

BELLARIA LXIV



UNFAMILIAR LATIN POETS II

LIVIUS ANDRONICUS (c. 280-200 BC)

Homer's *Odyssey* in Latin

'The father of Latin Literature', because he was said to be the first at Rome to compose Greek-style poems in Latin—'father of Latin epic' more accurately?—Livius wrote comedies and tragedies and translated the *Odyssey* into Latin saturnians (a metre far too complex to abridge usefully here). He keeps pretty close to the Greek, but Romanises where he feels like it e.g. *Camena* (1.1) is the Roman muse of poetry, as she needed to be, and Patroclus (3.110) is not Homer's 'counsellor equal to the gods' but *summus adprimus* 'top, by far the first'. 'Odysseus' knees were loosened' in Greek became *Ulixi cor frigit*, 'Odysseus' heart froze'.

He survives only in fragments. Here I quote a sample, translating just Livius' Latin.



Egeria, one of the four Roman *Camenae*

ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, πολύτροπον,
uirum mihi, Camena, insece uersutum
Tell me, O muse, about the skilful man
(*Od.* 1.1)

Zeus to Athene

ἔτεκνον ἐμόν, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων
mea puer, quid uerbi ex tuo ore supra/fugit?
'My daughter, what statement escapes up from your mouth?'
(*Od.* 1.64)

Zeus to Athene

πῶς ἂν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆος ἐγὼ θείοιο λαθοίμην,
neque enim te oblitus sum, Laertie noster
For neither I have forgotten you, our son of Laertes
(*Od.* 1.65)

Telemachus to the disguised Athene

ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπέ καὶ ἀτρεκέως κατάλεξον:
tuque mihi omnia narrato disertim
And you must openly tell me everything
(*Od.* 1.169)

Athene to Telemachus (about the suitors)

τίς δαίς, τίς δὲ ὄμιλος ὄδ' ἔπλετο; ...
εἰλαπίνη ἢ γάμος;
quae daps haec est? qui festus dies?
What is this banquet? What holiday is it?
(*Od.* 1.225-6)

Nestor (to Telemachus) remembers the Trojan war

ἔνθα δὲ Πάτροκλος. θεόφιν μῆστρω ἀτάλαντος.
ibidemque uir summus adprimus Patroclus
and in that place [fell] the top, by far the first, man—Patroclus
(*Od.* 3.110)

Menelaus to Telemachus

δόρπου δ' ἐξαῦτις μνησώμεθα
atque escas habeamus mentionem
and let us have the thought of food
(*Od.* 4.213)



Odysseus and Nausicaa

Odysseus supplicates Nausicaa

[ὁ δὲ μερμήριξεν Ὀδυσσεύς,]
 ἢ γούνων λίσσοιτο λαβῶν ἐτώπιδα κούρην,
utrum genua amploctens virginem oraret
 whether to clasp the maidens knees and beg her
 (*Od.* 6.141-2)

Nausicaa's orders to Odysseus

ἔνθα καθεζόμενος μεῖναι χρόνον, εἰς ὃ κεν ἡμεῖς
 ἄστυδε ἔλθωμεν καὶ ἰκώμεθα δώματα πατρός.
ibi manens sedeto, donicum uidemus
me carpento uehentem en! domum uenisse
 Sit there and wait, until you see
 that I have come home, riding in my carriage
 (*Od.* 6.295-6)



Odysseus weeps

Odysseus weeps at Demodocus' tales of Troy

δάκρυ ὁμορξάμενος κεφαλῆς ἄπο φᾶρος ἔλεσκε

simul ac lacrimas de ore noegeo detersit*

* 'with his cloak'

at the same time he also wiped the tears from his face with his cloak
(*Od.* 8.88)

Laodamas wonders whether Odysseus could partake in the games

οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ γέ τί φημι κακώτερον ἄλλο θαλάσσης

ἄνδρα γε συγχεῖται, εἰ καὶ μάλα καρτερὸς εἴη.

namque nullum

peius macerta humanum quamde mare saeuum;

uires cui sunt magnae topper confringent*

importunae undae

'For nothing

wastes a man worse than cruel sea. The man
whose strength is great—him at once
the ruthless waves will shatter'

*confess: who knew that was a Latin word? 'At once'

(*Od.* 8.138-9)

Odysseus returns to Circe after visiting the underworld

οὐδ' ἄρα Κίρκην

ἐξ Ἀίδεω ἐλθόντες ἐλήθομεν, ἀλλὰ μάλ' ὤκα

ἦλθ' ἐντυναμένη: ἅμα δ' ἀμφίπολοι φέρον αὐτῇ

σῖτον καὶ κρέα πολλὰ καὶ αἶθοπα οἶνον ἐρυθρόν.

topper citi ad aedis uenimus Circa;

simul ... carnem portant ad naues,

multam ancillae; uina isdem inserinuntur

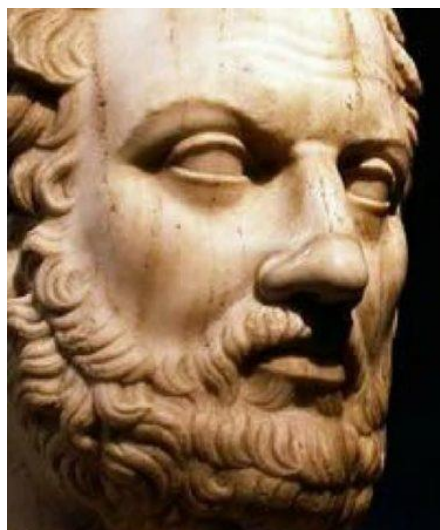
At once we quickly come to the house of Circe;

At the same time to the ships

Maids bring much meat; wine was put in the same place

(*Od.* 12.16-19)

PUBLILIUS THE SYRIAN (85-43 BC)



Publius

Introduction

Publilius was brought to Rome as a slave in the 1st C BC. A witty fellow, he was freed and wrote mimes, which were originally improvised street sketches but soon became part of the Roman theatrical scene: exciting 'rags to riches' types of story involving disguise, deceit, adultery, rape, witchcraft, theft and so on, featuring male and female actors, sexual innuendo, and all very popular (Augustus loved them).

None survive, but snappy quotations from them do, designed for schoolboys to copy and memorise (all part of the orator's training). Here is a selection: there is, of course, no consistency about them all, and many may not be by Publilius. It is easy to imagine the context in which they might appear.

He doubly benefits the needy who gives quickly.

inopi beneficium bis dat, qui dat celeriter.



If your parent is just, revere him; if not, bear with him.

ames parentem, si aequus est, si aliter, feras.

Audacity augments courage; hesitation fear/Valour grows by daring, fear by holding back.

audendo uirtus crescit, tardando timor.

A good reputation is more valuable than money.

honesta fama melior pecunia est.

Too much nobility is foolish against the shameless.

contra impudentem stulta est nimia ingenuitas.

The judge is condemned when the guilty are acquitted.

iudex damnatur cum nocens absoluitur.

For a good cause, wrongdoing is virtuous.

honeste turpitudine est pro causa bona.



Poverty is the lack of many things, but avarice is the lack of all things.

inopiae desunt multa, auaritiae omnia.

Death is lucky for childhood, bitter for youth, too late for age.

mors infanti felix, iuueni acerba, nimis sera est seni.

When Fortune flatters, she does it to betray.

fortuna cum blanditur, captatum uenit.

Fortune is like glass—the brighter the glitter, the more easily broken.

fortuna uitrea est: tum cum splendet frangitur.



It is more easy to get a favour from Fortune than to keep it.
fortunam citius reperias quam retineas.

Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm.
in tranquillo esse quisque gubernator potest.

The judge is condemned when the guilty is absolved.
iudex damnatur ubi nocens absoluitur.

Lose trust and one can lose no more.
fidem qui perdit nihil pote ultra perdere.

Necessity prescribes law; she does not bow to it herself.
necessitas dat legem; non ipsa accipit.



Mind, not body, makes lasting wedlock.
perenne coniugium animus, non corpus, facit.

It is a bad plan that admits of no modification.
malum est consilium, quod mutari non potest.

Pardon one offence and you encourage the commission of many.
inuitat culpam qui peccatum praeterit



Whom Fortune wishes to destroy, she first makes mad.
stultum facit fortuna, quem uult perdere.

Let a fool hold his tongue and he will pass for a sage.
taciturnitas stulto homini pro sapientia est.

Penitence follows hasty decisions.
uelox consilium sequitur paenitentia.

Confession of our faults is the next thing to innocence.
proximum ab innocentia tenet locum uerecunda peccati confessio.

What comes by wishing is never truly yours.
alienum est omne, quicquid optando euenit.



We fancy the lot of others; others fancy ours more.
aliena nobis, nostra plus aliis placent.

As you treat a neighbour, expect another to treat you
ab alio expectes, alteri quod feceris.

Courage that can fear can take the road to safety
animus uereri qui scit, scit tuta ingredi.

Tolerate a friend's faults and you make them your own.
amici uitia si feras, facias tua.



To dispute with a drunk is to debate with an empty house.
absentem laedit, cum ebrio qui litigat.

The angry lover tells himself many a lie.
amans iratus muta mentitur sibi.

The miser is himself the cause of his misery.
auarus ipse miseriae causa est suae.

The lover knows what he desires; his wisdom is out of sight.
amans quid cupiat scit, quid sapiat non uidit.



To accredit disaster, every rumour has power.
ad calamitatem quilibet rumor ualet.

You die every time you lose someone who is dear to you.
homo totiens moritur, quotiens amittit suos.

Good for man is death when it ends life's miseries.
bona mors est homini, uitae quae exstinguit mala.

Good courage in a bad circumstance is half of the evil overcome.
bonus animus in re mala dimidium est mali.

Fate had different plans.
dis aliter uisum est.



When you love, you are not wise, and when you are wise, you don't love.
cum ames, non sapias, cum sapias, non ames.

Fortune makes a fool of him whom she favours too much.
stultum facit fortuna, quem perdere uult.

A small debt produces a debtor, a large one, an enemy.
leue æs alienum debitorem facit, graue inimicum.

Each day succeeding is the student of the one preceding.
discipulus est prioris posterior dies.

The eyes are blind when the mind works on other things.
caeci sunt oculi, cum animus alias res agit.

We lose things certain in pursuing things uncertain.
Certa amittimus, dum incerta petimus.

Money alone is the ruling principle of all things.
pecunia una regimen est rerum omnium.



Admonish your friends secretly, but praise them openly.
amicos secreto admone, palam lauda.

With the good man anger is quick to die.
bonum ad uirum cito moritur iracundia.

The man whom many people fear must fear many people.
multos timere debet, quem multi timent.



He conquers twice who conquers himself when he is victorious.
bis uincit, qui se uincit in uictoria.

Our life is short but is made longer by misfortunes.
breuis ipsa uita est, sed malis fit longior.

The judge passes judgement on himself as much as on the accused.
tam de se iudex iudicat quam de reo.

To be bested by a better means a share in glory.
superari a superior pars est gloriae.

To destroy the law is to rob oneself of one's first support.
sibi primum auxilium eripere qui est leges tollere.

Anger always thinks it has power beyond its power.
semper iratus plus se posse putat quam possit.



Introduction

Grattius' sole surviving work is his *Cynegetica* ('Hunting with Hounds'). It begins with a discussion of equipment—nets, spears etc.—and then turns to huntsmen, dogs and horses. This passage goes straight to the dogs:

150 But why do we traverse these wide rounds amidst small details? The foremost care is that of dogs; no other care comes before that throughout the whole system of hunting, whether you energetically pursue the untamed quarry with bare force or use skill to manage the conflict. Dogs belong to a thousand lands and they **155** each have characteristics derived from their origin. The Median dog, though undisciplined, is a great fighter, and great glory exalts the far-distant Celtic dogs. Those of the Geloni, on the other hand, shirk a combat and dislike fighting, but they have wise instincts: the Persian is quick in both respects.

150 *sed cur exiguis tantos in partibus orbis
lustramus? prima illa canum, non ulla per artis
cura prior, siue indomitos uehementior hostes
nudo Marte premas seu bellum ex arte ministres.
mille canum patriae ductique ab origine mores
155* *quoique sua. magna indocilis dat proelia Medus
magnaue diuersos extollit gloria Celtas.
arma negant contra Martemque odere Geloni,
sed natura sagax: Perses in utroque paratus.*



Some rear Chinese dogs, a breed of unmanageable ferocity; **160** but the Lycaonians, on the other hand, are easy-tempered and big in limb. The Hyrcanian dog, however, is not content with all the energy belonging to his stock: the females of their own will seek unions with wild beasts in the woods: Venus grants them meetings and joins them in the alliance of love. Then the savage paramour wanders safely **165** amid the pens of tame cattle, and the bitch, freely daring to approach the formidable tiger, produces offspring of nobler blood. The whelp, however, has headlong courage: you will find him a-hunting in the very yard and growing at the expense of much of the cattle's blood. Still you should rear him: whatever enormities he has placed to his charge at home, **170** he will obliterate them as a mighty combatant on gaining the forest.

*sunt qui Seras alant, genus intractabilis irae;
160 at contra faciles magnique Lycaones armis.
sed non Hyrcano satis est uehementia gentis
tanta suae: petiere ultro fera semina siluis;
dat Uenus accessus et blando foedere iungit.
tunc et mansuetis tuto ferus errat adulter
165 in stabulis ultroque grauem succedere tigrin
ausa canis maiore tulit de sanguine fetum.
sed praeceps uirtus: ipsa uenabitur aula
ille tibi et pecudum multo cum sanguine crescet.
pasce tamen: quaecumque domi sibi crimina fecit,
170 excutiet silua magnus pugnator adeptus.*



But that same Umbrian dog which has tracked wild beasts flees from facing them. Would that with his fidelity and shrewdness in scent he could have corresponding courage and corresponding will-power in the conflict! What if you visit the straits of the Morini, tide-swept by a wayward sea, and **175** choose to penetrate even among the Britons? O how great your reward, how great your gain beyond any outlays! If you are not bent on looks and deceptive graces (this is the one defect of the British whelps), at any rate when serious work has come, when bravery must be shown, **180** and the impetuous War-god calls in the utmost hazard, then you could not admire the renowned Molossians so much.

*at fugit aduersos idem quos repperit hostes
 Umber: quanta fides utinam et sollertia naris,
 tanta foret uirtus et tantum uellet in armis!
 quid, freta si Morinum dubio refluente ponto
 175 ueneris atque ipsos libeat penetrare Britannos?
 o quanta est merces et quantum impendia supra!
 si non ad speciem mentiturosque decores
 pronus es (haec una est catulis iactura Britannis),
 at magnum cum uenit opus promendaque uirtus
 180 et uocat extremo praeceps discrimine Mauors:
 non tunc egregios tantum admirere Molossos ...*

Grattius here moves to the more general picture:



223 'Tis the work of early dawn then, while the dog is picking out the trail as yet unspoiled by another animal's scent, if there is any 225 confusion of tracks in that place whereby he is thrown off, he runs an outside course in a wider circle and, at last discovering beyond mistake the footprints coming out, pounces on the track like the fourfold team, the pride of Thessaly, which is launched forth on the Corinthian race-course, stirred by ancestral glory and by hopes covetous of the first prize. 230 But lest loss be the outcome of excessive zeal, the dog's duties are regulated: he must not assail his foe with barking; he must not seize on some trivial prey or on signs of a nearer catch and so blindly lose the fruit of his first activities.

*primae lucis opus: tum signa uapore ferino
intemerata legens si qua est qua fallitur eius
225 turba loci, maiore secatur spatia extera gyro;
atque hic egressu iam tum sine fraude reperto
incubuit, spatiiis qualis permissa Lechaeis
Thessalium quadriga decus, quam gloria patrum
excitat et primae spes ambitiosa coronae.
230 sed ne qua ex nimio redeat iactura fauore,
lex dicta officiis: neu uoce lacesseret hostem
neue leuem praedam aut propioris pignora lucri
amplexus primos nequiquam effunderet actus.*



When, however, better fortune already attends the outlay of toil, 235 and the sought-for lair of the wild beasts is near, he must both know his enemies are hidden and prove this by signs: either he shows his new-won pleasure by lightly wagging the tail, or, digging in his own footprints with the nails of his paws, he gnaws the soil and sniffs the air with nostril raised high. 240 And yet to prevent the first signs from misleading the dog in his keenness, the hunter bids him run all about the inner space encircled by rough ground and nose the paths by which the beasts come and go; then, if it happens that the first expectation has failed him in the place, he turns again to his task in wide coursings; but, if the scent was right, 245 he will make for the first trail again as the quarry has not crossed the circle. Therefore, when full success has arrived with its proper issue, the dog must come as comrade to share the prey and must recognise his own reward: thus let it be a delight to have given ungrudging service to the work.

iam uero impensum melior fortuna laborem
235 *cum sequitur iuxtaque domus quaesita ferarum,*
et sciat occultos et signis arguat hostes:
aut effecta leui testatur gaudia cauda
aut ipsa infodiens uncis uestigia plantis
mandit humum celsisue apprensat naribus auras.
240 *et tamen, ut ne prima fauentem pignora fallant,*
circum omnem aspretis medius qua clauditur orbis
ferre pedem accessusque abitusque notare ferarum
admonet et, si forte loco spes prima fefellit,
rusum opus incubuit spatiis; at, prospera si res,
245 *intacto repetet prima ad uestigia gyro.*
ergo ubi plena suo rediit uictoria fine,
in partem praedae ueniat comes et sua norit
praemia: sic operi iuuat inseruisse benigne.

Next week: Calpurnius Siculus composes an eclogue (!) on a country bumpkin visiting Nero's games; Reposianus (who?) reworks the Mars and Venus adultery; and Cato the Elder turns out a string of morally improving one-liners.