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***THE AMORES;
OR, AMOURS***

Ovid

The Amores; or, Amours

**Literally Translated into English Prose, with Copious
Notes**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BOOK THE FIRST.

AN EPIGRAM ON THE AMOURS.

ELEGY I.

ELEGY II.

ELEGY III.

ELEGY IV.

ELEGY V.

ELEGY VI.

ELEGY VII.

ELEGY VIII.

ELEGY IX.

ELEGY X.

ELEGY XI.

ELEGY XII.

ELEGY XIII.

ELEGY XIV.

ELEGY XV.

BOOK THE SECOND

ELEGY I.

ELEGY II.

ELEGY III.

ELEGY IV.

ELEGY V.

ELEGY VI.

ELEGY VII.

ELEGY VIII.

[ELEGY IX.](#)

[ELEGY X.](#)

[ELEGY XI.](#)

[ELEGY XII.](#)

[ELEGY XIII.](#)

[ELEGY XIV.](#)

[ELEGY XV.](#)

[ELEGY XVI.](#)

[ELEGY XVII.](#)

[ELEGY XVIII.](#)

[ELEGY XIX.](#)

[BOOK THE THIRD.](#)

[ELEGY I.](#)

[ELEGY II.](#)

[ELEGY III.](#)

[ELEGY IV.](#)

[ELEGY V.](#)

[ELEGY VI.](#)

[ELEGY VII.](#)

[ELEGY VIII.](#)

[ELEGY IX.](#)

[ELEGY X.](#)

[ELEGY XI.](#)

[ELEGY XII.](#)

[ELEGY XIII.](#)

[ELEGY XIV.](#)

[ELEGY X.](#)

BOOK THE FIRST.

[Table of Contents](#)

AN EPIGRAM ON THE AMOURS.

[Table of Contents](#)

We who of late were five books [001](#) of Naso, are now but three: this work our author has preferred to the former one. Though it should [002](#) now be no pleasure to thee to read us; still, the labour will be less, the two being removed.

ELEGY I.

[Table of Contents](#)

He says that he is compelled by Cupid to write of love instead of battles and that the Divinity insists on making each second Hexameter line into a Pentameter.

I was preparing to write of arms and impetuous warfare in serious numbers, [003](#) the subject-matter being suited to the measure. [004](#) The second verse was of equal measure with the first; but Cupid is said to have smiled, and to have abstracted one foot. [005](#)

"Who, cruel boy, has given thee this right over my lines? We poets are the choir of *the Muses*, the Pierian maids, not thine. What if Venus were to seize the arms of the yellow-haired Minerva, *and* if the yellow-haired Minerva were to wave the lighted torches *of Love*? Who would approve of Ceres holding her reign in the woods on the mountain ridges, *or* of the fields being tilled under the control of the quivered Virgin? Who would arm Phoebus, graceful with his locks, with the sharp spear, while Mars is striking the Aonian lyre? Thy sway, O youth, is great, and far too potent; why, in thy ambition, dost thou attempt a new task? Is that which is everywhere, thine? Is Heliconian Tempe thine? Is even his own lyre hardly safe now for Phoebus? When the new page has made a good beginning in the first line, at that moment does he diminish my energies. 008 I have no subject fitted for *these* lighter numbers, whether youth, or girl with her flowing locks arranged."

Thus was I complaining; when, at once, his quiver loosened, 009 he selected the arrows made for my destruction; and he stoutly bent upon his knee the curving bow, and said, "Poet, receive a subject on which to sing." Ah wretched me! unerring arrows did that youth possess. I burn; and in my heart, *hitherto* disengaged, does Love hold sway. *Henceforth*, in six feet 010 let my work commence; in five let it close. Farewell, ye ruthless wars, together with your numbers. My Muse, 011 to eleven feet destined to be attuned, bind with the myrtle of the sea shore thy temples encircled with their yellow *locks*.

ELEGY II.

Table of Contents

He says, that being taken captive by Love, he allows Cupid to lead him away in triumph.

Why shall I say it is, that my bed appears thus hard to me, and that my clothes rest not upon the couch? The night, too, long as it is, have I passed without sleep; and why do the weary bones of my restless body ache? But were I assailed by any flame, I think I should be sensible of it. Or does *Love* come unawares and cunningly attack in silent ambush? 'Tis so; his little arrows have pierced my heart; and cruel Love is tormenting the breast he has seized.

Am I to yield? Or by struggling *against it*, am I to increase this sudden flame? I must yield; the burden becomes light which is borne contentedly. I have seen the flames increase when agitated by waving the torch; and when no one shook it, I have seen them die away. The galled bulls suffer more blows while at first they refuse the yoke, than those whom experience of the plough avails. The horse which is unbroken bruises his mouth with the hard curb; the one that is acquainted with arms is less sensible of the bit. Love goads more sharply and much more cruelly those who struggle, than those who agree to endure his servitude. Lo! I confess it; I am thy new-made prey, O Cupid; I am extending

my conquered hands for thy commands. No war *between us* is needed; I entreat for peace and for pardon; and no credit shall I be to thee, unarmed, conquered by thy arms. Bind thy locks with myrtle; yoke thy mother's doves; thy stepfather 014 himself will give a chariot which becomes thee. And in the chariot *so* given thee, thou shalt stand, and with thy skill shalt guide the birds *so* yoked 015, while the people shout "*Io triumphe*" 016 aloud. The captured youths and the captive fair shall be led *in triumph*; this procession shall be a splendid triumph for thee. I myself, a recent capture, shall bear my wound *so* lately made; and with the feelings of a captive shall I endure thy recent chains. Soundness of Understanding shall-be led along with hands bound behind his back, Shame as well, and whatever *beside* is an enemy to the camp of Love. All things shall stand in awe of thee: towards thee the throng, stretching forth its hands, shall sing "*Io triumphe*" with loud voice. Caresses shall be thy attendants, Error too, and Madness, a troop that ever follows on thy side. With these for thy soldiers, thou dost overcome both men and Gods; take away from thee these advantages, *and* thou wilt be helpless. From highest Olympus thy joyous mother will applaud thee in thy triumph, and will sprinkle her roses falling on thy face. While gems bedeck thy wings, *and* gems thy hair; in thy golden chariot shalt thou go, resplendent thyself with gold. 017

Then too, (if well I know thee) wilt thou influence not a few; then too, as thou passest by, wilt thou inflict many a wound. Thy arrows (even shouldst thou thyself desire it) cannot be at rest. A glowing flame *ever* injures by the propinquity of its heat. Just such was Bacchus when the

Gangetic land 018 was subdued; thou art the burden of the birds; he was *that* of the tigers. Therefore, since I may be some portion of thy hallowed triumph, forbear, Conqueror, to expend thy strength on me. Look at the prospering arms of thy kinsman Cæsar; 019 with the same hand with which he conquers does he shield the conquered. 020

ELEGY III.

Table of Contents

He entreats his mistress to return his affection, and shows that he is deserving of her favour.

ask for what is just; let the fair who has so lately captivated me, either love me, or let her give me a cause why I should always love her. Alas! too much have I desired; only let her allow herself to be loved; *and then* Cytherea will have listened to my prayers so numerous. Accept one who will be your servant through lengthened years; accept one who knows how to love with constant attachment. If the great names of ancient ancestors do not recommend me, or if the Equestrian founder of my family 021 *fails to do so*; and *if* no field of mine is renewed by ploughs innumerable, and each of my parents

022 with frugal spirit limits my expenditure; still Phoebus and his nine companions and the discoverer of the vine may do so; and Love *besides*, who presents me as a gift to you; a fidelity, too that will yield to none, manners above reproach, ingenuousness without guile, and modesty *ever* able to blush.

A thousand damsels have no charms for me; I am no rover in affection; 023 you will for ever be my choice, if you do but believe me. May it prove my lot to live with you for years as many as the threads of the Sister *Destinies* shall grant me, and to die with you sorrowing *for me*. Grant me yourself as a delightful theme for my verse; worthy of their matter my lines will flow. Io, frightened by her horns, and she whom the adulterer deceived in *the shape of* the bird 024 of the stream have a name in song; she, too, who, borne over the seas upon the fictitious bull, held fast the bending horns with her virgin hand. We, too, together shall be celebrated throughout all the world; and my name shall ever be united with thy own.

ELEGY IV.

[Table of Contents](#)

He instructs his mistress what conduct to observe in the presence of her husband at a feast to which he has been invited.

Your husband is about to come to the same banquet 026 as ourselves: I pray that it may be the last meal 027 for this husband of yours. And am I then only as a guest to look upon the fair so much beloved? And shall there be another, to take pleasure in being touched *by you*? And will you, conveniently placed below, be keeping warm the bosom of another? 028 *And* shall he, when he pleases, be placing his hand upon your neck? Cease to be surprised that the beauteous damsel of Atrax 029 excited the two-formed men to combat when the wine was placed *on table*. No wood is my home, and my limbs adhere not to *those of* a horse; *yet* I seem to be hardly able to withhold my hands from you. Learn, however, what must be done by you; and do not give my injunctions to be borne away by the Eastern gales, nor on the warm winds of the South.

Come before your husband; and yet, I do not see what can be done, if you do come first; but still, do come first. 031 When he presses the couch, with modest air you will be going as his companion, to recline by him; *then* secretly touch my foot. 032 Keep your eye on me, and my nods and the expression of my features; apprehend my secret signs, 033 and yourself return them. Without utterance will I give expression to words by my eyebrows; 034 you shall read words traced by my fingers, words *traced* in the wine. 035 When the delights of our dalliance recur to your thoughts, press your blooming cheeks 036 with your beauteous finger.

If there shall be anything, of which you may be making complaint about me silently in your mind, let your delicate hand reach from the extremity of your ear. When, my life, I shall either do or say aught which shall give you delight, let your ring be continually twisted on your fingers. 037 Take hold of the table with your hand, in the way in which those who are in prayer 038 take hold *of the altar*, when you shall be wishing many an evil for your husband, who so well deserves it. *The cup* which he has mixed for you, if you are discreet, 039 bid him drink himself; *then*, in a low voice, do you ask the servant 041 for what *wine* you wish. I will at once take the cup which you have put down; 042 and where you have sipped, on that side will I drink. If, perchance, he shall give you any morsels, of which he has tasted beforehand, reject them *thus* touched by his mouth. 043 And do not allow him to press your neck, by putting his arms around it; nor recline your gentle head on his unsightly breast. 044 Let not your bosom, or your breasts so close at hand, 045 admit his fingers; *and* especially allow him to give you no kisses. If you do give him *any* kisses, I shall be discovered to be your lover, and I shall say, "Those are my own," and shall be laying hands upon him.

Still, this I shall *be able to* see; but what the clothing carefully conceals, the same will be a cause for me of apprehension full of doubts. Touch not his thigh with yours, and cross not legs with him, and do not unite your delicate foot with his uncouth leg. To my misery, I am apprehensive of many a thing, because many a thing have I done in my wantonness; and I myself am tormented, through fear of my own precedent.

Oft *by joining hands* beneath the cloth, 048 have my mistress and I forestalled our hurried delights. This, I *am sure*, you will not do *for him*; but that you may not *even* be supposed to do so, take away the conscious covering 049 from your bosom. Bid your husband drink incessantly, but let there be no kisses with your entreaties; and while he is drinking, if you can, add wine by stealth. 050 If he shall be soundly laid asleep with dozing and wine, circumstances and opportunity will give us *fitting* counsel. When you shall rise to go home, we all will rise as well; *and* remember that you walk in the middle rank of the throng. In that rank you will either find me, or be found *by me*; *and* whatever part of me you can there touch, *mind and* touch.

Ah wretched me! I have given advice to be good for *but* a few hours; *then*, at the bidding of night, I am separated from my mistress. At night her husband will lock her in; I, sad with my gushing tears, will follow her as far as I may, even to her obdurate door. *And* now will he be snatching a kiss; *and* now not kisses only will he snatch; you will be compelled to grant him that, which by stealth you grant to me. But grant him this (you can do so) with a bad grace, and like one acting by compulsion; let no caresses be heard; and let Venus prove inauspicious. If my wishes avail, I trust, too, that he will find no satisfaction therein; but if otherwise, still at least let it have no delights for you. But, however, whatever luck may attend upon the night, assure me in positive language to-morrow, that you did not dally with him.

ELEGY V.

Table of Contents

The beauties of Corinna.

T was summer time, 051 and the day had passed the hour of noon; *when* I threw my limbs to be refreshed on the middle of the couch. A part of the window 053 was thrown open, the other part shut; the light was such as the woods are wont to have; just as the twilight glimmers, when Phoebus is retreating; or *as* when the night has gone, and still the day is not risen. Such light should be given to the bashful fair, in which coy modesty may hope to have concealment.

Behold! Corinna 054 came, clothed in a tunic 055 hanging loose, her flowing hair 056 covering her white neck.

Beauteous Semiramis 057 is said to have entered her chamber, and Lais, 058 beloved by many a hero. I drew aside the tunic; in its thinness 059 it was but a small impediment; still, to be covered with the tunic did she strive; and, as she struggled as though she was not desirous to conquer, without difficulty was she overcome, through betrayal of herself. When, her clothing laid aside, she stood before my eyes, throughout her whole body nowhere was there a blemish. What shoulders, what arms I *both* saw and touched! The contour of her breast, how formed was it to be

pressed! How smooth her stomach beneath her faultless bosom! How full and how beauteous her sides! How plump with youthfulness the thigh! *But* why enlarge on every point? Nothing did I behold not worthy of praise; and I pressed her person even to my own.

The rest, who knows not? Wearied, we both reclined. May such a midday often prove my lot.



ELEGY VI.

[Table of Contents](#)

He entreats the porter to open to him the door of his mistress's house.

Porter, fastened (*and* how unworthily!) with the cruel fether, [060](#) throw open the stubborn door with its turning hinge. What I ask, is but a trifle; let the door, half-opened, admit me sideways with its narrow passage. Protracted Love has made my body thin for such an emergency, and by diminishing my bulk, has rendered my limbs *quite* supple.'Tis he who shows me how to go softly amid the watches of the keepers; [062](#) 'tis he directs my feet that meet no harm. But, at one time, I used to be afraid of the night and imaginary ghosts; *and* I used to be surprised if any one was about to go in the dark: Cupid, with

his graceful mother, laughed, so that I could hear him, and he softly said, "Thou too wilt become bold." Without delay, love came *upon me*; then, I feared not spectres that flit by night, 063 or hands uplifted for my destruction.

I only fear you, *thus* too tardy; you alone do I court; you hold the lightning by which you can effect my destruction. Look (and that you may see, loosen the obdurate bars) how the door has been made wet with my tears. At all events, 'twas I, who, when, your garment laid aside, you stood ready for the whip, 064 spoke in your behalf to your mistress as you were trembling. Does then, (O shocking thought!) the credit which once prevailed in your behalf, now fail to prevail in my own favour? Give a return for my kindness; you may *now* be grateful. As you wish, 065 the hours of the night pass on; 066 from the door-post 067 strike away the bar. Strike it away then may you one day be liberated from your long fetters and may the water of the slave 068 be not for ever drunk of by you. Hard-hearted porter! you hear me, as I implore in vain; the door, supported by its hard oaken *posts*, is still unmoved. Let the protection of a closed gate be of value to cities when besieged; *but* why, in the midst of peace are you dreading warfare? What would you do to an enemy, who thus shut out the lover? The hours of the night pass on; from the door-post strike away the bar.

I am not come attended with soldiers and with arms; I should be alone, if ruthless Love were not here. Him, even if I should desire it, I can never send away; first should I be even severed from my limbs. Love then, and a little wine about my temples, 069 are with me, and the chaplet falling from off my anointed hair. Who is to dread arms *such* as

these? Who may not go out to face them? The hours of the night pass on; from the door-post strike away the bar.

Are you delaying? or does sleep (who but ill befriends the lover) give to the winds my words, as they are repelled from your ear? But, I remember, when formerly I used to avoid you, you were awake, with the stars of the midnight. Perhaps, too, your own mistress is now asleep with you; alas! how much superior *then* is your fate to my own! And since 'tis so, pass on to me, ye cruel chains. The hours of the night pass on; from the door-post strike away the bar.

Am I mistaken? Or did the door-posts creak with the turning hinge, and did the shaken door give the jarring signal? Yes, I am mistaken; the door was shaken by the boisterous wind. Ah me! how far away has that gust borne my hopes! Boreas, if well thou dost keep in mind the ravished Orithyia, come hither, and with thy blast beat open this relentless door. 'Tis silence throughout all the City; damp with the glassy dew, the hours of the night pass on; from the door-post strike away the bar.

Otherwise I, myself, 073 now better prepared *than you*, with my sword, and with the fire which I am holding in my torch, 074 will scale this arrogant abode. Night, and lore, and wine, 075 are persuasive of no moderation; the first is without shame, Bacchus and Love *are without fear*.

I have expended every method; neither by entreaties nor by threats have I moved you, O *man*, even more deaf yourself than your door. It becomes you not to watch the threshold of the beauteous fair; of the anxieties of the prison, 076 are you more deserving. And now Lucifer is moving his wheels beset with rime; and the bird is arousing

077 wretched *mortals* to their work. But, chaplet taken from my locks joyous no longer, be you the livelong night upon this obdurate threshold. You, when in the morning she shall see you *thus* exposed, will be a witness of my time thus thrown away. *Porter*, whatever your disposition, good bye, and *one day* experience the pangs of him who is now departing; sluggish one, and worthless in not admitting the lover, fare you well. And you, ye cruel door-posts, with your stubborn threshold; and *you*, ye doors, equally slaves, 078 hard-hearted blocks of wood, farewell.

ELEGY VII.

[Table of Contents](#)

He has beaten his mistress, and endeavours to regain her favour.

Put my hands in manacles (they are deserving of chains), if any friend of mine is present, until all my frenzy has departed. For frenzy has raised my rash arms against my mistress; hurt by my frantic hand, the fair is weeping. In such case could I have done an injury even to my dear parents, or have given unmerciful blows to even the hallowed Gods. Why; did not Ajax, too, 080 the owner of the sevenfold shield, slaughter the flocks that he

had caught along the extended plains? And did Orestes, the guilty avenger of his father, the punisher of his mother, dare to ask for weapons against the mystic Goddesses? 081

And could I then tear her tresses so well arranged; and were not her displaced locks unbecoming to my mistress? Even thus was she beautiful; in such guise they say that the daughter of Schoeneus 082 pursued the wild beasts of Mænalus with her bow. 'Twere more fitting for her face to be pale from the impress of kisses, and for her neck to bear the marks of the toying teeth.

In such guise did the Cretan damsel 083 weep, that the South winds, in their headlong flight, had borne away both the promises and the sails of the forsworn Theseus. Thus, *too*, chaste Minerva, did Cassandra 084 fall in thy temple, except that her locks were bound with the fillet.

Who did not say to me, "You madman!" who did not say *to me*, "You barbarian!" She herself *said* not a word; her tongue was restrained by timid apprehensions. But still her silent features pronounced my censure; by her tears *and* by her silent lips did she convict me.

First could I wish that my arms had fallen from off my shoulders; to better purpose could I have parted with a portion of myself. To my own disadvantage had I the strength of a madman; and for my own punishment did I stoutly exert my strength. What do I want with you, ye ministers of death and criminality? Impious hands, submit to the chains, your due. Should I not have been punished had I struck the humblest Roman 085 of the multitude? *And* shall I have a greater privilege against my mistress? The son of Tydeus has left the worst instance of crime: he was the first

to strike a Goddess, 086 I, the second. But less guilty was he; by me, she, whom I asserted to be loved *by me*, was injured; against an enemy the son of Tydeus was infuriate.

Come now, conqueror, prepare your boastful triumphs; bind your locks with laurel, and pay your vows to Jove, and let the multitude, the train, that escorts your chariot, shout aloud, "Io *trumphe!* by *this* valiant man has the fair been conquered!" Let the captive, in her sadness, go before with dishevelled locks, pale all over, if her hurt cheeks 087 may allow.

In short, if, after the manner of a swelling torrent, I was impelled, and if impetuous anger did make me its prey; would it not have been enough to have shouted aloud at the trembling girl, and not to have thundered out my threats far too severe? Or else, to my own disgrace, to have torn her tunic from its upper edge down to the middle? Her girdle should, at the middle 089 have come to its aid. But now, in the hardness of my heart, I could dare, seizing her hair on her forehead, to mark her free-born cheeks 090 with my nails. *There* she stood, amazed, with her features pale and bloodless, just as the marble is cut in the Parian mountains. 091 I saw her fainting limbs, and her palpitating members; just as when the breeze waves the foliage of the poplars; just as the slender reed quivers with the gentle Zephyr; or, as when the surface of the waves is skimmed by the warm South wind. Her tears, too, so long repressed, flowed down her face, just as the water flows from the snow when heaped up.

Then, for the first time, did I begin to be sensible that I was guilty; the tears which she was shedding were *as* my

own blood. Yet, thrice was I ready, suppliantly to throw myself before her feet; thrice did she repel my dreaded hands. But, *dearest*, do not you hesitate, (*for* revenge will lessen your grief) at once to attack my face with your nails. Spare not my eyes, nor *yet* my hair; let anger nerve your hands, weak though they may be.

And that tokens so shocking of my criminality may no longer exist, put your locks, arranged anew, in their proper order. [092](#)



ELEGY VIII.

Table of Contents

He curses a certain procuress, whom he overhears instructing his mistress in the arts of a courtesan.

T here is a certain—(whoever wishes to make acquaintance with a procuress, let him listen.)—
There is a certain old hag, Dipsas by name. From fact does she derive [094](#) her name; never in a sober state does she behold the mother of the swarthy Memnon with her horses of roseate hue. She knows well the magic arts, and the charms of *Ææa*, [095](#) and by her skill she turns back to its source [096](#) the flowing stream. She knows right well what the herbs, what the thrums impelled around the whirling spinning-wheel, [097](#) *and* what the venomous exudation [098](#) from the prurient mare can effect. When she wills it, the clouds are overspread throughout all the sky; when she wills it, the day is bright with a clear atmosphere.

I have beheld (if I may be believed) the stars dripping with blood: the face of the moon was empurpled [099](#) with gore. I believe that she, transformed, [101](#) was flying amid the shades of night, and that her hag's carcass was covered with feathers. *This* I believe, and such is the report. A double pupil, too, [102](#) sparkles in her eyes, and light proceeds from a twofold eyeball. Forth from the ancient sepulchres she

calls our great grandsires, and their grandsires 103 as well; and with her long incantations she cleaves the solid ground. She has made it her occupation to violate the chaste bed; and besides, her tongue is not "wanting in guilty advocacy. Chance made me the witness of her language; in such words was she giving her advice; the twofold doors 105 concealed me.

"You understand, my life, how greatly you yesterday pleased a wealthy young man; *for* he stopped short, and stood gazing for some time on your face. And whom do you not please? Your beauty is inferior to no one's. *But* woe is me! your person has not a fitting dress. I *only* wish you were as well off, as you are distinguished for beauty; if you became rich, I should not be poor. The adverse star of Mars in opposition 106 was unfortunate for you; Mars has gone; now Venus is befriending you with her planet. See now how favourable she is on her approach; a rich lover is sighing for you, and he makes it his care 107 what are your requirements. He has good looks, too, that may compare with your own; if he did not wish to have you at a price, he were worthy himself to be purchased."

On this the damsel blushed: 108 "Blushing," *said the hag*, "suits a fair complexion indeed; but if you *only* pretend it, 'tis an advantage; *if* real, it is wont to be injurious. When, your eyes cast down, 109 you are looking full upon your bosom, each man must *only* be looked at in the proportion in which he offers. Possibly the sluttish Sabine females, 111 when Tati us was king, were unwilling to be accommodating to more men *than one*. Now-a-days, Mars employs the bravery *of our men* in foreign warfare; 112 but Venus holds sway in the City

of her own Æneas. Enjoy yourselves, my pretty ones; she is chaste, whom nobody has courted; or else, if coyness does not prevent her, she herself is the wooer. Dispel these frowns 113 as well, which you are carrying upon your lofty brow; with those frowns will numerous failings be removed. Penelope used to try 114 the strength of the young men upon the bow; the bow that tested *the strength* of their sides, was made of horn. Age glides stealthily on, and beguiles us as it flies; just as the swift river glides onward with its flowing waters. Brass grows bright by use; good clothes require to be worn; uninhabited buildings grow white with nasty mould. Unless you entertain *lovers*, beauty *soon* waxes old, with no one to enjoy it; and *even* one or two *lovers* are not sufficiently profitable. From many *of them*, gain is more sure, and not so difficult to be got. An abundant prey falls to the hoary wolves out of a *whole* flock.

"See now! what does this poet of yours make you a present of besides his last verses? You will read many thousands of them by *this* new lover. The God himself of poets, graceful in his mantle 116 adorned with gold, strikes the harmonious strings of the gilded lyre. He that shall make you presents, let him be to you greater than great Homer; believe me, it is a noble thing to give. And, if there shall be any one redeemed at a price for his person 117, do not you despise him; the fault of having the foot rubbed with chalk 118 is a mere trifle. Neither let the old-fashioned wax busts about the halls 119 take you in; pack off with your forefathers, you needy lover. Nay more, should 120 one, because he is good-looking, ask for a night without a

present; *why*, let him first solicit his own admirer for something to present to you.

"Be less exacting of presents, while you are laying your nets, *for fear* lest they should escape you: *once* caught, tease them at your own pleasure. Pretended affection, too, is not a bad thing; let him fancy he is loved; but have you a care that this affection is not all for nothing. Often refuse your favours; sometimes pretend a head-ache; and sometimes there will be Isis 121 to afford a pretext. *But* soon admit him again; that he may acquire no habits of endurance, and that his love, so often repulsed, may not begin to flag. Let your door be deaf to him who entreats, open to him who brings. Let the lover that is admitted, hear the remarks of him who is excluded. And, as though you were the first injured, sometimes get in a passion with him when injured *by you*. His censure, when counterbalanced by your censure, 127 may wear away. But do you never afford a long duration for anger; prolonged anger frequently produces hatred. Moreover, let your eyes learn, at discretion, to shed tears; and let this cause or that cause your cheeks to be wet. And do not, if you deceive any one, hesitate to be guilty of perjury; Venus lends *but* a deaf hearing 128 to deceived *lovers*.

"Let a male servant and a crafty handmaid 129 be trained up to their parts; who may instruct him what may be conveniently purchased for you. And let them ask but little for themselves; if they ask a little of many, 130 very soon, great will be the heap from the gleanings. 131 Let your sister, and your mother, and your nurse as well, fleece your admirer. A booty is soon made, that is sought by many

hands. When occasions for asking for presents shall fail you, call attention with a cake [132](#) to your birthday. Take care that no one loves you in security, without a rival; love is not very lasting if you remove *all* rivalry. Let him perceive the traces of *another* person on the couch; all your neck, too, discoloured by the marks of toying. Especially let him see the presents, which another has sent. If he gives you nothing, the Sacred Street [133](#) must be talked about. When you have received many things, but yet he has not given you every thing, be continually asking him to lend you something, for you never to return. Let your tongue aid you, and let it conceal your thoughts; [134](#) caress him, and prove his ruin. [135](#) Beneath the luscious honey cursed poisons lie concealed. If you observe these precepts, tried by me throughout a long experience; and if the winds and the breezes do not bear away my words; often will you bless me while I live; often will you pray, when I am dead, that in quietude my bones may repose."

She was in the middle of her speech, when my shadow betrayed me; but my hands with difficulty refrained from tearing her grey scanty locks, and her eyes bleared with wine, and her wrinkled cheeks. May the Gods grant you both no home, [136](#) and a needy old age; prolonged winters as well, and everlasting thirst.

ELEGY IX.

Table of Contents

He tells Atticus that like the soldier, the lover ought to be on his guard and that Love is a species of warfare.

Every lover is a soldier, and Cupid has a camp of his own; believe me, Atticus, [138](#) every lover is a soldier. The age which is fitted for war, is suited to love as well. For an old man to be a soldier, is shocking; amorousness in an old man is shocking. The years which [139](#) generals require in the valiant soldier, the same does the charming fair require in her husband. Both *soldier and lover* pass sleepless nights; both rest upon the ground. The one watches at the door of his mistress; but the other *at that* of his general. [140](#) Long marches are the duty of the soldier; send the fair *far away, and* the lover will boldly follow her, without a limit *to his endurance*. Over opposing mountains will he go, and rivers swollen with rains; the accumulating snows will he pace.

About to plough the waves, he will not reproach the stormy East winds; nor will he watch for Constellations favourable for scudding over the waves. Who, except either the soldier or the lover, will submit to both the chill of the night, and the snows mingled with the heavy showers? The one is sent as a spy against the hostile foe; the other keeps his eye on his rival, as though upon an enemy. The one lays siege to stubborn cities, the other to the threshold of his obdurate mistress: the one bursts open gates, and the

other, doors. 142 Full oft has it answered to attack the enemy when buried in sleep; and to slaughter an unarmed multitude with armed hand. Thus did the fierce troops of the Thracian Rhesus 143 fall; and you, captured steeds, forsook your lord. Full oft do lovers take advantage of the sleep of husbands, and brandish their arms against the slumbering foe. To escape the troops of the sentinels, and the bands of the patrol, is the part *both* of the soldier, and of the lover always in misery. Mars is wayward, and Venus is uncertain; both the conquered rise again, and those fall whom you would say could never possibly be prostrate.

Whoever, then, has pronounced Love *mere* slothfulness, let him cease *to love*: 144 to the discerning mind does Love belong. The mighty Achilles is inflamed by the captive Briseis. Trojans, while you may, destroy the Argive resources. Hector used to go to battle *fresh* from the embraces of Andromache; and it was his wife who placed his helmet on his head. The son of Atreus, the first of *all* the chiefs, on beholding the daughter of Priam, is said to have been smitten with the dishevelled locks of the raving *prophetess*. 146 Mars, too, when caught, was sensible of the chains wrought at the forge; 147 there was no story better known than his, in all the heavens.

I myself was of slothful habit, and born for a lazy inactivity; 148 the couch and the shade 149 had enervated my mind. Attentions to the charming fair gave a fillip to me, in my indolence; and *Love* commanded me to serve 150 in his camp. Hence it is that thou seest me active, and waging the warfare by night. Let him who wishes not to become slothful, fall in love.