Love and Betrayal
Selections from Catullus

Vīvāmus, mea Lesbia, atque amēmus!

"Sappho and Alcaeus"
Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, British, 1836–1912
The Walters Art Gallery
Baltimore, Maryland

INTRODUCTION

Catullus has commonly proved to be a potent resource against boredom for those students who otherwise may think of Roman authors as old fuddy-duddies. The youthful hero who tells his elders exactly what he thinks of them and then begs his girlfriend to give him hundreds and thousands of kisses right now before it's too late grips the interest of most young people who are in their early years of studying Latin. Catullus has been Western civilization's poster child for youthful alienation, and thus his life elicits ready sympathy on the part of the casual reader. What students should know, therefore, about the poet's life and poetry may not always seem entirely useful when first coming to grips with this author, but it may serve to help them, on further reflection, to understand the many portions of the Catullan corpus that do not immediately bubble up on the page with gushing romantic sentiment.

It might strike the modern student of Catullus as odd that the Latin love poets, who in subsequent generations looked back to him as a model for their own work, described him as **doctus Catullus**. His designation as "learned" derives primarily from the fact that he belonged to the first generation of Latin poets to be significantly instructed in and shaped by the aesthetic sensibilities and literary practices of Greek poets of the third century B.C., several hundred years before his own day and age (Catullus' dates are usually given as 84–54 B.C.). Alexander the Great had founded Alexandria in 331 B.C. as the administrative center of Greek rule in Egypt, and his successors, the Ptolemies, built and cultivated a great library there, which became the most important center of Greek literature and learning during the Hellenistic era (323–31 B.C.). The most notable of the third century Alexandrian or Hellenistic Greek poets was Callimachus, who espoused a critical awareness of literary form, scrupulous attention to refinement in composition, and elegant erudition. He made fun of long, continuous narrative poems that were still being written in imitation of Homer, comparing them to the muddy Euphrates River. He himself experimented with short poems, such as epigrams, hymns, and personal invective, books of discontinuous, episodic narratives, and a miniature epic or "epyllion"; in his treatment of myth he gave some attention, as did other Alexandrians poets, to exploring the feelings of lovers. He attached more importance to themes of personal and scholarly interest than to the communal and moralistic values common to the traditional epic and dramatic poetry of archaic and classical Greece. Many of the features of Callimachus' innovative poetic program were deliberately taken up in the poetry of Catullus and presumably in the poetry, no longer extant, of other Latin poets of that period who are associated loosely with Catullus. These are the very ones whom Catullus' older contemporary Cicero called

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poëtae novī and *neoteroi* (a Greek word meaning "newer" or "rather new"), terms that expressed his disdain for what he regarded as their "modern" tendencies. As we have seen, these tendencies had been around for several hundred years in the Greek world, but they seemed revolutionary to many in the Roman world who still preferred the traditional epic and dramatic poetry of the early Latin writers Naevius (late third century B.C.) and Ennius (239–169 B.C.), with their patriotic and nationalistic themes.

Some of the Latin poets who shaped the neoteric revolution in Italy, such as C. Helvius Cinna and Licinius Calvus, were close friends of Catullus and are warmly acknowledged in his poetry; many of them came from Cisalpine Gaul, as did Catullus himself, who was a native of Verona. Prominent among them was Valerius Cato, who settled at Rome as a grammarian and teacher of poetry in the Alexandrian tradition. We also hear of a Greek poet, Parthenius of Nicaea, who was brought to Rome from Bithynia by Cinna and whose presence in Rome stimulated interest in Alexandrian literature and especially in the poetry of Callimachus. There can be little doubt that such friendships and associations with poets who were engaged in experimenting with new styles of thinking, writing, and living during the mid seventies and the sixties B.C. had a profound influence on the youthful Catullus' own destiny as a poet.

According to Jerome (c. A.D. 347–420), who relied on Suetonius (c. A.D. 70–130), our poet lived only thirty years. Thus, if we assume that the last datable allusions in his poetry fall in the final year of his life, we may speculate that he lived from approximately 84 to 54 B.C. (Jerome himself gives the dates as 87–57 B.C., which cannot be right.) At some time in his life Catullus took up residence in Rome, where he came into contact with many of the men prominent in politics and literature who are known to us through historical sources. He is antagonistic toward a great many of the influential politicians of the time, such as Caesar, Pompey, Memmius, Clodius, Calpurnius Piso, and Vatinius, as well as lesser satellites such as Gellius and Mamurra, Caesar's chief engineer in his Gallic campaigns. In addition, poets like Volusius and Suffenus, who were apparently working in the tradition of Latin epic going back to the *Annals* of Ennius over a century before, come in for harsh criticism. The great city of Rome certainly opened unparalleled opportunities for enjoying the urbane intellectual, social, and poetic life that engaged Catullus so deeply, yet on the other hand he was outraged by much of what passed for culture, literature, and politics in the capital. He was always an outsider to some extent, and this allowed him to view the Roman élite from the perspective of his own discomfort, perhaps something like that of a Midwesterner living in New York City, unclouded by the prevailing political ideologies and social practices of the day—mostly corrupt from his perspective.

The most notable topic that extends its influence throughout Catullus' brief poetic career is a love affair with a woman he calls Lesbia, a name that alludes to Sappho, the famous Greek love poetess of the island of Lesbos (seventh to sixth centuries B.C.). The Lesbia of Catullus' poetry is thus at least in part a literary creation who is meant to recall the emotion and the artistry of Sappho. Two of Catullus' most important poems, which describe critical moments in his turbulent affair with the woman he calls Lesbia, are written in a meter reminiscent of Sappho, and both contain allusions to her poetry as the poet describes his own feelings. In part, then, a literary creation, Catullus' affair with Lesbia is usually regarded also as reflecting an affair that he had in real life with a beautiful, captivating, and talented woman named Clodia, who was most likely the wife of Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer, governor of Cisalpine Gaul in 62–61 B.C. and consul in 60 (died 59 B.C.). Nothing that Catullus' poetry says about his relationship with Lesbia/Clodia can be corroborated by other sources, and much that he relates seems more appropriate to a literary fiction than a literary autobiography. His poems offer the first example we have from ancient literature of the poetic record of an affair (imaginary, real, or a combination of the two) extending over time with a beginning, middle, and end. Catullus is also the first poet of whom we have any record who wrote in a subjective manner about his own (or what purports to be his own) love affair as it developed over the course of time.

In the first eleven poems there is an interesting array of pieces that treat Catullus' love affair with a **puella**, who is sometimes explicitly named as Lesbia. These poems appear to offer the outlines of an affair: first the poet's attraction to the **puella** (poems 2 and 3), then his courting of her love (poems 5 and 7), then a realization that she is no longer interested (poem 8), and finally the dissolution of the affair in bitter acrimony as the poet finds himself betrayed by a mistress whom he has discovered to be wildly promiscuous (poem 11).

The theme of betrayal recurs throughout Catullus' poems—sometimes betrayal by his **puella** and sometimes betrayal by his male friends and associates: hence the title of this book. As you read the poems relating to the "affair" with "Lesbia," you will want to think about the extent to which these poems may have been prompted by actual events in the poet's affair with a real woman and the extent to which they are fictional, literary creations. Whether you regard them as more biographical or more fictional, you will likely find yourself wanting to locate and rearrange all of the "Lesbia" poems into a cycle that makes emotional and psychological sense of the ups and downs of the love affair. Two things that you will certainly find are that the poems often allude to Greek models (Sappho, Callimachus, and other Hellenistic poets) and that they are

works of supreme poetic artistry that repay very careful attention to their poetic craftsmanship, something on which the neoteric poets all prided themselves. While possibly inspired by actual moments in a real-life affair with Clodia the wife of Metellus (known as **Clōdia Metellī**), Catullus' poems are also creations that he prayed would "endure through the years for more than one century" (1.10) because of what they have to say to readers of all generations, our own no less than any other.

One other significant event in the biography of the poet is clearly marked for the reader as a major contributor to his embitterment: his year-long tenure of service on the provincial staff of Gaius Memmius in Bithynia, which can be dated with all probability to 57–56 B.C. Memmius was considered an expert in literary matters and was a patron of the Roman poet Lucretius. This powerful man's involvement in the literary scene at Rome may have been a factor in Catullus' acquaintance with him and his being appointed to his personal staff. Things did not work out, however, as Catullus planned, and he levels some nasty vituperation at Memmius in poems 10 and 28.

In Rome Catullus depended upon the sympathy of a few close friends such as Veranius and Fabullus and of fellow neoterics such as Licinius Calvus and Cinna. Among these close friends Catullus cultivated a life style based on **ōtium**, *leisure*, and devoted to friendship, love, and poetry. The key term describing the ideal relationships among the people in this circle of friends is **urbanitās** (its opposite is **rūsticitās**), and readers of Catullus soon discover a range of other words that the poet repeatedly uses when writing about the sophisticated urbane values and interactions among the members of his social and literary coterie.

By Catullus' own testimony there were few in the élite circles with whom he was on good terms. This was the age of the so-called First Triumvirate, an agreement made in 60 B.C. between Julius Caesar, Pompey the Great, and Marcus Crassus with the design of controlling political affairs at Rome and reserving the choicest political offices for themselves and their followers. The pact was symptomatic of the destructive ambitions and illegal maneuvering that undermined political life during the fifties and led ultimately to its cataclysmic collapse in civil war at the end of the decade. Many of Catullus' poems raise what is almost a "voice in the wilderness," protesting against the unrestricted greed and social crassness that were so prevalent at the time. In particular, Catullus singles out Caesar and Pompey and their underlings for scathing criticism.

Another disheartening event in Catullus' life was the death of his brother, whose grave in the vicinity of Troy Catullus visited and commemorated with the justly famous and moving poem 101. There seems to have been deep affection between the brothers, and Catullus' tragic sense of loss over at his brother's death appears also in poems 65 and 68.

Catullus seems to have admired the traditional value set upon the Roman family, as the hymn to Diana (34) and the two wedding poems (61 and 62) indicate. Suetonius reports (*Life of Julius Caesar* 73) that Catullus' father enjoyed Caesar's friendship and that the son on one occasion apologized to Caesar for the libelous verses he had written against him. While it is difficult to imagine Catullus abandoning his deep-seated hatred toward the budding dictator and his minions, there is no difficulty in supposing that the poet undertook such a reconciliation in deference to his father's ties of hospitality, which may have been important for the family's influence and business contacts.

The problems of understanding Catullus' poetry extend beyond the mysteries of his personal life. The text itself of the poems has spawned many questions and insoluble conundrums. Our modern editions of the text descend from three manuscripts copied in the fourteenth century, all of which are derived from a single version, now lost, that managed to make it through the Middle Ages. That single copy had many errors, for which much scholarly work has produced some plausible corrections, and some fragmentary parts that have never been adequately explained or integrated with their surrounding poems. You will encounter some of these textual problems in the poems contained in this book, and there will be some discussion of them in the notes. This should help you to understand how fragile is much of our literary heritage from the classical world and how difficult it is to restore our damaged texts to readings in which we can have confidence.

There is another thorny problem presented by the text that has prompted much scholarly debate. Did Catullus arrange part or all of the poems in his corpus in the order in which we now have them, or is the collection a miscellany gathered together by a posthumous editor? The first poem in the corpus as we have it is a piece dedicating a **novus libellus**, *a new little papyrus roll*, to a certain Cornelius. The problem is that the word **libellus** seems to imply a single, short papyrus roll, but the 2,289 lines of poetry in the present corpus exceed what would have comfortably fit on the literary papyrus rolls of which we have knowledge. Many scholars, therefore, assume a threefold division of Catullus' poetry, which would have originally been transmitted on three separate rolls: poems 1–60 (848 lines), poems 61–64 (795 lines), and poems 65–116 (646 lines). These divisions are not arbitrary but coincide with major breaks in the grouping of poems by genre or meter. The first 60 poems are short, personal compositions, often addressed to a specific recipient, written in a variety of meters (and thus called "polymetric"), the most common of which is the hendecasyllabic meter. The second group of four long poems may all be said to treat marriage in one form or another, including the two epithalamia, which recall one of the favorite genres of poetry that Sappho worked

in. This group also includes a highly polished short epic or epyllion on the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. The poems of the final group are all written in the elegiac meter, a common meter for writing love poetry. Most of these poems are short epigrams, a literary type recalling one of the favorite genres of Hellenistic poets such as Callimachus, who loved the brief compass and compressed expression of this poetic form. Other scholars have produced other divisions of the poems, and some hold that the **novus libellus** dedicated to Cornelius may have included only poems 2–11 or 2–14. However this may be, Catullus' poetry from one end of the corpus to the other features recurrent themes, such as love, friendship, betrayal, social commentary, and discussions of literary practice, and the range of different genres in which he writes is truly impressive. He appears to have given examples in Latin of the most important kinds of short poetry that were written by the Greeks before him, including both the Hellenistic poets and earlier lyric poets such as Sappho.

TIME LINE

84 A plausible date for the birth of Catullus (see Introduction).
81 Sulla dictator after returning from campaign in Asia against
    Mithradates and civil war against Marians in Italy.
78 Death of Sulla.
75 Beginning of Cicero's career as quaestor in Sicily.
70 First consulship of Pompey and Crassus.
    Birth of Vergil.
66 Cicero as praetor delivers speech *De imperio Pompei*.
65 Birth of Horace.
63 Consulship of Cicero and suppression of the Catilinarian conspiracy.
62 After campaigning in the East, Pompey settles affairs there and
    returns to Rome, disbanding his army.
62–60 Approximate period of Catullus' move to Rome.
61 Governorship of Metellus Celer in Cisalpine Gaul.
60 Caesar returns from a provincial command in Spain and forms the so-
    called First Triumvirate, an illegal agreement for sharing power
    with Pompey and Crassus.
59 Caesar's consulship, during which he receives Cisalpine Gaul and
    Illyricum under the *lex Vatinia*.
58 P. Clodius is tribune and brings about the exile of Cicero.
57 Rioting in Rome between Clodius and Milo.
    Cicero returns from exile.
    Catullus spends the year on the staff of C. Memmius in Bithynia.
56 Cicero delivers the *Pro Caelio*.
    Renewal of the so-called First Triumvirate at Luca.
    Catullus returns to Italy.
55 Second consulship of Pompey and Crassus.
    Caesar bridges the Rhine and later invades Britain.
54 Pompey governs Spain while remaining near Rome.
    Caesar makes a second invasion of Britain.
    Crassus prepares in Syria for a campaign against the Parthians.
    Last datable allusions in the poetry of Catullus (to the campaigns in
    Britain and Parthia), probably indicating that he died about this
    time or in the next couple of years.
53 Crassus defeated and killed in the military disaster at Carrhae.
52 Caesar finally subdues powerful rebellion in Gaul.
50 Caesar crosses the Rubicon into Italy, beginning civil war with
    Pompey and the Senate.
48 Caesar defeats Pompey at Pharsalus.
44 Caesar becomes dictator for life and is assassinated on the Ides of
    March.

USING THIS BOOK

The running vocabularies facing the Latin passages contain most of the words that are not in *ECCE ROMANI*, Books I and II, published by Prentice Hall. Words the meaning of which can be easily deduced are not given in the running vocabularies. A word that is in *ECCE ROMANI*, Books I and II, is included in the facing vocabulary if it is being used in a sense different from the sense in which it is used in that series. Words not given on the facing pages will be found in the vocabulary at the end of the book, thus allowing this book to be used after completion of any standard Latin program. When words that appear in the facing vocabularies reappear in later poems, they are glossed again on the facing page. This facilitates reading of the poems in any order; the vocabulary aids will always be there no matter in what order the poems are read. Note that a word that is glossed on the facing page and then reappears later in the same poem is not normally glossed at this later reappearance and may not appear in the end vocabulary. Look for the word in the earlier glosses for the poem.

The format of vocabulary entries is similar to that in the *ECCE ROMANI* series, with two major modifications. First, information about the Latin words themselves—in particular, information about the individual parts of compound verbs, adjectives, and nouns—is given in brackets. Second, cross references to uses of the same or similar words in other poems are given in parentheses after the Latin word in question. Tracking down these cross references helps the reader build up an awareness of some of the distinctive features of Catullus' diction and expression.

Several definitions are usually given for the Latin words, with the most basic meaning of the word coming first and an appropriate meaning for the context coming last. Definitions and translations are given in italics. Words or phrases that help round out a definition but are not part of the definition itself are enclosed in parentheses. Words or phrases that fill out a suggested translation to make it more complete or to make it better English are placed in square brackets.

When reading a poem of Catullus from this book for the first time, one should not look at the facing vocabulary and notes at all but should read through the Latin of the poem, making as much sense of it as possible. When reading it a second or third time, one usually goes from the right-hand page to the vocabulary on the left-hand page, noting the italicized meanings, especially the last one given, for any unfamiliar words, and back again to the right-hand page. Only after one has grasped the sense of the poem should one look more closely at the vocabulary entries, the grammatical notes, and the other information on the left-hand page.

The Latin texts of the poems of Catullus as printed in this book are for the most part those that appear in the Oxford Classical Text edition of the poems of Catullus, edited by R. A. B. Mynors and published in 1958. Much scholarly attention has been directed to the text of the poems of Catullus since Mynors' edition; the most recent comprehensive edition of the poems produced in the English-speaking world is that of D. S. F. Thomson, *Catullus: Edited with a Textual and Interpretative Commentary*, University of Toronto Press, 1997. At a number of points Thomson and other modern editors have supplied readings that seem to be preferable to those of Mynors. In the present book we have often made note of these in special sections labeled **Text** appearing beneath the notes on the left-hand pages. Rarely we have incorporated readings different from those of Mynors in the poems as printed on the right-hand pages, and we have then given the Oxford Classical Text version in a section labeled **Text** on the left-hand page.

The Latin texts of the poems on the right-hand pages of this book are followed by study questions. Usually these are of two sorts, labeled **Initial Explorations** and **Discussion**. Beginning with poem 62, we provide only one set of questions, labeled **Explorations**. Detailed comparison with other poems is frequently invited in sections labeled **Comparison**.

The poems as presented in this book are often divided into segments printed on successive pages so that the facing vocabularies and notes and the questions will always be on the same page-spread as the related segments of the poems. It is very important, however, to see the poem in its entirety and to be able to mark it in various ways as one studies its structure, its poetic devices, and so forth. We accordingly provide for the teacher large-print versions of the poems with each poem intact (except for Catullus 62, which is too long to fit on one page). Teachers may use these as masters for making overhead transparencies, and they may photocopy them and distribute them to students for their use.

In preparing the vocabularies and notes on the left-hand pages and the questions accompanying the poems, the following reference books were heavily used, and the authors wish to acknowledge their profound debt to them:

Grammar:
> Greenough, J. B., and G. L. Kittredge, A. A. Howard, and Benjamin L. D'Ooge, eds. *Allen and Greenough's New Latin Grammar for Schools and Colleges*. Boston MA: Ginn and Company, 1931.

Dictionaries:
> Glare, P. G. W., ed. *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Oxford ENG: Clarendon Press, 1982.
> Hornblower, Simon, and Antony Spawforth, eds. *Oxford Classical Dic-*

bers," a climactic series of three (or more) examples, illustrations, phrases, or clauses, each (or at least the last) more fully developed or more intense than the preceding, e.g., quīcum lūdere, quem in sinū tenēre, / cui prīmum digitum dare appetentī / et ācrīs solet incitāre morsūs (2.2–4).

Word-Picture: a type of imagery in which the words of a phrase are arranged in an order that suggests the visual image being described, e.g., manūsque collō / ambās iniciēns (35.9–10), where the words manūs . . . ambās surround the word collō just as the girl embraces the man's neck.

Zeugma: Gr., "yoking," use of a single word with a pair of others (e.g., a verb with two adverbial modifiers), when it logically applies to only one of them or applies to them both, but in two quite different ways, e.g., mē recūrāvī ōtiōque et urtīcā (44.15; see note on passage).

THE METERS OF CATULLUS' VERSE

Hendecasyllabic or Phalaecean (first found in Catullus 1):

Traditionally this meter is divided into feet as follows:

$$\underset{\smile}{} \underset{\smile}{} \mid - \smile \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \smile \mid - \underset{\smile}{}$$

It is now regarded as preferable not to divide the line into feet as above but to give the scheme as follows:

$$\underset{\smile}{} \underset{\smile}{} - \smile \smile - \smile - \smile - \underset{\smile}{}$$

This allows the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth syllables to be regarded as a choriamb ($- \smile \smile -$), which was one of the basic metrical patterns in lyric meters.

Pure Iambic Trimeter (found in Catullus 4 and used by Catullus elsewhere only in poem 29, which is not in this book):

$$\smile - \smile - \mid \smile \parallel - \smile - \mid \smile - \smile \underset{\smile}{}$$

The meter consists of three pairs of iambic feet, divided here by the two single vertical lines. The double vertical lines mark the caesura. The pattern is invariable, except that the final syllable may be either long or short.

Choliambic (first found in Catullus 8):

The choliambic meter is based on the iambic trimeter (three pairs of iambic feet):

$$\times - \cup \simeq \mid \times \parallel - \cup - \mid \cup - - \times$$

In the choliambic (Gr., "limping iambic") meter, the next to the last syllable is long instead of short, thus producing the limping effect. Note where substitutions are possible.

Sapphic Strophe (used by Catullus only in poems 11 and 51):

Traditionally this meter is divided into feet as follows:

Three lines (Lesser Sapphic) $- \cup \mid - \times \mid - \parallel \cup \cup \mid - \cup \mid - \times$

One line (Adonic) $\qquad\qquad\quad - \cup \cup \mid - \times$

It is now regarded as preferable not to divide the line into feet as above but to give the scheme as follows:

Three lines (Lesser Sapphic) $- \cup - \times - \parallel \cup \cup - \cup - \times$

One line (Adonic) $\qquad\qquad\quad - \cup \cup - \times$

This allows one to recognize choriambs ($- \cup \cup -$) as basic constituents of this lyric meter.

Catullus 34

Three lines (Glyconic) $\qquad \times \times - \cup \cup - \cup \times$
One line (Pherecratean) $\qquad \times \times - \cup \cup - \times$

Dactylic Hexameter (Catullus 62):

$$- \simeq \mid - \simeq \mid - \parallel \simeq \mid - \simeq \mid - \simeq \mid - \times$$

$$- \simeq \mid - \simeq \mid - \cup \parallel \cup \mid - \simeq \mid - \simeq \mid - \times$$

$$- \simeq \mid - \parallel \simeq \mid - \simeq \mid - \parallel \simeq \mid - \simeq \mid - \times$$

$$- \simeq \mid - \parallel \simeq \mid - \times \mid - \cup \parallel \cup \mid - \simeq \mid - \times$$

Spondees may be substituted for dactyls in the first five feet, but the substitution of a spondee in the fifth foot is rare. Double vertical lines indicate where caesuras may occur.

Elegiac Couplet (first found in Catullus 70):

Hexameter: – ⏜ | – ⏜ | – ⏜ | – ⏜ | – ⏜ | – ⏑

Pentameter: – ⏜ | – ⏜ | – | / – ⏑ ⏑ | – ⏑ ⏑ | ⏑

For caesuras in the hexameter, see above under **Dactylic Hexameter**. In the pentameter, the second half of the third foot and the second half of the sixth foot of a hexameter have been truncated, thus giving two sets of two and a half feet (= five feet or a pentameter). A diaeresis (here frequently coinciding with a pause in the sense) normally occurs after the third foot of the pentameter (marked here with a forward slash).

METRICAL TERMS

The following metrical terms will be fond to be useful. Those included in the *Teacher's Guide to Advanced Placement Courses in Latin* are marked with asterisks.

*Caesura: a pause between words occurring within a metrical foot; the effect is to emphasize the word immediately preceding or, less often, following; cf. diaeresis.

Consonantal i and u: the vowels *i* and *u* become consonants before vowels.

Coriamb: a metrical foot with the pattern – ⏑ ⏑ – .

*Dactyl: a metrical foot with the pattern – ⏑ ⏑ .

*Diaeresis: a pause between words coinciding with the end of a metrical foot, less common than caesura and sometimes employed to emphasize the word immediately preceding or, less often, following.

*Diastole: lengthening of an ordinarily short vowel (and hence the syllable containing it), usually when it occurs under the ictus and before a caesura; sometimes reflecting an archaic pronunciation; for an example, see poem 62.4.

*Elision: Lat., "bruising," the partial suppression of a vowel or diphthong at the end of a word when the following word begins with a vowel or with *h*. A final *m* does not block elision, and thus the letters *um* of cum are elided in poem 1.5: iam tum, cum‿ausus es ūnus Ītalōrum.

*Hexameter: a line of poetry consisting of six metrical feet.

*Hiatus: Lat., "gaping," omission of elision; this is generally avoided, but when it does occur it emphasizes the word that is not elided or coincides with a pause in the sense, e.g., Ō factum male! Ō miselle passer! (3.16; male! and Ō do not elide).

*Hypermetric Line: a line containing an extra syllable, which elides with the word at the beginning of the next line, e.g., prātī / ultimī 11.22–23). Elision of this sort is called *synapheia* (see below).

Iambic Shortening: words with a metrical pattern of a short syllable followed by a long syllable, e.g., sciō, could be pronounced as two short syllables in ordinary speech. In Catullus 2.6 this carries over into nescio. A number of examples will be found in Catullus, e.g., volo for volō (6.16).

*Iambus (Iamb): a metrical foot with the pattern ◡ - .

*Ictus: Lat., "stroke," the verse accent or beat, falling on the first long syllable in each foot.

*Pentameter: the second line of an elegiac couplet.

Spondaic line: a dactylic hexameter with a spondee in the fifth foot, e.g., ūna salūs haec est, hōc est tibi pervincendum (76.15).

*Spondee: a metrical foot with the pattern - - .

Synaeresis: Gr., "taking together," occasional pronunciation of the vowel *i* as a consonant *y* before a vowel, e.g., cōnūbium (62.57), normally four syllables, pronounced as cōnūbyum, three syllables. So, perhaps also omnium (11.19).

Synapheia or Synaphaea: Gr., "binding," elision at the end of one line with a word at the beginning of the next, e.g., prātī / ultimī (11.22–23); prātī elides with ultimī.

*Syncope or syncopation: Gr., "striking together, cutting short," omission of a letter or a syllable from the middle of a word, e.g., saeclō (1.10) = saeculō; nōrat (3.6) = nōverat.

*Synizesis: Gr., "settling together, collapsing," the pronunciation of two vowels as one syllable without forming a diphthong, e.g., deinde.

*Systole: shortening of a vowel that was ordinarily long, e.g., illius (3.8) for illīus.

*Trochee: a metrical foot with the pattern - ◡ .

LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL TERMS

Archaism: deliberate use of old-fashioned words or forms no longer in common currency.

Asterisks: e.g., *stanō (8.11), indication of a hypothetical form not actually found in surviving written documents.

Diminutives: the suffixes -ulus, -olus (after a vowel), -culus, -ellus, and -illus form diminutive adjectives and nouns, often expressing

endearment and affection, sometimes pity, e.g., **Cui dōnō lepidum novum libellum** (1.1), *[my] dear little papyrus roll.*

Inceptive Verbs: verbs with an **-sc-** infix such as **cognōscō** are called inceptive verbs and often denote the beginning (cf. Lat. **incipiō**, *to begin*) of an action. Thus, **cognōscō** means *to get to know, learn, become acquainted with.* The inceptive infix **-sc-** appears only in the present stem of inceptive verbs, and forms of these verbs derived from the perfect stem are not translated as inceptive. The perfect tense of **cognōscō**, for example, **cognōvī**, means *to have come to understand, to know* and may often best be translated in context as a present tense, *I know.* The pluperfect of inceptive verbs may often best be translated as an imperfect.

Impersonal Verbs: impersonal verbs such as **libet (lubet)** + dat., *(it) is pleasing* (to), do not appear in the first or second persons and do not have personal subjects. In dictionaries the subject is given as the impersonal *it*, and this word may be used in your translation. There will often, however, be an infinitive, a phrase, or a clause introduced by **ut** and with its verb in the subjunctive that serves as the actual grammatical subject of the impersonal verb. Thus, in Catullus 2.6, the words **lubet iocārī** may be translated *it pleases [her] to play*, with the infinitive filling out the meaning of the impersonal verb, or we may translate *to play pleases [her]*, with the infinitive serving as the subject of the impersonal verb. You may translate either way, but in the notes in this book the actual grammatical subjects of impersonal verbs will usually be pointed out and used as subjects in translations.

Meter: hendecasyllabic

1   **lepidus, -a, -um** [colloquial word, common in Plautus and Terence], *charming, delightful, nice; witty, amusing.*

      libellus, -ī, m. [dim. of **liber, librī, m.**, *papyrus roll* (the ancient form of what we think of as a book)], *little papyrus roll.*

2   **āridus, -a, -um,** *dry.*

      modo, adv., *only; recently, just now.*

      pūmex, pūmicis, f. here, though usually m., *pumice-stone* (used like sandpaper to smooth the ends of a papyrus roll).

      expoliō [ex-, *thoroughly* + **poliō, -īre, -īvī, -ītus,** *to polish*], **-īre, -īvī, -ītus,** *to smooth, polish.*

3   **Cornēlius, -ī, m.,** *Cornelius* (Cornelius Nepos, c. 110–24 B.C., historian, biographer, and minor poet; Nepos, like Catullus, was a Transpadane; he was considerably older than Catullus, and he had important connections in Rome, being a friend of Atticus and Cicero).

      namque, conj., *for.*

4   **esse aliquid:** colloquial, *[they] were [worth] something, were of some value.*

      nūgae, -ārum, f. pl., *nonsense; trifles, frivolities.*

5   **iam tum, cum:** *already at that time, when.*

      ausus es: from the semi-deponent verb **audēre.**

      ūnus Italōrum: *the [only] one of the Italians, alone of Italians.*

6   **aevum, -ī, n.,** *age, generation; time.*

      omne aevum: *all recorded history.* The work of Cornelius Nepos referred to here was entitled *Chronica* (= *Annals*) and was a universal history of the Greco-Roman world in three papyrus rolls.

      explicō [ex-, *out* + **plicō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus,** *to fold; to roll*], **-āre, -āvī, -ātus,** *to unfold, unroll; to make known, explain, give an account of.*

      carta, -ae, f., *sheet of papyrus;* by extension, *papyrus roll* (i.e., sheets of papyrus glued together), *volume* (of written work).

7   **doctus, -a, -um,** *learned, full of learning.*

      Iuppiter: *by Jupiter! = I swear it!*

      labōriōsus, -a, -um, *involving much work; laborious, painstaking.*

8   **habē tibi:** a legal phrase used when transferring property from one person to another, *take for yourself!* Used colloquially, it implies indifference, as if one were to say, *it's yours, you may have it.*

      quisquis, quisquis, quidquid, indefinite pronoun/adjective, *whoever, whatever.*

         quidquid hoc libellī: supply **est,** a depreciatory phrase, *whatever this [is] of a little papyrus roll.*

CATULLUS 1

Dedication

Catullus dedicates his new papyrus roll of verse to Cornelius Nepos.

1   Cui dōnō lepidum novum libellum
2   āridā modo pūmice expolītum?
3   Cornēlī, tibi: namque tū solēbās
4   meās esse aliquid putāre nūgās
5   iam tum, cum ausus es ūnus Ītalōrum
6   omne aevum tribus explicāre cartīs
7   doctīs, Iuppiter, et labōriōsīs.
8   Quārē habē tibi quidquid hoc libellī

Initial Explorations

1. What qualities does Catullus ascribe to his **libellus**? (1–2)
2. Examine each word that Catullus uses to describe his **libellus** in the first two lines. How could each word simultaneously describe both the physical appearance of the libellus and also the quality of the poetry within it?
3. Why does Catullus use the diminutive form **libellum**? (1)
4. Identify examples of alliteration, assonance, and homoioteleuton in the first two lines. What effects are produced by these features of the verse?
5. How is **modo** in line 2 related to **novum** in line 1? How is **expolītum** in line 2 related to **lepidum** in line 1? How do these words form a chiasmus?
6. Identify the rhetorical figure involved in the words **solēbās / meās . . . nūgās** (3–4). What is its effect?
7. Why has Catullus chosen Cornelius as the recipient of his **libellus**? (3–4)
8. How by word choice and word order has Catullus drawn an effective contrast between Cornelius' estimation of the poet's work and Catullus' own estimation of it? (3–4)
9. In line 5 Catullus commends Cornelius for being a bold writer. What did Cornelius dare to produce? (5–6)
10. What are the characteristics of Cornelius as a writer and of his literary production? (5–7) What stylistic devices does Catullus employ in describing Cornelius' literary achievement? What are some of the implications of Catullus' use of the two adjectives **doctīs** and **labōriōsīs** (7)?
11. Compare line 6 with line 1, and line 7 with line 2. How do Catullus' and Cornelius' respective works of poetry and history differ? Does Catullus express unqualified admiration of Cornelius' work?

9   quāliscumque, quāliscumque, quālecumque, indefinite adjective, *of what-
     ever sort.*
         quālecumque: idiomatically, *such as it is* or *for what it's worth.*
     quod: connecting relative and subject of the jussive subjunctive **maneat** (10),
         and may it. . . .
     <ō>: not found in the manuscripts, but supplied by modern editors.
     patrōna, -ae, f., *patroness.*
10   **perennis, -is, -e** [**per-,** *through* + **annus, -ī,** m., *year*], *lasting through the years;
     enduring.*
         perenne: predicate adjective, modifying **quod** (9).
     saeclum, -ī, n. [syncope for **saeculum**], *age; lifetime; generation; century.*

Text

8   **quālecumque; quod:** Thomson puts a comma at the end of line 8 and deletes
     the semicolon here, giving:
         8   Quārē habē tibi quidquid hoc libellī,   ·
         9   quālecumque quod, <ō> patrōna virgō,
         10   plūs ūnō maneat perenne saeclō.
     quālecumque quod: quod is now a delayed relative pronoun, and the
     phrase = **quod quālecumque. . . . ,** *which, such as it is. . . .* Such delaying of
     relative pronouns is an example of hyperbaton and is found elsewhere in
     Catullus.

Comparison

Compare the following English rendering of Catullus 1 by Andrew Lang (1888).
To what extent has Lang succeeded in his rendering of Catullus' poem? In what
ways has he failed? What changes has he deliberately made? Which is the better
poem? Why?

My little book, that's neat and new,
Fresh polished with dry pumice stone,
To whom, Cornelius, but to you,
Shall *this* be sent, for you alone—
(Who used to praise my lines, my own)—
Have dared, in weighty volumes three,
(What labors, Jove, what learning thine!)
To tell the Tale of Italy,
And all the legend of our line.

So take, whate'er its worth may be,
My Book,—but, Lady and Queen of Song,
This one kind gift I crave of thee,
That it may live for ages long!

9   quālecumque; quod, <ō> patrōna virgō,
10   plūs ūnō maneat perenne saeclō.

Initial Explorations

12. What attitude toward his own work does Catullus seem to reveal in his choice of the phrases **habē tibi** and **quidquid hoc libellī** and in the word **quālecumque**? (8–9) What words earlier in the poem express a similar attitude?
13. To whom do you suppose the word **virgō** (9) refers?
14. What prayer does Catullus make to the **virgō**? (9–10)
15. Explain the tension that exists between the content of the wish in the final two lines and the poet's earlier assessment of his work.
16. Read the poem aloud in meter and comment on your reading. Recall the effects produced by alliteration, assonance, and homoioteleuton in lines 1–2, and comment on (a) the effect of homoioteleuton in lines 1–2, 3–4, 6–7, and 9–10, (b) the elisions in lines 5–6, and (c) the strong alliteration or consonance in lines 8–9.

Discussion

1. What does the poem say about Catullus' **libellus** and about what Catullus valued in his poetry and thought noteworthy about it?
2. Is Catullus' admiration of Cornelius' *Chronica* sincere or is it tinged with sly humor?
3. What is the role of the **patrōna virgō** in the final two lines?
4. Consider the underlying paradox of the whole poem. Although the poet seems to downplay the significance of his poetry and to elevate the importance of Cornelius' history, the emphasis in lines 1–2 on the charm and polish of Catullus' poetry and the emphasis in line 7 on the choppy and double-edged description of Cornelius' volumes of history seem to suggest the opposite. With what final impression of the quality of the two writers' works are you left after reading the whole poem?

Comparison

The Greek poet Callimachus, who inspired Catullus in a number of ways, made a prayer to the Graces that Catullus may have had in mind when formulating his prayer to the **patrōna virgō**:

Come now and wipe your anointed hands
    on my elegies so that they may last for many a year.

—*Aetia* I, fragment 7, lines 13–14

Meter: hendecasyllabic

1   **passer, passeris,** m., *small bird* (usually thought to be a *sparrow*, but taken by some to be a *blue thrush*; the word and its diminutive, **passerculus,** were used as terms of endearment).

        passer: vocative, picked up by **tēcum** in line 9.

    dēliciae, -ārum, f. pl. [usually pl. in form, sing. in meaning], *pleasure, delight; pet; darling, sweetheart.*

    puella, -ae, f., *girl; girlfriend, sweetheart.*

2   **quīcum:** = **quōcum.**

        quīcum lūdere: all the infinitives in lines 2–4 are dependent on **solet** (4); the subject (*she*) is the **puella** (1).

    sinus, -ūs, m., *fold of a toga; lap; bosom.*

3   **prīmum digitum:** *fingertip.*

    appetō [**ad-,** *toward, against* + **petō, petere, petīvī, petītus,** *to look for, seek*], **appetere, appetīvī, appetītus,** *to try to reach; to seek instinctively; to desire; to attack, assail.*

        cui . . . appetentī: the participle, completing the line framing, may be translated with **cui** as a substantive, *to whose eager attack.*

            quīcum (2) . . . **quem** . . . / **cui** (3): polyptoton and anaphora.

4   **ācer, ācris, ācre,** *keen, sharp.*

        ācrīs: = **ācrēs,** *i*-stem nouns and adjectives commonly retain their original spelling in the accusative plural.

    incitō [**in-,** *in, into* + **citō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus,** *to set in motion, rouse*], **-āre, -āvī, -ātus,** *to urge on, arouse, provoke.*

    morsus, -ūs, m., *nibble, bite, peck* (of a bird).

CATULLUS 2

A Pet Bird

Catullus wishes that the pet bird of his puella could satisfy his needs as well as it appears to satisfy hers.

1   Passer, dēliciae meae puellae,
2   quīcum lūdere, quem in sinū tenēre,
3   cui prīmum digitum dare appetentī
4   et ācrīs solet incitāre morsūs,

Initial Explorations

1. The words **passer, meae,** and **puellae** in line 1 inform us of a triangle of relationships that this poem will explore. Identify the members of the triangle.
2. What does the word **dēliciae** with its range of meanings tell us about how the poet views the relationship between the **puella** and the **passer?**
3. Describe each of the interactions between the **puella** and the **passer** in lines 2–4.
4. Identify the clauses of an ascending tricolon in lines 2–4.
5. In addition to its literal meaning, what suggestive meaning does the infinitive **lūdere** carry in this context? (2)
6. Of the words **quem in sinū tenēre,** which one adds an erotic coloring to the scene? (2)
7. What is the relationship between the actions of the **puella** in line 3 and in line 4? Can something more than innocent play be seen here?
8. What meaning of the verb **appetere** is most appropriate in translating the participle **appetentī** (3)? How does this word contribute an amorous overtone to the scene?
9. Why is the verb **solet** (4) important? What does it add to the description of the behavior of the **puella?**
10. Discuss the words **ācrīs . . . morsūs** (4). In what direction do these two words take the poet's description of the scene? Elsewhere Catullus uses similar language of lovers' kisses: e.g., Catullus 8.18, **Quem basiābis? Cui labella mordēbis?** *Whom will you kiss? Whose little lips will you bite?* and 68b.86–88, *the dove is said to snatch kisses with her biting beak* (**mordentī . . . rōstrō**) *more wantonly than even an especially passionate woman.* How does this affect your understanding of the scene here?

25

5 cum: *whenever*; cum may introduce a general temporal clause with its verb in the indicative describing repeated action.

 dēsīderium, -ī, n., *desire, longing; something longed for, object of desire; sweetheart.*

 niteō, nitēre, *to shine; to be beautiful, be radiant.*

  dēsideriō meō nitentī: usually interpreted as dative with lubet (6), *to the radiant object of my desire*, but some, including Thomson, regard dēsideriō meō as ablative and translate *to [her] radiant with desire for me.*

6 nesciō quis, nesciō quid, indefinite pronoun [only the quis, quid part changes form; lit., *I don't know who, I don't know what*], *someone or other, something or other.*

  nescio: iambic shortening carries over here into the compound ne-scio.

 lubet: archaic for libet, impersonal + dat., *(it) is pleasing* (to).

  lubet: the subject is the infinitive iocārī.

 iocor, -ārī, -ātus sum, *to jest, joke; to play a game.*

  iocārī: governing cārum nescio quid as internal or cognate accusative, *to play some dear game or other* or *to engage in some endearing play.*

7 sōlāciolum, -ī, n. [dim., probably coined by Catullus] + gen., *slight relief (from), small comfort (for).*

  et sōlāciolum: a second internal or cognate accusative with iocārī, *and to play at a small comfort* (for her. . . .). The Renaissance scholar Guarinus suggested reading ut instead of et. He is followed by Thomson. This ut would be translated *as.* Line 7 would then clarify the vague cārum nescio quid in line 6; the puella plays with the passer *as a small comfort for her heartache.*

 dolor, dolōris, m., *pain, smart, heartache.*

8 acquiēscō [ad-, intensive prefix + quiēscō, quiēscere, quiēvī, quiētūrus, *to fall asleep; to rest*], inceptive, acquiēscere, acquiēvī, *to quiet down, find rest.*

  ut . . . acquiēscat: either a result or more likely a purpose clause.

 ārdor, ārdōris, m., *fire; heat; passionate desire.*

9 sīcut, adv., *just as.*

 ipsa: literally, *[she] herself*; here perhaps, *your mistress*, in the sense that ipse and ipsa often refer to the master and mistress of the household and owner and overseer of household slaves and workers.

 possem: *would that I could, if only I could*; the imperfect subjunctive here expresses an unrealized wish in present time.

  tēcum . . . possem: note the strict correspondence between the meter and the individual words in the line.

10 trīstīs: for the ending, see the note on ācrīs in line 4.

 levō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus, *to lighten, alleviate.*

 cūra, -ae, f., *worry, care, distress* (here, the cares or distress felt by a lover).

5   cum dēsīderiō meō nitentī
6   cārum nescio quid lubet iocārī,
7   et sōlāciolum suī dolōris,
8   crēdō, ut tum gravis acquiēscat ārdor;
9   tēcum lūdere sīcut ipsa possem
10 et trīstīs animī levāre cūrās!

Initial Explorations

11. The words **dēsīderiō meō nitentī** (5) may be translated *to the radiant object of my desire* or *to [her] shining with longing for me*. Does one translation seem to be more appropriate than the other? Need one choose?
12. Why, according to the poet, is the **puella** playing with the **passer**? (5-8) Include in your answer reference to the three line-ending words, **iocārī, dolōris**, and **ārdor**. To what extent is the **passer** described as a surrogate lover?
13. How does the presence of the parenthetical word **crēdō** qualify the statements in lines 7 and 8? What level of knowledge of the true intentions of the **puella** does this word suggest on the part of the poet?
14. Is the **puella** or the **passer** the center of the poet's interest in lines 1-8?
15. What is the poet's wish in line 9? in line 10?
16. What is implied in the use of the imperfect subjunctive (**possem**, 9) for the poet's wish?

Discussion

1. What is the relationship between Catullus and the **puella**?
2. How satisfactory is this poem as an introduction to a cycle of poems devoted to the love affair between Catullus and the **puella**?

Meter: hendecasyllabic

1   **tam ... quam:** *as ... as.*
     grātus, -a, -um + dat., *welcome* (to), *pleasing* (to).
         Tam grātum est: *It is as pleasing.* The three lines printed here as Catullus
             2b are joined together with poem 2 in the manuscripts, but most editors
             separate them as a fragment of a poem the remainder of which is now
             lost (similar things happen elsewhere in the Catullan corpus). If they
             were to be joined after line 10 of poem 2, that line would end with a
             comma and the lines of 2b would complete the sentence. The main rea-
             son editors usually print 2b as a fragment of a separate poem is the
             change in the mood of the verbs. Catullus says in 2.9 *if only I could sport
             with you*, using the imperfect subjunctive **possem**. If fragment 2b is to be
             joined to that statement, it is odd that Catullus continues with the indica-
             tive **est**, *it is as pleasing as*, when we would naturally expect the subjunc-
             tive, *it would be as pleasing as*. Furthermore, the comparison to Atalanta,
             the swift girl who refused to marry anyone who could not defeat her in a
             race and who was finally defeated by the stratagem of the golden apple,
             does not appear to illuminate or fit easily with any of the themes of Ca-
             tullus 2.
     ferunt *they say.*
     puellae: Atalanta, the swift huntress, whose hand in marriage Hippomenes
         (or Milanion; the name of her successful suitor differs in the sources) won
         by throwing three golden apples given him by Venus aside off the race
         course at intervals during his race with Atalanta, the prize of which would
         be marriage with her. Atalanta stopped to pick up the apples and so lost
         the race. According to one version of the story she deliberately wasted
         time in retrieving the last apple because she had fallen in love with Hip-
         pomenes (or Milanion) and wanted to lose the race so that he would marry
         her (see Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10.560–704).
2   **pernīx, pernīcis,** *swift, nimble, agile.*
     aureolus, -a, -um [dim. of **aureus, -a, -um,** *golden*], *golden.*
     mālum: note the macron; do not confuse with **malus, -a, -um.**
3   **quod:** relative pronoun.
     zōna, -ae, f. [Greek loan word], *girdle* (worn by unmarried girls).
     soluit: pronounce as three syllables here (usually spelled **solvit**).

CATULLUS 2b

Atalanta

The poet compares a personal pleasure to Atalanta's delight with the golden apple.

1   Tam grātum est mihi quam ferunt puellae
2   pernīcī aureolum fuisse mālum,
3   quod zōnam soluit diū ligātam.

Discussion

Could these lines make sense as an ending to Catullus 2?

Meter: hendecasyllabic

1   lūgeō, lūgēre, lūxī, lūctus, *to mourn, grieve.*
     Venus, Veneris, f., *Venus* (goddess of love); *charm.*
     Cupīdō, Cupīdinis, m., *Cupid* (son of Venus and god of love); *desire.*
        Venerēs Cupīdinēsque: Catullus is calling upon all the Venuses and Cu-
        pids in the world, i.e., all the manifestations of charm and desire.
2   quantum, -ī, n., pronoun, *whatever amount.*
        quantum est: the third vocative with lūgēte: *whatever amount [of] . . . there is*
        = *however many [of] . . . there are,* a colloquial expression.
     venustus, -a, -um, *endowed/involved with Venus; attractive, charming.*
        venustiōrum: the comparative adjective may be translated *rather/quite. . . .*
           hominum venustiōrum: perhaps, *of men who are quite caught up in the*
           bonds of Venus herself, i.e., *who are deeply in love.*
4   passer . . . meae puellae: = line 3; conduplicatio, as often in dirges.
     dēliciae: see note to line 1 of Catullus 2.
        passer, dēliciae meae puellae: = Catullus 2.1, vocative there, nominative
        here.
6   mellītus, -a, -um [mel, mellis, n., *honey*], *honey-sweet, as sweet as honey.*
     erat: the subject is passer.
     nōscō, nōscere, nōvī, nōtus, inceptive, *to get to know, learn;* perfect, *to know*
     (a person or thing).
        nōrat: syncope for nōverat; the pluperfect translates into English as an
        imperfect with the meaning *used to know.*
7   ipsam: = dominam, *his mistress* (modified by suam in line 6), compare ipsa
     in Catullus 2.9.
     puella mātrem: supply nōvit.
8   sēsē: an alternate form of sē. The form sēsē may originally have conveyed
        greater emphasis, but often it is indistinguishable in sense from the simple
        sē.
     gremium, -ī, n., *bosom, lap.*
     illius: = illīus, with short *i* for the sake of the meter.
9   circumsiliō [circum-, *around* + saliō, salīre, saluī, salitus, *to jump, leap*], cir-
     cumsilīre, *to jump/leap/hop around.*
     modo . . . modo: *now . . . now.*
10   domina, -ae, f., *mistress* (female head of a household); *owner; female ruler; mis-*
     tress (a woman loved by a man but not married to him).
     usque, adv., *continuously, all the time.*
     pīpiō, -āre [onomatopoetic], *to chirp.*

CATULLUS 3

Death of the Pet Bird

Catullus eulogizes the pet bird.

1   Lūgēte, ō Venerēs Cupīdinēsque
2   et quantum est hominum venustiōrum:
3   passer mortuus est meae puellae,
4   passer, dēliciae meae puellae,
5   quem plūs illa oculīs suīs amābat.
6   Nam mellītus erat suamque nōrat
7   ipsam tam bene quam puella mātrem,
8   nec sēsē ā gremiō illius movēbat,
9   sed circumsiliēns modo hūc modo illūc
10   ad sōlam dominam usque pīpiābat;

Initial Explorations

1.   Whom does the poet call upon to grieve? Why does he invoke these gods and men? (1–2)
2.   Locate and analyze two ascending tricola in lines 1–2 and 4–5.
3.   Lines 4–10 recall Catullus 2. Compare the relationship of the passer and the puella in these lines with lines 1–4 of Catullus 2. What are the similarities and differences?
4.   With what word earlier in the poem does mellītus (6) correspond? How does the word mellītus contribute to our understanding of the relationship between the puella and the passer as expressed in this poem?
5.   The verb nōrat (6) may connote a knowing in carnal or sexual as well as mental terms. What limitation does line 7 place on the dual meaning of nōrat in this context? Why is that significant?
6.   The word gremiō (8) reminds the reader of sinū in Catullus 2.2. How has the bird's behavior at the bosom or on the lap of the puella changed between poems?
7.   Comment on the impression produced by the polysyllabic participle placed next to four choppy and elided adverbs in line 9.
8.   What do the words ad sōlam dominam usque pīpiābat (10) say about the relationship of the bird to the puella? Which meaning of the word domina is most appropriate? In the context of the scene described in lines 4–10, is more than one meaning of the word applicable?

11 tenebricōsus, -a, -um [a colloquial formation from tenebrae, -ārum, f. pl., *darkness, gloom*], *dark, gloomy.*

12 quisquam, quisquam, quicquam, indefinite pronoun, *anyone, anything.*
negant . . . quemquam: *they say that no one. . . .*

13 male sit: colloquial, + dat., *may it go badly* (for), *curses* (on).
tenebrae, -ārum, f. pl., *darkness, gloom.*

14 Orcus, -ī, m., *Orcus* (god of the underworld); *death; the underworld.*
quae . . . dēvorātis: *you who. . . .*
bellus, -a, -um [colloquial, cf. the more formal pulcher, pulchra, pulchrum, *beautiful, handsome, lovely*], *handsome, pretty, charming.*

15 mihi: *from me*, dative of separation with abstulistis.

16 Ō factum male!: *O misfortune!* (literally, *[thing] done badly*).
misellus, -a, -um [dim. of miser, misera, miserum, *wretched*], *poor little, wretched.*

17 opera, -ae, f., *effort; deed.*
tuā . . . operā: idiomatic, *because of your doing, due to you.*
meae puellae: genitive, with ocellī (18).

18 flendō: *from. . . .* , gerund, ablative of cause.
turgidulus, -a, -um [dim. of turgidus, -a, -um, *swollen*], *slightly swollen, puffed.*
rubeō, rebēre, *to be red.*
ocellus, -ī, m. [dim. of oculus, -ī, m., *eye*], *little eye, dear eye.*
turgidulī . . . ocellī: colloquial diminutives expressing endearment or compassion.

Text

16 male! Ō: hiatus emphasizes the pathos of the exclamations. Goold, however, emends as follows, eliminating the hiatus:
16   Ō factum male, quod, miselle passer,
17   tuā nunc operā meae puellae
18   flendō turgidulī rubent ocellī!

17 Instead of tuā, Thomson prints vestrā, referring to the malae tenebrae / Orcī (13–14), whereas tuā would refer to the passer (16). Thomson gives lines 15–17 as follows (note the different punctuation):
15   tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis
16   (ō factum male! ō miselle passer!);
17   vestrā nunc operā meae puellae

11 quī nunc it per iter tenebricōsum
12 illūc, unde negant redīre quemquam.
13 At vōbīs male sit, malae tenebrae
14 Orcī, quae omnia bella dēvorātis:
15 tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis.
16 Ō factum male! Ō miselle passer!
17 Tuā nunc operā meae puellae
18 flendō turgidulī rubent ocellī.

Initial Explorations

9. What journey must the bird now make? (11–12) How is it portrayed? What is its mythological background? Do the word **tenebricōsus** and the sentiment expressed in line 12 reinforce or undercut the gravity of the loss? Is there an element of parody here?

10. Whom does the poet curse? (13–14) What specific reason does the poet give for uttering the curse?

11. In a surprising conclusion, what is the bird (or the shades of Orcus if Thomson's reading is accepted) blamed for? (17–18) Does the traditional text or Thomson's emendation make better sense?

12. What feelings does the poet express in the final line? How does he express them?

13. Where in the poem do you find shifts in sentiment and tone? Describe the sentiment and tone of each section of the poem.

14. Read the poem aloud and in meter. Describe the effects of the various sound and metrical patterns in the poem, such as (a) the repetition of double *l*s and the resulting linkage among words, (b) the resonance of *m*s in lines 6–7, (c) the multiple elisions and onomatopoeia in lines 9–10, (d) the contrast between mono- or disyllabic words in the first half of line 11 and the polysyllabic word at the end of the line, (e) the repetitions in lines 13–15 (**malae ... male; bella ... bellum**), (f) the anaphora and exclamations in line 16, and (g) the soft liquid sounds of line 18.

Discussion

1. How is the **passer** given human qualities in the image of a lover?

2. How does the portrayal of the **passer** with the puella in Catullus 3 complement that in Catullus 2?

3. How does the death of the **passer** open the way for future developments in Catullus' love for the puella?

Meter: iambic trimeter

1   **phasēlus, -ī, m.** [Greek loan word meaning *bean*], *small boat, yacht* (named
      phasēlus from its resemblance to a bean-pod).
      hospes, hospitis, m., *guest; visitor; stranger.*

2   **ait:** pronounce as two syllables.
      ait fuisse . . . celerrimus: *says that it was the swiftest.* . . . The phasēlus uses
        Greek grammar, for, unlike Latin, Greek uses the nominative case in
        indirect statement and does not express the subject of the indirect state-
        ment when that subject is the same as the subject of the verb of saying;
        normal Latin would be **ait sē fuisse . . . celerrimum.**
           ait . . . neque (3) **. . . nequīsse** (4): *and [it] says that it was not unable;* ei-
           ther litotes = *and [it] says that it was able* or a denial of a denial = *and*
           [it] denies that it was not able (as if someone had said that it was not
           able, and it now denies that anyone ever said such a thing).

3   **natō, -āre, -āvī, -ātūrus,** *to swim; to float; to sail.*
      impetus, -ūs, m. [a word associated with epic poetry], *strong forward move-*
        ment, speed.
      trabs, trabis, f., *tree trunk; wooden beam, timber;* by metonymy in poetry, *boat.*

4   **nequeō, nequīre, nequīvī/nequiī** (perfect infinitive, **nequīsse**), *to be unable.*
      praetereō [**praeter-**, *past, by* + **eō, īre, iī, itūrus,** *to go*], **praeterīre,**
        praeterīvī/praeteriī, praeteritus, *to go past; to surpass.*
      sīve . . . sīve (5), conj., *whether . . . or if* or *or whether.*
      palmula, -ae, f. [dim. of **palma, -ae,** f., *palm* (of the hand)], *palm* (of the hand);
        metaphorically, *blade of an oar; oar.*

5   **opus est,** impersonal idiom, *(it) is necessary.*
      opus foret (= **esset**): *was necessary;* the subject is **volāre.** Dependent
        clauses in indirect statement have their verbs in the subjunctive.
      volō, -āre, -āvī, -ātūrus, *to fly, speed, go quickly.*
      linteum, -ī, n., *linen; towel, napkin; sail.*

6   **Et hoc negat . . . negāre lītus** (7): *And it denies that the shore . . . denies this*
      [claim], i.e., that it was the swiftest ship. In addition to **lītus,** the infinitive
      negāre has four other subjects in the indirect statement: **īnsulās** (7), **Rho-**
      dum (8), **Propontida** (9), and **sinum** (9).
      mināx, minācis, *menacing, threatening* (in word or action).
      Hadriāticum, -ī, n., *Adriatic Sea.*

7   **-ve,** enclitic conj., *or.*
      Cycladēs, Cycladum, f. pl., *Cyclades* (a group of islands in the Aegean Sea).
      Cycladās: Greek accusative plural.

8   **Rhodus, -ī, f.,** *Rhodes* (an island in the Aegean Sea, east of the Cyclades).
      nōbilis, -is, -e, *well-known, famous.*
      horridus, -a, -um, *bristling* (of hair); *rough, choppy* (of the sea).
      Thracius, -a, -um, *Thracian, on the Thracian side* (referring to Thrace, a terri-
      tory in northeast Greece).
        Thrāciam: Thomson prints **Thrāciā,** ablative of **Thāciās, -ae, f.** [Greek
        loan word], *Thracias* (a wind blowing from a direction west of north);
        Thrāciā would be ablative of instrument or cause with **horridam.**

CATULLUS 4

A Ship Retired from Service

The poet commemorates the retirement of a well-traveled ship.

1   Phasēlus ille, quem vidētis, hospitēs,
2   ait fuisse nāvium celerrimus,
3   neque ūllius natantis impetum trabis
4   nequīsse praeterīre, sīve palmulīs
5   opus foret volāre sīve linteō.
6   Et hoc negat minācis Hadriāticī
7   negāre lītus īnsulāsve Cycladās
8   Rhodumque nōbilem horridamque Thrāciam

Initial Explorations

1.   Who is the speaker? Whom does the speaker address? What is the speaker doing? (1)
2.   What claim does the speaker report that the **phasēlus** makes for itself? (2)
3.   What denial does the speaker report that the **phasēlus** makes in lines 3–5? What is the tone of the denial? What is the flavor of the words attributed to the **phasēlus** here?
4.   In continuing to insist on its swiftness, what tone does the **phasēlus** use in lines 6–9?
5.   What words describe the dangers of the waters through which the **phasēlus** claims to have sailed so swiftly? (6–9)
6.   Find three words that suggest that the **phasēlus** is being personified. Find one word that suggests it is like a bird. What words suggest the personification of nature? (2–9)

9 **Propontis, Propontidos,** f. [**pro-,** *in front of,* + **Pontus, -ī,** m., *the Black Sea*], *Propontis* (the ancient name for the Sea of Marmora, situated between the Aegean to the west and the Black Sea to the east).

　　Propontida: Greek accusative.

trux, trucis, *harsh, savage, pitiless* (of persons); *cruel, savage* (of the sea).

Ponticus, -a, -um, *Pontic* (referring to the Pontus, the Black Sea).

sinus, -ūs, m., see Catullus 2.2; here, *bay, gulf, sea.*

　　Ponticum sinum: *the Black Sea.*

　　　horridamque Thrāciam / Propontida: the three-word phrase is balanced by **trucemve Ponticum sinum.**

10 **iste, ista, istud,** *that, that* (which you see).

　　iste post phasēlus: the adverb **post,** *afterward,* here modifies the noun, **phasēlus,** *that afterward phasēlus, that phasēlus to be.*

11 **comātus, -a, -um,** *long-haired; having much foliage, leafy.*

Cytōrius, -a, -um, *Cytorian, of Mt. Cytorus* (a mountain on the southern shore of the Black Sea, rising up behind the port cities of Amastris and Cytorus).

iugum, -ī, n., *yoke; mountain ridge.*

12 **sībilus, -ī,** m., *whistling sound.*

ēdō, ēdere, ēdidī, ēditus, *to put out; to produce, let out; to utter.*

coma, -ae, f., *hair; foliage, leaves.*

13 **Amastris, Amastris,** f., *Amastris* (a port city on the southern coast of the Black Sea).

　　Amastri: vocative.

Cytōrus, -ī, m., *Cytorus* (both the name of a port city on the southern coast of the Black Sea that was absorbed by Amastris and the name of the mountain behind it, famous as a source of box wood).

buxifer, buxifera, buxiferum [**buxus, -ī,** f., *box tree* + **-fer, -fera, -ferum,** *carrying, bearing*], *producing boxwood trees, boxwood-bearing.*

　　buxifer: compounds of this sort are a common feature of older Latin poetic style.

14 **tibi:** since Cytorus was absorbed by Amastris, the two locations are addressed with a singular pronoun.

haec: either *these things* (just mentioned in lines 10–12) or *the following events;* **haec** is the subject of **fuisse** and **esse** in indirect statement.

cognitus, -a, -um, *recognized, well-known.*

15 **ultimus, -a, -um,** *farthest; earliest.*

orīgō, orīginis, f., *beginning.*

　　ultimā ex orīgine: i.e., from its earliest days.

16 **stetisse dīcit:** the **phasēlus** is the subject of **dīcit** and of the three infinitives **stetisse, imbuisse** (17), and **tulisse** (19). Normally Latin would use **sē** as subject of the infinitives in indirect statement, but the ship is again using a Greek construction for indirect statement in which no subject needs to be expressed if it is the same as the subject of the introductory verb, here **dīcit.**

cacūmen, cacūminis, n., *peak, summit.*

9   Propontida trucemve Ponticum sinum,

10 ubi iste post phasēlus anteā fuit

11 comāta silva; nam Cytōriō in iugō

12 loquente saepe sībilum ēdidit comā.

13 Amastri Pontica et Cytōre buxifer,

14 tibi haec fuisse et esse cognitissima

15 ait phasēlus: ultimā ex orīgine

16 tuō stetisse dīcit in cacūmine,

Initial Explorations

7. Describe a chiastic arrangement of words in lines 8–9.

8. The speaker, quoting the denials of the **phasēlus**, leads us back to its place of origin in lines 6–9. With what words does the poet endow the **phasēlus** with human attributes and abilities when it stood as a forest on Mt. Cytorus? (10–12)

9. Whom did the speaker address in line 1? What does the speaker now address in line 13? What is the technical term for the rhetorical figure involved here?

10. Once more the **phasēlus** is said to refer to an authority for its veracity. (13–15) To what does it refer now and to what did it refer for its veracity before?

11. The word **haec** (14) could refer to what comes before it or to what comes after it. Do you think it refers backward or forward? Present reasons for your answer.

17   imbuō, imbuere, imbuī, imbūtus, *to dip, wet* (for the first time, as if in an initiatory rite).

18   impotēns, impotentis [in-, *not* + potēns, potentis, *having power* (over), *able to control*], *powerless* (over oneself); *lacking self-control; wild, violent, raging*.

       fretum, -ī, n., *strait, narrows; sea*.

19   erus, -ī, m., *master; owner*.

       laevus, -a, -um, *left, on/from the left*.

          laeva sīve. . . . : the first sīve has been omitted here: *whether from the left or. . . .*

20   vocāret . . . incidisset (21): for the use of the subjunctive here, see the note to line 5. Note the change in tense from imperfect (*the breeze used to call/invite*) to pluperfect (*had fallen*).

       aura, -ae, f., *breeze*.

       sīve: *or if, or whether*.

       utrumque: modifying pedem (21).

       Iuppiter, Iovis, m., *Jupiter*; (by metonymy) *sky; wind*.

21   secundus, -a, -um [from sequor, sequī, secūtus sum, *to follow*], *following* (in order), *second*; of wind, *following* (producing a tail wind), *favorable*.

       pēs, pedis, m., *foot; sheet* (rope fastening the lower corners of a sail to the ship).

22   vōtum, -ī, n., *vow* (promise made to a god to do something in exchange for the god's granting of a request).

       lītorālis, -is, -e, *of/belonging to the shore*.

          lītorālibus deīs: i.e., gods of the sea, who commonly had temples on the shore and to whom sailors in distress would pray begging that the gods bring them safely to shore.

23   sibi: *by itself*, dative of agent with the perfect passive infinitive esse facta, which here replaces a pluperfect indicative, *had been made*, and requires secondary sequence with the imperfect subjunctive in the cum clause.

       venīret: the subject is the phasēlus.

24   novissimus, -a, -um [superlative of novus, -a, -um, *new*], *most recent, latest, last to be reached*.

          ā marī novissimō . . . ad . . . lacum: i.e., *from the last sea* to be crossed, usually identified as the Adriatic, to the inland lake, often identified as the Benacus (Lake Garda), where Catullus' ancestral home was located at Sirmio.

       ad usque + acc., *all the way to*.

       limpidus, -a, -um, *limpid, unclouded, clear*.

       lacus, -ūs, m., *lake*.

Text

24   novissimō: a Renaissance conjecture replacing the superlative adverb novissimē. The adverb would mean *after all else, lastly* and is probably to be preferred here (Thomson prints it in his text).

17   tuō imbuisse palmulās in aequore,
18   et inde tot per impotentia freta
19   erum tulisse, laeva sīve dextera
20   vocāret aura, sīve utrumque Iuppiter
21   simul secundus incidisset in pedem;
22   neque ūlla vōta lītorālibus deīs
23   sibi esse facta, cum venīret ā marī
24   novissimō hunc ad usque limpidum lacum.

continued

Initial Explorations

12.   What rhetorical figure is involved in the repetition of **tuō** (16, 17)?
13.   Find words that continue the personification of the **phasēlus** and of nature. (14–24)
14.   What word again calls attention to the dangers of the waters through which the **phasēlus** sailed?
15.   How had the **phasēlus** emphasized its versatility before? How does it do it now?
16.   What is the final boast of the **phasēlus**? (22–24)

Et hoc negat mināci s Hadriāticī
negāre lītus īnsulāsve Cȳcladās
Rhodumque nōbilem horridamque Thrāciam
Propontida trucemve Ponticum sinum. . . .

25   **haec**: *these events.*
      fuēre: = fuērunt.
      reconditus, -a, -um, [re-, *back* + **conditus, -a, -um**, *hidden, concealed*], *hidden, secluded.*
26   **seneō, senēre**, *to be old.*
      quiēs, quiētis, f., *relief from labor, rest, repose.*
      tibi: a singular pronoun is here used to refer to the twins, Castor and Pollux, who, as Merrill (12) explains, "were often spoken of . . . under one name,— that of Castor being more frequently used."
27   **gemellus, -a, -um**, *twin-born, twin.*
      Castor, Castoris, m., *Castor* (Castor and his twin brother Pollux were the sons of Zeus and Leda; as the constellation Gemini they were traditionally considered protectors of sailors and ships).
      gemellus, -ī, m., *twin.*
      gemelle Castoris: i.e., Pollux.

Comparisons

Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations* (1.101) gives this Latin translation of a famous epigram written by the Greek poet Simonides commemorating the Greeks under the command of Leonidas who fell at Thermopylae fighting against the Persian invaders. Compare it with the opening of Catullus 4:

Dīc, hospes, Spartae nōs tē hīc vīdisse iacentēs,
    dum sānctīs patriae lēgibus obsequimur.

lēx, lēgis, f., *law.*
obsequor, obsequī, obsecūtus sum + dat., *to obey.*

Compare the following translation of a Greek epigram written by Macedonius the Consul (*Palatine Anthology* 6.69) with the conclusion of Catullus 4:

Crantas, after many voyages, dedicated his ship to Poseidon,
    anchoring it firmly in the floor of the temple,
now that it is aground it cares no longer for the breeze; on this ground
    Crantas stretching out sleeps without fear.

25   Sed haec prius fuēre: nunc recondită
26   senet quiēte sēque dēdicat tibi,
27   gemelle Castor et gemelle Castoris.

Initial Explorations

17.   At what point does the speaker again stop letting the phasēlus speak for it-
      self?
18.   The words prius and nunc in line 25 complete the temporal circle of the
      poem, from the present (quem vidētis, 1) to the past (ait fuisse, 2) to the pre-
      sent (nunc . . . senet, 25–26). What picture does the speaker present of the
      phasēlus in its retirement?
19.   To whom does the phasēlus dedicate itself and why?
20.   What rhetorical device used earlier in the poem is used again in the last line?
21.   What is the effect of the meter used in this poem?

Discussion

1.   Examine the structure of the poem as a whole. Define an "introduction," a
     "conclusion," and a "center." Then locate lines that move toward the center
     and lines that move away from the center.
2.   In what ways does the phasēlus betray its origin as a Greek ship?
3.   In what ways is the phasēlus similar to the legendary Argo?
4.   The phasēlus is personified. What personality or traits of character does it
     project as the speaker reports its words?
5.   How do you think the speaker feels about the phasēlus? How do you feel
     about it?

Meter: hendecasyllabic

1   vīvō, vīvere, vīxī, vīctūrus, *to live; to live* (in the full sense of the word), *really live, enjoy life.*

    Vīvāmus ... amēmus ... aestimēmus (3): explain the mood and construction of these verbs.

    Lesbia, -ae, f., *Lesbia* (the name or pseudonym of the woman to whom the poem is addressed; see Introduction).

    atque, conj., *and, also; and what is more, and in fact, and indeed.*

2   rūmor, rūmōris, m., *rumor; gossip.*

    sevērus, -a, -um, *severe in judgment, stern, strict.*

    sevēriōrum: for translation of the comparative, see note to Catullus 3.2.

3   aestimō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus, *to estimate the worth of, value.*

    as, assis, m., *copper Roman coin, penny, cent.*

    ūnius assis aestimāre, idiom, *to consider X* (acc.) *as worth just one cent,* genitive of indefinite value. The *i* of ūnius is here short for the sake of the meter.

4   sōlēs: from sōl, sōlis, m., *sun.*

    occidō [ob-, *against* + cadō, cadere, cecidī, cāsūrus, *to fall*], occidere, occidī, occāsūrus, *to fall; to die; to sink, set* (of celestial bodies).

5   nōbīs: emphatic by position, serving as dative of reference, *for us,* with occidit brevis lūx and as dative of agent, *by us,* with est ... dormienda (6). Thomson places a comma after nōbīs, allowing nōbīs to be taken only with est ... dormienda (6).

    semel, adv., *once, once and for all.*

    cum semel occidit: either present or perfect indicative in a present-general temporal clause, *whenever ... once sets* or *whenever ... has once set.* Present-general temporal and conditional clauses take the present or perfect indicative in the subordinate clause and the present indicative (here est ... dormienda) in the main clause. The pronoun nōbīs will then refer to humankind in general, not to Catullus and Lesbia as individuals.

6   est ... dormienda: gerundive of obligation or passive periphrastic, *must be slept,* with the dative of agent, nōbīs (5).

    perpetuus, -a, -um, *everlasting, continuous, uninterrupted.*

7   Dā mī: note the reversed and lengthened repetition of vowel sounds from the previous word dormienda.

    bāsium, -ī, n., *kiss.*

    bāsia: the word is first attested in Catullus and is rare in later poets; the normal words for *kiss* are ōsculum and suāvium/sāvium.

8   dein: = deinde.

9   usque, adv., *continuously, without a break, immediately.*

CATULLUS 5

Give me a thousand kisses!

The poet invites Lesbia to a life of love.

1   Vīvāmus, mea Lesbia, atque amēmus,
2   rūmōrēsque senum sevēriōrum
3   omnēs ūnius aestimēmus assis!
4   Sōlēs occidere et redīre possunt;
5   nōbīs cum semel occidit brevis lūx,
6   nox est perpetua ūna dormienda.
7   Dā mī bāsia mīlle, deinde centum,
8   dein mīlle altera, dein secunda centum,
9   deinde usque altera mīlle, deinde centum;

Initial Explorations

1. To whom is this poem addressed? Who is Lesbia? What does the name signify? Of what significance is its position in the line here?
2. With what two exhortations does the poet frame the first line? How does the second exhortation explain the first? How do these exhortations jar with traditional Roman values?
3. How would a well-brought-up young Roman woman react to Catullus' exhortations in line 1?
4. How does Catullus in lines 2–3 anticipate reservations that Lesbia might have?
5. How does Catullus encourage Lesbia to evaluate the **rūmōrēs** of the stern old men? (2–3)
6. What do assonance, alliteration, and word placement contribute to the effect of line 3?
7. What is meant by the phrase **carpe diem**? How do lines 4–6 introduce this theme?
8. Identify, analyze, and comment on the meaning of the imagery and the antitheses in lines 4–6.
9. How does the demand for kisses (7–9) result logically from what the poet has said so far in the poem?
10. How would you characterize Catullus' demand for kisses, and what would the stern old men think of it?

43

10   **multa mīlia**: supply **basiōrum** as partitive genitive.

      fēcerīmus: future perfect indicative, with long *i* here. In addition to mean-
          ing simply *will have made*, the verb may be understood here in a special
          commercial sense of *making up* or *reaching* a specific sum of money.

11   **conturbō** [con-, *thoroughly* + **turbō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus**, *to stir up, throw into con-
          fusion*], **-āre, -āvī, -ātus**, *to mix up, confound*.

      nē sciāmus: the danger for them is that "to count one's blessings is to invite
          Nemesis and the evil eye" (Fordyce, 108).

12   **quis, qua/quae, quid**, indefinite pronoun after **nē**, *anyone, anybody, somebody,
          anything, something*.

      nē quis malus: *so that no evil person* (lit., *so that somebody evil . . . not . . .*).

      invideō [in-, *in, on* + **videō, vidēre, vīdī, vīsus**, *to see*], **invidēre, invīdī, in-
          vīsus** + dat., *to cast an evil eye* (on), *cast spells* (upon); *to envy*.

          invidēre: use one of the first two translations of the verb given above;
             supply **nōbīs**.

13   **cum**: *when*.

      tantum, -ī, n., *such a quantity, so much; so great a number*.

          tantum: with **bāsiōrum**. According to widely held beliefs of magic, some-
             one knowing the exact number of a person's possessions or actions could
             cast a destructive spell upon them or upon the person.

Text

11   **conturbābimus illa, nē sciāmus**: as a technical commercial term, the verb
      conturbāre may mean *to throw one's accounts* (**ratiōnēs**) *into confusion* (in
      order to give a deceptive appearance of bankruptcy), *to go bankrupt*. The
      technical commercial meaning may be appropriate after lines 7–10; when
      used in this sense, the verb is intransitive and never has an expressed di-
      rect object; one would then place the comma after **conturbābimus** instead
      of after **illa**, and **illa** (*those things* = *the sum, the total*) would be taken with **nē
      sciāmus**:

          11   conturbābimus, illa nē sciāmus

             we will throw our accounts into confusion (i.e., fraudulently go
             bankrupt), *so that we may not know them* (i.e., the numbers of the
             kisses)

      Fordyce remarks, "they will cheat the evil eye [see line 12], as the
      bankrupt cheats his creditors, by faking their books" (108).

10   dein, cum mīlia multa fēcerīmus,
11   conturbābimus illa, nē sciāmus,
12   aut nē quis malus invidēre possit,
13   cum tantum sciat esse bāsiōrum.

Initial Explorations

11.   Analyze the rhetorical effects produced by sound, rhythm, and movement in
      lines 7–11.
12.   How does line 11 set up a contrast between passion and rationality?
13.   What two threats to the love between himself and Lesbia does Catullus want
      to protect against? (11–13)

Discussion

1.   How would you divide the poem into sections?
2.   The **malus**, *evil person*, of line 12 is usually thought to represent the stern old
     men of line 2. To what extent is the following conclusion justified: "The asso-
     ciation, or identification, of the *malus* and his envy with the *senes severi* shows
     them up as hypocrites, and their moral censure stands discredited"?
     (Fredricksmeyer, 443)
3.   In opposition to the **senēs sevērī** and the **malus**, Catullus stakes out a moral
     defense of the life of love in this poem. How, in lines 4–6, has he also staked
     out a rational defense of the life of love?
4.   Assume that the woman addressed as **mea Lesbia** in this poem is the same
     as the person referred to as **mea puella** in Catullus 2 and 3. To what extent is
     Catullus 5 an appropriate next step in Catullus' courtship of the **puella**?

Comparisons

Catullus 5 was widely imitated in the Renaissance and later. Compare the follow-
ing versions, one French and the rest British.

Pierre de Ronsard
(1524–85)

La Lune est coustumiere
De naistre tous les mois,
Mais quand nostre lumiere
Est esteinte une fois,
Longuement sans veiller
Il nous faut sommeiller.

    Tandis que vivons ores,
Un baiser donnez-moy,
Donnez-m'en mille encores.
Amour n'a point de loy,
A sa Divinité,
Convient l'infinité.

Thomas Campion
(1567?–1619)

My sweetest Lesbia let us live and love,
And though the sager sort our deedes reprove,
Let us not way them: heav'ns great lampes doe dive
Into their west, and strait againe revive,
But soone as once set is our little light,
Then must we sleepe one ever-during night.

Ben Jonson
(1571/72–1637)

Come, my Celia, let us prove,
While we can, the sports of love;
Time will not be ours for ever,
He at length our good will sever.
Spend not then his gifts in vain:
Suns that set, may rise again;
But if once we lose this light,
'Tis with us perpetual night.
Why should we defer our joys?
Fame and rumour are but toys.
Cannot we delude the eyes
Of a few poor household spies?
Or his easier ears beguile,
So removed by our wile?
'Tis no sin love's fruit to steal,
But the sweet thefts to reveal,
To be taken, to be seen,
These have crimes accounted been.

Robert Herrick
(1591–1674)

Come, let us goe, while we are in our prime;
And take the harmlesse follie of the time.
    We shall grow old apace, and die
    Before we know our liberty.
    Our life is short; and our dayes run
    As fast away as do's the Sunne:
And as a vapour, or a drop of raine
Once lost, can ne'r be found againe:
    So when or you or I are made
    A fable, song, or fleeting shade;
    All love, all liking, all delight
    Lies drown'd with us in endlesse night.
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying;
Come, my *Corinna*, come, let's goe a Maying.

Richard Crashaw
(1613?–49)

Come and let us live my deare,
Let us love and never feare,
What the sowrest fathers say:
Brightest Sol that dyes to day
Lives againe as blith to morrow;
But if we darke sons of sorrow
Set: O then how long a Night
Shuts the eyes of our short light!
Then let amorous kisses dwell
On our lips, begin and tell
A thousand, and a hundred score,
An hundred and a thousand more,
Till another thousand smother
That, and that wipe off another.
Thus at last when we have numbred
Many a thousand, many a hundred,
Wee'l confound the reckoning quite
And lose our selves in wild delight:
While our joyes so multiply
As shall mocke the envious eye.

Andrew Marvell
(1621–78)

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day;
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood;
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor in thy marble vault shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honor turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust.
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now, therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning glew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,

CATULLUS 5

Rather at once our time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapped power.
Let us roll all our strength, and all
Our sweetness, up into one ball;
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life.
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Meter: choliambic

1　paene īnsulārum: = paenīnsulārum. The genitives in line 1 depend on the
word ocelle (2).

　Sirmiō, Sirmiōnis, f., *Sirmio* (a small peninsula or promontory overlooking
Lake Garda, Lago di Garda in Italian, the ancient lacus Bēnācus, where
Catullus' family had a villa).

2　ocellus, -ī, m. [dim. of oculus, -ī, m., *eye*], *little eye, dear eye;* figurative, *jewel.*

　ocelle: vocative (affectionate diminutive), in apposition with Sirmiō (1).

　　Sirmiō (1) ... / ocelle: personification.

　quīcumque, quaecumque, quodcumque, indefinite relative pronoun, *who-
ever, whatever.*

　liquēns, liquentis, *clear.*

　stagnum, -ī, n., *pool; lake.*

3　vastus, -a, -um, *desolate;* of the sea, *dreary, endless, immense, huge.*

　uterque Neptūnus: i.e., each of the two Neptunes, referring to the tradition
that there was a Neptune of saltwater seas and one of fresh-water lakes.

4　quam ... quamque: *how ... and how. ...*

　invīsō, invīsere, invīsī, invīsus, *to come to see, to visit; to look upon.*

5　mī: dative with crēdēns.

　crēdēns: introducing indirect statement; supply mē as subject of līquisse (6)
and vidēre (6).

　Thȳnia (Thūnia), -ae, f., *Thynia* (the country on the south shore of the Black
Sea inhabited by the Thyni).

　Bīthȳnus (Bīthūnus), -a, -um, *Bithynian, of/belonging to Bithynia* (the Roman
province in Asia Minor inhabited by the Thyni and the Bithyni).

　　Thȳniam atque Bīthȳnōs ... campōs (6): objects of līquisse (6).

6　līquisse: = relīquisse.

　līquisse ... vidēre: what tense is each infinitive?

　tūtus, -a, -um, *safe, secure.*

　　in tūtō: *in one piece, safely.*

　solūtīs ... cūrīs: ablative of comparison; instead of translating *than anxieties
that have been relieved,* turn the idea expressed in the participle into a noun;
compare ab urbe conditā = *from the foundation of the city.*

　beātius: for the word, see note on 9.5.

8　repōnō [re-, *back* + pōnō, pōnere, posuī, positus, *to put, place*], repōnere,
reposuī, repositus, *to put aside.*

　peregrīnus, -a, -um, *foreign.*

　　peregrīnō / labōre (9): the phrase refers to the hardships of travel and pub-
lic service in foreign lands.

9　fessī: = dēfessī.

　lar, laris, m., *household god, household altar;* by synecdoche, *home.*

10　acquiēscō [ad-, intensive + quiēscō, quiēscere, quiēvī, quiētūrus, *to fall
asleep; to rest*], acquiēscere, acquiēvī, inceptive, *to rest, relax.*

　lectō: = in lectō.

CATULLUS 31

Coming Home after Work

Catullus arrives home to his villa at Sirmio in the spring of 56 B.C. for a welcome rest after spending a trying year in Bithynia on the staff of Gaius Memmius.

1 Paene īnsulārum, Sirmiō, īnsulārumque
2 ocelle, quāscumque in liquentibus stagnīs
3 marīque vastō fert uterque Neptūnus,
4 quam tē libenter quamque laetus invīsō,
5 vix mī ipse crēdēns Thȳniam atque Bīthȳnōs
6 līquisse campōs et vidēre tē in tūtō.
7 Ō quid solūtīs est beātius cūrīs,
8 cum mēns onus repōnit, ac peregrīnō
9 labōre fessī vēnimus larem ad nostrum,
10 dēsīderātōque acquiēscimus lectō?

Initial Explorations

1. What is the tone of the poet's opening address to Sirmio? (1–3)
2. What words and phrases are paired in these lines? Which words are arranged in a chiasmus? Find an example of homoioteleuton.
3. What does the poet reveal in lines 4–6 about what he is doing now and what he has done in the recent past?
4. Locate an example of anaphora in lines 4–6. Locate three pairs of words in these lines. What effect do such figures of speech and pairing of words have on the reader?
5. What further factual information does the poet reveal about himself in lines 7–10?
6. What emotions or feelings does the poet express in lines 7–10?
7. Locate the members of an ascending tricolon in lines 7–10. Which of the three clauses in the tricolon is the longest? Which is climactic?
8. What words or phrases in lines 7–10 are set in contrast or concordance with each other?

11   ūnus, -a, -um, here, *alone, by itself.*

        prō, prep. + abl., *for; in return for, in compensation for.*

        Hoc est quod ūnum est prō: *This is [that] which alone is in compensation*
        for. . . . = *This is what alone makes up for.* . . .

12   **venustus, -a, -um**: see Catullus 3.2, 10.4, 12.5, 13.6. Use of the adjective here
        personifies Sirmio.

        erus, -ī, m.: see Catullus 4.19.

        erō: with **gaudente** (13). What case and construction?

13   **Lȳdius, -a, -um**, *Lydian, Etruscan* (the area around Sirmio had once been
        ruled by the Etruscans, who were thought to have come from Lydia in Asia
        Minor).

        lacus, -ūs, m., *lake.*

        Lȳdiae lacūs undae: transferred epithet.

14   **quisquis, quisquis, quidquid**, indefinite pronoun/adjective, *whoever, what-*
        ever.

        domī: locative, here not literally *at home*, but idiomatically, *at your disposal, in*
        your stock, in store.

        cachinnus, -ī, m. [onomatopoetic] (see Catullus 13.5), *loud laughter.*

        quidquid . . . cachinnōrum: **quidquid** with its dependent partitive geni-
        tive functions as internal or cognate accusative with the intransitive verb
        rīdēte, *laugh whatever (of) laughter;* we would say *with whatever laughter.*

Text

13   **vōsque, ō Lȳdiae lacūs undae**: Thomson argues for reading **vōsque lūci-**
        dae lacūs undae:

                13   gaudente, vōsque lūcidae lacūs undae

        [**lūdicus, -a, -um**, *clear, bright, translucent*] This eliminates the learned ref-
        erence to Lydia. Goold prints **limpidae**, *clear, transparent,* in his text.

11   Hoc est quod ūnum est prō labōribus tantīs.

12   Salvē, ō venusta Sirmiō, atque erō gaudē

13   gaudente, vōsque, ō Lȳdiae lacūs undae,

14   rīdēte quidquid est domī cachinnōrum.

Initial Explorations

9.   With what word in line 7 does **labōribus** (11) correspond?
10. Locate the members of an ascending tricolon in lines 12–14. Which clause is longest? Is it also climactic?
11. Identify the transferred epithet in the phrase **Lȳdiae lacūs undae**. Some editors eliminate the learned allusion in the description of the lake as Lydian and substitute descriptive adjectives instead (see **Text** on the opposite page). What arguments could you make for and against the substitution of descriptive adjectives?
12. How do lines 12–14 echo lines 1–3? How do these sets of lines provide an effective frame for the poem? How is the tone of lines 12–14 different from that of lines 1–3? Why is it different?

Discussion

1.   This poem is an example of a literary genre that the ancients described with the Greek word *epibaterion*, which refers to a speech or poem recited by someone who steps onto the shore of his homeland upon returning from travels abroad. The Greek poem translated below is an example, representing the words of Ulysses upon his return home after the Trojan War and his subsequent wanderings. What similarities do you find with Catullus' poem? What differences?
2.   What role does personification play in Catullus' poem? How is it important?
3.   Compare Catullus 31 with Catullus 9 on Veranius' return home. What similarities and what differences do you find?

Comparison

Ithaca, hail! After my labors, after the bitter woes
of the sea, with joy I come to your soil, hoping to see
Laertes and my wife and my glorious only son.
Love of you enticed my heart; I have learnt for myself that
"Nothing is sweeter than a man's country and his parents."

—Anonymous, *Palatine Anthology* 9.458

Meter: hendecasyllabic

1   annālis, annālis, m. [annus, -ī, m., *year*], *a book of annals or chronicles*; pl., *annals, chronicles* (in several volumes).

> Annālēs: vocative: *Annals* of Volusius, referring to a verse chronicle written by the poet Volusius, who is lambasted here and in Catullus 95 for being a verbose writer.

cacō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus, *to defecate; to expel as excrement.*

carta, -ae, f., *sheet of papyrus*; by extension, *papyrus roll* (i.e., sheets of papyrus glued together).

> cacāta carta: *papyrus expelled as excrement*, in apposition with **Annālēs** and a bold metaphor; Volusius suffers from verbal diarrhea.

2   vōtum, -ī, n., *vow* (a promise to dedicate or sacrifice something to a deity if the deity should grant a favor or answer a prayer); *offering or sacrifice made in repayment of a vow, votive offering.*

solvō, solvere, solvī, solūtus, *to loosen, untie; to relax, relieve*; here, *to pay off, discharge, fulfill.*

> vōtum solvite: translate vōtum in the first of the two senses given in the vocabulary entry above.

prō, prep. + abl., *on behalf of, for.*

4   voveō, vovēre, vōvī, vōtus, *to promise* (something to a god in return for a favor), *vow.*

sī ... restitūtus essem dēsīssemque (5) ... (sē) datūram (esse) (7): *if I would be ... and would ... (she) would. . . . ,* an example of a conditional sentence in an indirect statement, here, introduced by **vōvit**. The verb in the if-clause (protasis) is in the subjunctive since subordinate clauses in indirect statements use subjunctives; the verb in the conclusion (apodosis) is an infinitive in indirect statement. The type of the conditional sentence will determine the tense of the subjunctive and infinitive. In this case, Lesbia's vow was in the form of a future-more-vivid condition: **sī Catullus mihi restitūtus erit dēsieritque trucēs vibrāre iambōs, dabō.** ... In indirect statement the future perfect indicatives become pluperfect subjunctives, and the future indicative becomes a future infinitive.

sibi: i.e., Lesbia.

restituō [re-, *back, again* + statuō, statuere, statuī, statūtus, *to set; to stand up; to place*], restituere, restituī, restitūtus, *to set up again; to restore; to bring back;* + dat., *to reinstate in favor* (with).

5   dēsīssem: syncope for dēsiissem.

trux, trucis, *fierce, vicious.*

vibrō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus, *to fling, hurl* (as a spear or a bolt of lightning).

iambus, -ī, m., *iamb; poem written in iambic meter* (including the choliambic or "limping iambic" meter); pl., *invective written in iambic meter.*

> trucēs ... iambōs: possibly referring to Catullus 37, a scabrous indictment of Lesbia's promiscuity, which is written in choliambics.

CATULLUS 36

Good riddance to the *Annals* of Volusius!

Catullus at a time of estrangement from his **puella** *eagerly sacrifices the* Annals of Volusius *to Vulcan, the fire-god, in fulfillment of a playful vow that his* **puella** *made.*

1 Annālēs Volusī, cacāta carta,
2 vōtum solvite prō meā puellā.
3 Nam sānctae Venerī Cupīdinīque
4 vōvit, sī sibi restitūtus essem
5 dēsīssemque trucēs vibrāre iambōs,

Initial Explorations

1. What is Catullus addressing in the opening lines and what command does he give? (1–2) On whose behalf is his command to be carried out? Who is the puella?
2. Analyze the first line as a chiasmus. What role do alliteration and assonance play in the effectiveness of the line?
4. What can we infer about recent events in the relationship of Catullus and his puella from lines 4 and 5?

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6   ēlēctus, -a, -um [ēligō, ēligere, ēlēgī, ēlectus, *to pick out, choose*], *select, choice.*
     ēlēctissima pessimī poētae: i.e., *the very worst.* . . . (Thomson).

7   scrīptum, -ī, n., *writing, written work.*
     tardipēs, tardipedis [tardus, -a, -um, *slow* + pēs, pedis, m., *foot*], *slow-footed.*
     tardipedī deō: what case? The slow-footed god is the limping Vulcan.
     datūram: = sē datūram esse.

8   īnfēlīx, īnfēlīcis [in-, *not* + fēlīx, fēlīcis, *fruitful, productive; auspicious; lucky*],
     unproductive, sterile; inauspicious; unlucky.
     ūstulō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus, *to burn partially, char, scorch.*
     ūstulanda: modifying scrīpta (7).
     lignum, -ī, n., *wood, firewood.*
     īnfēlīcibus . . . lignīs: firewood from a tree thought of as īnfēlīx because it
     does not grow from seed or bear fruit; such trees were consecrated to the
     gods of the underworld, condemned criminals were hung from them in
     primitive times, and their wood was used to burn deformed creatures
     thought of as prodigies or monsters (Fordyce, 180).

9   hoc: supply vōtum.

10   iocōsē, adv., *in jest, humorously, playfully.*
     lepidē, adv., *charmingly, pleasantly, wittily.*
     iocōsē lepidē: asyndeton; the words describe how the puella saw herself
     making her vow to the gods, *playfully and wittily.*
     dīvus, -ī, m., *god.*

11   ō . . . creāta: O *[goddess] created/born.* . . . , i.e., Venus.
     caeruleus, -a, -um, *blue.*
     pontus, -ī, m., *sea.*
     caeruleō . . . pontō: ablative of origin; Aphrodite, Venus' Greek counter-
     part, was thought to have been born from the foam (Greek, *aphros*) of the
     sea.

12   quae . . . colis (14): *you who.* . . . ; the first of several relative clauses naming
     the various locations at which Venus was worshiped throughout the
     Mediterranean world. In a hymn or appeal to a god or goddess, it was
     common practice to list the names and places of worship associated with
     the particular divinity. The verb colis (14) is understood in each clause.
     Īdalium, -ī, n., *Idalium* (a cult site of Aphrodite on the island of Cyprus).
     Ūriī, -ōrum, m. pl., *Urii* (possibly an alternate spelling for Urion [Greek] or
     Urium [Latin], a town in Apulia on the east coast of Italy). Nothing is
     known about worship of Venus there.
     apertus -a, -um, *open; exposed* (i.e., to the elements).
     apertōs: this describes Urii as an "open roadstead, in the nautical sense, in
     contrast to a safe, well-sheltered harbour" (Thomson, 298).

13   Ancōn, Ancōnis, acc. Ancōna, f., *Ancon* or *Ancona* (a seaport on the central
     east coast of Italy; a temple of Venus was located there, and representations
     of Venus appeared on its coins).
     Cnidus, -ī, m., *Cnidus* (a city on the southwest coast of Asia Minor; Praxiteles'
     famous statue of Aphrodite stood in a temple in this city).
     harundinōsus, -a, -um [harundō, harundinis, f., *reed*], *full of reeds* (reeds
     were exported from Cnidus and used for the production of paper).

6   ēlēctissima pessimī poētae
7   scrīpta tardipedī deō datūram
8   īnfēlīcibus ūstulanda lignīs,
9   et hoc pessima sē puella vīdit
10 iocōsē lepidē vovēre dīvīs.
11 Nunc, ō caeruleō creāta pontō,
12 quae sānctum Īdalium Ūriōsque apertōs
13 quaeque Ancōna Cnidumque harundinōsam

Initial Explorations

5. What exactly did the **puella** promise, and on what conditions? (3–8)
6. What might the **puella** have had in mind when she spoke of **ēlēctissima pessimī poētae / scrīpta**? (6–7)
7. Locate elements of humor and wit in the vow as it is quoted in lines 3–8.
8. How does a phrase in line 9 answer a phrase in the vow of the **puella**?
9. What do lines 9–10 tell us about the attitude of the **puella** toward the vow she made?
10. What is bizarre about the vow made by the **puella**? How can it be said truly to have been made **iocōsē lepidē**?
11. What does the word **Nunc** (11) signal with regard to the structure of the poem?

14   colō, colere, coluī, cultus, *to cultivate; to live in, inhabit.*
     colis: deities were thought to dwell in the places where they were wor-
        shiped.
     Amathus, Amathuntis, acc. Amathunta, f., *Amathus* (a seaport town in
        Cyprus and cult site of Aphrodite).
     Golgī, -ōrum, m. pl., *Golgi* (a town in Cyprus, famous for its very ancient cult
        of Aphrodite).
15   Dyrrachium (Durrachium), -ī, n., *Dyrrachium* (a seaport in southern Illyria,
        across the Adriatic from Brundisium and a prosperous trading center).
     Hadria, -ae, f., *the Adriatic Sea.*
     taberna, -ae, f., *shop; inn.*
        Hadriae tabernam: in apposition with Durrachium. The town of
           Dyrrachium is described metaphorically as the *inn of the Adriatic* because
           sailors would frequently put in there. The town had a bad reputation,
           and the word taberna can be used of a house of ill repute. In Plautus,
           Menaechmi 258–62, the inhabitants of Dyrrachium are described as "the
           greatest pleasure-lovers and drinkers . . . lots of swindlers, cajolers . . .
           prostitutes nowhere in the world more blandishing." The word taberna
           has disreputable connotations in Catullus 37, the only other poem in
           which Catullus uses this word and possibly the poem referred to in the
           phrase trucēs . . . iambōs (above, line 5).
16   face: archaic for fac.
     reddō [re-, *back* + dō, dare, dedī, datus, *to give*], reddere, reddidī, redditus,
        to give back; to pay (a debt); *to render* (ritual offerings); *to discharge, fulfill* (a
        vow).
        acceptum face redditumque vōtum: the words acceptum face . . . vō-
           tum, literally, *make the votive offering received* = accipe vōtum, *receive
           the votive offering* (note that vōtum is used here in the second of the two
           senses given in the vocabulary entry for line 2). The words face reddi-
           tum . . . vōtum mean *regard the vow as discharged/fulfilled* (vōtum is
           used here in the first of the two senses given in the vocabulary entry
           for line 2).
17   nōn illepidum neque invenustum: litotes; see Catullus 10.4.
18   vōs: addressed again to the *Annals* of Volusius.
     intereā: here not in its temporal sense, *meanwhile*, but in its adversative sense,
        no matter how that is, regardless.
19   īnficētiae, -ārum [in-, *not* + facētiae, -ārum, f. pl., *skillfulness, cleverness, face-
        tiousness*] (compare Catullus 22.14), *unrefinement, coarseness.*
        īnficētiārum: some editors print īnfacētiārum.

14   colis quaeque Amathunta quaeque Golgōs
15   quaeque Dyrrachium Hadriae tabernam,
16   acceptum face redditumque vōtum,
17   sī nōn illepidum neque invenustum est.
18   At vōs intereā venīte in ignem,
19   plēnī rūris et īnficētiārum
20   annālēs Volusī, cacāta carta.

Initial Explorations

12.   What is the tone of the poet's invocation of Venus? (11–15) How does it dis-
      play the poet's learning? Is it entirely serious, or does it contain some hu-
      mor? Is it a respectful eulogy of Venus' power?
13.   What does the poet request of Venus (16) after his invocation of her?
14.   Explain how the descriptive phrases in line 17 apply to the two different
      things that are referred to with the word **vōtum** in line 16.
15.   What does the use of the qualifying word **intereā** (18) imply?
16.   How does line 18 echo line 2?
17.   How does line 20 echo line 1?
18.   What is accomplished by Catullus' violating the symmetry of the opening
      and closing lines of the poem by adding line 19?

Discussion

1.   What does the poem imply about the present and future relationship be-
      tween Catullus and the **puella**?
2.   Compare Catullus 36 with Catullus 35. What are some of the similarities and
      differences?

Meter: Sapphic strophe

1   Ille: i.e., a man discussed further in lines 3–4.

   mī: take with vidētur.

   pār, paris + dat., *equal* (to).

2   fās, indeclinable, n., *that which is right or permissible by divine law; that which is*
   morally right, fitting, proper; that which is in accordance with natural law.

   sī fās est: *if it is in accordance with natural law, if it is possible.*

   superō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus, *to overcome, defeat; to be superior to, surpass.*

   superāre: supply vidētur.

   dīvus, -ī, m., *god.*

3   adversus, -a, -um, *turned towards, facing, opposite.*

   adversus: some editors take this not as an adjective but as an adverb or as a
   preposition governing tē.

5   dulcis, -is, -e, *sweet.*

   dulce: = dulciter.

   miserō: take in agreement with mihi (6) as a dative of separation (*from . . .*).
   For the word as a staple of erotic vocabulary, see Catullus 50.9 miser and
   8.1 Miser.

   quod: *[a thing] that*, subject of ēripit in line 6.

   omnīs: = omnēs; in early Latin and in many of the poets, the accusative plu-
   ral of i-stem nouns and adjectives often ends in -īs.

6   sēnsus, -ūs, m., *sensation* (i.e., ability to perceive by the senses).

   simul: supply ac, *at the same time as, as soon as.*

7   aspiciō [ad-, *to, toward* + speciō, specere, spexī, spectus, *to see, observe*], as-
   picere, aspexī, aspectus, *to catch sight of, behold, look at.*

   est super: = superest, *remains, is left.*

   simul tē, / . . . aspexī, nihil est super: *as soon as I [ever] look at you, nothing*
   is left. . . . , perfect tense in the temporal clause and present in the main
   clause = a present-general temporal structure, in which we regularly
   translate the perfect tense with a present tense in English and to which
   we may add the word *ever* to emphasize the generality of the statement.

8   <vōcis in ōre,>: this line is missing from the manuscripts. Editors have
   made various suggestions, such as vōcis in ōre (supplied in the text here)
   and Lesbia, vōcis, with the genitive dependent on nihil in line 7.

CATULLUS 51

Lesbia's Devastating Effect on Catullus

This poem may have been the first in the cycle of love poems to Lesbia.

1   Ille mī pār esse deō vidētur,
2   ille, sī fās est, superāre dīvōs,
3   quī sedēns adversus identidem tē
4   spectat et audit

5   dulce rīdentem, miserō quod omnīs
6   ēripit sēnsūs mihi: nam simul tē,
7   Lesbia, aspexī, nihil est super mī
8   <vōcis in ōre,>

Initial Explorations

1. Three people are involved in the first two stanzas of this poem. Who are they? What exactly are we told about the identity of each of them?
2. What rhetorical figure links the first two lines?
3. What does the poet accomplish by adding the second line?
4. Why does the poet add the parenthetical sī fās est?
5. What is the man referred to by the word ille doing? (3–5)
6. What is the woman doing? (5)
7. To what does quod (5) refer?
8. The pronoun mihi (6) is modified by miserō (5). Is it better to take miserō as an attributive adjective (*from miserable/lovesick me*) or to take it proleptically (*from me [and makes me] miserable/lovesick*)? Why is the adjective placed so early, even ahead of the relative pronoun that introduces the clause within which the adjective functions grammatically?
9. How does the word miserō (5) set the poet in opposition to the man referred to by the word ille?
10. What words in the first stanza are echoed by simul tē / . . . aspexī in the second?
11. What contrast is being drawn between Catullus in the second stanza and the man referred to by the word ille in the first?

9   **torpeō, torpēre**, *to be numb, be paralyzed.*
    tenuis, -is, -e, *thin, fine.*
    artus, -ūs, m., *joint; limb.*

10 **dēmānō [dē-,** *down* **+ mānō, -āre, -āvī, -ātūrus,** *to flow*] **-āre, -āvī, -ātūrus,** *to flow down.*
    suōpte: the suffix **-pte** intensifies the reflexive possessive adjective.

11 **tintinō, -āre,** *to make a ringing sound; to have a ringing sensation, to ring.*
    auris, auris, f., *ear.*

12 **lūmen, lūminis,** n., *light;* pl., *eyes.*

13 **ōtium, -ī,** *spare time; time free from serious occupations; leisure; idleness.*

14 **exsultō [ex-,** *thoroughly* **+ saltō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus,** *to dance*], **-āre, -āvī,** *to leap about, dance; to run riot; to rejoice without restraint;* + abl., *to exult/revel* (in).
    nimium, adv., *too much.*
    gestiō [gestus, -ūs, m., *movement* (of the limbs in dancing)], **-īre, -īvī,** *to desire eagerly; to make expressive movements/gestures; to act without restraint, be elated, exult.*

15 **beātus, -a, -um,** *happy, fortunate; wealthy.*
    rēgēs . . . beātās / perdidit urbēs: Catullus may be thinking of the fabulously wealthy and prosperous King Croesus of Lydia, whose city, Sardis, was sacked by the Persian king, Cyrus. Croesus had foolishly lowered his defenses by disbanding his allied army and was intending to wait until the next spring and the arrival of additional allied forces before continuing his war against Cyrus. Cyrus attacked Croesus with his defenses down and captured and sacked his city. See Herodotus 1.77 and 79.

9   lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artūs
10   flamma dēmānat, sonitū suōpte
11   tintinant aurēs, gemina teguntur
12   lūmina nocte.

13   Ōtium, Catulle, tibī molestum est;
14   ōtiō exsultās nimiumque gestīs;
15   ōtium et rēgēs prius et beātās
16   perdidit urbēs.

Initial Explorations

12.   What four more debilitating effects does Catullus describe in lines 9–12?
13.   Examine the positions of the nouns and the verbs in the four clauses in lines 9–12 and identify the elements of a chiasmus.
14.   What letters in lines 9–12 create a particularly effective alliteration?
15.   Find a transferred epithet in lines 9–12.
16.   What two words are most effectively juxtaposed in lines 9–12?
17.   How does the final clause, gemina ... / ... nocte (11–12), provide a fitting climax for the list of debilitating effects? How is the placement of the word nocte significant?
18.   What rhetorical figure is most prominent in the final stanza? (13–16)
19.   Point out several ways in which the placement of words and arrangement of clauses in the final stanza parallel the placement of words and arrangement of clauses in the first stanza of the poem.
20.   In the second and third stanzas Catullus has listed ways in which he is physically debilitated and devastated whenever he looks at Lesbia. On what does he place blame for this happening to him? (13)
21.   How does Catullus rebuke himself for his employment of his leisure (ōtium)? (14)
22.   How is the effect that ōtium has had on kings and wealthy cities (15–16) a heightened parallel to the effect that looking at Lesbia has on Catullus?
23.   How does Catullus' excessive indulgence in ōtium (14) account for his inability to look at Lesbia and listen to her sweetly laughing the way that the man referred to by the word ille is able to do?

Comparison

Compare this poem with Catullus 50:

Catullus 50

Hesternō, Licinī, diē ōtiōsī
multum lūsimus in meīs tabellīs,
ut convēnerat esse dēlicātōs:
scrībēns versiculōs uterque nostrum
lūdēbat numerō modo hōc modo illōc,
reddēns mūtua per iocum atque vīnum.
Atque illinc abiī tuō lepōre
incēnsus, Licinī, facētiīsque,
ut nec mē miserum cibus iuvāret
nec somnus tegeret quiēte ocellōs,
sed tōtō indomitus furōre lectō
versārer, cupiēns vidēre lūcem,
ut tēcum loquerer simulque ut essem.
At dēfessa labōre membra postquam
sēmimortua lectulō iacēbant,
hoc, iūcunde, tibī poēma fēcī,
ex quō perspicerēs meum dolōrem.
Nunc audāx cave sīs, precēsque nostrās,
ōrāmus, cave dēspuās, ocelle,
nē poenās Nemesis reposcat ā tē.
Est vēmēns dea; laedere hanc cavētō.

Catullus 51

Ille mī pār esse deō vidētur,
ille, sī fās est, superāre dīvōs,
quī sedēns adversus identidem tē
    spectat et audit

dulce rīdentem, miserō quod omnīs
ēripit sēnsūs mihi: nam simul tē,
Lesbia, aspexī, nihil est super mī
    <vōcis in ōre,>

lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artūs
flamma dēmānat, sonitū suōpte
tintinant aurēs, geminā teguntur
    lūmina nocte.

Ōtium, Catulle, tibī molestum est;
ōtiō exsultās nimiumque gestīs;
ōtium et rēgēs prius et beātās
    perdidit urbēs.

1. In what ways are Catullus' encounters with Calvus and with Lesbia similar? In what ways are they dissimilar?
2. Compare the effects suffered by Catullus from his poetic encounter with Calvus with the effects suffered by Catullus when he looks at Lesbia.
3. What role does **ōtium** play in the two poems?
4. What resolution of his plight does Catullus envision in poem 50? What resolution of his plight in poem 51 does its final stanza hint at?

Another Comparison

The first three stanzas of the poem at the left below by the Greek poetess Sappho of Lesbos (seventh to sixth centuries B.C.) provided a model for Catullus when he wrote the first three stanzas of poem 51. Compare this translation of Sappho's poem (number 31 in modern editions of her work) with Catullus' poem printed next to it. For the Greek text of Sappho's poem, see page 124.

Sappho 31

That man appears to me to be equal
to the gods, who sits opposite
you and listens to your sweet voice
    close at hand

and your lovely laughter, which truly sets
the heart in my breast aflutter,
for when I look at you for a moment, I can
    no longer speak,

but my tongue is tied, a thin
flame has at once run beneath my skin,
I cannot see even one thing with my eyes,
    my ears are buzzing,

sweat pours down me, a trembling
takes hold of all of me, I am paler
than grass, and I seem to myself little
    short of being dead.

But all must be endured. . . .

[The rest of the poem is lost.]

Catullus 51

Ille mī pār esse deō vidētur,
ille, sī fās est, superāre dīvōs,
quī sedēns adversus identidem tē
    spectat et audit

dulce rīdentem, miserō quod omnīs
ēripit sēnsūs mihi: nam simul tē,
Lesbia, aspexī, nihil est super mī
    <vōcis in ōre,>

lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artūs
flamma dēmānat, sonitū suōpte
tintinant aurēs, geminā teguntur
    lūmina nocte.

Ōtium, Catulle, tibī molestum est;
ōtiō exsultās nimiumque gestīs;
ōtium et rēgēs prius et beātās
    perdidit urbēs.

1. What are the major changes that Catullus has made in adapting the first three stanzas of Sappho's poem?
2. What reasons can you suggest for his having made each of these changes?
3. What is Catullus doing in writing a completely different fourth stanza?

More Comparisons

Sappho 31 again

1   That man appears to me to be equal
2   to the gods, who sits opposite
3   you and listens to your sweet voice
4   close at hand

5   and your lovely laughter, which truly sets
6   the heart in my breast aflutter,
7   for when I look at you for a moment, I can
8   no longer speak,

9   but my tongue is tied, a thin
10 flame has at once run beneath my skin,
12 I cannot see even one thing with my eyes,
13   my ears are buzzing,

14 sweat pours down me, a trembling
15 takes hold of all of me, I am paler
16 than grass, and I seem to myself little
17   short of being dead.

18 But all must be endured. . . .

Sappho's description of her physical symptoms served as a model for later poets when describing women falling in love at first sight. Compare the following description by Apollonius of Rhodes (third century B.C. Hellenistic Greek poet) of Medea falling in love with Jason at first sight when she was shot by the arrow of Eros (Cupid) in *Argonautica*, Book 3. Pay particular attention to the underlined words.

> [Eros] laid the arrow-notch on the cord [of his bow] in the center, and drawing wide apart with both hands he shot at Medea; and <u>speechless</u> amazement seized her soul. . . . and the bolt burnt deep down in the maiden's heart, like a <u>flame</u>; and ever she kept darting bright glances straight at [Jason], <u>and within her breast her heart panted fast with anguish</u>, all remembrance left her, and her soul melted with the sweet pain. . . . so, coiling round her heart, burnt secretly Love the destroyer; and the hue of her soft cheeks went and came, now <u>pale</u>, now red, in her soul's distraction. (3.282–98, trans., R. C. Seaton)

Later, Medea, alone in her bedroom, is wracked by the pangs of her love for Jason:

> And <u>fast did her heart throb</u> within her breast. . . . and ever within anguish tortured her, <u>a smouldering fire through her frame</u>, and about her inner nerves

and deep down beneath the nape of the neck where the pain enters keenest, whenever the unwearied Loves direct against the heart their shafts of agony. (3.755–65, trans., R. C. Seaton)

Her physical symptoms are again catalogued when she has a rendezvous with Jason to give him the magic that will save him from the fire-breathing bulls:

> The sight of him brought love-sick care. <u>Her heart fell from out her bosom</u>, and <u>a dark mist came over her eyes</u>, and a hot blush covered her cheeks. And she had no strength to lift her knees backwards or forwards, but her feet beneath were rooted to the ground. (3.961–65, trans., R. C. Seaton)

Another third century B.C. Hellenistic Greek poet, Theocritus, wrote of the love at first sight experienced by a fictional woman named Simaetha for a young man named Delphis. Simaetha describes her love at first sight:

> I saw, and madness seized me, and <u>my hapless heart was aflame</u>. <u>My looks faded away</u>. No eyes had I thereafter for that show, nor know how I came home again, but <u>some parching fever shook me</u>, and ten days and ten nights I lay upon my bed. (*Idyll* 2.82–86, trans., A. S. F. Gow)

She then describes her second encounter with Delphis:

> <u>Chiller I turned than snow from head to foot</u>, and from my brow, like the <u>damp</u> dews, started the <u>sweat, nor could I speak a word</u>, nay, not so much as babes that whimper in their sleep calling to their mother dear, but all my fair body grew stiff as it were a doll's. (*Idyll* 2.106–10, trans., A. S. F. Gow)

The Latin poet Lucretius, a contemporary of Catullus, borrowed Sappho's imagery to describe the effects on the body of the overwhelming emotion of fear:

> But when the intelligence is moved by more vehement fear, we see the whole spirit throughout the frame share in the feeling: <u>sweatings</u> and <u>pallor</u> hence arise over the whole body, <u>the speech falters, the voice dies away, blackness comes before the eyes, a sounding is in the ears, the limbs give way beneath</u>; in a word we often see men fall to the ground for mental terror. (3.152–58, trans., W. H. D. Rouse and M. F. Smith)

Another Latin poet, Valerius Aedituus, writing a little before the time of Catullus, composed an epigram that seems to borrow imagery from Sappho's lyric:

> Dīcere cum cōnor cūram tibi, Pamphila, cordis,
>   quid mī abs tē quaeram, verba labrīs abeunt,
> per pectus mānat subitō mihi sūdor:
>   sīc tacitus, subidus, dum pudeō, pereō.

> When I try to tell you, Pamphila, the pangs in my heart,
>   what I seek from you, <u>the words fail my lips</u>,
> <u>sweat suddenly flows over my chest</u>:
>   thus <u>in silence</u>, aroused with lust, while ashamed, <u>I perish</u>.

1. Find the words or phrases in the translation of Sappho's poem that one might recall when reading the underlined words and phrases in the passages above. Judging from the translations of Sappho and these later poets provided above, do the descriptions of symptoms in the latter seem to have been written in such a way as to recall Sappho's poem to the reader's mind? If so, what purpose is served by such recall?

2. Sappho's is a female voice, and the descriptions of the catastrophic physical and emotional effects of love at first sight in Apollonius and Theocritus are descriptions of the effects suffered by women. Valerius Aedituus and Catullus adapted these descriptions that had by their time come to be traditionally associated with the physical and emotional suffering of women to describe their own suffering as men overcome by love. What is ironic or paradoxical about Catullus' appropriation to his own situation of Sappho and of her imagery that had become traditional in descriptions of the physical and emotional suffering of *women* falling in love at first sight?

3. How does an understanding of the tradition that lies behind Catullus' portrayal of himself in a female role as victimized by love contribute to an understanding of the unity of his poem 51, including the last stanza?

A Final Comparison

Catullus 51

Ille mī pār esse deō vidētur,
ille, sī fās est, superāre dīvōs,
quī sedēns adversus identidem tē
    spectat et audit

dulce rīdentem, miserō quod omnīs
ēripit sēnsūs mihi: nam simul tē,
Lesbia, aspexī, nihil est super mī
    <vōcis in ōre,>

lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artūs
flamma dēmānat, sonitū suōpte
tintinant aurēs, geminā teguntur
    lūmina nocte.

Ōtium, Catulle, tibī molestum est;
ōtiō exsultās nimiumque gestīs;
ōtium et rēgēs prius et beātās
    perdidit urbēs.

Catullus 11

Fūrī et Aurēlī, comitēs Catullī,
sīve in extrēmōs penetrābit Indōs,
lītus ut longē resonante Eōā
    tunditur undā,

sīve in Hyrcānōs Arabasve mollēs,
seu Sagās sagittiferōsve Parthōs,
sīve quae septemgeminus colōrat
    aequora Nīlus,

sīve trāns altās gradiētur Alpēs,
Caesaris vīsēns monimenta magnī,
Gallicum Rhēnum horribile aequor ulti-
    mōsque Brittannōs,

omnia haec, quaecumque feret voluntās
caelitum, temptāre simul parātī,
pauca nūntiāte meae puellae
    nōn bona dicta.

cum suīs vīvat valeatque moechīs,
quōs simul complexa tenet trecentōs,
nūllum amāns vērē, sed identidem om-
nium
    īlia rumpēns;

nec meum respectet, ut ante, amōrem,
quī illius culpā cecidit velut prātī
ultimī flōs, praetereunte postquam
    tāctus arātrō est.

Gloria S. Duclos compares the two poems as follows:

> There can be no question of the link between c.11 and what was probably the first poem [Catullus] wrote to Lesbia, c.51. There are formal connections: metrical (both are in the Sapphic stanza which Catullus never otherwise used); word usage (the prosaic adverb *identidem* appears only in these two poems, significantly in the same position in the line and verse but in startlingly different contexts); source (c.51 is a partial adaptation of a poem of Sappho and the final stanza of c.11 hinges on a Sapphic image). These seem to be consciously erected signposts for Lesbia that what was begun in *ille mi par esse deo videtur* is now ended in *cecidit velut prati ultimi flos*.
>
> There are more than formal parallels between these two poems. The images of c.51 have been deliberately reversed in the fifth stanza of c.11. The first

stanza of c.51 creates a picture of quiet enchantment yet distance: a . . . figure sits opposite Lesbia (*qui sedens adversus*, 3) and gazes at her constantly and listens to her sweet laughter; this in contrast to the poet himself who becomes witless when he looks at her, so powerful is her effect upon him. What has happened to this distant enchantment in c.11? Lesbia is now shown in the closest possible proximity (*quos simul complexa tenet*, 18), not to one . . . admirer, but to hundreds of adulterers (*moechis . . . trecentos*, 17–18), constantly; (*identidem*, 19) performing upon them all (*omnium*, 19) sexual acts (*ilia rumpens*, 20). The Lesbia of c.51, who was the passive recipient of the gazes of her admirers, has been transformed into the voracious fornicator of c.11. The repetition of *identidem* underlines Catullus' purpose. In 51.3 it describes *te spectat et audit*—a man watches and listens to you constantly. In 11.19–20, Lesbia has become the subject, not the object, nor does she merely look and listen; she is *ilia rumpens*, and not of just one but of all her adulterers, and all at the same time and constantly (*identidem*). Grotesque pornography perhaps, but effective in expressing Catullus' contempt and hatred.

A comparable change has affected the poet too, between c.51 and c.11. The man who was struck dumb by the sight of Lesbia and was almost on the point of fainting (*lingua sed torpet . . . gemina teguntur lumina nocte*, 51.9, 11–12) has, in c.11, revived and found an all too bitter voice. Yet in c.11 he cannot bring himself to talk directly to Lesbia, as he had done in the earlier poem; he employs the device of intermediaries to convey his message of scorn. The intimate *te* of c.51 has become a contemptuous third person singular in the last two stanzas of c.11 and the simple indicatives have been transformed into the scathing commands of lines 17 and 21.

C.11, then, not only recalls c.51 but is in some ways a response to that earlier enthusiasm. . . . Catullus now truly sees Lesbia for what she is, as he had not when he first gazed on her in c.51. . . .

(Gloria S. Duclos, "Catullus 11: Atque in Perpetuum, Lesbia, Ave atque Vale," *Arethusa* 9, 1976, 78–79)

1. Study the chiastic arrangement of themes in the two poems when set side by side:

Poem 11		Poem 51	
A	B	B	A
negōtium	Final parting of the ways	Love at first sight	ōtium
(travel and conquest) (lines 1–14)	(reminiscence of Sappho) (lines 21–24)	(adaptation of Sappho) (lines 1–12)	(destruction of kings and cities) (lines 13–16)

2. How does the theme of travel developed in lines 1–14 of poem 11 answer the poet's self-rebuke for excessive indulgence in ōtium in poem 51.13–16?

3. How does the message of Catullus' final parting from Lesbia (11.21–24) echo and reverse his description of his original infatuation with her (51.1–12)?

Φαίνεταί μοι κῆνος ἴσος θέοισιν
ἔμμεν' ὤνηρ, ὄττις ἐνάντιός τοι
ἰσδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἆδυ φωνεί-
σας ὑπακούει

καὶ γελαίσας ἰμέροεν, τό μ' ἦ μὰν
καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν. . . .

That man appears to me to be equal
to the gods, who sits opposite
you and listens to your sweet voice
close at hand

and your lovely laughter, which truly sets
the heart in my breast aflutter. . . .

"Woman with Lyre"
Attic crater, 5th century B.C.
Museo Archeologico
Syracuse, Sicily