

Ovid, *The Metamorphoses* (from Book One)

Translated by Sir Samuel Garth, John Dryden, et al.

(These excerpts continue where the first section of Book I in the Norton leaves off, starting immediately after line 125 on page 1079.)

The Golden Age

The golden age was first; when Man yet new,
No rule but uncorrupted reason knew:
And, with a native bent, did good pursue.
Unforc'd by punishment, un-aw'd by fear,
His words were simple, and his soul sincere;
Needless was written law, where none opprest:
The law of Man was written in his breast:
No suppliant crowds before the judge appear'd,
No court erected yet, nor cause was heard:
But all was safe, for conscience was their guard.
The mountain-trees in distant prospect please,
E're yet the pine descended to the seas:
E're sails were spread, new oceans to explore:
And happy mortals, unconcern'd for more,
Confin'd their wishes to their native shore.
No walls were yet; nor fence, nor mote, nor mound,
Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry sound:
Nor swords were forg'd; but void of care and crime,
The soft creation slept away their time.
The teeming Earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
And unprovok'd, did fruitful stores allow:
Content with food, which Nature freely bred,
On wildings and on strawberries they fed;
Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns furnish'd out a feast.
The flow'rs unsown, in fields and meadows reign'd:
And Western winds immortal spring maintain'd.
In following years, the bearded corn ensu'd
From Earth unask'd, nor was that Earth renew'd.
From veins of vallies, milk and nectar broke;
And honey sweating through the pores of oak.

The Silver Age

But when good Saturn, banish'd from above,
Was driv'n to Hell, the world was under Jove.
Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.
Then summer, autumn, winter did appear:
And spring was but a season of the year.
The sun his annual course obliquely made,
Good days contracted, and enlarg'd the bad.
Then air with sultry heats began to glow;
The wings of winds were clogg'd with ice and snow;
And shivering mortals, into houses driv'n,
Sought shelter from th' inclemency of Heav'n.
Those houses, then, were caves, or homely sheds;
With twining oziars fenc'd; and moss their beds.

Then ploughs, for seed, the fruitful furrows broke,
And oxen labour'd first beneath the yoke.

[Omitted: Bronze and Iron Ages. A race of giants then rebels against the gods, and Jupiter decides to wipe all life from the earth, at first by using fire. . . .]

Already had he toss'd the flaming brand;
And roll'd the thunder in his spacious hand;
Preparing to discharge on seas and land:
But stopt, for fear, thus violently driv'n,
The sparks should catch his axle-tree of Heav'n.
Remembring in the fates, a time when fire
Shou'd to the battlements of Heaven aspire,
And all his blazing worlds above shou'd burn;
And all th' inferior globe to cinders turn.
His dire artill'ry thus dismist, he bent
His thoughts to some securer punishment:
Concludes to pour a watry deluge down;
And what he durst not burn, resolves to drown.

The Flood

The northern breath, that freezes floods, he binds;
With all the race of cloud-dispelling winds:
The south he loos'd, who night and horror brings;
And fogs are shaken from his flaggy wings.
From his divided beard two streams he pours,
His head, and rheumy eyes distill in show'rs,
With rain his robe, and heavy mantle flow:
And lazy mists are lowring on his brow;
Still as he swept along, with his clenched fist
He squeez'd the clouds, th' imprison'd clouds resist:
The skies, from pole to pole, with peals resound;
And show'rs enlarg'd, come pouring on the ground.
Then, clad in colours of a various dye,
Junonian Iris breeds a new supply
To feed the clouds: impetuous rain descends;
The bearded corn beneath the burden bends:
Defrauded clowns deplore their perish'd grain;
And the long labours of the year are vain.

Nor from his patrimonial Heaven alone
Is Jove content to pour his vengeance down;
Aid from his brother of the seas he craves,
To help him with auxiliary waves.
The watry tyrant calls his brooks and floods,
Who rowl from mossie caves (their moist abodes);
And with perpetual urns his palace fill:
To whom in brief, he thus imparts his will.

Small exhortation needs; your pow'rs employ:
And this bad world, so Jove requires, destroy.

Let loose the reins to all your watry store:
Bear down the damms, and open ev'ry door.

The floods, by Nature enemies to land,
And proudly swelling with their new command,
Remove the living stones, that stopt their way,
And gushing from their source, augment the sea.
Then, with his mace, their monarch struck the ground;
With inward trembling Earth receiv'd the wound;
And rising streams a ready passage found.
Th' expanded waters gather on the plain:
They float the fields, and over-top the grain;
Then rushing onwards, with a sweepy sway,
Bear flocks, and folds, and lab'ring hinds away.
Nor safe their dwellings were, for, sap'd by floods,
Their houses fell upon their household Gods.
The solid piles, too strongly built to fall,
High o'er their heads, behold a watry wall:
Now seas and Earth were in confusion lost;
A world of waters, and without a coast.

One climbs a cliff; one in his boat is born:
And ploughs above, where late he sow'd his corn.
Others o'er chimney-tops and turrets row,
And drop their anchors on the meads below:
Or downward driv'n, they bruise the tender vine,
Or tost aloft, are knock'd against a pine.
And where of late the kids had cropt the grass,
The monsters of the deep now take their place.
Insulting Nereids on the cities ride,
And wond'ring dolphins o'er the palace glide.
On leaves, and masts of mighty oaks they brouze;
And their broad fins entangle in the boughs.
The frightened wolf now swims amongst the sheep;
The yellow lion wanders in the deep:
His rapid force no longer helps the boar:
The stag swims faster, than he ran before.
The fowls, long beating on their wings in vain,
Despair of land, and drop into the main.
Now hills, and vales no more distinction know;
And levell'd Nature lies oppress'd below.
The most of mortals perish in the flood:
The small remainder dies for want of food.

A mountain of stupendous height there stands
Betwixt th' Athenian and Boeotian lands,
The bound of fruitful fields, while fields they were,
But then a field of waters did appear:
Parnassus is its name; whose forky rise
Mounts thro' the clouds, and mates the lofty skies.
High on the summit of this dubious cliff,
Deucalion wafting, moor'd his little skiff.
He with his wife were only left behind
Of perish'd Man; they two were human kind.
The mountain nymphs, and Themis they adore,
And from her oracles relief implore.

The most upright of mortal men was he;
The most sincere, and holy woman, she.

When Jupiter, surveying Earth from high,
Beheld it in a lake of water lie,
That where so many millions lately liv'd,
But two, the best of either sex, surviv'd;
He loos'd the northern wind; fierce Boreas flies
To puff away the clouds, and purge the skies:
Serenely, while he blows, the vapours driv'n,
Discover Heav'n to Earth, and Earth to Heav'n.
The billows fall, while Neptune lays his mace
On the rough sea, and smooths its furrow'd face.
Already Triton, at his call, appears
Above the waves; a Tyrian robe he wears;
And in his hand a crooked trumpet bears.
The sovereign bids him peaceful sounds inspire,
And give the waves the signal to retire.
His writhen shell he takes; whose narrow vent
Grows by degrees into a large extent,
Then gives it breath; the blast with doubling sound,
Runs the wide circuit of the world around:
The sun first heard it, in his early east,
And met the rattling ecchos in the west.
The waters, listning to the trumpet's roar,
Obey the summons, and forsake the shore.

A thin circumference of land appears;
And Earth, but not at once, her visage rears,
And peeps upon the seas from upper grounds;
The streams, but just contain'd within their bounds,
By slow degrees into their channels crawl;
And Earth increases, as the waters fall.
In longer time the tops of trees appear,
Which mud on their dishonour'd branches bear.

At length the world was all restor'd to view;
But desolate, and of a sickly hue:
Nature beheld her self, and stood aghast,
A dismal desart, and a silent waste.

Deucalion and Pyrrha

Which when Deucalion, with a piteous look
Beheld, he wept, and thus to Pyrrha spoke:
Oh wife, oh sister, oh of all thy kind
The best, and only creature left behind,
By kindred, love, and now by dangers joyn'd;
Of multitudes, who breath'd the common air,
We two remain; a species in a pair:
The rest the seas have swallow'd; nor have we
Ev'n of this wretched life a certainty.
The clouds are still above; and, while I speak,
A second deluge o'er our heads may break.
Shou'd I be snatcht from hence, and thou remain,
Without relief, or partner of thy pain,
How cou'dst thou such a wretched life sustain?

Shou'd I be left, and thou be lost, the sea
 That bury'd her I lov'd, shou'd bury me.
 Oh cou'd our father his old arts inspire,
 And make me heir of his informing fire,
 That so I might abolisht Man retrieve,
 And perisht people in new souls might live.
 But Heav'n is pleas'd, nor ought we to complain,
 That we, th' examples of mankind, remain.
 He said; the careful couple joyn their tears:
 And then invoke the Gods, with pious prayers.
 Thus, in devotion having eas'd their grief,
 From sacred oracles they seek relief;
 And to Cephysus' brook their way pursue:
 The stream was troubled, but the ford they knew;
 With living waters, in the fountain bred,
 They sprinkle first their garments, and their head,
 Then took the way, which to the temple led.
 The roofs were all defil'd with moss, and mire,
 The desert altars void of solemn fire.
 Before the gradual, prostrate they ador'd;
 The pavement kiss'd; and thus the saint implor'd.

O righteous Themis, if the Pow'rs above
 By pray'rs are bent to pity, and to love;
 If humane miseries can move their mind;
 If yet they can forgive, and yet be kind;
 Tell how we may restore, by second birth,
 Mankind, and people desolated Earth.
 Then thus the gracious Goddess, nodding, said;
 Depart, and with your vestments veil your head:
 And stooping lowly down, with losen'd zones,
 Throw each behind your backs, your mighty mother's
 bones.

Amaz'd the pair, and mute with wonder stand,
 'Till Pyrrha first refus'd the dire command.
 Forbid it Heav'n, said she, that I shou'd tear
 Those holy reliques from the sepulcher.
 They ponder'd the mysterious words again,
 For some new sense; and long they sought in vain:
 At length Deucalion clear'd his cloudy brow,
 And said, the dark Aenigma will allow
 A meaning, which, if well I understand,
 From sacrilege will free the God's command:
 This Earth our mighty mother is, the stones
 In her capacious body, are her bones:
 These we must cast behind. With hope, and fear,
 The woman did the new solution hear:
 The man diffides in his own augury,
 And doubts the Gods; yet both resolve to try.
 Descending from the mount, they first unbind
 Their vests, and veil'd, they cast the stones behind:
 The stones (a miracle to mortal view,
 But long tradition makes it pass for true)
 Did first the rigour of their kind expel,
 And suppld into softness, as they fell;
 Then swell'd, and swelling, by degrees grew warm;

And took the rudiments of human form.
 Imperfect shapes: in marble such are seen,
 When the rude chizzel does the man begin;
 While yet the roughness of the stone remains,
 Without the rising muscles, and the veins.
 The sappy parts, and next resembling juice,
 Were turn'd to moisture, for the body's use:
 Supplying humours, blood, and nourishment;
 The rest, too solid to receive a bent,
 Converts to bones; and what was once a vein,
 Its former name and Nature did retain.
 By help of pow'r divine, in little space,
 What the man threw, assum'd a manly face;
 And what the wife, renew'd the female race.
 Hence we derive our nature; born to bear
 Laborious life; and harden'd into care.

The rest of animals, from teeming Earth
 Produc'd, in various forms receiv'd their birth.
 The native moisture, in its close retreat,
 Digested by the sun's aethereal heat,
 As in a kindly womb, began to breed:
 Then swell'd, and quicken'd by the vital seed.
 And some in less, and some in longer space,
 Were ripen'd into form, and took a sev'ral face.
 Thus when the Nile from Pharian fields is fled,
 And seeks, with ebbing tides, his ancient bed,
 The fat manure with heav'nly fire is warm'd;
 And crusted creatures, as in wombs, are form'd;
 These, when they turn the glebe, the peasants find;
 Some rude, and yet unfinished in their kind:
 Short of their limbs, a lame imperfect birth:
 One half alive; and one of lifeless earth.

For heat, and moisture, when in bodies join'd,
 The temper that results from either kind
 Conception makes; and fighting 'till they mix,
 Their mingled atoms in each other fix.
 Thus Nature's hand the genial bed prepares
 With friendly discord, and with fruitful wars.

From hence the surface of the ground, with mud
 And slime besmear'd (the faeces of the flood),
 Receiv'd the rays of Heav'n: and sucking in
 The seeds of heat, new creatures did begin:
 Some were of sev'ral sorts produc'd before,
 But of new monsters, Earth created more.
 Unwillingly, but yet she brought to light
 Thee, Python too, the wondring world to fright,
 And the new nations, with so dire a sight:
 So monstrous was his bulk, so large a space
 Did his vast body, and long train embrace.
 Whom Phoebus basking on a bank espy'd;
 E're now the God his arrows had not try'd
 But on the trembling deer, or mountain goat;
 At this new quarry he prepares to shoot.

Though ev'ry shaft took place, he spent the store
Of his full quiver; and 'twas long before
Th' expiring serpent wallow'd in his gore.
Then, to preserve the fame of such a deed,
For Python slain, he Pythian games decreed.
Where noble youths for mastership shou'd strive,
To quoit, to run, and steeds, and chariots drive.
The prize was fame: in witness of renown
An oaken garland did the victor crown.
The laurel was not yet for triumphs born;
But every green alike by Phoebus worn,
Did, with promiscuous grace, his flowing locks adorn.

Juvenal: Third Satire

Translated by William Gifford

GRIEVED though I am to see the man depart,
Who long has shared, and still must share my
heart,

Yet (when I call my better judgment home)
I praise his purpose; to retire from Rome,
And give, on Cumae's solitary coast,
The Sibyl—one inhabitant to boast!

Full on the road to Baiae, Cumae lies,
And many a sweet retreat her shore supplies—
Though I prefer even Prochyta's bare strand,
To the Subura:—for, what desert land,
What wild, uncultured spot, can more affright,
Than fires, wide blazing through the gloom of night,
Houses, with ceaseless ruin, thundering down,
And all the horrors of this hateful town?
Where poets, while the dogstar glows, rehearse,
To gasping multitudes, their barbarous verse!

Now had my friend, impatient to depart,
Consigned his little all to one poor cart:
For this, without the town, he chose to wait;
But stopped a moment at the Conduit - gate.—
Here Numa erst his nightly visits paid,
And held high converse with the Egerian maid:
Now the once-hallowed fountain, grove, and fane,
Are let to Jews, a wretched, wandering train,
Whose furniture's a basket filled with hay,—
For every tree is forced a tax to pay;
And while the heaven-born Nine in exile rove,
The beggar rents their consecrated grove!

Thence slowly winding down the vale, we view
The Egerian grotts—ah, how unlike the true!
Nymph of the Spring! More honored hadst thou been,
If, free from art, an edge of living green,
Thy bubbling fount had circumscribed alone,
And marble ne'er profaned the native stone.

Umbritius here his sullen silence broke,
And turned on Rome, indignant, has he spoke.
Since virtue droops, he cried, without regard,
And honest toil scarce hopes a poor reward;
Since every morrow sees my means decay,
And still makes less the little of to-day;
I go, where Daedalus, as poets sing,
First checked his flight, and closed his weary wing:
While something yet of health and strength remains,
And yet no staff my faltering step sustains;
While few gray hairs upon my head are seen,
And my old age is vigorous still, and green.
Here then, I bid my much loved home farewell—
Ah, mine no more!—there let Artorius dwell,

And Catulus; knaves, who, in truth's despite,
Can white to black transform, and black to white,
Build temples, furnish funerals, auctions hold,
Farm rivers, ports, and scour the drains for gold!

ONCE they were trumpeters, and always found,
With strolling fencers, in their annual round,
While their puffed cheeks, which every village knew,
Called to "high feats of arms," the rustic crew:
Now they give Shows themselves; and, at the will,
Of the base rabble, raise the sign—to kill,
Ambitious of their voice: then turn, once more,
To their vile gains, and farm the common shore!
And why not every thing?—since Fortune throws
Her more peculiar smiles on such as those,
Whene'er, to wanton merriment inclined,
She lifts to thrones, the dregs of human kind!

But why, my friend, should I at Rome remain?
I cannot teach my stubborn lips to feign;
Nor, when I hear a great man's verses, smile,
And beg a copy, if I think them vile.
A sublunary wight, I have no skill
To read the stars; I neither can, nor will,
Presage a father's death; I never pried,
In toads, for poison, nor—in aught beside.
Others may aid the adulterer's vile design,
And bear the insidious gift, and melting line,
Seduction's agents! I such deeds detest;
And, honest, let no thief partake my breast.
For this, without a friend, the world I quit;
A palsied limb, for every use unfit.

Who now is loved, but he whose conscious
breast,
Swells with dark deeds, still, still to be suppress?
He pays, he owes, thee nothing, (strictly just,)
Who gives an honest secret to thy trust;
But, a dishonest!—there, he feels thy power,
And buys thy friendship high from hour to hour.
But let not all the wealth which Tagus pours
In Ocean's lap, not all his glittering stores,
Be deem'd a bribe, sufficient to requite
The loss of peace by day, of sleep by night:—
O take not, take not, what thy soul rejects,
Nor sell the faith, which he, who buys, suspects!
The nation, by the GREAT, admired, carest,
And hated, shunned by ME, above the rest,
No longer, now, restrained by wounded pride,
I haste to shew, (nor thou my warmth deride,)
I cannot rule my spleen, and calmly see, citizens,
A GRECIAN CAPITAL, IN ITALY!

Grecian? O, no! with this vast sewer compared,
The dregs of Greece are scarcely worth regard:
Long since, the stream that wanton Syria laves,
Has disembogued its filth in Tiber's waves,
Its language, arts; o'erwhelmed us with the scum
Of Antioch's streets, its minstrel, harp, and drum.
Hie to the Circus! ye who want to prove
A barbarous mistress, an outlandish love.
Hie to the Circus! there in crowds they stand,
Tires on their head, and timbrels in their hand.

Thy rustic, Mars, the trechedipna wears,
And on his breast, smeared with ceroma, bears
A paltry prize, well-pleased; while every land,
Sicyon, and Amydos, and Alaband,
Tralles, and Samos, and a thousand more,
Thrive on his indolence, and daily pour
Their starving myriads forth: hither they come,
And batten on the genial soil of Rome;
Minions, then lords, of every princely dome!
A flattering, cringing, treacherous, artful race,
Of torrent tongue, and never-blushing face;
A Protean tribe, one knows not what to call,
Which shifts to every form, and shines in all:
Grammarian, painter, augur, rhetorician,
Rope-dancer, conjuror, fiddler, and physician,
All trades his own, your hungry Greekling counts;
And bid him mount the sky,—the sky he mounts!
You smile—was't a barbarian, then that flew?
No, 'twas a Greek; 'twas an ATHENIAN, too!
—Bear with their state who will: for I disdain,
To feed their upstart pride, or swell their train:
Slaves, that in Syrian lighters stowed, so late,
With figs and prunes, (an inauspicious freight,)
Already see their faith preferred to mine,
And sit above me! And before me sign! —
That on the Aventine I first drew air,
And, from the womb, was nursed on Sabine fare,
Avails me not! Our birthright now is lost,
And all our privilege, an empty boast!

For lo! where versed in every soothing art,
The wily Greek assails his patron's heart,
Finds in each dull harangue an air, a grace,
And all Adonis in a Gorgon face;
Admires the voice that grates upon the ear,
Like the shrill scream of amorous chanticleer;
And equals the crane neck, and narrow chest,
To Hercules, when, straining his breast
The giant son of Earth, his every vein
Swells with the toil, and more with mortal pain.

We too can cringe as low and praise as warm,
But flattery from the Greeks alone can charm.
See! They step forth, and figure to the life,
The naked nymph, the mistress, or the wife,
So just, you view the very woman there,
And fancy all beneath the girdle bare!
No longer now, the favorites of the stage

Boast their exclusive power to charm the age;
The happy art with them a nation shares,
GREECE IS A THEATRE, WHERE ALL ARE
PLAYERS.

For lo! Their patron smiles, — they burst with mirth;
He weeps, they droop, the saddest souls on earth;
He calls for fire,— they court the mantle's heat;
'Tis warm, he cries,— and they dissolve in sweat.
Ill matched! —secure of victory they start,
Who, taught from youth to play a borrowed part,
Can, with a glance, the rising passion trace,
And mould their own, to suit their patron's face;
At deeds of shame their hands admiring raise,
And mad debauchery's worst excesses praise.

Besides, no mound their raging lust restrains,
All ties it breaks, all sanctity profanes;
Wife, virgin-daughter, son unstained before,—
And, where these fail, they tempt the grandam hoar:
They notice every word, haunt every ear,
Your secrets learn, and fix you theirs from fear.

Turn to their schools; —yon gray professor see,
Smeared with the sanguine stains of perfidy!
That tutor most accursed his pupil sold!
That Stoic sacrificed his friend to gold!
A true-born Grecian! littered on the coast,
Where the Gorgonian hack a pinion lost.

Hence, Romans hence! no place for you remains,
Where Diphilus, where Hermarchus reigns;
Miscreants, who, faithful to their native art,
Admit no rival in a patron's heart;
For let them fasten on his easy ear,
And drop one hint, one secret slander there,
Sucked from their country's venom, or their own,
That instant they possess the man alone;
While we are spurned, contemptuous, from the door,
Our long, long slavery, thought upon no more.
'Tis but a client lost! —and that, we find,
Sits wondrous lightly on a patron's mind;
And (not to flatter our poor pride, my friend)
What merit with the great can we pretend,
Though, in our duty, we prevent the day,
And, darkling run our humble court to pay;
When the brisk praetor, long before, is gone,
And hastening, with stern voice, his lictors on,
Lest his colleagues o'erpass him in the street,
And first the rich and childless matrons greet,
Alba and Modia, who impatient wait,
And think the morning homage comes too late;

Here freeborn youths wait the rich servant's call,
And, if they walk beside him, yield the wall;
And wherefore? This, forsooth, can fling away,
On one voluptuous night, a legion's pay,
While those, when some Calvina, sweeping by,
Inflames the fancy, check their roving eye,
And frugal of their scanty means, forbear,
To tempt the wanton from her splendid chair.

Produce, at Rome, your witness: let him boast,
The sanctity of Berecynthia's host,
Of Numa, or of Him, whose zeal divine
Snatched pale Minerva from her blazing shrine:
To search his rent-roll, first the bench prepares,
His honesty employs their latest cares:
What table does he keep, what slaves maintain,
And what, they ask, and where, is his domain?
These weighty matters known, his faith they rate,
And square his probity to his estate.
The poor may swear by all the immortal Powers,
By the Great Gods of Samothrace, and ours,
His oaths are false, they cry; he scoffs at heaven,
And all its thunders; scoffs,— and is forgiven!
Add, that the wretch is still the theme of scorn,
If the soiled cloak be patched, the gown o'erworn;
If, through the bursting shoe, the foot be seen,
Or the coarse seam tell where the rent has been.
O Poverty, thy thousand ills combined,
Sink not so deep into the generous mind,
As the contempt and laughter of mankind!
 "Up! Up! these cushioned benches," Lectius
 cries,
"Befit not your estates: for shame! arise."
For "shame!" — but you say well: the pander's heir,
The spawn of bulks and stews, is seated there;
The crier's spruce son, fresh from the fencer's
 school,
And prompt the taste to settle and to rule.—
So Otho fixed it, whose preposterous pride,
First dared to chase us from their Honor's side.
 In these cursed walls, devote alone to gain,
When do the poor a wealthy wife obtain?
When are they named in wills? when called to share
The Aedile's council, and assist the chair? —
Long since should they have risen, thus slighted,
 spurned,
And left their home, but — not to have returned!
 Depressed by indigence, the good and wise,
In every clime, by painful efforts rise;
HERE, by more painful still, where scanty cheer,
Poor lodging, mean attendance, — all is dear.
In earthen ware HE scorns, at Rome, to eat,
WHO, called abruptly to the Marsian's seat,
From such, well pleased, would take his simple food,
Nor blush to wear the cheap Venetian hood.
 There's many a part of Italy 'tis said,
Where none assume the toga, but the dead:
There, when the toil forgone and annual play,
Mark, from the rest, some high and solemn day,
To theatres of turf the rustics throng,
Charmed with the farce which charmed their sires so
 long;
While the pale infant, of the mask in dread,
Hides, in his mother's breast, his little head.
No modes of dress high birth distinguish THERE;

All ranks, all orders, the same habit wear,
And the dread Aedile's dignity is known,
O sacred badge! by his white vest alone.
BUT HERE, beyond our power, arrayed we go,
In all the gay varieties of show;
And when our purse supplies the charge no more,
Borrow, unblushing, from our neighbor's store:
Such is the reigning vice; and so we flaunt,
Proud in distress, and prodigal in want!
Briefly, my friend, here all are slaves to gold,
And words, and smiles, and every thing is sold.
What will you give for Cossus' nod? how high
The silent notice of Veiento buy?
—One favorite youth is shaved, another shorn;
And, while to Jove the precious spoil is borne,
Clients are taxed for offerings, and, (yet more,
To gall their patience,) from their little store,
Constrained to swell the minion's ample hoard,
And bribe the page, for leave to bribe his lord.
 Who fears the crash of houses in retreat?
At simple Gabii, bleak Praeneste's seat,
Volsinium's craggy heights, embowered in wood,
Or Tibur, beetling o'er prone Anio's flood?
While half the city here by shores is staid,
And feeble cramps, that lend a treacherous aid:
For thus the stewards patch the riven wall,
Thus prop the mansion, tottering to its fall;
Then bid the tenant court secure repose,
While the pile nods to every blast that blows.
 O! may I live where no such fears molest,
No midnight fires burst on my hour of rest!
For here 'tis terror all: midst the loud cry
Of "water! water!" the scared neighbors fly,
With all their haste can seize — the flames aspire,
And the third floor is wrapt in smoke and fire,
While you, unconscious, doze: Up, ho! and know,
The impetuous blaze which spreads dismay below,
By swift degrees will reach the aerial cell,
Where, crouching, underneath the tiles you dwell,
Where your tame doves their golden couplets rear,
" And you could no mischance, but drowning fear!"
 "Codrus had but one bed, and that, too short,
For his short wife;" his goods, of every sort,
Were else but few:—six little pipkins graced
His cupboard head, a little can was placed
On a snug shelf beneath, and near it lay,
A Chiron, of the same cheap marble, — clay.
And was this all! O no: he yet possest,
A few Greek books, shrined in an ancient chest,
Where barbarous mice through many an inlet crept,
And fed on heavenly numbers, while he slept.—
" Codrus, in short, had nothing." You say true;
And yet poor Codrus lost that nothing, too!
One curse alone was wanting, to complete
His woes: that, cold and hungry, through the street,
The wretch should beg, and, in the hour of need,

Find none to lodge, to clothe him, or to feed!

But should the raging flames on grandeur prey,
And low in dust Asturius' palace lay,
The squalid matron sighs, the senate mourns,
The pleaders cease, the judge the court adjourns;
All join to wail the city's hapless fate,
And rail at fire with more than common hate.
Lo! while it burns, the obsequious courtiers haste,
With rich materials, to repair the waste:
This, brings him marble, that, a finished piece,
The far famed boast of Polyclète and Greece;
This, ornaments, which graced of old the fane
Of Asia's gods; that, figured plate and plain;
This, cases, books, and busts the shelves to grace,
And piles of coin his specie to replace—
So much the childless Persian swells his store,
(Though deemed the richest of the rich before,)
That all ascribe the flames to thirst of pelf,
And swear, Asturius fired his house himself.

O, had you, from the Circus, power to fly,
In many a halcyon village, might you buy
Some elegant retreat, for what will, here,
Scare hire a gloomy dungeon through the year!
There wells, by nature formed, which need no rope,
No laboring arm, to crane their waters up,
Around your lawn their facile streams shall shower,
And cheer the springing plant, and opening flower.
There live, delighted with the rustic's lot,
And till, with your own hands, the little spot;
The little spot shall yield you large amends,
And glad, with many a feast, your Samian friends.
And, sure, — in any corner we can get,
To call one lizard ours, is something yet!

Flushed with a mass of undigested food,
Which clogs the stomach, then inflames the blood,
What crowds, with watching wearied and o'erprest,
Curse the slow hours, and die for want of rest!
For who can hope his languid lids to close,
Where brawling taverns banish all repose?
Sleep, to the rich alone, "his visit pays:"
And hence the seeds of many a dire disease.
The carts loud rumbling through the narrow way,
The drivers' clamors at each casual stay,
From drowsy Drusus would his slumber take,
And keep the calves of Proteus broad awake!
If business call, obsequious crowds divide,
While o'er their heads the rich securely ride,
By tall Illyrians borne, and read, or write,
Or (should the early hour to rest invite,)
Close the soft litter, and enjoy the night.
Yet reach they first the goal; while, by the throng
Elbowed and jostled, scarce we creep along;
Sharp strokes from poles, tubes, rafters, doomed to
feel;

And plastered o'er with mud, from head to heel:
While the rude soldier gores us as he goes,

Or marks, in blood, his progress on our toes!

See, from the Dole, a vast tumultuous throng,
Each followed by his kitchen, pours along!
Huge pans, which Corbulo could scarce uprear,
With steady neck a puny slave must bear,
And, lest amid the way the flames expire,
Glide nimbly on, and gliding, fan the fire;
Through the close press with sinuous efforts wind,
And, piece by piece, leave his botched rags behind.

Hark! groaning on, the unwieldy wagon spreads
Its cumbrous load, tremendous! o'er our heads,
Projecting elm or pine, that nods on high,
And threatens death to ever passer by.
Heavens! should the axle crack, which bears a weight
Of huge Ligurian stone, and pour the freight
On the pale crowd beneath, what would remain,
What joint, what bone, what atom of the slain?
The body, with the soul, would vanish quite,
Invisible as air, to mortal sight!—
Meanwhile, unconscious of their fellow's fate,
At home, they heat the water, scour the plate,
Arrange the strigils, fill the cruise with oil,
And ply their several tasks with fruitless toil:
For he who bore the dole, poor mangled ghost,
Sits pale and trembling on the Stygian coast,
Scared at the horrors of the novel scene,
At Charon's threatening voice, and scowling mien;
Nor hopes a passage, thus abruptly hurled,
Without his farthing, to the nether world.

Pass we these fearful dangers, and survey,
What other evils threat our nightly way.
And first, behold the mansion's towering size,
Where floors on floors to the tenth story rise;
Whence heedless garreteers their potsherds throw,
And crush the unwary wretch that walks below!
Clattering the storm descends from heights unknown,
Ploughs up the street, and wounds the flinty stone!
'Tis madness, dire providence of ill,
To sup abroad, before you sign your will;
Since fate in ambush lies, and marks his prey
From every wakeful window in the way:
Pray, then,—and count you humble prayer well sped,
If pots be only —emptied on your head.

The drunken bully, ere his man be slain,
Frets through the night, and courts repose in vain;
And while the thirst of blood his bosom burns,
From side to side, in restless anguish, turns,
Like Peleus' son, when, quelled by Hector's hand,
His loved Patroclus prest the Phrygian strand.

There are, who murder as an opiate take,
And only, when no brawls await them, wake:
Yet even these heroes, flushed with youth and wine,
All contest with the purple robe decline;
Securely give the lengthened train to pass,
The sun-bright flambeaux, and the lamps of brass.—
Me, whom the moon, or candle's paler gleam,

Whose wick I husband to the last extreme,
Guides through the gloom, he braves, devoid of fear:
The prelude to our doughty quarrel hear,
If that be deemed a quarrel, where, heaven knows,
He only gives, and I receive, the blows!
Across my path he strides, and bids me STAND!
I bow, obsequious to the dread command;
What else remains, where madness, rage, combine
With youth, and strength superior far to mine?
 “Whence come you, rogue?” he cries; “whose
 beans, to-night,
Have stuffed you, thus? what cobbler clubbed his
 mite,
For leeks, and sheep’s-head porridge? Dumb! quite
 dumb!
Speak, or be kicked.—Yet, once again! your home?
Where shall I find you? At what beggar’s stand,
(Temple, or bridge) whimp’ring, with outstretched
 hand?”

Whether I strive some humble plea to frame,
Or steal in silence by, ‘tis just the same;
I’m beaten first, then dragged in rage away;
Bound to the peace, or punished for the fray!

Mark here the boasted freedom of the poor!
Beaten and bruised, that goodness to adore,
Which, at their humble prayer, suspends its ire,
And sends them home, with yet a bone entire!

Nor this the worst; for when deep midnight
 reigns,
And bolts secure our doors, and massy chains,
When noisy inns a transient silence keep,
And harassed nature woos the balm of sleep,
Then, thieves and murderers ply their dreadful trade;
With stealthy steps our secret couch invade:—
Roused from the treacherous calm, aghast we start,
And the fleshed sword—is buried in our heart!
Hither from bogs, from rocks, and caves pursued,
(The Pontine marsh, and Gallinarian wood,)
The dark assassins flock, as to their home,
And fill with dire alarms the streets of Rome.
Such countless multitudes our peace annoy,
That bolts and shackles every forge employ
And cause so wide a waste, the country fears
A want of ore for mattocks, rakes, and shares.

O! happy were our sires, estranged from crimes;
And happy, happy, were the good old times,
Which saw, beneath their kings, their tribunes’ reign,
One cell the nation’s criminals contain!

Much could I add, more reasons could I cite,
If time were ours, to justify my flight;
But see! the impatient team is moving on,
The sun declining; and I must be gone:
Long since, the driver murmured at my stay,
And jerked his whip, to beckon me away.

Farewell, my friend! with this embrace we part:
Cherish my memory ever in your heart;

And when, from crowds and business, you repair,
To breathe at your Aquinum, freer air,
Fail not to draw me from my loved retreat,
To Elvine Ceres, and Diana’s seat:—
For your bleak hills my Cumae I’ll resign,
And (if you blush not at such aid as mine)
Come well equipped, to wage, in angry rhymes,
Fierce war, with you, on follies and on crimes.

Martial: Epigrams

Translated by J.A. Pott except where otherwise noted

From BOOK ONE

I (Two Versions)

PREFACE

SEE, at your service, if you list,
Martial the epigrammatist;
To whom, kind reader, here below,
While he the joys of fame could know,
Such meed of glory you have given
As poets seldom reap in heaven.

Trans. F.A. Wright

He unto whom thou art so partial,
O reader, is the well-known Martial,
The Epigrammatist: while living,
Give him the fame thou wouldst be giving
So shall he hear, and feel, and know it:
Post-obits rarely reach a poet.

Trans. Byron

II

THE BOOK SPEAKS

If you would choose a book to be
Your traveling comrade, I remind you
To buy a handy one like me,
And leave your heavy tomes behind you.

One that a single hand can hold
Is best of all, and 'twere a pity
Should you forget where such are sold
And wander vaguely through the city.

Near Pallas' forum you shall see
The shrine of Peace, and close behind them
Secundus' shop—a freedman he
Of Lucca's sage—there you shall find them.

XXXII (Latin & Two Versions)

NON AMO TE

Non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare:
Hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te.

I love not you, Sabidius.
Just why, I can't explain, it's true.
But this, it seems, I can express:
Without a doubt, I don't love you!

Trans. D. Meshner

I do not like thee, Dr. Fell.
The reason why I cannot tell;
But this I know and know full well
I do not like thee, Dr. Fell.

Tom Brown, on Dr. John Fell (c. 1670)

XXXIV

TO LESBIA

You never guard or close the doors
To hide your pranks from observation,
And for those stolen joys of yours
Your confidant is all the nation.
Nay, those who see your wantonness
Delight you more than those who share it, No
pleasure pleases you unless
To all the world you can declare it.
From brazen ways pray, Lesbia, turn
And let the demi-mondaines teach you,
From Chione or Ias learn
A show of virtue, I beseech you.
You think my censure harsh? Not so,
For if you follow my direction
I would not ask you to forgo
Your lovers, but to shun detection.

XLIII

TO MANCINUS

You bade us dine with you, three score Invited
guests, and nothing more
You gave us than a wretched boar—
Aye, that was all I vow.

No Autumn grapes of flavor rare,
No apple honey-sweet was there,
Nor any ripe and luscious pear,
Hung late upon the bough.

No rosy peaches graced the board,
Your baskets still their cheeses hoard,
No olive jar its bounty poured
To cheer our drooping mind.

In lonely state that pigling lay,
So small that 'twere an easy prey
For any brat unarmed to slay;
Yet there was worse behind!

We never got a single bit,
But only sat and looked at it,
So in the Arena one might sit,
And feast his eyes while starving.

You stingy host, for such a feat
I will not wish you boar to eat,
But only hope, when next you meet,
The boar may do the carving.

XLVI
FESTINALENTE

When you say—"Quick: let's get it over"—
I feel myself a languid lover.
It's only when you bid me wait
That I dash from the starting-gate.
If you are in such haste to go
You'd better tell me to be slow.

XLVII
TO DIAULUS

Now leechcraft forsaking you try undertaking
And furnish the funerals of men,
So your trade is the same though you alter the
name—
For you always provided them then.

From BOOK TWO
XXXVII
TO CAECILIANUS

Scarce was the dinner served, ere you
Had swept away our every dish;
Sow's udder, woodcock meant for two,
Pig's ear, the choicest kinds of fish,
The lamprey and the chicken's thigh,
The pigeon stewed in sauces rare—
And we, the hungry company,
Had nothing left to do but stare!
That bulging cloth, a dripping pack,
Your slave bore off. Pretend or feel
Some shame, and put our dinner back;
'Twas not for your tomorrow's meal.

XXXVIII
TO LINUS

You ask me how my farm can pay,
Since little it will bear;
It pays me thus.—'Tis far away
And you are never there.

LVII
THE DANDY

Just watch the fellow yonder stroll along!
The costliest of clothes he loves to wear,
And after him there comes a motley throng
Of clients spruce and slaves with curly hair.
His chair is gay and decked with curtains fair;
Say you the smartest dandy in the town?
Just now to buy a meal of plainest fare
He pawned his only ring for half-a-crown.

LXXXII
TO PONTICUS

Why maim your slave by cutting out
The wretch's tongue, you brute,
When all the city talks about
Your crimes—though he is mute?

LXXXIII
TO A JEALOUS HUSBAND

You have robbed the young gallant of nostrils and
ears,
And his face now of both is bereft.
But your vengeance remains incomplete it appears;
He has still got another part left.

Trans. F.A. Wright

From BOOK THREE
XXXVIII
LIFE IN ROME

Martial: What motive, Sextus, brings you up to town?
Some idle hope of fortune or renown?
Sextus: I'll be a pleader: all our courts shall know
I am more eloquent than Cicero.
Martial: So Civis thought and Atestinus too, —
You know them—but their rent is overdue.
Sextus: If that should fail, my verses might atone;
They're worthy Virgil's pen, as you will own.
Martial: The man is mad; our Virgils you may meet
And threadbare Ovids, cowering in the street.
Sextus: I'll find a patron—others have before—
Martial: And all have starved excepting three or four.
Sextus: I mean to live here—tell me how I can.
Martial: By luck alone, if you're an honest man.

LXXXV
TO A JEALOUS HUSBAND

What ailed you to cut off the young gallant's nose,
And leave all unscathed the prime source of your
woes.

Trans. F.A. Wright

LXXXVI
TO A MATRON

These pages were not meant for you
That was distinctly understood,
Yet you are reading them—I knew
You would.

Dear prude, through many plays you've sat.
Read on, nor fear my coarsest verse;
The scenes you often chuckle at
Are worse.

LXXXVII

TO CHIONE

They tell me, dear lady, you've always lived chaste
And your limbs by a lover have ne'er been
embraced.

Yet for them at the baths a close cover's supplied:
It's your face, in my judgment, you rather should
hide.

Trans. F.A. Wright

From BOOK FOUR

IV

TO BASSA

Stench from the pools of marshes newly drained,
Vapors from springs that bubble sulfur-stained,
Reek of a fish-pond old and salt and black,
Of he-goat straining on his partner's back,
Of soldiers' boots, when they have been long worn,
Of Jews who take no food on Sabbath morn,
Of fleeces dipped too much in purple dye,
Of criminals as loud they sob and sigh;
Leda's foul lamp whose fumes the ceiling soil,
Ointment that's made from lees of Sabine oil,
A fox in flight, a viper in her lair,
All these compared with you are perfumes rare.

Trans. F.A. Wright

VIII

THE DAILY ROUTINE

Exacting patrons claim the first two hours,
The third doth show the raucous pleader's powers,
The fourth and fifth in business Rome doth spend,
The sixth gives pause, the seventh brings labor's
end;

The eighth to manly sports and baths assign,
And at the ninth take cushioned ease and dine;
The tenth should be the season for my books,
When by your care, Euphemus, and the cook's,
On food ambrosial god-like Caesar sups
And drains the nectar from but modest cups;
Then usher in my little jests I pray—
Jove is too busy earlier in the day.

From BOOK FIVE

XXXVII

EROTION

A child more sweet-voiced than a swan full-grown,
Softer than all Galaesus' lamb's-wool down,
More dainty than the shells from Lucrine meres,
More fair than new-cut ivory appears,
Or Red Sea stones, or snow, or lilies white,
Whose locks than Baetic fleeces shine more bright
And could the dormouse and Rhine's knots surpass,
Whose breath than Paestan roses sweeter was,

Or Attic honey, or an amber ball
Snatched from a maiden's hand and warm withal,
Compared with whom a peacock's hues were pale,
Squirrels seemed clumsy, and a phoenix stale—
My little love-bird, my Erotion,
Lies in the pyre still warm; her life is done;
Six winters had not passed above her head
When fate relentless struck my playmate dead.
And yet friend Paetus bids me not to grieve—
"My wife," he cries, "is buried, but I live.
And she was rich and proud, of lineage brave.
Why weep so sorely for a little slave?"
And therewithal, to show his heartfelt pain,
He beats his breast and tears his hair again.
How brave is Paetus. He endures his life:
And yet he's got a fortune from his wife.

Trans. F.A. Wright

From BOOK SEVEN

LXI

THE OPEN-AIR MARKET

Bold hucksters had seized on the roads all about,
The contents of each shop you would see inside out,
Till the Emperor told them to beat a retreat,
And what was an alley made once more a street.
No cups chained to pillars to-day are allowed,
No barbers ply razors unseen in the crowd,
No longer through mud do our magistrates stray,
No longer do cookshops spread out o'er the way
Within doors butcher, barber, cook, vintner remain:
Rome was one big bazaar; she's herself now again,

Trans. F.A. Wright

From BOOK EIGHT

LXXVI

TO GALLICUS

'Pray tell me plainly what you think of it,'
You always say, 'I love a frank report.'
Thus when you read the products of your wit,
Thus when you plead a client's case in court,
You pester me a verdict to extort,
And since a flat refusal seems uncouth
Here is the truth you ask for, plain and short—
That truth is that you do not want the truth.

LXXIX

THE CONTRAST

Your lady friends are ill to see,
All old or ugly as can be,
And in their company you go
To banquet, play, and portico;
This hideous background you prepare
To seem, by contrast, young and fair.

From BOOK TEN
XLVII
THE HAPPY LIFE

The things that make a happy life,
My genial friend, are these:
A quiet dwelling free from strife,
Health, strength, a mind at ease;
Money bequeathed, not hardly won,
A blazing fire when work is done.

Ingenuous prudence, equal friends,
Bright talk and simple fare,
A farm that crops ungrudging lends,
Soberness free from care,
A wife who's chaste yet fond of sport,
And sleep that makes the night seem short.

Trans. F.A. Wright

LIX
TO A DAINTY CRITIC

You like the shortest poems, not the best,
'Tis those you always read—and skip the rest;
I spread a varied banquet for your taste,
You take made dishes and the rest you waste.
And wrong your appetite, for truth to tell
A satisfying meal needs bread as well.

LXII
TO A SCHOOLMASTER

Good schoolmaster, pray give your classes a rest.
If you do, I will ask that next term you be pressed
By curly-haired boys flocking close to your table,
And no short-hand clerk or quick counter be able
To boast that he has a more studious crew
Of pupils and fonder of teacher than you.
The hot sunny days are upon us again,
And blazing July burns the ripening grain,
So let your grim rod and your whip, put to sleep,
Till the Ides of October a holiday keep.
In summer if children can only stay well,
They learn quite enough and can rest for a spell.

Trans. F.A. Wright

C
ON A PLAGIARIST

To mix with yours my verse you steal,
The knavish trick is far from deft;
The easy contrast will reveal
The theft.

Think you a lion's lordly roar
Resembles the hyena's howl,
Or would you with the eagle soar,
Poor owl?

Had you one wooden leg, and one
Endowed with Ladas' might of limb
Do you suppose that you could run
Like him?

CIII

TO HIS FELLOW-TOWNSMEN

Ye sons of Bilbilis, beneath whose walls
The rushing Salo leaps and foams and falls,
My fellow-townsmen, do you take delight
In your bard's verses, and his glory bright?
Be sure I am your honor and your fame,
And that Verona owes no more her name
To gay Catullus than you yours to me,
She who is fain that I her son should be.
Now four-and-thirty summers have gone by
Since without me to Ceres' deity
You bring your rustic cakes, while I away
In Italy have, seen my hair turn grey.
If you will welcome my return, I come:
If not, I must go back again to Rome.

Trans. F.A. Wright

From BOOK ELEVEN
XXXIX

TO HIS OLD TUTOR

You rocked my cradle, were my boyhood's guide,
And faithful comrade ever at my side;
And now my beard makes black the shaving-cloth
And these my bristles rouse my lady's wrath,
You think me still the child you used to chide,
My bailiff trembles, pale and terrified,
My roof, too, quakes when your reproof goes forth,
I'm only free to do what you decide.

So if I game or flirt, you mourn your woes;
I use some scent, you scarce refrain from blows,
For that my father never used to do;
So if I wear a cloak of Tyrian hue
Or drink a draught of wine, one might suppose
You had to pay. Bring grumbling to a close,
I hate a freedman who's a Cato too.
Am I a man you ask? My lady knows.

LXXXII
THE WINE-BIBBER

A guest, going home to his lodging at night,
Had near Sinuessa an unpleasant fright,
For hurrying down a long stairway he fell,
And all but joined hapless Elpenor in hell.
He would never have fallen, ye Nymphs of the shrine,
If he'd kept to your water and kept off the wine.

Trans. F.A. Wright

LXXXIV
THE BARBER

You would not feel Ixion's wheel or change with
Sisyphus?
Oh then, beware the barber's chair of dread Antiochus!
The frenzied crowd may cry aloud with howls delirious;
Their arms they slash—your deadly gash is worse,
Antiochus.
One may endure a surgeon's 'cure' in fashion valorous,
Or broken bone without a groan—but not Antiochus.
'Twould take the crew of cynics who are most
necessitous,
Or else a horse, whose mane is coarse, to bear
Antiochus.
Though vultures tear Prometheus there upon the
Caucasus,
A ravening bird would be preferred to you, Antiochus.
Pentheus would flee to Agave, that mother infamous,
Or Orpheus face the Maenad race—but not Antiochus.
I've lost the skin from cheek and chin, the cause would
you discuss?
It was not strife or frenzied wife—it was Antiochus!
Old pugilists from other's fists are oft disfigured thus;
But I am marred and mauled and scarred all by
Antiochus.
The goat alone hath wisdom shown, more sensible than
us,
He grew a beard because he feared to meet Antiochus!

LVII
THE NOISES OF ROME

WHY do I seek my poor Nomentan home
And squalid hearth, my fields by drought
oppressed?
Because I cannot find a place in Rome
Where men as poor as I can sleep or rest.

At early dawn the schoolmasters begin,
By nights the pastry-cooks no respite give,
Smiths make the daylight hideous with their din
Of clashing hammers. What a life to live!

Here is a money-changer ringing coins
Upon his dirty counter—lazy cheat
Next door the Spanish goldsmith's shop adjoins,
All day the glittering mallets thump and beat.

Bellona's frenzied minions howl and rant,
A bandaged sailor begs, a Jewish child,
Taught by his mother, whines his lying cant,
Blar-eyed match peddlers shout and drive me
wild.

But who may count the noises of the Town
That murder sleep? Nay, you could count as soon
The clashing cymbal-strokes that try to drown
The Colchian incantation to the moon.

But, Sparsus, you can never know such ills,
Softly you lie and lapped in rustic peace,
Your lowest room is far above our hills,
Long ere they reach you noise and clamor cease.

A country house within the city bounds
Your laborers can live within the wall—
With vineyards rich and drives and spacious grounds,
All these are yours and quiet sleep withal.

At will the glaring sunlight you exclude,
Rome throngs about my bed, I start from sleep
To tramping footsteps and to laughter rude,
Till, wearied, to my country cot I creep.

Ovid: The Art of Love

Translated by J. Lewis May (1925)

From BOOK ONE

IF there be anyone among you who is ignorant of the art of loving, let him read this poem and, having read it and acquired the knowledge it contains, let him address himself to Love. [. . .]

Thus far my Muse, borne in her chariot with wheels of different height, has, told you, would-be lover, where to seek your prey, and how to lay your snares. Now I'll teach you how to captivate and hold the woman of your choice. This is the most important part of all my lessons. Lovers of every land, lend an attentive ear to my discourse; let goodwill warm your hearts, for I am going to fulfill the promises I made you.

First of all, be quite sure that there isn't a woman who cannot be won, and make up your mind that you will win her. Only you must prepare the ground. Sooner would the birds cease their song in the springtime, or the grasshopper be silent in the summer, or the hare turn and give chase to a hound of Mænalus, than a woman resist the tender wooing of a youthful lover. Perhaps you think she doesn't want to yield. You're wrong. She wants to. in her heart of hearts. Stolen love is just as sweet to women as it is to us. Man is a poor dissembler; woman is much more skilful in concealing her desire. If all the men agreed that they would never more make the first advance, the women would soon be fawning at our feet. Out in the springy meadow the heifer lows with longing for the bull; the mare neighs at the approach of the stallion. With men and women love is more restrained, and passion is less fierce. They keep within bounds. Need I mention Byblis, who burned for her brother with an incestuous flame, and hanged herself to expiate her crime? Or Myrrha, who loved her father, but not as a father should be loved, and now her shame is hidden by the bark of the tree that covered her. O sweetly scented tree, the tears which she distils, to us give perfume and recall the ill-fated maid's unhappy name.

One day in wood-crowned Ida's shady vale, a white bull went wandering by. The pride of all the herd was he. Between his horns was just a single spot of black; save for that mark, his body was as white as milk; and all the heifers of Gnosus and of Cydonia sighed for the joy of his caress. Pasiphaë conceived a passion for him and viewed with jealous eye the loveliest among the heifers. There's no gainsaying it, Crete with her hundred cities, Crete, liar though she be, cannot deny it. 'Tis said that Pasiphaë, with hands unused to undertake such toil, tore from the trees their tenderest shoots, culled from the meadows bunches of sweet grass and hastened to offer them to her beloved bull. Whithersoever he went, she followed him; nothing would stay her. She recked not of her spouse; the bull had conquered Minos. "What avails it, Pasiphaë, to deck yourself in costly raiment? How can your lover of such riches judge? Wherefore, mirror in hand, dost thou follow the wandering herd up to the mountain top? Wherefore dost thou for ever range thy hair? Look in thy mirror: 'twill tell thee thou art no meet mistress for a bull. Ah, what wouldst thou not have given if Nature had but armed thy brow with horns! If Minos still doth hold a corner in thy heart, cease this adulterous love; or if thou must deceive thy spouse, at least deceive him with a man." She hearkens not, but, fleeing from his royal couch, she ranges ever on and on, through forest after forest, like to a Bacchante full of the spirit that unceasingly torments her. How often, looking with jealous anger on a heifer, did she exclaim) "How then can she find favor in his sight? See how she prances before him on the green. Fool, she doubtless deems that thus she is lovelier in his eyes." Then, at her command, the hapless beast is taken from the herd and sent to bow her head beneath the yoke; or else, pretending to offer sacrifice to the gods, she orders her to be slain; at the altar; and then with joy fingers o'er the entrails of her rival. How often, under the guise of one who offers sacrifice, hath she appeased the alleged displeasure of the gods, and waving the bleeding trophies in her hand exclaimed, "Go, get thee to my lover, please him now!" Now she would be Europa; now she would be Io; the one because she was a

heifer, the other because a bull bore her on his back. Howbeit, deceived by the image of a cow of maple wood, the king of the herd performed with her the act of love, and by the offspring was the sire betrayed.

Had that other Cretan girl been able to forego her passion for Thyestes (but how hard it is for a woman to love one man alone), Phœbus would not have been compelled to stay his steeds in mid-career, and to have driven his chariot back again towards the Dawn. The daughter of Nisus, because she had stolen from the father's head the fatal lock of hair, is evermore beset by ravening dogs. The son of Atreus, though he escaped the perils of the battlefield and the ocean, died beneath the dagger of his cruel spouse. Who has listened to the love story of Creusa? Who has not hated the mad fury of Medea, a mother stained with her children's blood? Phœnix, the son of Amyntor, wept with his sightless orbs. You, ye steeds, in your terror, tore Hippolytus in pieces. Wherefore, Phineus, didst thou put out the eyes of thy innocent sons? Upon thine own head will that punishment return.

Such are the consequences of woman's unbridled passion. Fiercer it is than ours, with more of frenzy in it.

Be, then, of good cheer, and never doubt that you will conquer. Not one woman in a thousand will seriously resist. Whether a pretty woman grants or withholds her favors, she always likes to be asked for them. Even if you are repulsed, you don't run any danger. But why should a woman refuse? People don't resist the temptation of new delights. We always deem that other people are more fortunate than ourselves. The crop is always better in our neighbor's field; his cows more rich in milk.

Now the first thing you have to do is to get on good terms with the fair one's maid. She can make things easy for you. Find out whether she is fully in her mistress's confidence, and if she knows all about her secret dissipations. Leave no stone unturned to win her over. Once you have her on your side, the rest is easy. Let her watch for a favorable time (that's a precaution that doctors do not neglect); let her take advantage of the moment when her mistress may more easily be persuaded, when she is more likely to surrender to a lover's solicitations. At such times, the whole world seems *couleur de rose* to her; gaiety dances in her eyes as the golden wheat-ears dance in a fertile field. When the heart is glad, when it is not gripped by sorrow, it opens and expands. Then it is that Love slips gently into its inmost folds. So long as Ilion was plunged in mourning, her warriors kept the Greeks at bay; it was when she was rejoicing and making merry that she received within her walls the fatal horse with its armed freight. Choose, too, the moment when your charmer is smarting from the insult of a rival; make her see in you a means of wiping off the score. When, in the morning, she is doing her mistress's hair, let the maid foment her anger, let her press on with sail and oar and, sighing, murmur, "Why not, Madam, pay him out in his own coin?" Then let her talk of you; let her adroitly sing your praises and swear that you, poor fellow, are wildly in love with her. But don't lose any time, for fear the wind should drop and the sails hang limp. Fragile as ice, a woman's anger is a transient thing.

"What about the maid herself?" you ask. "Is it well to win her favors first?" Now that's a ticklish business. Sometimes it stimulates their zeal; sometimes the opposite's the case. One girl will do her utmost for her mistress, another will want to keep you for herself. The only thing is just to try, and see how it turns out. On the whole, my advice to you is "Don't." I shouldn't risk these steep and dangerous by-ways myself. If you keep with me, you'll be on the right road. If, however, you are taken with the servant's charms, if you find her as pretty as she's zealous, win the mistress first, and afterwards turn your attention to the maid; but don't begin with her. Only I warn you, if you have any faith in my teaching, if my words are not dispersed by the winds over the seas, don't make the attempt at all unless you carry it right through. Once she herself is well involved, she won't give you away. The bird, with its wings well limed, won't fly far; the boar can't escape from the nets; once a fish is

on the hook, he can't get away. So my advice to you is, push your attack well home, and don't be in a hurry to withdraw your forces when the victory's won. Thus she'll be your companion in crime, and she'll never betray you; she'll tell you everything you want to know about her mistress. The great thing is to be careful. If you keep your goings-on with the maid quite dark, you'll hear about everything her mistress does.

Some people think that time and the seasons only concern farmers and seafaring men. They're wrong. just as there's a time to sow, and a time to sail, so there's a time to begin on a pretty girl. Success often depends on your seizing the right moment to open the attack. Keep clear of her birthday, for example, and shun the Kalends of March. Don't begin when there's a big show on at the circus. That would prove the winter of your discontent, when the stormy winds would blow, and you'd do well to hold off. If you launch the ship then, you'll be lucky if you're washed ashore clinging to a spar. If you want a really good opportunity, wait for the anniversary of the fatal day when Roman blood incarnadined the waters of the Allia, or for that one day out of the seven on which the Syrian Jew will do no manner of work. Above all, don't go near her on her birthday; or indeed on any day when you're expected to give a present. However much you try to wriggle out of it, she'll make you buy her something. A woman always knows how to exploit an ardent lover. Some peddler fellow will be sure to turn up, and since buying's a mania with them all, she'll be sure to find the very things she wants. She'll ask you to look at 'em; then she'll kiss you, and say, "Oh, do buy me that. It'll last for years; it's just the very thing I want, and you couldn't buy me anything I should like more." It's no good saying you haven't got the money on you; she'll ask you to draw a check, and then you'll curse the day you learned to write. And how many times you'll have to give her something for her birthday! Every time she wants anything very special, she'll have a birthday. And then she'll come grieving some pretended loss; she'll come to you with eyes all red with weeping and tell you she's lost one of her precious ear-rings. That's the little game they play. Then they'll keep on asking you to lend them money; and once they've got it, I wouldn't give much for your chances of getting it back. You can look on that as gone, and they won't give you so much as a "thank you." Why, if I'd got ten mouths and ten tongues, I couldn't tell you all the tricks our ladies of the demi-monde get up to.

In the first place, it's best to send her a letter, just to pave the way. In it you should tell her how you dote on her; pay her pretty compliments and say all the nice things lovers always say. Achilles gave way to Priam's supplications. Even the gods are moved by the voice of entreaty. And promise, promise, promise. Promises will cost you nothing. Everyone's a millionaire where promises are concerned. Hope, if only she is duly fostered, holds out a long time. She's a deceitful goddess, but a very useful one. If you give your mistress something, she may give you your *cong e*. She will have had her quid pro quo. Always make her think you're just about to give, but never really do so. Thus your farmer will keep on manuring a barren field, hoping it will produce a crop some day. Your gambler will keep throwing good money after bad, in hopes of redeeming all his losses; and thus his greed falls a victim to his hope of gain. The really great problem, the problem that takes all a man's skill to solve, is to win a woman's favors without making her a present. If you succeed in that, she will go on giving, so as not to lose the guerdon of the favors she has already bestowed. So send off your letter and couch it in the sweetest terms; it should be a sort of preliminary reconnaissance and pave the way to her heart. A few characters written on an apple led the young Cydippe astray and, when she had read them, the rash girl found she was ensnared by her own words.

Take my advice, my youthful fellow-citizens, and study the fine arts, not only that you may champion the cause of some trembling dependent. The common herd, the austere judge, and those superior people, the senators, are not the only people who are moved by eloquence. But don't show your hand, and don't be in too much of a hurry to display your powers of speech. And don't put on the professorial style. Who but an idiot would write to his mistress as though he were addressing a

meeting. A show-off letter will often turn a woman against you. Be quite natural, quite simple, but engaging. In a word, say just what you would say if you were speaking to her. If she refuses your letter and sends it back unread, don't give up; hope for the best and try again. The unruly bull bows to the yoke in time, and, in time, the most obstreperous colt gets broken in. You can wear through an iron ring by continuous friction; the ploughshare wears away every day against the soil it cleaves. What could you have harder than a rock, or less hard than water? Nevertheless, water will wear away the hardest rock. So keep pegging away, and, given time, you'll get your way with Penelope herself. Troy held out a long time, but it fell at last. Suppose she reads your letter but doesn't answer. So be it. Only keep her busy reading. Since she has condescended to read, she'll answer some fine day. Everything comes gradually and at its appointed hour. Peradventure she'll write in a huff and tell you to cease annoying her. If she does, she's trembling lest you take her at her word. She wants you to go on, although she tells you not to. So go on, and soon you'll have your heart's desire.

Vatsyayana: Kama Sutra

Translated by Richard Burton

From BOOK ONE

Chapter Five:

About the Kinds of Women Resorted to by the Citizens, and of Friends and Messengers

WHEN Kama is practiced by men of the four castes according to the rules of the Holy Writ (i.e. by lawful marriage) with virgins of their own caste, it then becomes a means of acquiring lawful progeny and good fame, and it is not also opposed to the customs of the world. On the contrary the practice of Kama with women of the higher castes, and with those previously enjoyed by others, even though they be of the same caste, is prohibited. But the practice of Kama with women of the lower castes, with women excommunicated from their own caste, with public women, and with women twice married, is neither enjoined nor prohibited. The object of practicing Kama with such women is pleasure only.

Nayikas, therefore, are of three kinds, viz. maids, women twice married, and public women. Gonikaputra has expressed an opinion that there is a fourth kind of Nayika, viz. a woman who is resorted to on some special occasion even though she be previously married to another. These special occasions are when a man thinks thus:

This woman is self-willed, and has been previously enjoyed by many others besides myself. I may, therefore, safely resort to her as to a public woman though she belongs to a higher caste than mine, and, in so doing, I shall not be violating the ordinances of Dharma.

Or thus:

This is a twice-married woman and has been enjoyed by others before me; there is, therefore, no objection to my resorting to her.

Or thus:

This woman has gained the heart of her great and powerful husband, and exercises a mastery over him, who is a friend of my enemy; if, therefore, she becomes united with me she will cause her husband to abandon my enemy.

Or thus:

This woman will turn the mind of her husband, who is very powerful, in my favor, he being at present disaffected towards me, and intent on doing me some harm.

Or thus:

By making this woman my friend I shall gain the object of some friend of mine, or shall be able to effect the ruin of some enemy, or shall accomplish some other difficult purpose.

Or thus:

By being united with this woman, I shall kill her husband, and so obtain his vast riches which I covet.

Or thus:

The union of this woman with me is not attended with any danger, and will bring me wealth, of which, on account of my poverty and inability to support myself, I am very much in need. I shall therefore obtain her vast riches in this way without any difficulty.

Or thus:

This woman loves me ardently, and knows all my weak points; if therefore, I am unwilling to be united with her, she will make my

faults public, and thus tarnish my character and reputation. Or she will bring some gross accusation against me, of which it may be hard to clear myself, and I shall be ruined. Or perhaps she will detach from me her husband who is powerful, and yet under her control, and will unite him to my enemy, or will herself join the latter.

Or thus:

The husband of this woman has violated the chastity of my wives, I shall therefore return that injury by seducing his wives.

Or thus:

By the help of this woman I shall kill an enemy of the king, who has taken shelter with her, and whom I am ordered by the king to destroy.

Or thus:

The woman whom I love is under the control of this woman. I shall, through the influence of the latter, be able to get at the former.

Or thus:

This woman will bring to me a maid, who possesses wealth and beauty, but who is hard to get at, and under the control of another.

Or lastly thus:

My enemy is a friend of this woman's husband, I shall therefore cause her to join him, and will thus create an enmity between her husband and him.

For these and similar other reasons the wives of other men may be resorted to, but it must be distinctly understood that is only allowed for special reasons, and not for mere carnal desire.

Charayana thinks that under these circumstances there is also a fifth kind of Nayika, viz. a woman who is kept by a minister, or who repairs to him occasionally;

or a widow who accomplishes the purpose of a man with the person to whom she resorts.

Suvarnanabha adds that a woman who passes the life of an ascetic and in the condition of a widow may be considered as a sixth kind of Nayika.

Ghotakamukha says that the daughter of a public woman, and a female servant, who are still virgins, form a seventh kind of Nayika.

Gonardiya puts forth his doctrine that any woman born of good family, after she has come of age, is an eighth kind of Nayika.

But these four latter kinds of Nayikas do not differ much from the first four kinds of them, as there is no separate object in resorting to them. Therefore, Vatsyayana is of opinion that there are only four kinds of Nayikas, i.e. the maid, the twice-married woman, the public woman, and the woman resorted to for a special purpose.

The following women are not to be enjoyed:

- A leper
- A lunatic
- A woman turned out of caste
- A woman who reveals secrets
- A woman who publicly expresses desire for sexual intercourse
- A woman who is extremely white
- A woman who is extremely black
- A bad-smelling woman
- A woman who is a near relation
- A woman who is a female friend
- A woman who leads the life of an ascetic
- And, lastly the wife of a relation, of a friend, of a learned Brahman, and of the king

The followers of Babhravya say that any woman who has been enjoyed by five men is a fit and proper person to be enjoyed. But Gonikaputra is of opinion that even when this is the case, the wives of a relation, of a

learned Brahman and of a king should be excepted.

The following are of the kind of friends:

- One who has played with you in the dust, i.e. in childhood
- One who is bound by an obligation
- One who is of the same disposition and fond of the same things
- One who is a fellow student
- One who is acquainted with your secrets and faults, and whose faults and secrets are also known to you
- One who is a child of your nurse
- One who is brought up with you one who is an hereditary friend

These friends should possess the following qualities:

- They should tell the truth
- They should not be changed by time
- They should be favorable to your designs
- They should be firm
- They should be free from covetousness
- They should not be capable of being gained over by others
- They should not reveal your secrets

Charayana says that citizens form friendship with washermen, barbers, cowherds, florists, druggists, betel-leaf sellers, tavern keepers, beggars, Pithamardas, Vitas and Vidushekas, as also with the wives of all these people.

A messenger should possess the following qualities:

- Skillfulness
- Boldness
- Knowledge of the intention of men by their outward signs
- Absence of confusion, i.e. no shyness
- Knowledge of the exact meaning of what others do or say
- Good manners
- Knowledge of appropriate times and places for doing different things
- Ingenuity in business

- Quick comprehension
- Quick application of remedies, i.e. quick and ready resources

And this part ends with a verse:

“The man who is ingenious and wise, who is accompanied by a friend, and who knows the intentions of others, as also the proper time and place for doing everything, can gain over, very easily, even a woman who is very hard to be obtained.”