliconia tempe?               15  
    vix etiam Phoebo iam lyra tuta sua est?  
cum bene surrexit versu nova pagina primo,  
    attenuat nervos proximus ille meos;  
nec mihi materia est numeris levioribus apta,  
    aut puer aut longas compta puella comas.'               20  
Questus eram, pharetra cum protinus ille soluta  
    legit in exitium spicula facta meum,  
lunavitque genu sinuosum fortiter arcum,  
    'quod' que 'canas, vates, accipe' dixit 'opus!'  
Me miserum! certas habuit puer ille sagittas.               25  
    uror, et in vacuo pectore regnat Amor.  
Sex mihi surgat opus numeris, in quinque residat:  
    ferrea cum vestris bella valete modis!  
cingere litorea flaventia tempora myrto,  
    Musa, per undenos emodulanda pedes!               30

### 

Just now, I was preparing to start with heavy fighting

and violent war, with a measure to fit the matter.

Good enough for lesser verse – laughed Cupid

so they say, and stole a foot away.

‘Cruel boy, who gave you power over this song?

Poets are the Muses’, we’re not in your crowd.

What if Venus snatched golden Minerva’s weapons,

while golden Minerva fanned the flaming fires?

Who’d approve of Ceres ruling the wooded hills,

with the Virgin’s quiver to cultivate the fields?

Who’d grant long-haired Phoebus a sharp spear,

while Mars played the Aonian lyre?

You’ve a mighty kingdom, boy, and too much power,

ambitious one, why aspire to fresh works?

Or is everything yours? Are Helicon’s metres yours?

Is even Phoebus’s lyre now barely his at all?

I’ve risen to it well, in the first line, on a clean page,

the next one’s weakened my strength:

and I’ve no theme fitting for lighter verses,

no boy or elegant long-haired girl.’

I was singing, while he quickly selected an arrow

from his open quiver, to engineer my ruin,

and vigorously bent the sinuous bow against his knee.

and said, ‘Poet take this effort for your song!’

Woe is me! That boy has true shafts.

I burn, and Love rules my vacant heart.

My work rises in six beats, sinks in five:

farewell hard fighting with your measure!

Muse, garland your golden brow with Venus’s myrtle

culled from the shore, and sing on with eleven feet!

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### **Book II Elegy I: The Readership He Desires E**

I, that poet Naso, born by Pelignian waters,

also composed these, my naughtinesses.

Here too Love commands – go far, stay far, you puritans!

You’re not fit audience for the erotic mode.

Let the virgin who’s not frigid, who’s betrothed, read me,

and the inexperienced boy unused to the touch of love:

and let some other youth, now I’m wounded by the bow,

acknowledge the shared sign of his passion,

and gazing long at it say: ‘what betrayal has he learnt,

this poet, that he’s written about my misfortunes?’

I remember, I dared to speak about celestial war

and hundred-handed Gyas – that was enough effrontery –

with Earth herself’s fell vengeance, and Ossa

and steep Pelion piled on high Olympus.

And I had Jupiter, with thunder and lightning, in hand,

the things he throws with such effect through the sky –

my lover closed the door! I dropped Jove and the lightning:

my genius let fall Jupiter himself.

Jupiter, forgive me! Your weapons were no help:

her entrance was even closed to your mightier bolt.

I resumed my weapons, light flattering elegies:

gentle words can soften harsh doors.

Songs can draw down the blood-red moon,

and call the sun’s white stallions from their journey:

Serpents’ jaws are forced apart by song,

and fountains flow backwards to their source.

Doors yield to song, and the bolt rammed home,

however hard it is, is conquered at last by charms.

What does it profit me to sing of swift Achilles?

what use to me one or the other Atrides,

whoever that was who wasted years on war and wandering,

or sad Hector dragged behind the Thessalian horses.

but her face often praised, the beautiful girl herself

comes for the poet, the reward for song.

A great prize won! Bright heroic names farewell:

your rewards are not adequate for me!

Songs bring the beautiful girls to my shining face,

songs that Love dictates to me!

### **Book II Elegy II: Bagoas the Servant L**

While I’m passing a brief, appropriate, moment with you,

Bagoas , how anxious your mistress is at being watched!

I saw the girl yesterday in the light, walking there

where the portico displays the line of Danaids.

Straightaway, since she pleased me, I sent her a proposition.

She wrote back nervously: ‘It’s not allowed!’

And, querying why it wasn’t, I got the reply

that your excessive annoying care is the girl’s trouble.

O watchman, believe me, if you’re wise, you’ll desist

from incurring hatred: we wish those we fear would vanish.

Her husband’s also not wise: why labour to watch

something when nothing’s lost if you don’t?

But it humours the madman to think that his love

who delights many, is in fact chaste:

let your girl be given liberty in secret,

what you give her, she’ll repay you.

You choose to know – then the lady’s in debt to the servant:

you’re afraid to know – it’s alright to dissimulate.

She reads a note by herself – think that her mother sent it!

Some unknown comes – he’ll soon become known to you.

She pretends to go to see a friend who isn’t ill,

it’s fine! Your judgement is she’s ill.

If she’s late, don’t weary yourself waiting forever,

you can snore with your head between your knees.

Don’t ask what happens in the temple of linen-clad Isis,

and don’t be worried by the theatre’s arch!

One in the know constantly takes away gains he gathers –

equally how much less is the labour of the silent?

He pleases and lives in the house and doesn’t feel the lash:

he’s powerful – the others lie there a squalid crowd.

Concoct idle things to hide true motivations:

and what satisfies her will satisfy them both.

While her husband pulls a face and frowns,

the lovely woman does what she’d like to do.

Still now and then she needs to pick a quarrel with you too,

and simulate tears and call you a scoundrel.

You bring a charge against her, that she can wholly explain,

and with a false accusation you’ll hide the truth.

So your esteem and your savings grow.

Do this and you’ll be free in no time at all.

You see the informers with chains around their necks?

There’s a squalid prison for disloyal hearts.

His garrulous tongue left Tantalus searching

for water amongst the waters and fruit that fled.

Juno’s watchman guarded Io too well,

and died before his time: while she’s a goddess!

I’ve seen fetters worn on livid legs,

from a husband’s being made to learn of un-chastity.

The crime deserved no less. Bad tongues are doubly evil:

the husband grieves, the girl’s reputation is harmed.

Believe me, crimes like this don’t please a husband,

they’re no help to you, even if he listens.

If he’s indifferent, you speak your words to heedless ears:

if he’s in love, your officiousness will sadden him.

Most crime however obvious is unproven:

his judgement always comes to favour her.

Though he sees it himself, he’ll believe her denials

and condemn his own eyesight, and fool himself.

Seeing the woman’s tears, he’ll weep himself,

and say: ‘Punish that informer!’

Why start an unequal fight? Beaten, you’ll be lashed,

and she’ll be sitting on the judge’s lap.

We’re not taking to crime, we’re not uniting to mix

poisons, no drawn dagger gleams in my hand.

We’re looking for some safe love-making thanks to you.

What could be more innocuous than our prayers?

### **Book II Elegy IV: His Susceptibility L**

I wouldn’t dare defend my suspect morals

or falsely move to protect my vices.

I confess – if it’s any use to confess a sin:

I acknowledge the foolish guilt now in myself.

I hate to desire, but can’t not be what I hate:

ah, what a painful burden to throw off what you love!

I lack all power and authority to control myself:

carried away like a boat, swept swiftly through the water.

It’s not one kind of beauty that excites my desires –

there’s a hundred reasons why I’m always in love.

If it’s one with modest eyes cast on the ground,

I burn, and her shyness sets a trap for me:

or if it’s one who’s bold, I’m taken, sophisticated,

giving hope of being sweetly nimble in bed.

If she looks severe, and strict as a Sabine,

I think she wants it, but hides it, being noble.

If you’re learned, you please me with rare arts:

if you’re naive, your innocence pleases.

Then there’s the girl who says that Callimachus’s songs

are rough beside mine – she who I please soon pleases me.

Even she who castigates me and my poems –

I long to endure her critical thighs.

She walks sweetly – I like the motion: another’s hard –

but she could be sweeter at a man’s touch.

This one who sings divinely and smoothly alters pitch,

I want to give stolen kisses as she sings:

She who strikes plaintive chords with practised fingers –

who could not love such knowledgeable hands?

She who pleases with her postures, and waves her arms

in rhythm, and twists her tender body with sweet art? –

Be silent about me, who’s enticed by everything,

but put chaste Hippolytus by her, and he’d be Priapus!

You, who are so tall, are like the ancient heroines

and can lie the full length of the bed.

This one’s small size is manageable. I’m ruined by both:

tall and short agree with my desire.

She’s not cultured – come, she could take up culture:

she’s well-equipped -  she can display her gifts herself.

Fair ones capture me: I’m captured by golden girls,

but Venus is still pleasing when darkly coloured.

If dark tresses hang on a snowy neck,

then Leda was famed for her black hair:

If they’re golden, Aurora’s saffron hair pleases.

My desire adapts itself to all the stories:

Young girls entice me: older ones move me:

she pleases with her body’s looks, she with its form.

In short, whichever girls one might approve of in the city,

my desire has ambitions on them all.

### **Book II Elegy VI: The Death of Corinna’s Pet Parrot L**

Parrot, the mimic, the winged one from India’s Orient,

is dead – Go, birds, in a flock and follow him to the grave!

Go, pious feathered ones, beat your breasts with your wings

and mark your delicate cheeks with hard talons:

tear out your shaggy plumage, instead of hair, in mourning:

sound out your songs with long piping!

Philomela , mourning the crime of the Thracian tyrant,

the years of your mourning are complete:

divert your lament to the death of a rare bird –

Itys is a great but ancient reason for grief.

All who balance in flight in the flowing air,

and you, above others, his friend the turtle-dove, grieve!

All your lives you were in perfect concord,

and held firm in your faithfulness to the end.

What the youth from Phocis was to Orestes of Argos,

while she could be, Parrot, turtle-dove was to you.

What worth now your loyalty, your rare form and colour,

the clever way you altered the sound of your voice,

what joy in the pleasure given you by our mistress? –

Unhappy one, glory of birds, you’re certainly dead!

You could dim emeralds matched to your fragile feathers,

wearing a beak dyed scarlet spotted with saffron.

No bird on earth could better copy a voice –

or reply so well with words in a lisping tone!

You were snatched by Envy – you who never made war:

you were garrulous and a lover of gentle peace.

Behold, quails live fighting amongst themselves:

perhaps that’s why they frequently reach old age.

Your food was little, compared with your love of talking

you could never free your beak much for eating.

Nuts were his diet, and poppy-seed made him sleep,

and he drove away thirst with simple draughts of water.

Gluttonous vultures may live and kites, tracing spirals

in air, and jackdaws, informants of rain to come:

and the raven detested by armed Minerva lives too –

he whose strength can last out nine generations:

but that loquacious mimic of the human voice,

Parrot, the gift from the end of the earth, is dead!

The best are always taken first by greedy hands:

the worse make up a full span of years.

Thersites saw Protesilaus’s sad funeral,

and Hector was ashes while his brothers lived.

Why recall the pious prayers of my frightened girl for you –

prayers that a stormy south wind blew out to sea?

The seventh dawn came with nothing there beyond,

and Fate held an empty spool of thread for you.

Yet still the words from his listless beak astonished:

dying his tongue cried: ‘Corinna, farewell!’

A grove of dark holm oaks leafs beneath an Elysian slope,

the damp earth green with everlasting grass.

If you can believe it, they say there’s a place there

for pious birds, from which ominous ones are barred.

There innocuous swans browse far and wide

and the phoenix lives there, unique immortal bird:

There Juno’s peacock displays his tail-feathers,

and the dove lovingly bills and coos.

Parrot gaining a place among those trees

translates the pious birds in his own words.

A tumulus holds his bones – a tumulus fitting his size –

whose little stone carries lines appropriate for him:

‘His grave holds one who pleased his mistress:

his speech to me was cleverer than other birds’.

### **Book II Elegy IXa: A Reproach to Cupid E**

O nothing can express my indignation enough Cupid,

at the way you idle around in my heart –

Why annoy me, a soldier who’s never left your standard,

and let me be injured in my own camp?

Why does your torch blaze, your bow bend against friends?

There’s more glory in beating those who fight.

What of Achilles helping Telephus, struck by his spear,

healing his wounds quickly with its power?

The hunter chases what runs: leaves what he’s captured

and often searches for another quarry.

It’s we, the crowd dedicated to you, who feel your weapons:

your hand’s slack against enemies that fight.

What joy has a barbed arrow in being blunted on bone?

Love’s left my bones stripped naked of flesh.

There are so many men without love, so many girls! –

There you can triumph with the greatest praise.

If Rome had not spread her power to the wide world

she’d still to this day be just huts roofed with straw,

The weary soldier retires to the fields he’s given:

free of the starting line the racehorse is put out to grass:

after long service the warship is secretly beached,

the discharged man’s sword is safely laid away.

Me too, who’ve earned it so often, by loving girls:

time for me to be discharged and live in peace.

### **Book II Elegy IXb: His Addiction E**

If a god said ‘Live, and set love aside’ I’d say ‘no’!

Girls are such sweet misfortune.

When I’m truly weary, and ardour has died in my spirit,

I’m driven on by who knows what force in my poor mind.

It’s like a hard-mouthed horse carrying off its rider

headlong, as he hauls on the foaming bit in vain:

or a ship, suddenly, on the point of touching land,

when a squall in harbour drags it into the deep –

That’s how Cupid’s inconstant winds drive me back,

and noble Love takes up his familiar arrow.

Pierce me, boy! I’m offered naked to your weapons:

this is your power, this is what your strength does:

as if your arrows came here now fired by themselves –

their quiver is scarcely more familiar than me!

Unhappy, the man who spends the night in slumber,

and calls sleep itself the greatest of gifts!

Foolish, what’s sleep but the image of frozen death!

The grave grants us enough time for sleep.

Now my girl’s lying words deceive me:

I still live in hope of great delight.

Now she flatters me: now she contrives to quarrel:

I often enjoy my girl: I’m often shut out.

Mars gets inconstancy from you, Cupid, his stepson:

your stepfather wields his arms by your example.

You’re unreliable, far more fickle than your wings,

and give and deny your delights with dubious loyalty.

If you still hear me, Cupid, and your lovely mother,

establish your rule in my un-forsaken heart!

Let girls enter your country, that oh-so-fickle crowd!

Then you’ll be worshipped by both your subject peoples.

### **Book II Elegy X: Two at Once L**

It was you, Graecinus, you, I remember, for certain,

denied that one man could love two girls at once.

Deceived through you, through you caught defenceless –

behold, disgrace, I love two at the same time!

Both are lovely, the pair are sophisticated:

it’s doubtful, between her and her, who’s most artful.

She’s beautiful: she’s also beautiful:

she pleases me a lot, and she does too!

I sway, like a yacht caught by opposing winds,

and desire is divided between the two.

Venus, why endlessly double my problems?

Wasn’t there enough trouble with the one girl?

Why leaf the trees, why fill the sky with stars,

why add water you’ve gathered to the deep sea?

Still this is better, since I’m not despised and love-less –

let the sober life happen to my enemies!

Let my enemies sleep on a couch, bereft,

and relax their limbs in the midst of the bed!

But let wild love shatter my indolent slumber:

let me not be the only one weighing the mattress down!

Don’t let my girl spoil it, nothing forbidden –

if one can satisfy, fine, if not, then two!

I’ll manage – my limbs are slender but not without strength:

my body’s light but not lacking in power:

and pleasure secretly nourishes my forces.

No girl’s been disappointed by my performance:

often I’ve spent the whole night in play,

and was capable and resolute at dawn.

Happy the man, who dies in Love’s mutual battle!

Let the gods make that the cause of my death!

Let the soldier’s breast oppose the enemy missiles

and buy a lasting name with his blood.

Let the greedy seek wealth, and weary with voyaging,

shipwrecked, let their lying mouths drink brine.

But let me be taken fainting in Venus’s act,

when I die: freed in the midst of it, the work half-done:

and someone will say, weeping, at my funeral:

‘That death was so appropriate to his life!’

### **Book II Elegy XI: Corinna’s Voyage E**

The worst evil told of was that ship, pine felled on Pelion,

amazing the sea-lanes, among the ocean waves,

tossed about rashly between the clashing rocks

in its quest for the notorious Golden Fleece.

O I wish, if men had to cut the seas with oars, at least,

that Argo, crushed, had drunk funereal waters!

Behold, Corinna’s preparing to go on a tricky voyage,

and flee the familiar bed and our shared household gods.

Ah me, how I’ll fear, with you, the west and east wind,

the frozen north wind, and the cooling south!

No cities there, no woods for you to gaze at:

only the blue form of the cruel sea.

Mid-ocean has no delicate shells or coloured pebbles:

their natural place is by the thirsty shore.

Girls, imprint the sands with marble feet:

the beach is safe – the rest’s a dark journey.

Let others tell you of the battles of the winds:

whom Scylla attacks, and whom Charybdis’s waters:

and what rocks jut out from violent Ceraunian coasts:

what large and small bays lie hidden on that of Syrtes.

Let others report it to you: what ever they say

believe! No storms will harm your credulity.

Too late to look back at shore, when the ropes are loosed

and the curved ship sails over the immense sea:

while the worried sailor trembles at adverse winds

and sees the water near, as near as death.

And if Triton provokes the breaking waves,

the colour will drain completely from your face!

Then you’ll call on the noble stars of fertile Leda

and say ‘Happy, the one who stayed on shore!’

It’s safer to stay in bed, read your books,

make your Thracian lyre quiver with your fingers.

But if my words are carried in vain on the winged storm,

let Galatea still favour your ship’s sailing!

You’ll be guilty of shaking my girl about so much

Nereids , goddesses, and you, father of the Nereids.

Go on remembering me, return with a following wind:

let the breeze more strongly fill your sails!

May great Nereus drive the seas towards this shore:

let the winds blow this way, and the tides run!

Beg, yourself, and a west wind will fill your canvas,

you yourself lend a hand with the swelling sails!

I’ll be the first to sight your boat from the shore,

and say: ‘It carries my goddess!’

I’ll bear you to land on my shoulders, snatch disordered

kisses. I’ll offer the sacrifice promised for your return:

and we’ll make a couch of the soft sand,

and some dune can be our table.

There you’ll sit drinking wine and tell me –

how your ship was nearly wrecked in mid-ocean:

that, hastening to me, you weren’t frightened

by iniquitous nights or headlong southerlies.

Let me believe it’s all true: fiction’s worthwhile –

why shouldn’t I please myself with my dreams?

Lucifer, bright in the sky, with your galloping horses,

bring me that moment, as quickly as you can.

### **Book II Elegy XII: His Triumph L**

Go wreathe my brows with triumphal laurel!

I’ve won: behold, Corinna, in my arms,

whom husband, watchman, firm doors, all those enemies

guarded: she couldn’t be kept prisoner by their art!

Here’s a victory worthy of a major triumph,

where, whatever else it is, the gain is bloodless.

Not shallow walls, not some town encircled

with a narrow ditch, my general-ship won a girl!

When Troy fell, conquered after a ten-year war,

how much of the honour was due to Atrides?

But my fine glory’s not shared with any soldiers,

no one else has a right to the prize.

I made supreme commander here: I was the soldier,

the cavalry itself, the infantry: I was the standard-bearer.

And there’s no good fortune mixed in with my acts –

O triumph of mine you are due to all my care!

Nor is there any new reason for war here. If Helen

hadn’t been snatched, Europe and Asia had been at peace.

A woman made the woodland Lapiths, and the Centaurs,

shamefully turn to weapons, in the midst of the wine:

a woman incited the Trojans to a second war

in your kingdom, just Latinus:

Roman women, when it was still new-founded,

let in their fathers-in-law and gave them cruel weapons.

I’ve seen bulls fighting over a snow-white heifer:

watching, she herself aroused their passion.

Cupid orders me too, with many others,

without shedding blood though, to join his army.

### **Book II Elegy XV: The Ring E**

Ring, to encircle my beautiful girl’s finger,

appreciated only in terms of the giver’s love,

go as a dear gift! Receiving you with glad heart,

may she slide you straightaway over her knuckle:

May you suit her as well as you suit me,

and smoothly fit the right finger with your true band!

Lucky ring, to be touched by my lady:

now I’m sadly envious of my own gift.

O if only I could, suddenly, be my present,

by the art of Circe or old Proteus!

Then, when I wanted to touch my girl’s breasts

and slip my left hand into her tunic,

I’d glide from her finger, however tight and clinging,

and with wonderful art fall into the loose folds.

Again, so I could seal a secret letter,

the sticky wax not freeing from a dry gem,

I’d be touched first by the lovely girl’s wet lips –

so that sealing the work would give me no pain.

If I were to be plunged in your purse, I’d refuse to go,

I’d cling, a shrinking ring, to your finger.

I’ll never be an embarrassment to you, mea vita,

so your tender finger refuses to carry the weight.

Wear me, when you drench your body in the hot shower,

and let the falling water run beneath the jewel –

though, I think, your naked limbs would rouse my passion,

and, as that ring, I’d carry out a man’s part.

A vain wish? Off you go then little gift:

show her that true loyalty comes with you!

### **Book II Elegy XVII: His Slavery E**

If there’s anyone who thinks it’s disgraceful

to be slave to a girl, he’ll judge me guilty and disgraced!

Disrepute’s alright, so long as I’m less scorched

by her who holds Paphos and sea-washed Cythera.

And, since I’m to be a lovely woman’s prize,

I wish I was also the prize of a gentler girl!

Beauty brings pride. Corinna’s tempestuous with beauty –

Ah me! How does she know herself so well?

No doubt she gets her disdain from her mirror’s image,

and never looks at it until she’s ready!

If your beauty gives you pride and shows your power –

O beauty born to command my eyes! –

You don’t for that reason have to scorn me,

little things go well alongside the great.

The nymph Calypso was captivated by love of a mortal,

and held on to the reluctant man, it’s said.

A Nereid of the ocean shared her bed with Peleus,

that’s the story, Egeria hers with Numa the Just,

Venus with Vulcan, though when he leaves his anvil,

he’s shamefully defective with a crippled foot.

My kind of verse is just as unbalanced: but still fitting,

joining the heroic with the shorter line.

You too -  accept me, mea lux, on whatever terms:

you’re suited to laying the law down in a public place.

I won’t be a reproach to you, one you’d be pleased to lose:

this love of ours will never be one to disown.

Instead of wealth I possess joyful song,

and many a girl hopes for fame through me:

I know one who spreads it around she’s Corinna.

What wouldn’t she give for it to be so?

But cold Eurotas, far-off poplar-fringed Eridanus

can’t both slide between the same shores,

and no one but you will be sung in my verses:

you alone give me a chance to show my wit.

### **Book II Elegy XVIII: The Death of Tragedy E**

While in your poem you get to the Anger of Achilles,

and entangle your sworn heroes in a war,

Macer, I’m loitering in Venus’s idle shadows,

and sweet Love’s spoiling my sublimer ventures.

I’ve often told my girl ‘It’s final, off you go’ –

straight away she’s sitting in my lap again.

Often I’ve said ‘I’m ashamed!’ – ‘Ah me!’ she said,

scarce holding back tears, ‘Ashamed now of loving me?’

And wound her arms around my neck,

and gave me a thousand kisses that destroyed me.

I’m conquered, call back my wits from the war I started,

and, you, my lovely verses, gabble about things at home.

Still I grabbed the sceptre, and a tragedy flourished

in my care, and I was as suited as you like to doing it.

Love laughed at my cloak, and high, coloured boots,

and the sceptre I’d quickly grasped in my humble hand.

Here too my girl’s unfair power deflected me,

and Love has triumphed over the tragic poet.

I turn instead to what’s allowed, the arts of sweet loving –

ah me, burdened by my own precepts, myself! –

or I pen the words Penelope wrote Ulysses

and your tearful ones, deserted Phyllis,

the ones Paris, and Macareus, and ungrateful Jason,

and Hippolytus’s father, Theseus, and Hippolytus read,

what poor Dido said with the sword tight in her hand

or that lover from Ionian Lesbos with her lyre.

How soon Sabinus. my poet friend, you returned

carrying replies from lands scattered through the world!

Fair Penelope knew the seal of Ulysses:

Hippolytus’s stepmother recognised his script.

Dutiful Aeneas has replied to wretched Dido,

Phyllis, if she’s alive, has a note too.

A sad note from Jason reaches Hypsipyle:

the lover of Lesbos offers Phoebus her lyre.

Nor Macer, are you, in the midst of war’s martial song

silent, as far as is safe, about Love’s splendour.

Paris is there and the adulteress, guilty and famous,

and Laodamia faithful companion to the end.

If I know you, you’d be happier with that than war,

and you’ll be coming from your camp over to mine.

* Read all of *Amores* II in translation. The prescribed poems here are taken from A.S. Kline’s translation, free to download here: <https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/AmoresBkII.php>

Have a look at the others, too.

* Read the introduction to the text: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/ovid-amores-ii-a-selection-9781350010116/>
* Use the summaries of the English poems (in the front) and of the Latin poems (in the back) to help answer these questions:

1. Ovid does not seek to present a chronological account of his affair with Corinna, but to enjoy surprising his audience with constantly shifting themes and contrasts between adjacent poems.

Explore this as an analysis of the structure of *Amores* II.

2. Ovid is less interested in love than in the art of writing poetry about it.

How far do you agree?