

OVID

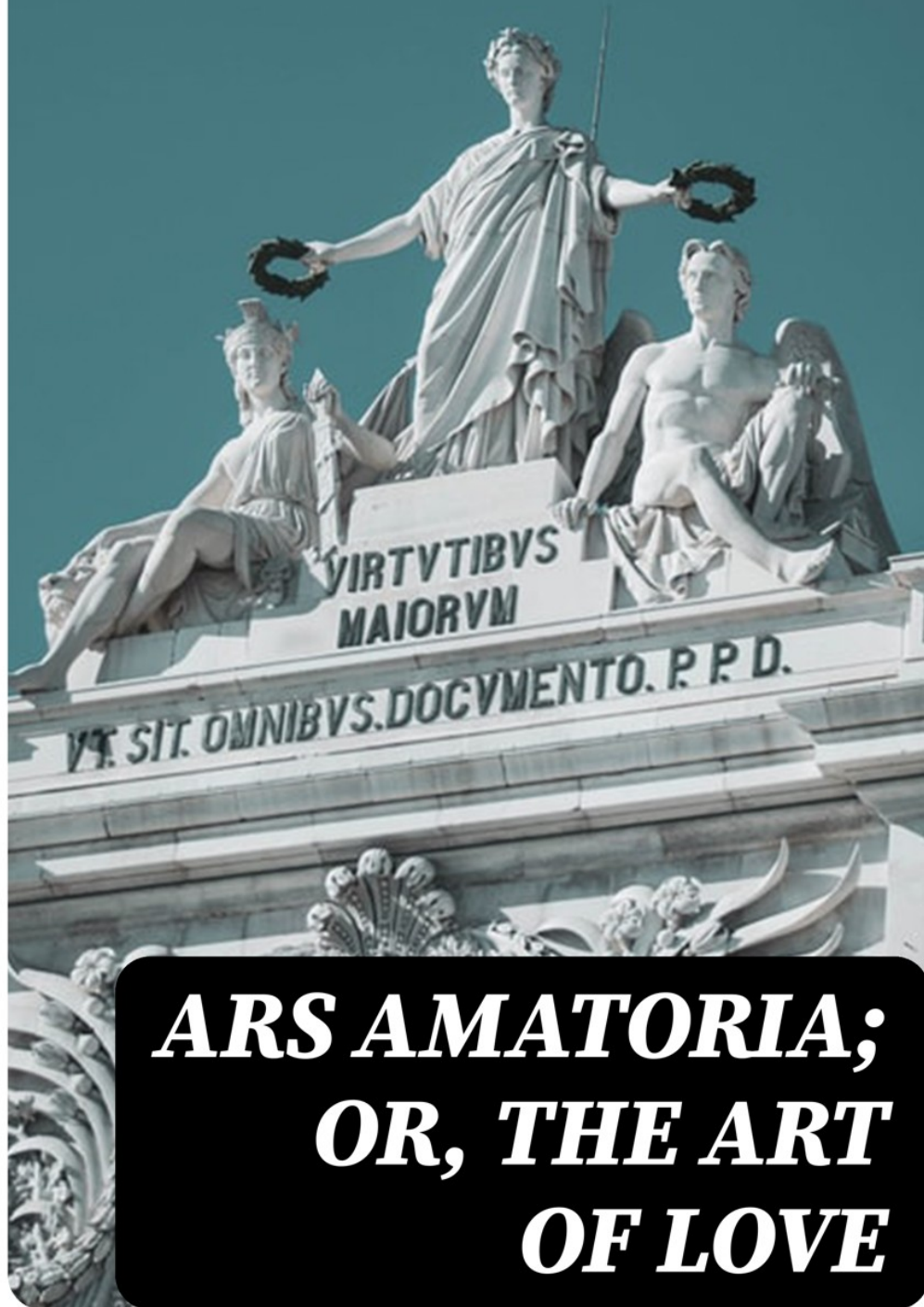


VIRTVTIBVS
MAIORVM

V. SIT. OMNIBVS. DOCUMENTO. P. P. D.

***ARS AMATORIA;
OR, THE ART
OF LOVE***

OVID



***ARS AMATORIA;
OR, THE ART
OF LOVE***

Ovid

Ars Amatoria; or, The Art Of Love

Literally Translated into English Prose, with Copious Notes

EAN 8596547021667

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



TABLE OF CONTENTS

[BOOK THE FIRST.](#)

[BOOK THE SECOND.](#)

[BOOK THE THIRD.](#)

BOOK THE FIRST.

Table of Contents

Should any one of the people not know the art of loving, let him read me; and taught by me, on reading my lines, let him love. By art the ships are onward sped by sails and oars; by art are the light chariots, by art is Love, to be guided. In the chariot and in the flowing reins was Automedon skilled: in the Hæmonian ship *of Jason* Tiphys was the pilot. Me, too, skilled in my craft, has Venus made the guardian of Love. Of Cupid the Tiphys and the Automedon shall I be styled. Unruly indeed he is, and one who oft rebels against me; but he is a child; his age is tender and easy to be governed. The son of Phillyra made the boy Achilles skilled at the lyre; and with his soothing art he subdued his ferocious disposition. He who so oft alarmed his own companions, so oft the foe, is believed to have stood in dread of an aged man full of years. Those hands which Hector was doomed to feel, at the request of his master he held out for stripes [701](#) as commanded. Chiron was the preceptor of the grandson of Æacus, I of Love. Both of the boys were wild; both of a Goddess born. But yet the neck of even the bull is laden with the plough; and the reins are champed by the teeth of the spirited steed. To me, too, will Love yield; though, with his bow, he should wound my breast, and should brandish his torches hurled against me. The more that Love has pierced me, the more has he relentlessly inflamed me; so much the fitter avenger shall I be of the wounds so made.

Phoebus, I pretend not that these arts were bestowed on me by thee; nor by the notes of the birds of the air am I inspired. Neither Clio nor the sisters of Clio have been beheld by me, while watching, Ascra, in thy vales, my flocks. To this work experience gives rise; listen to a Poet well-versed. The truth will I sing; Mother of Love, favour my design. Be ye afar, 702 ye with the thin fillets on your hair, the mark of chastity; and thou, long flounce, which dost conceal the middle of the foot. We will sing of guiltless delights, and of thefts allowed; and in my song there shall be nought that is criminal.

In the first place, endeavour to find out an object which you may desire to love, you who are now coming for the first time to engage as a soldier in a new service. The next task after that, is to prevail on the fair by pleasing her. The third is, for her love to prove of long duration. This is my plan; this space shall be marked out by my chariot; this the turning-place to be grazed by my wheels in their full career.

While you may, and while you are able to proceed with flowing reins; choose one to whom you may say, "You alone are pleasing to me." She will not come to you gliding through the yielding air; the fair one that suits must be sought with your eyes. The hunter knows full well where to extend the toils for the deer; full well he knows in what vale dwells the boar gnashing with his teeth. The shrubberies are known to the fowlers. He who holds out the hooks, knows what waters are swam in by many a fish. You, too, who seek a subject for enduring love, first learn in what spot the fair are to be met with. In your search, I will not bid you give

your sails to the wind, nor is a long path to be trodden by you, that you may find her.

Let Perseus bear away his Andromeda from the tawny Indians, 703 and let the Grecian fair be ravished by Paris, the Phrygian hero. Rome will present you damsels as many, and full as fair; so that you will declare, that whatever has been on the earth, she possesses. As many ears of corn as Gargara has, as many clusters as Methymna; as many fishes as are concealed in the seas, birds in the boughs; as many stars as 704 heaven has, so many fair ones does your own Rome contain; and in her own City does the mother of Æneas hold her reign. Are you charmed by early and still dawning years, the maiden in all her genuineness will come before your eyes; or do you wish a riper fair, 705 a thousand riper will please you; you will be forced not to know which is your own choice. Or does an age mature and more staid delight you; this throng too, believe me, will be even greater.

Do you only saunter at your leisure in the shade of Pompey's Portico, 706 when the sun approaches the back of the Lion of Hercules; 707 or where the mother 708 has added her own gifts to those of her son, a work rich in its foreign marble. And let not the Portico of Livia 709 be shunned by you, which, here and there adorned with ancient paintings, bears the name of its founder. Where, too, are the granddaughters of Be-lus, 710 who dared to plot death for their wretched cousins, and where their enraged father stands with his drawn sword. Nor let Adonis, bewailed by Venus, 711 escape you; and the seventh holy-day observed by the Jew of Syria. 712 Nor fly from the Memphian temples of Isis the

linen-wearing heifer; she has made many a woman 713 that which she was herself to Jove. Even the Courts, (who would have believed it?) are favourable to Love; and oft in the noisy Forum has the flame been found. Where the erection 714 of Appius, 715 adjoining the temple of Venus, built of marble, beats the air with its shooting stream; 716 in that spot full oft is the pleader seized by Love; and he that has defended others, the same does not defend himself. Oft in that spot are their words found wanting to the eloquent man; and new cares arise, and his own cause has to be pleaded. From her temple, which is adjoining, 717 Venus laughs at him. He who so lately was a patron, now wishes to become a client.

But especially at the curving Theatres do you hunt for prey: these places are even yet more fruitful for your desires. There you will find what you may love, what you may trifle with, both what you may once touch, and what you may wish to keep. As the numberless ants come and go in lengthened train, when they are carrying their wanted food in the mouth that bears the grains; or as the bees, when they have found both their own pastures and the balmy meads, hover around the flowers and the tops of the thyme; so rush the best-dressed women to the thronged spectacles; a multitude that oft has kept my judgment in suspense. They come to see, they come that they themselves may be seen; to modest chastity these spots are detrimental.

Romulus, 'twas thou didst first institute the exciting games; at the time when the ravished Sabine fair 718 came to the aid of the solitary men. Then, neither did curtains 719

hang over the marble theatre, 720 nor was the stage 721 blushing with liquid saffron. There, the branches were simply arranged which the woody Palatium bore; the scene was void of art. On the steps made of turf sit the people; the branches promiscuously overshadowing their shaggy locks. They look about them, and they mark with their eyes, each for himself, the damsel which to choose; and in their silent minds they devise full many a plan. And while, as the Etrurian piper sends forth his harsh notes, the actor with his foot thrice beats the levelled ground; in the midst of the applause, (in those days applause was void of guile,) the King gives to his people the signal to be awaited for the spoil. At once, they start up, and, disclosing their intentions with a shout, lay their greedy hands upon the maidens. 722 As the doves, a startled throng, fly from the eagles, and as the young lamb flies from the wolves when seen; in such manner do they dread the men indiscriminately rushing on; the complexion remains in none, which existed there before. For their fear is the same; the symptoms of their fear not the same. Some tear their hair; some sit without consciousness; one is silent in her grief; another vainly calls upon her mother; this one laments; this one is astounded; this one tarries; that one takes to flight. The ravished fair ones are carried off, a matrimonial spoil; and shame itself may have been becoming to many a one. If one struggled excessively, and repelled her companion; borne off, the man himself lifted her into his eager bosom. And thus he spoke: "Why spoil your charming eyes with tears? What to your mother your father was, the same will I be to you." Romulus, 'twas thou alone didst understand how to give rewards to

thy soldiers. Give such a reward to me, and I will be a soldier. In good truth, from that transaction, the festive Theatres, even to this day, continue to be treacherous to the handsome.

And let not the contest of the noble steeds escape you; the roomy Circus of the people has many advantages. There is no need there of fingers, with which to talk over your secrets; nor must a hint be taken by you through nods. Be seated next to your mistress, there being no one to prevent it; press your side to her side as close as ever you can; and conveniently enough, because the partition [723](#) compels you to sit close, even if she be unwilling; and because, by the custom of the place, the fair one must be touched by you. Here let the occasion be sought by you for some friendly chat, and let the usual subjects [724](#) lead to the first words. Take care, and enquire, with an air of Anxiety, whose horses those are, coming; and without delay, whoever it is to whom she wishes well, to him do you also wish well. But when the thronged procession shall walk with the holy statues of ivory, [725](#) do you applaud your mistress Venus with zealous hand. And, as often happens, if perchance a little dust should fall on the bosom of the fair, it must be brushed off with your fingers [726](#) and if there should be no dust, still brush off that none; let any excuse be a prelude to your attentions. If her mantle, hanging too low, shall be trailing on the earth, gather it up, and carefully raise it from the dirty ground. [727](#) At once, as the reward of your attention, the fair permitting it, her ancles will chance to be seen by your eyes. Look, too, behind, who shall be sitting behind you, that he may not press her tender back with his knee

against it. 728 Trifles attract trifling minds. It has proved to the advantage of many a one, to make a cushion with his ready hand. 729 It has been of use, too, to waft a breeze with the graceful fan, and to place the hollow footstool beneath her delicate feet. Both the Circus, and the sand spread for its sad duties 730 in the bustling Forum, will afford these overtures to a dawning passion. On that sand, oft has the son of Venus fought; and he who has come to be a spectator of wounds, himself receives a wound. 731 While he is talking, and is touching her hand, and is asking for the racing list; 732 and, having deposited the stake, 733 is enquiring which has conquered, wounded, he sighs, and feels the flying dart, and, himself, becomes a portion of the spectacle so viewed.

Besides; when, of late, 734 Cæsar, on the representation of a rival fight, introduced 735 the Persian and Athenian ships; in truth, from both seas came youths, from both came the fair; and in the City was the whole of the great world. Who, in that throng, did not find an object for him to love? How many, alas! did a foreign flame torment? See! Cæsar prepares 736 to add what was wanting to the world subdued; now, remote East, our own shalt thou be! Parthian, thou shalt give satisfaction; entombed Crassi, rejoice; 737 ye standards, too, that disgracefully submitted to barbarian hands. Your avenger is at hand, and proves himself a general in his earliest years; and, while a boy, is conducting a war not fitted to be waged by a boy. Cease, in your fears, to count the birth-days of the Gods: 738 valour is the lot of the Cæsars, in advance of their years. The divine genius rises more rapidly than its years, and brooks not the evils of slow delay. The Tirynthian hero was a baby, and he crushed

two serpents in his hands; even in his cradle he was already worthy of Jove. Bacchus, who even now art a boy, how mighty wast thou then, when conquered India dreaded thy thyrsi! With the auspices and the courage of thy sire, thou, Youth, shalt wield arms; and with the courage and the auspices of thy sire shalt thou conquer. Such first lessons are thy due, under a name so great; now the first of the youths, 739 at a future day to be the first of the men. Since thou hast brothers, 740 avenge thy brethren slain; and since thou hast a sire, 741 vindicate the rights of thy sire. He, the father of thy country and thine own, hath put thee in arms; the enemy is tearing realms away from thy reluctant sire. Thou wilt wield the weapons of duty, the foe arrows accursed; before thy standard, Justice and Duty will take their post. By the badness of their cause, the Parthians are conquered; in arms, too, may they be overcome; may my hero add to Latium the wealth of the East. Both thou, father Mars, and thou, father Cæsar, grant your divine favour as he sets out; for the one of you is now a Deity, thou, the other, wilt so be.

What, Parthian, dost thou leave to the conquered, who dost fly that thou mayst overcome? Parthian, even now has thy mode of warfare an unhappy omen. And will that day then come, on which thou, the most graceful of all objects, glittering with gold, shalt go, drawn by the four snow-white steeds? Before thee shall walk the chiefs, their necks laden with chains; that they may no longer, as formerly, be secure in flight. The joyous youths, and the mingled fair, shall be looking on; and that day shall gladden the minds of all. And when some one of the fair shall enquire the names of the

Monarchs, what places, what mountains, or what rivers are borne in the procession; answer to it all; and not only if she shall make any inquiry; even what you know not, relate, as though known perfectly well. *

This is the Euphrates, 742 with his forehead encircled with reeds; the one whose 743 azure hair is streaming down, will be the Tigris. Make these to be the Armenians; this is Persia, sprung from Danaë; 744 that was a city in the vales of Achæmenes. This one or that will be the leaders; and there will be names for you to call them by; correctly, if you can; if not, still by such as suggest themselves.

Banquets, too, with the tables arranged, afford an introduction; there is something there besides wine for you to look for. Full oft does blushing Cupid, with his delicate arms, press the soothed horns of Bacchus there present. And when the wine has besprinkled the soaking wings of Cupid, there he remains and stands overpowered on the spot of his capture. He, indeed, quickly flaps his moistened wings; but still it is fatal 745 for the breast to be sprinkled by Love. Wine composes to choose an object for you to love, where to lay your nets. Now, I attempt to teach you, by what arts she must be captured who has pleased you, a work of especial skill. Ye men, whoever you are, and in every spot, give attention eager to be informed; and give, all people, a favourable ear to the realization of my promises. First of all, let a confidence enter your mind, that all women may be won; you will win them; do you only lay your toils. Sooner would the birds be silent in spring, the grasshoppers in summer, sooner would the Mænaliam dog turn its back upon the hare, than the fair, attentively

courted, would resist the youth. She, however, will wish you to believe, so far as you can, that she is reluctant.

Lo! I utter a prophecy; thou wilt conquer, and I shall offer the lines which I have vowed; and with a loud voice wilt thou have to be celebrated by me. Thou wilt there be taking thy stand, and in my words thou wilt be animating thy troops. O that my words may not prove unworthy of thy spirit! I will celebrate both the backs of the Parthians as they fly, and the valour of the Romans, and the darts and the feelings, and makes them ready to be inflamed; care flies, and is drenched with plenteous wine. Then come smiles; then the poor man resumes his confidence then grief and cares and the wrinkles of the forehead depart. Then candour, most uncommon in our age, reveals the feelings, the God expelling *all* guile. On such occasions, full oft have the fair captivated the hearts of the youths; and Venus amid wine, has proved flames in flame. Here do not you trust too much to the deceiving lamp; 746 both night and wine are unsuited to a judgment upon beauty. In daylight, and under a clear sky, did Paris view the Goddesses, when he said to Venus: "Thou, Venus, dost excel them both." By night, blemishes are concealed, and pardon is granted to every imperfection; and that hour renders every woman beauteous. Consult the daylight about jewels, about wool steeped in purple; consult the daylight about the figure and the proportion.

Why enumerate the resorts of fair ones suited for your search? The sands would yield to my number. Why mention Baïæ, 747 and the shores covered with sails, and the waters which send forth the smoke from the warm sulphur? Many a one carrying thence a wound in his breast, has exclaimed;

"This water was not so wholesome as it was said to be." See, too, the temple in the grove of suburban Diana, and the realms acquired with the sword by hostile hand. 748 Because she is a virgin, because she hates the darts of Cupid, she has given many a wound to the public, *and* will give many *still*.

Thus far, Thalia borne upon unequal wheels, 749 teaches where the foeman hurls from his flying steed.

As stealthy courtship is pleasing to the man, so, too, is it to the fair. The man but unsuccessfully conceals his passion; with more concealment does she desire. Were it agreed among the males not to be the first to entreat any female, the conquered fair would soon act the part of the suppliant. In the balmy meads, the female lows after the bull; the female is always neighing after the horny-hoofed horse. Passion in us is more enduring, and not so violent; among men the flame has reasonable bounds. Why mention Byblis, who burned with a forbidden passion for her brother, and who resolutely atoned with the halter for her crimes? Myrrha loved her father, but not as a daughter ought; and she now lies hid, overwhelmed by the bark 750 that grew over her. With her tears too, which she distils from the odoriferous tree, are we perfumed; and the drops still retain the name of their mistress.

By chance, in the shady vales of the woody Ida, there was a white bull, the glory of the herd, marked with a little black in the middle between his horns; there was but one spot; the rest was of the complexion of milk. The heifers of Gnosus and of Cydon 751 sighed to mate with him. Pasiphaë delighted to become the paramour of the bull; in

her jealousy she hated the beauteous cows. I sing of facts well known: Crete, which contains its hundred cities, untruthful as it is, 752 cannot gainsay them. She herself is said to have cut down fresh leaves and the tenderest grass with hand unused to such employment.

She goes as the companion of the herds; so going, no regard for her husband restrains her; and by a bull 753 is Minos conquered. "Of what use, Pasiphaë, is it to put on those costly garments? This love of thine understands nothing about wealth. What hast thou to do with a mirror, when accompanying the herds of the mountain? Why, foolish one, art thou so often arranging thy smoothed locks? Still, do thou believe that mirror, that denies that thou art a heifer. How much couldst thou wish for horns to spring up upon thy forehead! If Minos still pleases thee, let no paramour be sought; but if thou wouldst rather deceive thy husband, deceive him through a being that is human."

Her chamber abandoned, the queen is borne over the groves and the forests, just as a Bacchanal impelled by the Aonian God. Alas! how oft with jealous look does she eye a cow, and say, "Why is she thus pleasing to my love? See how she skips before him on the tender grass! I make no doubt that the fool thinks that it is becoming to her." Thus she spoke, and at once ordered her to be withdrawn from the vast herd, and, in her innocence, to be dragged beneath the bending yoke; or else she forced her to fall before the altars, and rites feigned for the purpose; and, with joyous hand, she held the entrails of her rival. How often did she propitiate the Deities with her slain rivals, and say, as she held the entrails, "Now go and charm my love!" And

sometimes she begged that she might become Europa, sometimes Io; because the one was a cow, the other borne upon a bull. Still, deceived by a cow made of maple-wood, the leader of the herd impregnated her; and by the offspring was the sire [754](#) betrayed.

If the Cretan dame [755](#) had withheld from love for Thyestes (alas! how hard it is for a woman possibly to be pleasing to one man only!) Phoebus would not have interrupted his career in the midst, and, his chariot turned back, retreated, with his returning steeds, to the morn. The daughter, who spoiled [756](#) Nisus of his purple locks, presses beneath her thigh and groin the raving dogs. The son of Atreus, who escaped from Mars by land, and Neptune on the waves, was the mournful victim of his wife. By whom have not been lamented the flames [757](#) of the Ephyrean Creusa? Medea, the parent, too, stained with the blood of her children? Phoenix, the son of Amyntor, [758](#) wept with his blinded eyes; you, startled steeds, tore Hippolytus in pieces. Why, Phineus, dost thou tear out the eyes of thy guiltless sons? [759](#) That punishment will revert to thy own head.

All these things have been caused by the passion of females. It is more violent than ours, and has more frenzy *in it*. Come then, and doubt not that you can conquer all the fair: out of so many, there will be hardly one to deny you. What they yield, and what they refuse, still are they glad to be asked for. Even if you are deceived, your repulse is without danger. But why should you be deceived, since new pleasures are delightful, and since what is strange attracts the feelings more than what is one's own? [760](#) The crop [761](#) of corn is always more fertile in the fields of other people;

and the herds of our neighbours have their udders more distended.

But first, be it your care to make acquaintance with the handmaid of the fair one to be courted; she can render your access easy. [762](#) Take care that she is deep in the secrets of her mistress, and not too little entrusted with her secret frolics. Her do you bribe with promises, her with entreaties; you will obtain what you ask with little trouble, if she shall be willing. Let her choose the time (physicians, even, watch their time) when the feelings of her mistress are pliant, and easy to be influenced. Then will her feelings be easily influenced, when, in the best humour in the world, she shall be smiling, just as the corn on the rich soil. While hearts are joyous, and not closed by sadness, *then* are they assailable; then with soothing arts does Venus steal on apace. At the time when Troy was in sorrow, she was defended by arms; when joyous, she admitted the horse pregnant with its soldiers. Then, too, must she be assailed, when she shall be fretting on being offended by a rival; then effect it by your means that she go not unrevenged. Let her handmaid, as she combs her hair in the morning, urge her on; and to the sail let her add the resources of the oar. And, sighing to herself, let her say, in gentle murmurs: "In my idea, you yourself cannot pay him in return." [763](#) Then let her talk about you; then let her add persuasive expressions; and let her swear that you are perishing with frantic passion. But speed on, let not the sails fall, and the breezes lull: like brittle ice, anger disappears in lapse of time.

You inquire if it is of use [764](#) to win the handmaid herself? In such attempts there is a great risk. This one becomes